

HISTORIC
LANDMARKS
OF ADVENTISM

*The
Bankrupt
Servant*

*Only one Person in the
universe was able to pay
the debt of sin and save the
human race, Jesus Christ.*

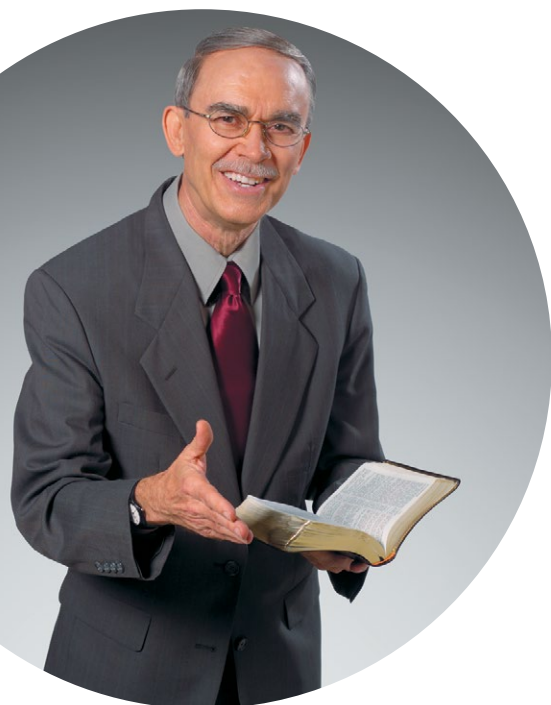
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of Eternal
Realities*

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From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

Machinery

When David told King Saul that he was willing to go and fight the Philistine, Goliath, Saul gave David a brass helmet, a coat of mail, and a sword. This was the minimum armor that he thought David would need in such a battle. However, David was not used to fighting with unfamiliar equipment and preferred to meet Goliath with the two weapons he had depended on to kill a lion and a bear, namely his trust in the God of Israel and his sling.

Goliath was enraged that Israel would send an unarmed man to fight with him. The conversation went like this: “‘Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?’ And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, ‘Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!’ Then David said to the Philistine, ‘You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds

of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands” (1 Samuel 17:43–47).

Goliath was a little over six cubits tall (about nine feet). The image that Nebuchadnezzar built was 60 cubits tall. It was apparently impossible to avoid yielding to the King's demand to bow down to his idol, but a fiery furnace heated seven times hotter than usual could not keep God's people who are faithful to Him from victory.

In the near future God's faithful people will all be commanded to worship a beast or an image to that beast whose number is 666. The victory to be gained will not be with any human machinery or strategy. Rather it will be gained through a miracle of God, as it was with David's sling and the faith of the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace.

“They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: ‘Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints’ ” (Revelation 15:3)! [LM](#)

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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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The Bankrupt Servant

By John J. Grosboll

The number seven in the Bible refers to perfection. When Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive, and then suggested seven times (Matthew 18:21), I am sure he was in a state of shock when Jesus said, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven” (verse 22).

Jesus then told Peter a story to illustrate forgiveness. “Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents” (verses 23, 24).

This is a symbolic story of a servant who could not pay the debt because he was bankrupt. The King in the parable is the God of heaven. He has many other servants who are not bankrupt. We read, “Men living in this little atom of a world are finite; God has unnumbered worlds that are obedient to His laws and are conducted with reference to His glory.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 66.

However, the king has one servant that is bankrupt, and that servant represents the people of this world. We are bankrupt because we owe a debt that we have no means to repay. Adam and Eve sinned, and as a result, we are

all under a death sentence. Genesis 5:3 says, “And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in His own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.” Notice, that son of Adam was under the sentence of death and so it has been since the beginning of the world. Every descendant of Adam and Eve is under the sentence of death.

There was only one person in the universe able to pay the debt. Adam and Eve had broken the law of God and the angels could not pay it because they were under the law. The debt could only be paid by someone who was above the law of God. Only one Person had the qualification. His name



is Jesus Christ. Originally that was not His name, but the name He acquired because He decided that He was going to pay the debt on man's behalf. The name *Jesus* comes from the English equivalent of the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *Jehoshua*, which means *Saviour* or *deliverer*. *Christ* comes from the Greek work *Christos*, which means *anointed*.

Jesus told the angels that in order to save the human race, He would come to earth as a man. He would be a teacher. He would be rejected and lifted up between heaven and earth and die the most agonizing and cruel death. It would be so bad that no one would be able to look at it, but He would rise again on the third day. By His actions He would open the door to heaven and save all who are willing to be saved. The debt that sinners are unable to pay would be paid by Him. (See *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 4.)

The man in the parable who had a ninety-million-dollar debt wished he could pay it and begged for patience, but he was totally deceived. No matter how much patience the Lord had, the debtor would never be able to acquire what was needed to pay it.

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

This is such a stupendous idea that the apostle Paul does not believe that our minds can take it in all at once. So he says in Philippians 2:5, 6, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery [or did not consider it a thing to be grasped] to be equal with God." Jesus Christ, as a member of the Godhead, was equal with the Father, but He did not consider holding that position was something to hang onto while man, whom He had created, was lost. He was willing to lay all that aside and come to this world as a man. The reason



"Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

Romans 13:10

we do not understand this sacrifice is because we do not understand how great He really is.

Christ's sacrifice was a humiliation, a condescension that we cannot even comprehend. But becoming a man was just the beginning; the Bible says He "made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men" (verse 7).

It would be one thing to come as a respected king or as a rich person, or high-class, or a person honored, but Jesus came to this world as a servant, as one of the common men. Even that was just the beginning. "And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (verse 8, literal translation). He went so low that it was not possible to go any lower.

Ellen White wrote, "Christ did not come to this earth merely to live as any man might live. He descended to the very depths of human woe, becoming obedient to a shameful, ignominious

death, even death by crucifixion. So deeply was Paul impressed with the Saviour's condescension that he traces His history from stage to stage, as if the sacrifice were too great to be comprehended all at once. Step by step he leads us down, until the lowest depths of humiliation are reached, and we see the Saviour hanging on the cross, while the priests and rulers say tauntingly, 'He saved others; Himself He can not save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him' (Matthew 27:42).

"I present to Christians this wonderful picture. If it is clearly discerned, will it not annihilate selfishness? As we see the royal Sufferer hanging on the cross, let us think of the height from which He descended in our behalf." *The Signs of the Times*, May 22, 1901.

"From the heavenly courts He beheld the misery of the race, and coming to this earth He found a ransom for us, even through great humiliation and

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suffering. To rescue us, the Lord of life and glory took up the position and duties of a servant. For us He submitted to mockery, insult, and rejection. He became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. 'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed' (Isaiah 53:5)." Ibid.

The first and most important commandment in the law is to love the Lord thy God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind (Mark 12:30). If that command seems arbitrary or severe then you don't understand what the cross is all about. When relieved from such an impossible debt it should be an automatic response to love God with all of your heart, for has He not proved Himself to be worthy of the first place in your affections?

Continuing the story about the bankrupt servant, we read, "As he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made" (Matthew 18:25).

In ancient times there were two ways of solving problems with bankruptcy. One was to sell the debtor and his family into slavery. The money recouped would at least partially pay the debt. We read in 2 Kings 4 about a woman in that very situation who came to Elisha to appeal for help. Her sons were to be sold as slaves because she was bankrupt and couldn't pay the debt.

The other way people dealt with bankruptcy was to put the debtor into prison. England once had debtors' prisons. Those unable to service their debts were put in prison and would stay there indefinitely unless someone came to their aid and arrangements made to service the debt.

In this parable of the bankrupt debtor the king says to take everything he has, his wife and his children, and sell them as slaves.

"The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me,

and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt" (Matthew 18:26, 27).

The man was set free, but his freedom would not be forever. If you believe that you are saved today, don't be deceived into thinking that your salvation is ensured forever. The doctrine of "once saved, always saved" is disproved very clearly by the Scriptures, and this is one of the stories that disproves it. This man was saved and forgiven, but it was not forever. By his behavior towards a fellow debtor He soon lost his salvation.

Verse 28, *first part*, says, "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii." A debt of a hundred denarii is a debt that a working man could pay off within a year or two. If he was making really good wages, he could actually pay that debt off in less than a year. This servant was not bankrupt. He was in debt, but not bankrupt. He just needed more time. Notice how the forgiven man treats his fellow servant: "He laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt" (verses 28, *last part*–30). He showed no mercy, foreclosed on him, and threw him into debtor's prison.

"So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done" (verse 31).

Whom does this fellow servant represent and what was the debt that he owed? This is not a debt between the servant and the Lord. This is a personal debt owed to one of his fellow men. Let's think that through for a moment. The plan of salvation has been offered to both of these servants. So, what did the one servant owe the other?

In Romans 13:10 we are told: "Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." Remember, if you want to go to heaven, you must not only

keep the first commandment of the law, which is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and He has proved that He is worthy of that; but the second commandment of the law is to love your neighbor as yourself.

John says in 1 John 4:7-11, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins [pay the ten thousand talent debt]. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love another.” We have an obligation “to love one another.” We owe that to one another.

Consider if there have been any times when you have neglected to manifest to your brothers and sisters the love that you should have. If so, then you are in debt, because you owe it to them. What are you going to do to pay the debt? It takes time to show that you really do have the love of God in your heart. Throughout life’s experiences we either make payments on that debt of love owed to others or sink deeper into debt.

The devil wants you to go deeper into debt by neglecting to show the love and compassion to your brothers and sisters that you should. To love is a Christian obligation. As God has loved us we are under obligation to love one another. If we don’t we sink further and further into debt.

The Lord came to the first servant and asked him why he didn’t give him more time. He certainly had character defects, but he was not allowed time to overcome them. Don’t you expect the Lord to allow you more time to work on your own character defects?

Following are a few statements where Ellen White comments on this very



subject. She said, “The spirit of Christ will lead us to think kindly of our brethren [these include the people in your own family]. It is the work of Satan to seek some stain upon the character of Christ’s followers, to talk of their faults, and magnify their errors. Satan is an accuser of the brethren, and all who engage in this work show that they are actuated by the same spirit. All our prayers will be in vain while we cherish feelings of envy, jealousy, suspicion, and enmity. We shall be forgiven only as we forgive. It is no better than mocking God to engage in religious worship with hearts thinking evil, and full of bitterness toward our brethren or our fellow-men.

“Jesus, our exemplar, looks with abhorrence upon all who are cherishing unkindness.” *The Review and Herald*, November 6, 1883.

In *Letter* 69, 1896, she says: “You cannot be too careful of what you say, for the words you utter show what power is controlling your mind and heart.”

“If you are fully satisfied with your own peculiar ways, so that you feel

justified in complaining of your brethren, you will never reach heaven. If you cannot live in harmony on the earth, how could you live throughout eternity in love and peace? There must be kindness, love, courtesy, and delicate regard shown for one another here and now.” *The Review and Herald*, July 22, 1890.

“Satan is an accuser of the brethren, and when he can set the leaven of dissatisfaction to work in human hearts, he is exultant. When he can divide brethren, he has a hellish jubilee.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 261, 262.

“A person’s dress, bonnet, or apron takes their attention. They must talk to this one or that one, and it is sufficient to dwell upon for weeks. I saw that all the religion a few poor souls have consists in watching the garments and acts of others, and finding fault with them. Unless they reform, there will be no place in heaven for them, for they would find fault with the Lord Himself.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 145.

You see, friends, finding fault is a habit that people develop and eventually you would find fault with the Lord

Himself. We have to overcome that if we are going to go to heaven.

The following is a dream given to Ellen White and recorded in *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, pages 10, 11.

"I had a dream. I saw A in close conversation with men and with ministers. He adroitly would make statements born of suspicion and imagination to draw them out, and then would gain expression from them. I saw him clap his hands over something very eagerly. I felt a pang of anguish at heart as I saw this going on. I saw in my dream yourself and B in conversation with him. You made statements to him which he seemed to grasp with avidity, and close his hand over something. I then saw him go to his room, and there upon the floor was a pile of stones systematically laid up, stone upon stone. He placed the additional stones on the pile and counted them up. Every stone had a name—some report gathered up—and every stone was numbered.

"The young man who often instructs me came and looked upon the pile of stones with grief and indignation, and inquired [of A] what he had and what he proposed to do with them. A looked up with a sharp, gratified laugh. 'These are mistakes of C. I am going to stone him with them, stone him to death.' The young man said, 'You are bringing back the stoning system, are you? You are worse than the ancient Pharisees. Who gave you this work to do? The Lord raised you up, the Lord entrusted you with a special work [to be a minister]. The Lord has sustained you in a most remarkable manner, but it was not

for you to degrade your powers for this kind of work. Satan is an accuser of the brethren.'

"I thought A seemed very defiant and determined. Said he, 'C is trying to tear us to pieces. He is working against us, and to save our reputation and life, we must work against him. I shall use every stone to the last pebble here upon this floor to kill him. This is only self-defense, a disagreeable necessity.'

“

If you cannot live in harmony on the earth, how could you live throughout eternity in love and peace?

"And then said the young man solemnly, 'What have you gained? Have you in the act righted your wrongs? Have you opened your heart to Jesus Christ, and does He sit there enthroned? Who occupies the citadel of the soul under this

administration of the stoning system?

"'You have a higher calling, a more important work. Leave all such work of gathering stones for the enemies of God's law. You brethren must love one another, or you are not children of the day, but of darkness.'

"I then saw C [the person that A planned to stone] engaged in a similar work, gathering stones, making a pile, and ready to begin the stoning system." Ibid. Each one of them was going to stone the other. "Similar words were repeated to him with additional injunctions, and I awoke." Ibid.

My dear friend, to get ready to go to heaven takes time. The Lord is giving us time here in this world to prepare. So as the time passes, it is impossible for any of us to pay the debt that Jesus has paid for us. All that is possible is to thank Him for it and receive it. But there are debts that you and I owe to our fellow

men, to the people in our household, and that is to love them as ourselves. If we are not doing that, we are going deeper and deeper into debt.

Remember there is a recording angel keeping track of what is being talked about in our homes, not only the content of the words, but also the tone of voice and the emotions behind them. Does this speech reflect love?

If we are planning on going to heaven, we have to learn the lessons of loving our neighbor as ourselves. Take the challenge to pray about this, and pray, "Lord, am I really loving my neighbor as myself? Does my speech reflect the fact that I love my neighbor, or am I going deeper and deeper into debt?"

"The longest journey is performed by taking one step at a time. A succession of steps brings us to the end of the road. The longest chain is composed of separate links. If one of these links is faulty, the chain is worthless. Thus it is with character. A well-balanced character is formed by single acts well performed. One defect, cultivated instead of being overcome, makes the man imperfect, and closes against him the gate of the Holy City. He who enters heaven must have a character that is without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Naught that defileth can ever enter there. In all the redeemed host not one defect will be seen." *Lift Him Up*, 346.

Use this time we have been given to service the debt that we owe to each other. We must love our neighbor as ourselves if we are going to be in the kingdom of heaven.

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

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A Glimpse of Eternal Realities

The Kingdom of Glory

By John R. Pearson

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

John 14:1-3 KJV

All who are eagerly anticipating the soon return of their Redeemer have no doubt thought from time to time about what life is going to be like in heaven. Although we are told in 1 Corinthians 2:9 that “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him,” in His tender regard for His people, our Creator has given us a few hints of that eternal existence.

We know with a certainty, for example, that there will be no more pain, no sickness or death, and that God will wipe away all tears. We are promised that in Revelation 21:4. We know that there will be permanent dwellings for the faithful to live in that Jesus Himself has prepared. Jesus promised that in John 14:1-3.

Revelation 22:3 tells us that the two-fold curse cast upon the earth because of man’s sin will be removed. The earth was cursed when Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:17) and again when Cain slew Abel (Genesis 4:11, 12). Methuselah’s son, Lamech, Noah’s father, refers to the curse of the ground in Genesis 5:29 when he chose Noah’s name, “saying, ‘This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed.’” Imagine how bountiful our gardens will be in heaven when this two-fold curse is removed!



An even more amazing promise is given in Revelation 21:3: “And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.’”

All of these wonderful benefits will be preceded by the precious words of our Redeemer when He says, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34 KJV).

In addition to the Scriptural promises we are given, Seventh-day Adventists have been blessed with a more detailed glimpse of eternal realities through the writings of Ellen G. White, who—for the benefit of the faithful—has seen in vision and related in her writings the blissful realities of heaven of which Scripture only hints.

In remarking on the earth made new as seen in one of her many visions, Sister White notes: “The earth originally given to man as his kingdom, betrayed by him into the hands of Satan, and so long held by the mighty foe, has been brought back by the great plan of redemption. All that was lost by sin has been restored.” *The Great Controversy*, 674.

The amazing aspects of heaven that can be gleaned from the Spirit of Prophecy are provided in exquisite and enticing detail primarily in two places in the writings of Sister White: the final chapter of *The Great Controversy*, “The Controversy Ended,” pages 662–678, and the final chapter of *Edu-*

cation, “The School of the Hereafter,” pages 301–309.

In addition to the detailed description of heaven given in these chapters, which we will review shortly, other gems are sprinkled here and there in the writings of God’s prophet to the remnant. One example, and a very precious one, is in *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 254, where it is written that Jesus will lead the redeemed beside the living stream flowing from the throne of God and will explain the “dark providences” through which on this earth He allowed us to experience “in sorrow and amazement” in order to perfect our characters. (See *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4b, 99.)

Another gem is recorded in volume 3 of *Spiritual Gifts*, page 83, where the descent of the Holy City is described: “As His [Jesus’] feet touch the mountain, it parts asunder, and becomes a very great plain, and is prepared for the reception of the holy city in which is the paradise of God, the garden of Eden, which was taken up after man’s transgression.” It is difficult for the mind to grasp a city with a magnificence so overwhelming. Imagine a city so grandiose that within its confines is the Garden of Eden, “more beautiful, and gloriously adorned than when removed from the earth.” Ibid., 83, 84.

Because we have an enemy who seeks unceasingly to lead anyone and everyone away from the narrow way onto the broad road with inconceivable subtlety and deception, every life is tainted from time to time with the dark shadow of Satan falling across their daily walk. By reviewing the delights of the heavenly kingdom from time to time, we can

anticipate identifying with an experience Sister White had in one of her visions. When the redeemed were asked by Brethren Fitch and Stockman what experiences they had passed through prior to Christ’s return, she wrote, “We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, ‘Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!’” *Early Writings*, 17.

Following are a few of the elevating and encouraging delights—“the exceeding and eternal weight of glory”—described in the above-referenced chapters cited earlier from *The Great Controversy* and *Education*:

- No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God. GC, 675.
- No one will need or desire rest. Ibid., 676.
- The people of God will “ever feel the freshness of the morning and shall ever be far from its close.” Ibid.
- The redeemed will hold open communion with the Father and the Son. Ibid.
- The acquisition of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. Ibid., 677.
- Jesus will reveal the “riches of redemption.” Ibid., 678.
- He will also explain the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan. Ibid.
- Eden restored will be present within the boundaries of the Holy City. Ibid., 674.
- The redeemed will walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day. Ibid., 676.
- There will be no tree of the knowledge of good and evil to afford an opportunity for temptation. Ed., 302.
- Restored to God’s presence, man will again be taught of God. Ibid.
- The “records of creation” will be available for endless study. Ibid., 303.

“
*The veil that
separates the visible and
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things that can only be
vaguely imagined
now.*”

- The veil that separates the visible and the invisible worlds will be drawn aside, revealing things that can only be vaguely imagined now. Ibid., 304.
- The redeemed will understand what is owed to the care and interposition of the angels and the ministry of angels in their life. Ibid., 305.
- The guardian angel who stood by the side of each saint will recount the many times he interposed to provide guidance and safety. Ibid.
- Among the daily social experiences of the hereafter will be
 - Pure communion with holy beings. Ibid., 306.
 - A harmonious social life with angels and the faithful of all ages. Ibid.
 - Sacred fellowship that binds together “the whole family of heaven and earth.” Ibid.
 - Music and song such as no mortal ear has heard or mind conceived. Ibid., 307.
- Every power will be developed and every capability increased. Ibid.
- All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God’s children. Ibid.

The list is infinite and unfathomable. When contemplating this wonderful future, we are reminded of the statement of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:19: “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.”

“We need to have more distinct views of Jesus and a fuller comprehension of the value of eternal realities. The beauty of holiness is to fill the hearts of God’s children; and that this may be accomplished, we should seek for divine disclosures of heavenly things.” *Steps to Christ*, 99.

Using the reasoning ability that God has given us as we “seek for divine disclosures of heavenly things,” the mind thrills with anticipation of a life devoid of sin and its consequences. This imagined list, too, is infinite and unfathomable.



The acquisition of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies.

In addition to the incredible aspects of life that Scripture and Inspiration give us, free from the efforts of the tempter and his evil agents to lead us into sin, we can add our own list of heavenly benefits if we free our minds from the confines of our earthly ties and let them roam freely, unbounded by conventional thought.

Among the more mundane things we might include in our contemplations are the following:

- No worries about where we put the keys, for keys will not be necessary since there are no thieves in heaven.
- No need to read labels for unhealthy contents of our food. There will be neither labels nor unhealthy foods.
- No political bickering.
- No worries about meeting budgets or paying bills.
- No worries about where to educate our children.
- No concerns about the weather.
- No automobile maintenance or concerns about gas prices.
- Time to engage in any and every hobby we have ever wanted to pursue.
- Time to develop any talent we want, from playing any musical instrument to laying bricks.
- Opportunity to design and build a country house, perhaps using tech-

niques that do not exist on earth now, in any kind of environment we desire: mountain, desert, forest, prairie, lake-side, tropical, moderate, frigid.

The list is indeed limitless and unfathomable. We can only conclude, as he concluded in his epistle, “And there are many other things ..., which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen” (John 21:25).

The possibilities that lie before us in “eternal realities” are available to anyone and everyone who seeks them, diligently and faithfully obeying and following the instructions our loving Creator has given us to guide us in our daily lives here on earth. The joy of an eternity of ever-new bliss in the presence of our God and the Lamb of our salvation is the joy that was set before that Lamb as He toiled during His life on earth to open the plan of salvation to all mankind.

May that joyful experience be yours.

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

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The Passover

By Lawrence Nelson

The precious atonement of Jesus, as portrayed by the Passover, was not an afterthought or something that came by chance. The sacrifice of God's Son was foreseen by Deity long before the world came into existence. The atonement was planned in every detail to the very moment. The life of Christ on earth was laid out from birth to the cross, before He ever came to this world.

But more than this was entailed in the atonement. God chose to schedule events from Eden to the cross, leaving no possible room for doubt as to its divine purpose. Christ had a schedule to meet, not only a time to be born in Bethlehem, and a time to die on the cross of Calvary, but also an exact time for His second coming and an exact time for His third coming at the close of the millennium. Yes, Christ had a schedule to meet. "Jesus said unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come" (John 2:4).



Jesus' words, "Mine hour is not yet come," point to the fact that every act of Christ's life on earth was in fulfillment of the plan that had existed from the days of eternity. Before He came to earth, the plan lay out before Him perfect in all its details. His last Passover supper spent on this earth was scheduled to the exact day. "And He said, Go into the city to such a man, and say to him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with My disciples" (Matthew 26:18).

Christ went to the Garden after spending the Passover with His disciples and this, too, had been scheduled. For it was here that He was to be betrayed. "Then cometh He to His disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners" (Matthew 26:45).

Jesus knew the time had come. Just as the Passover commemorated the deliverance from Egypt, so Christ understood the Passover lamb pointed to His coming sacrifice. Even the Passover in Egypt was scheduled in the time frame of God, for it took place exactly on the day that it was planned.

Abraham was told that his children would go into Egypt for four hundred and thirty years as slaves. (See Genesis 15.) "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:40, 41).

It required some drastic judgments from God such as the world had never seen before to bring it to pass on the exact day. Water was turned to blood. There were plagues of frogs, lice and hail, darkness, and finally a

never-to-be-forgotten night, for in the land of Goshen, the first Passover was held. Each family met together to kill a lamb and sprinkle its blood on their doorposts. The lamb was to be roasted and eaten just as the angel of death passed over each home at midnight.

In the land of Egypt, the same angel of death struck in every home, including the king's palace. Every firstborn of man and beast was slain. The Israelites were commanded to leave immediately—and it all happened at the precise time God had predicted.

Israel was commanded to keep the Passover when they should reach the Promised Land of Canaan as a memorial of this mighty deliverance by the hand of God. The Passover was kept in the day of Christ. Jesus was twelve years old when He went to Jerusalem to keep His first Passover. As He watched the priest carrying out the Passover activities, Jesus suddenly discovered a sublime truth; for He understood that every act of His life was bound up in what the priest did with the little lamb.

New impulses awakened within Him. God was His Teacher. Like a sudden clap of thunder His mission in life opened up before Him. Silently, absorbed in divine thoughts, He studied the sin problem as never before. Finally the moment arrived. He saw Himself as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world.

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Before He came to earth, the plan lay out before Him perfect in all its details. His last Passover supper spent on this earth was scheduled to the exact day.

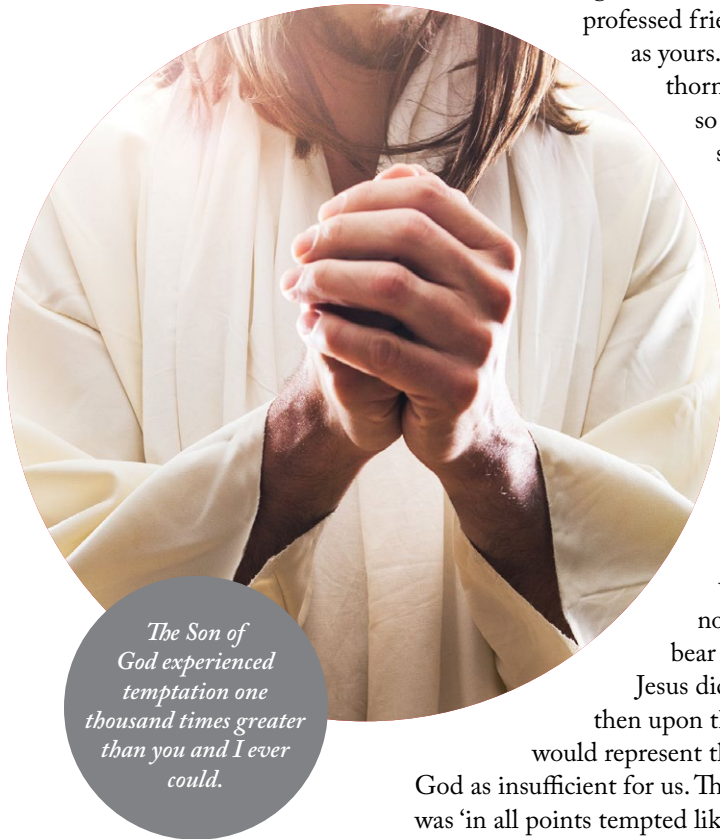
Immediately there was a change in this boy of twelve. His meekness as a willing child had changed to an awareness of a higher responsibility. He addressed His parents, Joseph and Mary, in a remarkable new manner. "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business" (Luke 2:49)? Divine inspiration tells us that as He spoke these words, He pointed heavenward, to the astonishment of His earthly parents. At this young age, he was aware of His divine Father.

His purpose in life became clear as crystal. Just as God delivered His people from the slavery of Egypt, so Jesus was to deliver His people from the slavery of sin. He, the Son of God, was to become the Passover Lamb by giving His own life as a sacrifice for our sins. Every moment of His life from then on was dedicated to preparation for the moment of sacrifice.

This preparation demanded total surrender to God's will and a full commitment to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Every day of His life was a twenty-four-hour battle with Satan. "Satan was unwearied in his efforts to overcome the Child of Nazareth. From His earliest years Jesus was guarded by heavenly angels, yet His life was one long struggle against the powers of darkness. That there should be upon the earth one life free from defilement of evil was an offense and a perplexity to the prince of darkness. He left no means untried to ensnare Jesus. No child of humanity will ever be called to live a holy life amidst so fierce a conflict with temptation as was our Saviour." *The Desire of Ages*, 71.

Battle with Satan

You and I may think we have a hard time in this battle with Satan, but we in our struggle with evil do not commence to meet the battle as He did. The Son of God experienced temptation one thousand times greater than you and I ever could. "You have not a difficulty that did not press with equal weight



The Son of God experienced temptation one thousand times greater than you and I ever could.

upon Him, not a sorrow that His heart has not experienced. His feelings could be hurt with neglect, with indifference of professed friends, as easily as yours. Is your path thorny? Christ's was so in a tenfold sense. Are you distressed? So was He. How well fitted was Christ to be an example!" *Our High Calling*, 59. Will we ever be tempted in a way Christ was not? "If we had to bear anything which Jesus did not endure, then upon this point Satan would represent the power of God as insufficient for us. Therefore Jesus was 'in all points tempted like as we are' (Hebrews 4:15)." *The Desire of Ages*, 24.

He endured every trial to which we are subject and He exercised in His own behalf no power that is not freely offered to us. As a man, He met temptation and overcame in the strength given Him from God. And so it can be with you and me. "To Jesus, who emptied Himself for the salvation of lost humanity, the Holy Spirit was given without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart is surrendered for His indwelling. Our Lord Himself has given the command, 'Be filled with the Spirit' (Ephesians 5:18)." *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 21.

This is what Paul tells us: "For in Him the whole fullness of Deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fulness of life in Him" (Colossians 2:9, 10 RSV). Peter admonishes us with the same encouragement. "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to

glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:3, 4). How we should praise God for what He has made possible for us.

After the baptism of Jesus, three years of public ministry were scheduled in which Jesus was to reveal God's love by miracles and by teachings. This accomplished, He knew His time had finally come to attend the last Passover of His life here on this earth. He said, "Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with My disciples" (Matthew 26:18 KJV).

The final crisis had arrived. The destiny of the whole universe was at stake. This is so serious that Christ felt He must find a place to be alone with His Father, for as a man, He knew that He could do nothing without God's help. He chose the Garden of Gethsemane. As He entered the Garden, He became sad and silent. His form began to sway as if He were about to fall. Every step was labored. He groaned aloud, for He was under a terrible burden. The sins of the entire world were being placed upon Him.

Twice His companions had to prevent Him from falling to the ground. He cried, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death" (Matthew 26:38). His frame convulsed with anguish as He fell prostrate to the cold ground. He was overpowered with fear as God removed His presence from Him, and He was alone with the pressure of the sins of the whole world weighing down on Him.

The gulf of sin that separated Him from the Father was so wide, black, and deep that His spirit shuddered before it. He clung convulsively to the ground as if to prevent Himself from being drawn still further from God. His convulsed lips uttered that bitter cry, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39).

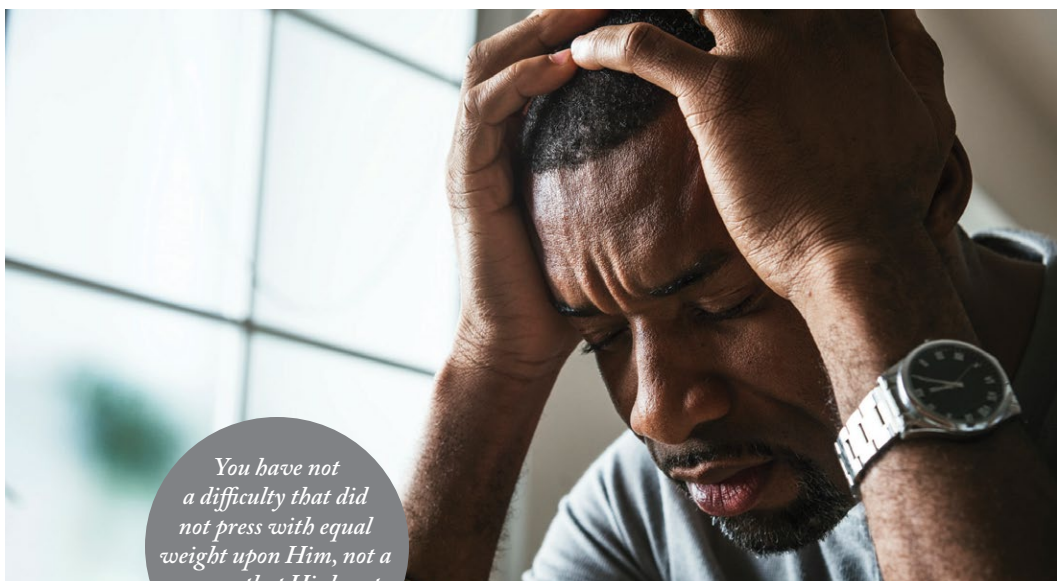
If you are in tune with God, these thoughts will break your heart and bring tears to your eyes. The undeniable fact is this: sin and God cannot dwell together. In the

struggle, eternal separation from God was possible. "Everything was at stake with him (Satan). If he failed here, his hope of mastery was lost; the kingdoms of the world would become Christ's; he himself would be overthrown and cast out. But if Christ could be overcome, the earth would become Satan's kingdom, and the human race would be forever in his power. With the issues of the conflict before Him, Christ's soul was filled with the dread of separation from God. Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal. He would be identified with Satan's kingdom, and would nevermore be one with God." *The Desire of Ages*, 687.

What a struggle! Satan painted a picture that would discourage the strongest heart. He pointed to the ingratitude of man, to God's people who would reject Him and reminded Him that His very own church would seek to destroy Him. Even His disciples would forsake Him and one of them would betray Him.

"Christ's whole being abhorred the thought. That those whom He had undertaken to save, those whom He loved so much, should unite in the plots of Satan, this pierced His soul. The conflict was terrible. Its measure was the guilt of His nation, of His accusers and betrayer, the guilt of a world lying in wickedness. The sins of men weighed heavily upon Christ, and the sense of God's wrath against sin was crushing out His life." *Ibid.*

Then the history of the human race came up before the world's Redeemer. "He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish under the Father's displeasure. He sees the power of sin, and the utter helplessness of man to save himself. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world arise before Him. He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself. He accepts His baptism of blood, that perishing millions through Him may gain everlasting life. He left the courts of Heaven, where all was purity, happiness,



You have not a difficulty that did not press with equal weight upon Him, not a sorrow that His heart has not experienced.

and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that had fallen by transgression, and He will not turn from the mission He has chosen. He will reach to the very depths of misery to rescue a lost and ruined race." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, 99, 100.

Having made this decision, He fell in a dying condition to the earth. Had it not been for an angel, who was sent from heaven to support Him, He would have died then and there. But the angel enabled our Saviour to drink the cup. Christ now stood in the sinner's place, forsaken by God and forsaken by man.

"The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God." *The Desire of Ages*, 753. What a cost for our salvation!

Christ knew that His hour had come. He knew that the Passover lamb would be offered in the temple at the moment that He would die on Calvary's cross. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit He sees it all. As the priest lifted the knife to slay the lamb on the altar, suddenly there was a rending noise as the veil of the temple was torn open from top to bottom, thus, opening the way into the heavenly sanctuary in which the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, would mediate for us before God the Father.

"All is terror and confusion. The priest is about to slay the victim; but the knife drops from his nerveless hand, and the lamb escapes. Type has met antitype in the death of God's Son. The great sacrifice has been made. The way into the Holiest is laid open. A new and living way is prepared for all. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the High Priest. Henceforth the Saviour was to officiate as Priest and Advocate in the heaven of heavens." *Ibid.*, 757.

What an atonement Jesus made on Calvary for our sin! "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7). It is one thing to believe this happened

for us, but in reality, more than belief is necessary. There are responsive actions required by each of us.

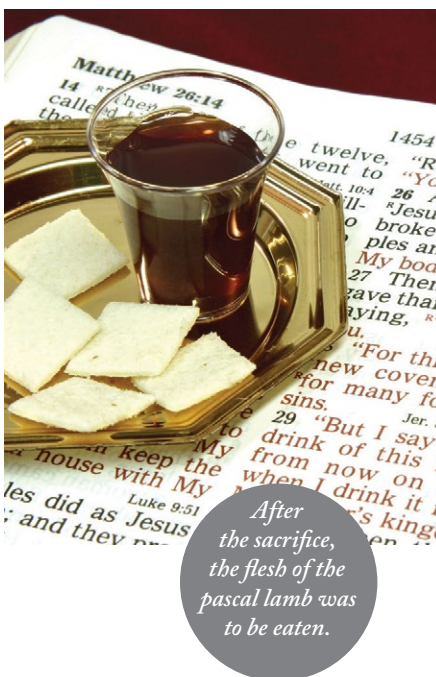
“It was not enough that the pascal lamb be slain; its blood must be sprinkled upon the doorposts; so the merits of Christ’s blood must be applied to the soul. We must believe, not only that He died for the world, but that He died for us individually. We must appropriate to ourselves the virtue of the atoning sacrifice.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 277.

That is why we must come to the place where we know of a surety that Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us. Hyssop, used to sprinkle the blood (a symbol of purification), was used by the priests to cleanse the leper and those defiled by contact with the dead. “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Psalm 51:7).

The lamb was to be prepared whole, for not a bone was to be broken in the Lamb of God, representing the completeness, the “wholeness” of Christ’s sacrifice. A full ransom was to be paid.

After the sacrifice, the flesh of the pascal lamb was to be eaten. “It is not enough even that we believe on Christ for the forgiveness of sin; we must by faith be constantly receiving spiritual strength and nourishment from Him through His word. Said Christ, ‘Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life’ (John 6:53, 54).” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 277.

To explain what He meant, He said, The words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life. What does this mean? “The followers of Christ must be partakers of His experience. They must receive and assimilate the word of God so that it shall become the motive power of life and action. By the power of Christ they must be changed into His likeness, and reflect the divine attributes.” *Ibid.*, 278.



And there was another lesson we would do well to recognize. “The lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs, as pointing back to the bitterness of the bondage in Egypt. So when we feed upon Christ, it should be with contrition of heart, because of our sins. The use of unleavened bread also was significant. It was expressly enjoined in the law of the Passover ... that no leaven should be found in their houses during the feast. In like manner the leaven of sin must be put away from all who would receive life and nourishment from Christ.” *Ibid.*

Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump ... For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). We have ministers today who are teaching us that we will sin until Jesus comes. God forbid!

Consider the blood that was sprinkled on the doorposts. This was a sign to show that the family was completely separated from Egypt. They must show their faith in the deliverance to be accomplished. They must separate themselves and their family from the Egyptians and gather within their own dwelling. This is the same message that has been given to the remnant

today. Come out from among them and be ye separate (2 Corinthians 6:17).

“Had the Israelites disregarded in any particular the directions given them, had they neglected to separate their children from the Egyptians, had they slain the lamb, but failed to strike the doorpost with the blood, or had any gone out of their houses, they would not have been secure. They might have honestly believed that they had done all that was necessary, but their sincerity would not have saved them. All who failed to heed the Lord’s directions would lose their first-born by the hand of the destroyer.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 278.

The atonement Christ provided for each of us on the cross of Calvary demands not only belief but also obedience. “By obedience the people were to give evidence of their faith. So all who hope to be saved by the merits of the blood of Christ should realize that they themselves have something to do in securing their salvation. While it is Christ only that can redeem us from the penalty of transgression, we are to turn from sin to obedience. Man is to be saved by faith, not by works; yet his faith must be shown by his works. God has given His Son to die as a propitiation for sin, He has manifested the light of truth, the way of life, He has given facilities, ordinances, and privileges; and now man must co-operate with these saving agencies; he must appreciate and use the help that God has provided—believe and obey all the divine requirements.” *Ibid.*, 279. **LM**

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



Faith of Jesus

Revelation 14:12

My own faith can never save me,
Never can it stand the test;
I must have the faith of Jesus,
Would I find celestial rest.

Give me, Lord, this faith of Jesus,
Ere the storm with fury beat;
When hell's cohorts breathe destruction,
May it prove my strong retreat.

In Gethsemane's dark garden,
Calvary looming just ahead,
When Christ's staunchest friend denied Him
And His other followers fled—

Yet did not the faith of Jesus
Falter once, nor did it fail,
Though earth's sins His heart were crushing,
Thorny crown and cruel nail

Could not take from Him His vision.
Through the thick, encircling gloom
He could see the "joy before Him,"
Past the portals of the tomb.

He could see His soul's deep travail
For His loved ones, satisfied;
He could see God's plan to triumph—
Saving souls for whom He died.

So His faith held on triumphant,
For He saw by faith alone.
Give me, Lord, the faith of Jesus,
Till I, too, shall reach Thy throne!

Through the Waters, By Pearl Waggoner Howard

Esther

Clues – KJV

Across:

B20	How many months did Esther use oil of myrrh?	2:12
C4	The king must hold this out to uninvited guests of the inner court or they'd die	4:11
C12	Mordecai and Esther's letter was sent to all 127 of these (singular)	9:30
E3	Haman was willing to pay 10,000 talents of silver to have the Jews _____	3:9
E18	When the king chose Esther for the new queen he put the royal _____ on her	2:17
G2	Part of the new feast of Purim was to send these to the poor (singular)	9:22
H11	The whole capital city of Shushan was this at Haman's wicked decree	3:15
I9	Mordecai established the feast of Purim to be kept each _____	9:21
J4	The king's second decree caused _____ of the Jews to fall upon the people	9:2
J9	Because of Haman's plot Jews throughout the empire were _____	4:3
K10	They were afraid the queen's _____ would cause wives to have contempt	1:18
K15	All the maidens used sweet _____ for their "purification"	2:12
M1	Haman referred to the Jews as "a certain people _____" (two words)	3:8
N15	The Jews were able to kill all these on the designated day	9:5
O7	The king was appalled that Haman would try to _____ Esther	7:8
O13	Haman's sons that were killed	9:10
P1	In the king's palace garden colorful hangings were attached with silver _____	1:5, 6
Q12	Haman told the king the Jews' laws were this from all others	3:8
R2	Haman died on these that he had prepared for Mordecai	7:10
S9	No one could reverse what was _____ with the King's ring	8:8
S16	Upon discovering Haman's plot Mordecai rent these	4:1

Down:

A4	The king instructed Haman to make this to attend Esther's banquet	5:5
A12	This of the new decree was sent to all the Jews throughout the kingdom	8:13
A17	Because of Haman's plot _____ Jews lay in sackcloth and ashes	4:3
A21	Mordecai wrote that the evil of Haman returned upon _____ (three words)	9:25
B10	He was the keeper of the women for the king	2:3
C7	A very brave queen Esther was willing to do this to try to save her people	4:16
C15	At the king's feast all these were diverse from one another (singular)	1:7
E3	The king's servants questioned Mordecai _____ about not bowing to Haman	3:2-4
E11	The king's wise men feared women of the kingdom would _____ their husbands	1:17
E19	The Jews were authorized to be this to avenge themselves on a specific day	8:13
F13	When Esther exposed Haman's wicked plot he became this	7:6
G5	Mordecai suggested Esther had become queen for such a _____ (three words)	4:14
G9	The king offered Esther this much of his kingdom	5:3
J10	The king _____ Haman above all the princes of the kingdom	3:1
J12	Esther had _____ in pleading with the king to negate Haman's evil plan (singular)	8:3
J15	The king held out to Esther what kind of sceptre?	8:4
J17	Haman suggested the king honor someone by their riding on the king's _____	6:8
K3	Hadassah's mother and father were this	2:7
K20	Haman lead Mordecai through the _____ of the city and proclaimed his honor	6:11
L8	When the king couldn't sleep he had the book of this read to him	6:1

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

Answer Key:

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

- M13 Esther _____ more grace and favor of the king than any other virgin 2:17
 N18 Some of the posts delivering the decree rode these (singular) 8:10
 O2 One of the fair young _____ of the realm was to replace Queen Vasti (singular) 2:2
 Q6 Esther's maids _____ her about Mordecai's severe distress 4:4
 Q17 Esther told the king she and her people were _____ to be slain 7:4
 Q21 The two malefactors Mordecai reported were hanged on this 2:23
 R11 The king's wise men wanted to do something to Vashti according to this 1:15



Some Who Will Not Be There

CAIN – Notwithstanding that Cain had by his crimes merited the sentence of death, a merciful Creator still spared his life, and granted him opportunity for repentance. But Cain lived only to harden his heart, to encourage rebellion against the divine authority, and to become the head of a line of bold, abandoned sinners. This one apostate, led on by Satan, became a tempter to others; and his example and influence exerted their demoralizing power, until the earth became so corrupt and filled with violence as to call for its destruction.

LOT'S WIFE – If Lot himself had manifested no hesitancy to obey the angels'

warning, but had earnestly fled toward the mountains, without one word of pleading or remonstrance, his wife also would have made her escape. The influence of his example would have saved her from the sin that sealed her doom. But his hesitancy and delay caused her to lightly regard the divine warning. While her body was upon the plain, her heart clung to Sodom, and she perished with it. She rebelled against God because His judgments involved her possessions and her children in the ruin. Although so greatly favored in being called out from the wicked city, she felt that she was severely dealt with, because the wealth that it had taken years to

accumulate must be left to destruction. Instead of thankfully accepting deliverance, she presumptuously looked back to desire the life of those who had rejected the divine warning. Her sin showed her to be unworthy of life, for the preservation of which she felt so little gratitude.

KING SAUL – Saul knew that in this last act, of consulting the witch of Endor, he cut the last shred which held him to God. He knew that if he had not before willfully separated himself from God, this act sealed that separation, and made it final. He had made an agreement with death, and a covenant with hell. The cup of his iniquity was full.

JUDAS – God has appointed means, if we will use them diligently and prayerfully, that no vessel shall be shipwrecked, but outride the tempest and storm, and anchor in the haven of bliss at last. But if we despise and neglect these appointments and privileges, God will not work a miracle to save any of us, and we will be lost as were Judas and Satan.

HEROD, HERODIAS, PILATE, AND INDIVIDUALS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN JESUS' CRUCIFIXION – And

now before the swaying multitude are revealed the final scenes—the patient Sufferer treading the path to Calvary; the Prince of heaven hanging upon the cross; the haughty priests and the jeering rabble deriding His expiring agony; the supernatural darkness; the heaving earth, the rent rocks, the open graves, marking the moment when the world's Redeemer yielded up His life.

The awful spectacle appears just as it was. Satan, his angels, and his subjects have no power to turn from the picture of their own work. Each actor recalls the part which he performed. Herod, who slew the innocent children of Bethlehem that he might destroy the King of Israel; the base Herodias, upon whose guilty soul rests the blood of John the Baptist; the weak, timeserving Pilate; the mocking soldiers; the priests and rulers and the maddened throng who cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25)! all behold the enormity of their guilt. They vainly seek to hide from the divine majesty of His countenance, outshining the glory of the sun, while the redeemed cast their crowns at the Saviour's feet, exclaiming: "He died for me!"

Those who derided His claim to be the Son of God are speechless now. There is the haughty Herod who jeered at His royal title and bade the mocking soldiers crown Him king. There are the very men who with impious hands placed upon His form the purple robe, upon His sacred brow the thorny crown, and in

His unresisting hand the mimic scepter, and bowed before Him in blasphemous mockery. The men who smote and spit upon the Prince of life now turn from His piercing gaze and seek to flee from the overpowering glory of His presence. Those who drove the nails through His hands and feet, the soldier who pierced His side, behold these marks with terror and remorse.

With awful distinctness do priests and rulers recall the events of Calvary. With shuddering horror they remember how, wagging their heads in satanic exultation, they exclaimed: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him" (Matthew 27:42, 43).

Vividly they recall the Saviour's parable of the husbandmen who refused to render to their lord the fruit of the vineyard, who abused his servants and slew his son. They remember, too, the sentence which they themselves pronounced: The lord of the vineyard "will miserably destroy those wicked men" (Matthew 21:41). In the sin and punishment of those unfaithful men the priests and elders see their own course and their own just doom. And now there rises a cry of mortal agony. Louder than the shout, "Crucify Him, crucify Him," which rang through the streets of Jerusalem, swells the awful, despairing wail, "He is the Son of God! He is the true Messiah!" They seek to flee from the presence of the King of kings. In the deep caverns of the earth, rent asunder by the warring of the elements, they vainly attempt to hide.

NERO AND HIS MOTHER; PAPAL PRIESTS AND PONTIFFS – Amid the

ransomed throng are the apostles of Christ, the heroic Paul, the ardent Peter, the loved and loving John, and their truehearted brethren, and with them the vast host of martyrs; while outside the walls, with every vile and abominable thing, are those by whom they were persecuted, imprisoned, and slain. There is Nero, that monster of cruelty and vice, beholding the joy and exaltation of those whom he once tortured, and in whose extremest anguish he found satanic delight.

His mother is there to witness the result of her own work; to see how the evil stamp of character transmitted to her son, the passions encouraged and developed by her influence and example, have borne fruit in crimes that caused the world to shudder.

There are papist priests and prelates, who claimed to be Christ's ambassadors, yet employed the rack, the dungeon, and the stake to control the consciences of His people. There are the proud pontiffs who exalted themselves above God and presumed to change the law of the Most High. Those pretended fathers of the church have an account to render to God from which they would fain be excused. Too late they are made to see that the Omniscient One is jealous of His law and that He will in no wise clear the guilty. They learn now that Christ identifies His interest with that of His suffering people; and they feel the force of His own words: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matthew 25:40).

Heaven, 106–110. **LM**

“
Papist priests and prelates, who claimed to be Christ's ambassadors, yet employed the rack, the dungeon, and the stake to control the consciences of His people.”



A Poor Woman's Prayer

A Christian lady who often helped the poor was sitting alone in her room one winter morning. Soon her daughter came into the room.

"My dear," the mother said to her daughter, "I've been thinking about old Mr. and Mrs. Woods off and on all night. I know they are going through a hard time right now and they could use some help. I wish you would go to the store and buy some groceries to take to them."

"Of course, Mother," the daughter agreed. And she turned to leave.

"Oh, and maybe you should take this too," her mother said, handing her a warm flannel skirt. "It's cold, and Mrs. Woods might need it."

The girl bought several bags of groceries and carried them to the house where Mr. and Mrs. Woods lived. She was just about to knock on the door, when she heard Mr. Woods' voice inside. She could hear him asking God's blessing on the food they were about to eat. She

paused and waited until he had finished praying before she knocked.

As she entered the little home, sure enough, there was Mr. and Mrs. Woods at dinner. Mrs. Woods sat on one side of the table, and Mr. Woods sat on the other. On the table between them sat their dinner—*one large apple!* This was all the food the old couple had!

With tears in her eyes, the girl set the bags of groceries on the table. And as Mrs. Woods began to fix a nice meal, the young girl listened to their story and their grateful thanks. They told her how they had been sick and how Mr. Woods hadn't been able to work for some weeks and how they were having a difficult time making ends meet. They told her how they had been pouring out all their troubles to God in prayer and how they had been trusting Him to send them help.

When dinner was ready and their visitor was about to leave, Mrs. Woods

went with her to the door. "My dear," she asked hesitantly, "did you bring the flannel skirt?"

In the excitement of getting the dinner ready, the girl had completely forgotten the skirt her mother had sent.

"Why, yes," she said surprised. "I did bring you a flannel skirt. But why would you think that I had?"

"Because, dear," said Mrs. Woods, "when I told the Lord yesterday that we had only one apple left, I also told Him that I needed a warm flannel skirt. And I was just wondering whether He had sent it with you or if He was planning to use someone else to bring it."

Jesus said, "Do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ... Your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you" (Matthew 6:31–33 NIV). **LM**

Recalls and Footsteps

We read in the Spirit of Prophecy that Satan will at the end recall all that he had done against our Lord. We also may have to recall similar things that we have done unless we make the necessary changes in our lives right now and become like Jesus. Satan has led many to walk the same road with him. Open your eyes now and see.

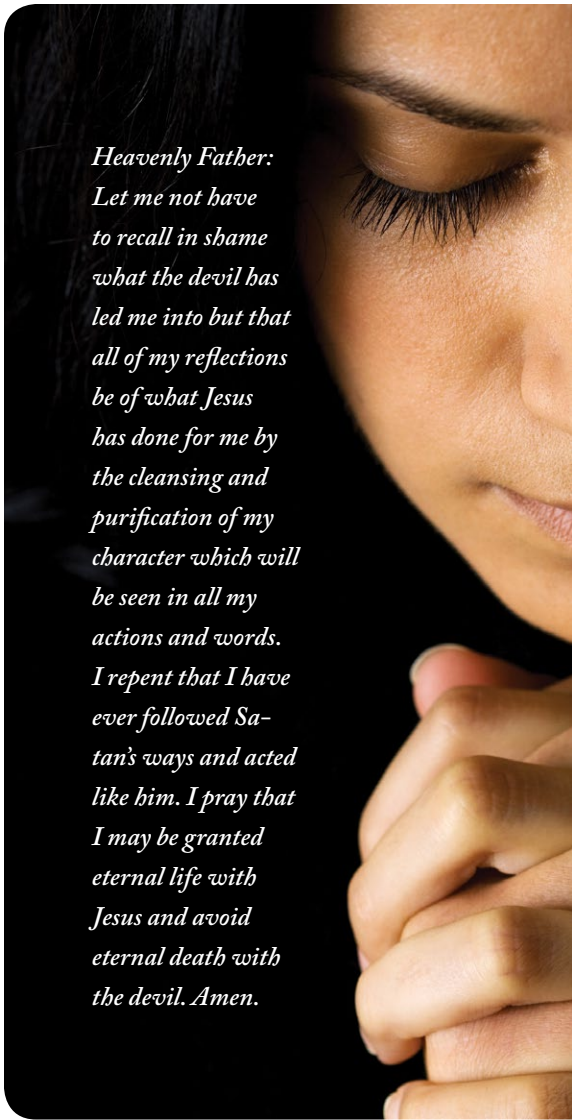
“[Satan’s] Memory recalls

- the home of his innocence and purity, the peace and contentment that were his until he indulged in murmuring against God, and envy of Christ.
- His accusations, his rebellion, his deceptions to gain the sympathy and support of the angels,
- his stubborn persistence in making no effort for self-recovery when God would have granted him forgiveness—all come vividly before him.
- He reviews his work among men and its results—the enmity of man toward his fellow man,
- the terrible destruction of life, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the overturning of thrones, the long succession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions.
- He recalls his constant efforts to oppose the work of Christ and to sink man lower and lower.

- He sees that his hellish plots have been powerless to destroy those who have put their trust in Jesus. As Satan looks upon his kingdom, the fruit of his toil, he sees only failure and ruin. He has led the multitudes to believe that the City of God would be an easy prey; but he knows that this is false. Again and again, in the progress of the great controversy, he has been defeated and compelled to yield. He knows too well the power and majesty of the Eternal.” *The Great Controversy*, 669.

“Satan sees that his voluntary rebellion has unfitted him for heaven. He has trained his powers to war against God; the purity, peace, and harmony of heaven would be to him supreme torture. ... Satan bows down and confesses the justice of his sentence.” *Ibid.*, 670.

What can you recall right now? Has Satan been powerless against your conviction, or has he successfully tricked you into following him on his path of destruction? We know the end of his story and it is each one’s choice now which path he or she will travel. Will you step out in faith and walk in God’s way and in the end be found without spot or wrinkle or will you take the broad way in the companionship of the enemy of heaven. **LM**



*Heavenly Father:
Let me not have
to recall in shame
what the devil has
led me into but that
all of my reflections
be of what Jesus
has done for me by
the cleansing and
purification of my
character which will
be seen in all my
actions and words.
I repent that I have
ever followed Sa-
tan’s ways and acted
like him. I pray that
I may be granted
eternal life with
Jesus and avoid
eternal death with
the devil. Amen.*

How thankful I am for *LandMarks* and the monthly Bible Studies. When I first got the magazine, I was just reading a few articles and laying it aside, but one day I started in on one of the Bible Studies. Praise God I've been doing them ever since. I cannot lay them down. I've even gone back in the first issues to complete all of those Bible Studies. I'm so blessed that you use all the Spirit of Prophecy along with the Bible verses that speak to each subject. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

"One of my close friends originally from the Philippines told me that it was through Steps to Life Ministry that she and her family came into the church and that she will be eternally grateful.

"I pray for your ministry every day. Psalm 16 is one of my favorite Psalms: 'Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore' (verse 11)."

—PL, Michigan

September Sermon of the Month

An Hour You Do Not Know

By John J. Grosboll

Today is the day of salvation. Don't be careless and put it off!

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

September 2019

Dear Friend,

Have you ever missed a golden opportunity? The reason they are often missed is because the person did not realize what was going to happen in the future and as a result, he or she missed a wonderful moment of capitalizing on future developments. Missing them does not only happen in the business or professional world. Many Christians, having no foresight, neglect to seize opportunities that have the ability to change their future.

It is a fact that if enough Christian literature is distributed, some of it will get into the hands of people who are susceptible to the truth and read it and be saved. Often, however, there is considerable time between receiving the literature and results are seen. As a result, for that reason many people are reluctant to pass out literature.

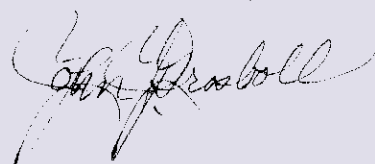
A few weeks ago, I met a lady who had received literature a few years ago from our church. Though she was completely unknown to our church family, we recently found out that her mother, who is still alive, is a Seventh-day Adventist. This lady has now decided to be a Seventh-day Adventist also.

Here is what the Holy Spirit bears testimony as the results of giving out literature:

"There are many places in which the voice of the minister cannot be heard, places which can be reached only by publications—the books, papers, and tracts, that are filled with the Bible truth that the people need. Our literature is to be distributed everywhere. The truth is to be sown beside all waters; for we know not which shall prosper, this or that. In our erring judgment we may think it unwise to give literature to the very ones who would accept the truth most readily. We know not what may be the good results of giving away a leaflet containing present truth." *The Southern Watchman*, January 5, 1904.

Be prepared and carry literature of some kind in your car, purse, or your pocket so that you do not miss any more golden opportunities.

Your brother in Christ,



John J. Grosboll

Increasing Commitment

in Southern Nigeria

By Pastor Domingo Nunez

We have been reporting this quarter on the success of our volunteers in Nigeria and are encouraged to relate increasing success in their evangelism among former Pentecostals, led by Bishop Matthews, with whom I met during my visit last June. Our volunteer Michael Ugorji has been following up after I left and reports with great joy and enthusiasm the commitment Bishop Matthews has made to the faith once delivered to the saints.

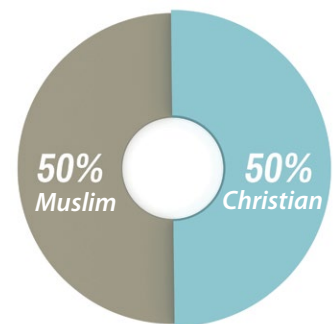
Not only has Bishop Matthews accepted the Sabbath truth, his entire family has realized the truth of God's word as promoted by the Seventh-day Adventist faith and have acknowledged their commitment by baptism into the brotherhood of the saints.

It is encouraging that not only have Bishop Matthews and his family accepted the Sabbath truth, they have also accepted the health message, beginning the transition to a vegetarian diet.

The good news continues. Bishop Matthews reports that he is excited and happy to have learned the truth of the narrow way and is intent on working with Michael Ugorji to assist him in spreading our precious truths to other Pentecostals.

"The more one tries to explain the word of God to others, with a love for souls, the plainer it becomes to himself. The more we use our knowledge and exercise our powers, the more knowledge and power we shall have." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 354.

"As God gives us light, we should make use of it; God will not give us a second ray, while the first is not appreciated. We must praise the Lord for the light already graciously given, and reflect it upon those around us. Then more light will shine upon us, and as we praise, we shall know that 'the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day' (Proverbs 4:18)." *The Review and Herald*, October 11, 1892. **LM**



About half of the Nigerian population is Christian, although the exact ratio is unknown because Islam is increasing. The majority of Christians are Pentecostal.



Often leaders of Pentecostal churches in Africa are responding to deeper Biblical truths.

Central Nigeria ***Prophecy Meetings***

By Pastor Domingo Nunez and Daniel Terence

By the grace of God, the three angels' messages were presented in central Nigeria through the efforts of Daily Manna Ministry of Free Seventh-day Adventists, an affiliate of Steps to Life, to the Pentecostal Sheep Gate Church. The prophecy meetings presented by Pastor Nunez were conducted from the last part of March to the first week of April 2019.

Three meetings on end time events were held each day. Topics such as the change of the Sabbath, who changed it, and other present truth subjects were presented.

Concurrently with the morning meetings, health sessions were conducted during which people were treated for various diseases as well as health counseling. Attendees were taught the connection between health and spirituality. In the evening, just before the prophecy topics, there was another health presentation focusing on the source of illnesses.



Top left: Daniel Terence and others prepare for the medical missionary workshops.



Top right: The first Sabbath worship is held in a formerly Pentecostal church.

Bottom: Pr. Domingo Nunez and the Pentecostal pastors who attended the meetings



The evening presentations attracted over 900 people every night. Interestingly, many were seen recording the messages and snapping photos of the PowerPoint presentations on their smart phones while others listened from their homes adjacent to the venue.

On the last night of the prophecy meetings, the subject of the mark of the beast was presented. At the conclusion was a loud “Amen,” with attendees praising the Lord and expressing great enthusiasm for the truths they had learned. Many pledged to continue to study to learn more of the wonderful truths in God’s word.

Sadly, the enthusiasm that these Pentecostal pastors showed for learning new Bible truths did not go well with the general overseer of the Pentecostal Sheep Gate Church, who, during the presentation, asked the interpreter, Daniel Terence, the Bible worker supported through your donations by Steps to Life, to stop the translation. The overseer was asking that the presentation be stopped because he knew that those accepting this truth would not go back to what they were taught through his churches.

He wanted the messages translated in a watered-down fashion and the listeners be encouraged to get back to their various churches and refuse the true Sabbath worship invitation.

Although many were visited and taught from the Scriptures, only two Pentecostal pastors were receptive and allowed Sabbath worship in their churches for the first time. Since those meetings, four other pastors and their churches are now responding to truths they heard. Praise God for the honest in heart and for their courage to follow what God says in His word.

Pastor Lawrence of Sheep Gate Church in Makurdi met with Pastor Nunez and by God’s grace attended the worship services, despite the objections from his general overseer and director. Also, by God’s grace, Pastor Jack, who has a church of approximately 60–70 members, formerly of the Pentecos-

tal Sheep Gate Church in Makurdi, attended our prophecy seminars and opened the door for ministry in health and prophecy. The pastors from Koko and Makurdi have pledged to continue studying the ministerial training course with the Daily Manna church.

It was a blessed event. Many came proclaiming healing and thankfulness for the benefit derived from the spiritual messages presented during this convocation.

Daily Manna Church has planned their annual camp meeting this year in December and will continue presenting the SDA health message as well as present truth subjects.

We are trusting the Lord to produce a fruitful harvest with the seeds that have been planted. Your faithful prayers will avail much in the efforts of those workers who remain to reach out to the people who attended. [LM](#)

Tardigrades

Tardigrades are probably the most paradoxical animals on the planet. On the one hand, these microscopic organisms are impossibly cute, seeming like tiny blimps that bumble around harmlessly on their stubby legs. But they also enjoy a legendary reputation as the toughest, most indestructible creatures on Earth.

Just 0.04 inches (1 millimeter) long (or less), their little bodies contain biological superpowers that help them withstand conditions that would spell certain death for other organisms.

Tardigrades are happiest frolicking about in moist habitats, such as the moss that adorns river stones. When tardigrades have enough food and water to support their bodily functions, they live out the natural course of their lives, rarely lasting for longer than 2.5 years. And yet, tardigrades can survive for much longer if they go into a state called cryptobiosis, which is triggered when environmental conditions become unbearable.

"Tardigrades are fascinating little beasts," said Sandra McInnes, a tardigrade researcher with the British Antarctic Survey, who has been studying species


that occur in the frozen snowscapes of Antarctica since 1980. "Tardigrades have this ability to cope with extreme environments by shutting down their metabolism. This ability to cope with drying out or freezing is what gives them their durability in the Antarctic."

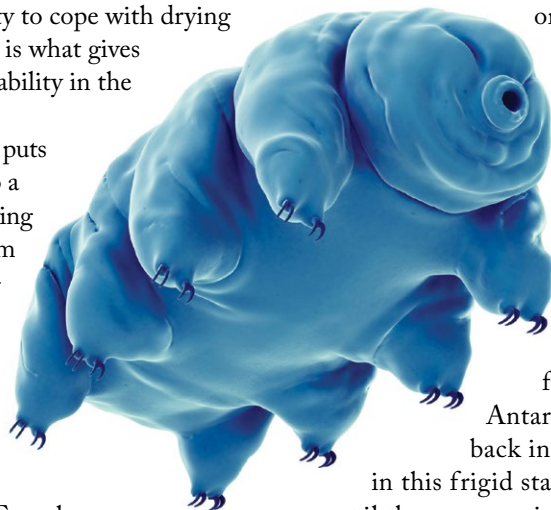
Cryptobiosis puts tardigrades into a "tun" state, slowing their metabolism to a halt, reducing their need for oxygen and ridding their cells of water almost completely, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica. In this shrunken state, tardigrades mimic death so closely that they're able to survive in places devoid of water, at temperatures as low as minus 328 degrees Fahrenheit and as high as 304 degrees F (minus 200 Celsius and 151 degrees C). When these mummy-like tardigrades are exposed to water again, they simply reanimate, returning to normal life in a matter of hours.

McInnes once defrosted a moss sample from a former experiment and found it contained live tardigrades.

She deduced that the organisms had survived, frozen, for at least eight years. In 2016, a paper published in the journal *Cryobiology* made waves when it showed that a handful of tardigrades, frozen in another Antarctic moss sample back in 1983, had survived

in this frigid state for 30 years until they were revived in 2014. www.livescience.com/62720-tardigrade-lifespan.html

By creating Tardigrades to cope in seemingly impossible circumstances we have a witness that God can work a miracle in all of our difficult situations. "Everyone who has a true character will be qualified to cope with difficulties and will be prompt in following a 'Thus saith the Lord.'" *Child Guidance*, 131. 



Q:

*Is the Spirit
of Prophecy
relevant
today?*

A:

Looking at this from a biblical standpoint, Paul said to Timothy, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). The Spirit of Prophecy is part of “the word of truth.”

There are testimonies and prophecies in Ellen White’s writings that may not directly apply to you or to me personally, such as the testimony where Ellen White said that ladies as well as men should learn how to harness a horse. (See *Education*, 216, 217.) She was stating the practical truth for her time. Statements she made about bicycles and horses may well apply to automobiles and tractors today. From a practical standpoint, we can see that our religion needs to be applied in all our everyday activities.

“Great truths must be brought into little things. Practical religion is to be carried into the lowly duties of daily life. The greatest qualification for any man is to obey implicitly the word of the Lord.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 359.

We are blessed in having the instruction from the Spirit of Prophecy as a guide in our daily living. We may follow the principles given in these inspired writings in our business transactions, our health questions, our family discipline, our worship, our preparation for eternal life, and our social life. God has been very gracious to give us divine instruction on many things. These instructions are not rigid rules, but helpful guidelines to give us happiness while we are occupying this earth.

The following quotations from Ellen White’s writings are cautions we do well to heed:

“It is Satan’s plan to weaken the faith of God’s people in the *Testimonies*. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the *Testimonies*, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles

his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 211.

“When the testing time shall come, those who have made God’s word their rule of life will be revealed. In summer there is no noticeable difference between evergreens and other trees; but when the blasts of winter come, the evergreens remain unchanged, while other trees are stripped of their foliage. So the falsehearted professor may not now be distinguished from the real Christian, but the time is just upon us when the difference will be apparent. Let opposition arise, let bigotry and intolerance again bear sway, let persecution be kindled, and the halfhearted and hypocritical will waver and yield the faith; but the true Christian will stand firm as a rock, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, than in days of prosperity.” *The Great Controversy*, 602.

Jesus is coming to take us home. May God bless you as you make your calling and election sure. [LM](#)



A Little Dirt Won't Hurt

As a little girl, I always liked to share. I would prepare in the back yard the most awesome meals and for dessert—pies! For some reason many people did not want to participate but my little brother was always very happy to join me. I would present mud patties and my dessert of mud-pies sprinkled with grass, flowers and any other pretties found in the dirt. I was just so proud! We would enjoy it until, suddenly, mama would come barreling out of the house with a dish rag and water and her big finger to try to clean all of that good food out of our mouths. I just couldn't understand why she would do that! Oh, if Mama could read the latest headline: "*Dirtying up our Diets*," she might have appreciated my mud pies!

Here are a few excerpts to show why a few little mud-pies won't hurt.

"Increasing evidence suggests that the alarming rise in allergic and autoimmune disorders during the past few decades is at least partly attributable to our lack of exposure to microorganisms that once covered our food and us. ...

"In a world of hand sanitizer and wet wipes, we can scarcely imagine the preindustrial lifestyle that resulted in the daily intake of trillions of helpful organisms. For nearly all of human history, this began with maternal transmission of beneficial microbes during passage through the birth canal — mother to child. However, the alarming increase in the rate of Caesarean section births means a potential loss of microbiota from one generation to the next. And for most of us in the industrialized world, the microbial cleansing continues throughout life. Nature's dirt floor has been replaced by tile; our once soiled and sooted bodies and clothes are cleaned almost daily; our muddy water is filtered and treated; our rotting and fermenting food has been chilled; and the cowshed has been neatly tucked out of sight. While these improvements in hygiene and sanitation deserve applause, they have inadvertently given rise to a set of truly human-made diseases.

"While comforting to the germ-phobic public, the too-shiny produce and triple-washed and bagged leafy greens in our local grocery aisle are hardly recognized by our immune system as food. The immune system is essentially a sensory mechanism for recognizing microbial challenges from the environment. Just as your tongue and nose are used to sense suitability for consumption, your immune system has receptors for sampling the environment, rigorous mechanisms for dealing with friend or foe, and a memory. Your immune system even has the capacity to learn.

"For all of human history, this learning was driven by our near-continuous exposure from birth and throughout life to organisms as diverse as mycobacteria from soil and food; helminth, or worm parasites, from just about everywhere you turned; and daily recognition and challenges from our very own bacteria. Our ability to regulate our allergic and inflammatory responses to these co-evolved companions is further compro-

mised by imbalances in the gut microbiota from overzealous use of antibiotics (especially in early childhood) and modern dietary choices.

"The suggestion that we embrace some 'old friends' does not immediately imply that we are inviting more food-borne illness — quite the contrary. Setting aside for the moment the fact that we have the safest food supply in human history, the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and food processing plants and farmers continue to take the blame for the tainted food that makes us ill, while our own all-American sick gut may deserve some blame as well. ...

"As we move deeper into a 'post-modern' era of squeaky-clean food and hand sanitizers at every turn, we should probably hug our local farmers' markets a little tighter. They may represent our only connection with some 'old friends' we cannot afford to ignore." Excerpts from: www.nytimes.com/2012/06/21/opinion/lets-add-a-little-dirt-to-our-diet.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

In his article, "Why I Don't Use Hand Sanitizers," Al Sears, M.D. states: "I went out to my favorite restaurant with my friend. Instead of washing her hands, she rubbed hand sanitizer on while we were waiting for our food. Then she handed it to me. But I told her I wasn't touching the stuff.

"The truth is, hand sanitizers don't do what they're intended to do. A new

University of Virginia study tested hand sanitizers on two groups of people. One used hand sanitizers every three hours for 10 weeks.

The other group just went about their daily lives, as usual. The result? There was no difference in the viruses on the hands of the participants in the two groups. And that's a good thing. Because being exposed to germs can help prevent a ton of health problems. ...

"Bottom line: Not only do you not need hand sanitizers to fight off germs, it's a very bad idea to use them. What you really need to do is be exposed to bacteria and build a stronger immune system. ... eat natural foods. They're the best source for the vitamins and nutrients you need to prevent colds. Load up on immune-boosting foods like red and pinto beans, blueberries, cranberries, artichokes, raspberries, strawberries, apples, plums, pecans, oranges, and green leafy veggies. These foods will help you fight off infections and protect your cells from damage. ... you can boost your immunity by eating garlic. It's one of nature's best antibiotics. And unlike antibiotics, it doesn't kill off the good bacteria in your gut while fighting off the bad stuff. All you need are a few cloves a day to wipe out germs. You even can create your own natural "V8" by blending some tomatoes, sea salt, garlic cloves and your favorite mix of veggies." <https://alsearsmd.com/2010/10/why-i-dont-use-hand-sanitizers/>

Oh, if mama could understand that my mud pies were just fine! **LM**





Strength in Weakness

By John J. Grosboll

Sometimes people find themselves facing seemingly hopeless situations for which there is apparently no help. Often it even seems that their prayers are not to be answered, but take heart, for the apostle Paul faced similar situations several times and gives some interesting counsel.

All of the apostles taught that how a person received the gospel was a serious matter, for one of two things can happen. If the gospel is accepted, it is the beginning of life eternal. But if the gospel is rejected, it guarantees eternal separation from God unless the mind is changed before death.

Paul said, “Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life” (2 Corinthians 2:14–16, *first part*).

In Acts 4:12, Peter said, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Clearly taught here is that the only person who can save you is Jesus Christ. If you reject Him and choose not to follow Him and allow Him to be the sovereign of your life, then there is no other way that you can be saved. No one else can give you life.

Speaking to the Jews, Jesus said, “You are not willing to come to Me that you may have life” (John 5:40). “If you do not believe that I am the One, you will die in your sins” (John 8:24, literal translation). To die in sin means eternal death. Jesus came to deliver His people from their sins and eternal death (Matthew 1:21).

Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:15, 16). To accept the gospel is to be saved. To reject it is to be lost. The choice you make determines your eternal destiny, for it is either a fragrance of life unto life, or of death unto death.

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul deals at length with the subject of generosity, which is a character trait of the Christian religion. Notice what he says about the generosity of God Himself: “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15)! In verses 6 and 7 he says, “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully



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will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”

How is it in your life? Have you learned to be a giver or is your focus simply about what you can get? The early church at Philippi was a poor church. However, this church understood the principle of giving. Paul said, “In a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God” (2 Corinthians 8:2–5).

In spite of their own poverty they learned the lesson of giving of what they had to help others. Generosity is fundamental to the Christian religion and God Himself has given us the

example. He loved the world so much that He gave all of heaven in one gift when He gave His son to die for the sins of a rebellious race. It is fatal to live for self. Living for self indicates that we are part of the devil’s kingdom. Notice how clearly Jesus taught this when He said, “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matthew 10:39).

“He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life” (John 12:25). We are living in a selfish age. The Bible predicts that in the last days men will be lovers of their own selves, they will love money and pleasure more than they love God, yet they will still have a form of godliness. (See 2 Timothy 3:1–5.)

Benevolence is the very foundation of the universe and God is benefactor of the human family. God is a being of inexhaustible goodness and love. That love of the Father for man was expressed in the gift of His beloved Son to save our race from eternal ruin. Christ gave His life for man. Though He was the Mon-

“

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will also reap bountifully.*

2 Corinthians 9:6



arch in the courts of heaven, He voluntarily left His riches and His honor and came to this world, becoming meek and lowly so that we might be made rich. Paul said, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Those who live for self are demonstrating to the whole universe that they are not part of the kingdom of Christ, but part of the kingdom of Satan. The sin of covetousness is especially denounced in the Scriptures. Worldliness is at war with the true principles of Christianity. A life of benevolent labor is the fruit that will be borne on the Christian tree.

The second letter to the Corinthians contains many passages that cause some people to be troubled. In 2 Corinthians 3:6, we read, “Who [that is, God] also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”

The “letter” that kills refers to the ten-commandment law that was written in stone. It kills because “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). So, sin is simply breaking God’s law and the consequence is death. Now the problem is that everybody has sinned, so everyone is doomed to die unless that sin can be forgiven. The penalty for breaking God’s law cannot be remitted; the penalty has to be paid. God’s law cannot be done away with, nor can the penalty for breaking it be remitted.

Dear friends, that is why Jesus had to go to the cross of Calvary. He paid the price of sin for a race of sinners who were doomed to eternal death. By that, He opened up the possibility for every member of the human race to have eternal life if they would believe in Him and accept Him as their personal Saviour and sovereign or Lord of their life.

Jesus said to the Jews, “Why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say” (Luke 6:46)? To those who accept Jesus He has promised something very wonderful.

He said, “I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper [that is, the Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you” (John 16:5–7).

Jesus told Nicodemus that unless a person is born of water and the Spirit, there is no chance that he can go to the kingdom of heaven (John 3:3, 5). The reason is because the unconverted person is actually against God and cannot in his own strength be subject to Him. (See Romans 8:7.)

Paul tells us one of the results of receiving the Holy Spirit. He says, “That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Romans 8:4). Not only will his past sins be forgiven, but the Holy Spirit will give that person power to keep God’s law.

The ministration of the Spirit changes the heart and gives life in preparation for the final judgment. Paul said, “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10). This causes perplexity to many people who just read that we are saved by grace through faith. There is no text in the Bible that tells us that the judgment is on the basis of our faith, but “according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” As James wrote, “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him” (James 2:14)?

The way a person lives day to day demonstrates to the whole universe whether or not he or she has faith and has received the Holy Spirit. All who have been born again and directed by the Holy Spirit will begin to live lives in harmony with God’s government and His law.



The Bible predicts that in the last days men will be lovers of their own selves, they will love money and pleasure more than they love God, yet they will still have a form of godliness.

However, a person's works do not gain any merit. The only merit by which you can receive the gift of eternal life is that which Jesus has provided for you. His death on the cross of Calvary made it possible for you to receive forgiveness of sins. However, in addition to having your sins forgiven, you must be born again of the Holy Spirit and this new birth will be demonstrated by your works.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you are disqualified" (2 Corinthians 13:5).


There was a situation of personal suffering and affliction that Paul had to deal with himself. It was so awful that three times he prayed to the Lord to be delivered from it and it seemed as if his prayers were not answered. God did not say yes to his prayer. In fact, it is recorded in 2 Corinthians 12:7–10: "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in

the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

This is one of the most profound declarations of faith that you will find in all the Bible. Paul was in a situation where he desperately wanted to be delivered from the bodily affliction that he suffered. Three times he prayed that the Lord would deliver him from his affliction, but the answer was "no." We are not told why, and we don't need to know why in this world. All we need to learn is to trust when we don't know why. The Lord told him, "My grace is sufficient for you, because My strength is made

perfect in weakness." Paul then concluded that he was going to rejoice in all the troubles and trials that he couldn't understand because he was going to trust in the Lord. He knew that when he was weak, then he would be strong because the power of Christ would rest upon him.

O, friend, this story is in the Bible for you to claim when going through trying experiences. If you have surrendered your life to Christ and chosen to follow Him and find yourself in an impossible situation, His words to you are the same as He gave to the apostle Paul. "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

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

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God Is at the Helm, Brethren

By Ellen G. White

He who gave being to the world has not lost His power of sovereignty. He still presides over the world. It is His prerogative to speak out His purposes. By His Son, the Mediator between God and man, these purposes are executed, and the Holy Spirit gives them effect.

The awful confusion in the world has been brought about because the way of the Lord has not been followed, because man has set up his human judgment against the law of Him who created the world. Men have undertaken to please and glorify themselves, to set themselves above truth and above God.



Daniel writes: "I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And He said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (Daniel 12:7-10).

This world is a theatre. The actors, the inhabitants of the world, are preparing to act their part in the last great drama. God is lost sight of. There is no unity of purpose, except as parties of men confederate to gain their ends. God is looking on. His purposes in regard to his rebellious subjects will be fulfilled. The world has not been given into the hands of men, though God is permitting the elements of confusion and disorder to bear sway for a season. A power from beneath is working to bring about the last great scenes in the drama—Satan coming as Christ, and working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are binding themselves together in secret societies. Those who are yielding to the passion for confederation are working out the plans of the enemy. The cause will be followed by the effect.

Transgression has almost reached its limit. Confusion fills the world, and a great terror is soon to come upon human beings. And the end is very near. We who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise.

God permits men to work out the purposes He would have saved them from had they kept His commandments. When in the face of light and



This world is a theatre. The actors, the inhabitants of the world, are preparing to act their part in the last great drama. God is lost sight of. There is no unity of purpose.

evidence, they refuse to obey, they must reap the harvest of the seed they have sown. "Many shall be purified, and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand" (Daniel 12:10). The wicked have chosen Satan as their leader. Under his control the wonderful faculties of the mind are used to construct agencies of destruction. God has given the human mind great power, power to show that the Creator has endowed man with ability to do a great work against the enemy of all righteousness, power to show what victories may be gained in the conflict against evil. To those who fulfill God's purpose, for them will be spoken the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:21). The human machinery has been used to do a work that is a blessing to humanity; and God is glorified.

But when those to whom God has entrusted capabilities give themselves

into the hands of the enemy, they become a power to destroy. When men do not make God first and last and best in everything, when they do not give themselves to Him for the carrying out of His purposes, Satan comes in, and uses in his service the minds that, if given to God, could achieve great good. Under his direction, they do an evil work with great and masterly power. God designed them to work on a high plane of action, to enter into His mind, and thus to acquire an education that would enable them to work the works of righteousness. But they know nothing of this education. They are helpless. Their powers do not guide them aright; for they are under the enemy's control.

The way to holiness and heaven is found in the path of obedience. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Bible Training School, February 1, 1903 **LM**

September 29 – October 5, 2019

What Is Prayer?

Key Text

“Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto Thee will I pray” (Psalm 5:1, 2).

Study Help: *Steps to Christ*, 93–104.

Introduction

“Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend.”
Steps to Christ, 93.

Sunday

TALKING TO GOD

- a. How did our first parents talk with God, and how did sin interrupt this communication? Genesis 1:27–30; 3:8–10; 1 Timothy 2:5.

Note: “After the transgression of Adam, the Lord spoke no longer directly with man; the human race was given into the hands of Christ, and all communication came through Him to the world.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 237.

- b. What privilege has God provided so that we who are sinners can still individually communicate freely with Him? John 16:23, *last part*, 24; Matthew 6:5–8; Matthew 7:7, 8.

Note: “Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and

the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Well-spring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God. The spiritual faculties lose their vitality, the religious experience lacks health and vigor. ...

“It is only as we behold Jesus that we desire to be like Him, only as we view His righteousness that we hunger and thirst to possess it; and it is only as we ask in earnest prayer, that God will grant us our heart’s desire.

“God’s messengers must tarry long with Him, if they would have success in their work.” *Gospel Workers*, 254, 255.

Monday

COMMUNICATION ESSENTIAL TO FRIENDSHIP

- a. God wants you to be His friend. How is this friendship demonstrated? John 15:13–17.

Note: “Every association we form, however limited, exerts some influence upon us. The extent to which we yield to that influence will be determined by the degree of intimacy, the constancy of the intercourse, and our love and veneration for the one with whom we associate. Thus by acquaintance and association with Christ we may become like Him, the one faultless Example.

“Communion with Christ—how unspeakably precious! Such communion it is our privilege to enjoy if we will seek it, if we will make any sacrifice to secure it.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 222, 223.

- b. To how many people does God offer this relationship? John 3:16. Name someone who took up God’s offer of friendship. James 2:23.

- c. How do friendships usually begin? Proverbs 18:24. While obeying God will be the evidence of our friendship with Him (John 15:14), what action is essential in order to build our friendship with Him? Philippians 4:6.
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Note: “Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing. It is our privilege to drink largely at the fountain of boundless love. What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. What can the angels of heaven think of poor helpless human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God’s heart of infinite love yearns toward them, ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so little and have so little faith? The angels love to bow before God; they love to be near Him. They regard communion with God as their highest joy; and yet the children of earth, who need so much the help that God only can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of His Spirit, the companionship of His presence.” *Steps to Christ*, 94.

Tuesday

SUBMITTING OURSELVES ENTIRELY

- a. How many times did Jesus pray in Gethsemane for the same difficulty? Did the words of His prayer change? Matthew 26:39, 42, 44.
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Note: “Three times has He uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last, crowning sacrifice. But now the history of the human race comes up before the world’s Redeemer. He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish. He sees the helplessness of man. He sees the power of sin. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before Him. He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself. He accepts His baptism of blood, that through Him perishing millions may gain everlasting life. He has left the courts of heaven, where all is purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that has fallen by transgression.

And He will not turn from His mission. He will become the propitiation of a race that has willed to sin. His prayer now breathes only submission: ‘If this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done’ (Matthew 26:42).” *The Desire of Ages*, 690, 693.

- b. How did Jesus submit Himself to the Father? Matthew 26:39, *last part*. Did the Father answer the prayer of Jesus to save Him from the cross? Verses 45, 46; Romans 8:32, *first part*.
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- c. What can we learn from Jesus’ prayer of submission? James 4:6–8.
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Note: “It is hard for us to submit to the crucifixion of self; but when the work is all submitted to God, to Him who knows our weaknesses and our sinfulness, He takes the very best way to bring about the desired results. It was through constant conflict and simple faith that Enoch walked with God. We may all do the same.” *The Review and Herald*, June 22, 1886.

“The Lord will do His part if the human agent will submit to the control of the Holy Spirit. If we consecrate to God body, soul, and spirit, He will do just as He said—He will be found of all those who seek Him diligently.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 10, 96, 97.

Wednesday

PERSISTENT PLEADING WHEN IN DIFFICULTY

- a. What did Jacob pray for when he heard that his brother Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men as he was returning to his father’s house in Palestine? Genesis 32:9–11.
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- b. After sending a present to Esau to appease him, how did Jacob again lay his fears and cares before God? Hosea 12:4. What persistence and determination did Jacob demonstrate? Genesis 32:24–31.
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Note: “Jacob sent his family across the ford of the river, while he alone remained behind. He had decided to spend the night in prayer, and he desired to be alone with God. God could soften the heart of Esau. In Him was the patriarch’s only hope.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 196.

- c. How did God, in answering Jacob’s prayer, change both Jacob and Esau? Genesis 32:31; 33:4.
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Note: “The error that had led to Jacob’s sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud was now clearly set before him. He had not trusted God’s promises, but had sought by his own efforts to bring about that which God would have accomplished in His own time and way. As an evidence that he had been forgiven, his name was changed from one that was a reminder of his sin, to one that commemorated his victory. ‘Thy name,’ said the Angel, ‘shall be called no more Jacob [the supplanter], but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed’ (Genesis 32:28).

“Jacob had received the blessing for which his soul had longed.

“While Jacob was wrestling with the Angel, another heavenly messenger was sent to Esau. In a dream, Esau beheld his brother for twenty years an exile from his father’s house; he witnessed his grief at finding his mother dead; he saw him encompassed by the hosts of God. This dream was related by Esau to his soldiers, with the charge not to harm Jacob, for the God of his father was with him.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 197, 198.

Thursday

TRUE COMMUNION CHANGES LIVES

- a. What does God know about us? Matthew 6:8, *last part*. What is our greatest need? Ezekiel 36:26, 27.
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Note: “The change we need is a change of heart, and can only be obtained by seeking God individually for His blessing, by pleading with Him for His power, by fervently praying that His grace may come upon us, and that our characters may be transformed. This is the change we need today, and for the attainment of this experience we should exercise persevering energy and manifest heartfelt earnestness.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 187.

- b. What assurance do we have that God has an answer prepared before we pray? Isaiah 65:24; Matthew 6:8. What is the purpose of God in prayer? John 14:13, 14.
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Note: “Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.” *Steps to Christ*, 93.

“Prayer is not intended to work any change in God; it brings us into harmony with God. It does not take the place of duty.” *The Youth’s Instructor*, August 18, 1898.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 When we fail to maintain regular communion with God through prayer, what happens to us?
- 2 Why is prayer essential to developing a friendship with God?
- 3 Describe the experience of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, as He submitted to His Father’s will.
- 4 For whom was Jacob praying as he wrestled with the Angel?
- 5 Why do we so much need to pray when God knows everything about us already?

October 6 – 12, 2019

David's Prayer Life

Key Text

"Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us" (Psalm 62:8).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 717–726.

Introduction

"David's prayer was continually directed to God. His trust was in God, and he walked before Him in a perfect way." *The Signs of the Times*, August 17, 1888.

Sunday

PRAYING WHEN PERSECUTED

- a. How was David treated by Saul? 1 Samuel 19:9, 10; 23:7, 8.

Note: "After the death of Samuel, David was left in peace for a few months. Again he repaired to the solitude of the Ziphites; but these enemies, hoping to secure the favor of the king, informed him of David's hiding place. This intelligence aroused the demon of passion that had been slumbering in Saul's breast. Once more he summoned his men of arms and led them out in pursuit of David. But friendly spies brought tidings to the son of Jesse that Saul was again pursuing him." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 668.

- b. What did David pray when he was chased by Saul?
How did David submit himself to God? Psalm 7:1–5, 17.

Note: "It is only through Christ that Satan's power is limited. This is a momentous truth that all should understand. Satan is busy every moment, going to and fro, walking up and down in the earth, seeking whom he may devour. But the

earnest prayer of faith will baffle his strongest efforts. Then take 'the shield of faith,' brethren, 'wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked' (Ephesians 6:16)." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 294.

Monday

THE FALL OF DAVID

- a. What does the Bible mention regarding the character of David? 1 Samuel 13:13, 14; 1 Kings 11:38.

Note: "It was when he [David] was walking in the counsel of God that he was called a man after God's own heart. When he sinned, this ceased to be true of him until by repentance he had returned to the Lord." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 723.

"David was beloved of God, not because he was a perfect man, but because he did not cherish stubborn resistance to God's expressed will. His spirit did not rise up in rebellion against reproof. ... David erred greatly, but he was just as greatly humbled and his contrition was as profound as his guilt. There was never a man more humble than David under a sense of his sin. He showed himself a strong man, not in always resisting temptation, but in the contrition of soul and sincere penitence manifested. He never lost his confidence in God, who put the stern rebuke in the mouth of His prophet. He had no hatred for the prophet of God. He was beloved, also, because he relied upon the mercy of a God whom he had loved and served and honored." *Pamphlet 28*, 1890, 16.

- b. Which sins in David's life did he attempt to hide? 2 Samuel 12:9.

- c. What was David's reaction when his sin was known? How did he acknowledge his guilt? 2 Samuel 12:13; Psalm 51:3, 4.

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

Tuesday

PLEADING FOR FORGIVENESS

- a. What two things was David pleading for after confessing his sin? Psalm 51:1, 2; 1 John 1:9.

Note: “All wrong done to others reaches back from the injured one to God. Therefore David seeks for pardon, not from a priest, but from the Creator of man. He prays: ‘Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions’ (Psalm 51:1).” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 639.

- b. Where is the seat of impurity? Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:21–23.

Note: “Many of you may retain a notion of religion in the head, an outside religion, when the heart is not cleansed. God looks at the heart; ‘all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do’ (Hebrews 4:13). Will He be satisfied with anything but truth in the inward parts? Every truly converted soul will carry the unmistakable marks that the carnal mind is subdued.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 163.

- c. What prayer of David’s should we repeat on a daily basis? Psalm 51:10–12.

Note: “Many are leaning upon a supposed hope without a true foundation. The fountain is not cleansed, therefore the streams proceeding from that fountain are not pure. Cleanse the fountain, and the streams will be pure. If the heart is right, your words, your dress, your acts, will all be right. True godliness is lacking. ...

“I saw how this grace could be obtained. Go to your closet, and there alone plead with God: ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me’ (Psalm 51:10). Be in earnest, be sincere. Fervent prayer availeth much. Jacoblike, wrestle in prayer. Agonize. Jesus, in the garden, sweat great drops of blood; you must make an effort. Do not leave your closet until you feel strong in God; then watch, and just as long as you watch and pray you can keep these evil besetments under, and the grace of God can and will appear in you.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 158.

Wednesday

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TOWARD GOD

- a. What did David acknowledge regarding God’s blessings? 1 Chronicles 29:11–14.

Note: “God scatters blessings all along our path. ... We may weep and groan and mourn and stumble at every step if we choose, or we may gather up the precious, fragrant flowers and rejoice in the Lord for His goodness in making our path to heaven so pleasant.” *Our High Calling*, 245.

“It is as we give ourselves to God for the service of humanity that He gives Himself to us.

“No one can give place in his own heart and life for the stream of God’s blessing to flow to others, without receiving in himself a rich reward.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 81.

- b. How did David express some of his feelings about God? Psalm 31:19–23; 57:10.

Note: “The song of gratitude and praise is to be heard by those in darkness. For the good tidings of the gospel, for its promises and assurances, we are to express our gratitude by seeking to do others good. The doing of this work will bring rays of heavenly righteousness to wearied, perplexed, suffering souls. It is as a fountain opened for the wayworn, thirsty traveler. At every work of mercy, every work of love, angels of God are present.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 31.

- c. What else can we be thankful for today? Psalm 103:10–14; Jeremiah 31:34, *last part*.

Note: “We should be self-forgetful, ever looking out for opportunities, even in little things, to show gratitude for the favors we have received of others, and watching for opportunities to cheer others and lighten and relieve their sorrows and burdens by acts of tender kindness and little deeds of love. These thoughtful courtesies that, commencing in our families, extend outside the family circle help make up the sum of life’s happiness; and the neglect of these little things makes up the sum of life’s bitterness and sorrow.” *The Adventist Home*, 428.

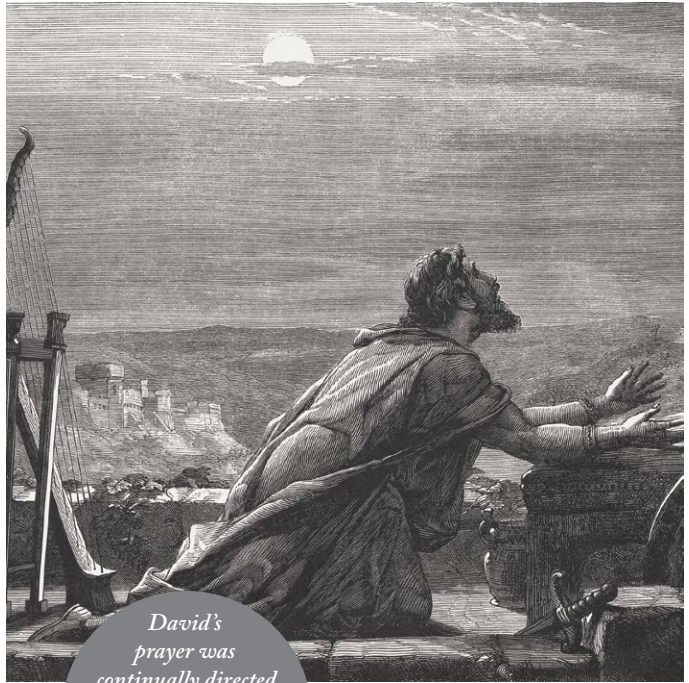
Thursday

PRAYING FOR DELIVERANCE

- a. With what words does David praise God for deliverance from his enemies? 2 Samuel 22:1–7, 18–20.

- b. How can we, like David, pray for deliverance from sin today? Psalm 6:4; 25:20; Matthew 6:13.

Note: “Many receive the gospel as a way of escape from suffering, rather than as a deliverance from sin. They rejoice for a



David's prayer was continually directed to God. His trust was in God, and he walked before Him in a perfect way.

season, for they think that religion will free them from difficulty and trial. While life moves smoothly with them, they may appear to be consistent Christians. But they faint beneath the fiery test of temptation. They cannot bear reproach for Christ's sake. When the word of God points out some cherished sin, or requires self-denial or sacrifice, they are offended. It would cost them too much effort to make a radical change in their life. They look at the present inconvenience and trial, and forget the eternal realities.” *Christ's Object Lessons*, 47, 48.

“When we pray for earthly blessings, the answer to our prayer may be delayed, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so when we ask for deliverance from sin. It is His will to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life.” *The Desire of Ages*, 266.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What limits Satan's power? When can Christ help us the most?
- 2 Why was David beloved of God?
- 3 How must we pray if we desire to have a clean, pure heart?
- 4 How can we show gratitude to God in a practical way, and what will be the result?
- 5 What should we be seeking beyond mere deliverance from difficulties?

October 13 – 19, 2019

Prayer in the Psalms

Key Text

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God” (Psalm 42:1).

Study Help: *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 270–278.

Introduction

“I have been referred by the Spirit of God to the many encouragements given to us in the Psalms. ... If our people would realize the possibilities that lie in increased faith and prayer, there would be a decided change in our churches. Those who are now downcast and worried, would be lifted up from their discouragements, and would rejoice in the Lord.” *Australasian Union Conference Record*, April 29, 1907.

Sunday

ACCESS TO THE THRONE OF GRACE

- a. What are some of the themes expressed by David in the Psalms regarding the Christian's experience? Psalm 25:16–18; 28:2, 7, 8.
- b. What may a repentant sinner confidently expect when he sincerely asks for God's forgiveness? Psalm 51:1–6.

Note: “A repentance such as this [David's], is beyond the reach of our own power to accomplish; it is obtained only from Christ, who ascended up on high and has given gifts unto men.

“Just here is a point on which many may err, and hence they fail of receiving the help that Christ desires to give them. They think that they cannot come to Christ unless they first repent,

and that repentance prepares for the forgiveness of their sins. It is true that repentance does precede the forgiveness of sins; for it is only the broken and contrite heart that will feel the need of a Saviour. But must the sinner wait till he has repented before he can come to Jesus? Is repentance to be made an obstacle between the sinner and the Saviour?” *Steps to Christ*, 25, 26.

Monday

WHEN GOD FORGIVES

- a. Under what conditions can a sinner obtain God's mercy? Psalm 32:5.

Note: “The conditions of obtaining mercy of God are simple and just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order that we may have the forgiveness of sin. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven or to expiate our transgression; but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy.” *Steps to Christ*, 37.

“When He permits trials and afflictions, it is ‘for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness’ (Hebrews 12:10). If received in faith, the trial that seems so bitter and hard to bear will prove a blessing. The cruel blow that blights the joys of earth will be the means of turning our eyes to heaven. How many there are who would never have known Jesus had not sorrow led them to seek comfort in Him! ...

“The Lord will work for all who put their trust in Him. Precious victories will be gained by the faithful. Precious lessons will be learned. Precious experiences will be realized. ...

“Christ lifts up the contrite heart, and refines the mourning soul, until it becomes His abode.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 302.

- b. What did David do as He approached God, and what was God's response? Psalm 66:17–20.

Note: “Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 532.

- c. To what degree does God forgive our sins? Psalm 103:3, 12–14.

Note: “Let Christ, the divine Life, dwell in you and through you reveal the heaven-born love that will inspire hope in the hopeless and bring heaven’s peace to the sin-stricken heart.”
Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 114, 115.

Tuesday

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

- a. With what spirit did David seek the Lord in prayer? How did his practical life reflect his heart condition? Psalm 26:2–5, 8; 119:58.

- b. What actions reveal an inward change of heart? Isaiah 1:16, 17; Ezekiel 33:15.

Note: “Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin.” *Steps to Christ*, 39.

“A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. ... But this union costs us something. ... 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, they try to attach themselves to Christ without detaching themselves from these cherished idols.” *The Faith I Live By*, 221.



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prayer, they would be
lifted up from their
discouragements.

- c. What attitude does God desire us to have as we come before Him? Psalm 95:2; 100:4.

Note: “God desires His obedient children to claim His blessing and to come before Him with praise and thanksgiving. God is the Fountain of life and power. He can make the wilderness a fruitful field for the people that keep His commandments, for this is for the glory of His name. He has done for His chosen people that which should inspire every heart with thanksgiving, and it grieves Him that so little praise is offered. He desires to have a stronger expression from His people, showing that they know they have reason for joy and gladness.

“The dealings of God with His people should be often repeated. How frequently were the waymarks set up by the Lord in His dealings with ancient Israel! ... We need often to recount God’s goodness and to praise Him for His wonderful works.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 364, 365.

Wednesday

FAITH AND CONFIDENCE

- a. With what words did David express his faith in the Lord? Psalm 27:1–5.

Note: “Our God has heaven and earth at His command, and He knows just what we need. We can see only a little way before us; ‘but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do’ (Hebrews 4:13). Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best.

“Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father’s notice. Satan’s hatred against God leads him to delight in destroying even the dumb creatures. It is only through God’s protecting care that the birds are preserved to gladden us with their songs of joy. But He does not forget even the sparrows. ‘Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows’ (Matthew 10:31).” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 272, 273.

b. How did David express his confidence in God when outnumbered by earthly foes? Psalm 56:2, 9, 11.

Note: “Why do we not show that we have a living Saviour, one who can walk with us in the darkness as well as in the light, and that we can trust in Him? ...

“We have seen clouds interpose between us and the sun, but we did not mourn and clothe ourselves in sackcloth for fear that we should never see the sun again. We manifested no anxiety about it, but waited as cheerfully as possible until the cloud passed away and revealed the sun. Just so in our trials and temptations. Clouds may seem to shut from us the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness; but we know that the face of our Redeemer is not forever hidden. He is looking upon us with love and tender compassion. Let us not cast away our confidence, which hath great recompense of reward, but when clouds hang over the soul, let us keep our eyes fixed where we can see the Sun of Righteousness, and rejoice that we have a living Saviour. Think how beautiful was the light which we enjoyed, keep the mind stayed on Jesus, and the light will again shine upon us, and dismal thoughts will flee. We shall have joy in Christ, and shall go singing on our way to Mount Zion.” *Our High Calling*, 65.

Thursday

GOD SATISFIES THE THIRSTING SOUL

a. Describe the fervor that should accompany our prayers. Psalm 42:1–4.

Note: “Let us put away the listless, sluggish habit into which we have fallen, and pray as though we meant it. ‘The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much’ (James 5:16). Faith takes a firm hold of the promises of God, and urges her petitions with fervor; but when the life of the soul stagnates, the outward devotions become formal and powerless.” *Gospel Workers* (1892), 426.

b. As we approach God in the midst of our trials and struggles, what assurance do we have? Psalm 77:1, 14, 15.

Note: “To all who are reaching out to feel the guiding hand of God, the moment of greatest discouragement is the time when divine help is nearest. They will look back with thankfulness upon the darkest part of their way. ... From every temptation and every trial He will bring them forth with firmer faith and a richer experience.” *The Desire of Ages*, 528.

“In every trial, if we seek Him, Christ will give us help. Our eyes will be opened to discern the healing promises recorded in His word. The Holy Spirit will teach us how to appropriate every blessing that will be an antidote to grief. For every bitter draft that is placed to our lips, we shall find a branch of healing.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 248.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 On what point do many err and fail to receive the promised blessing?
- 2 Instead of performing great acts of self-sacrifice in order to obtain forgiveness and mercy, what steps do we need to take?
- 3 What attitude will lead us to make a genuine confession?
- 4 What should we do when trials seem to hide the face of the Sun of Righteousness from our vision?
- 5 With what type of spirit should we approach God? What is the promise that we have when we do this?

October 20 – 26, 2019

The Silent Prayer

Key Text

“When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:6).

Study Help: *Prophets and Kings*, 628–634.

Introduction

“There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God. ... In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may ... plead for divine guidance.” *Steps to Christ*, 99.

Sunday

PRAYING AT WORK

- a. What news concerned Nehemiah, and how did his employer discover this concern? Nehemiah 1:2–4; 2:1, 2.

- b. What did the king ask, and how did Nehemiah respond? Nehemiah 2:4. How was Nehemiah’s silent prayer heard? Verse 6.

Note: “The man of God did not venture to reply till he had sought direction from One higher than Artaxerxes. ... In that brief prayer Nehemiah pressed into the presence of the King of kings and won to his side a power that can turn hearts as the rivers of waters are turned.

“To pray as Nehemiah prayed in his hour of need is a resource at the command of the Christian under circumstances

when other forms of prayer may be impossible. Toilers in the busy walks of life, crowded and almost overwhelmed with perplexity, can send up a petition to God for divine guidance. Travelers by sea and land, when threatened with some great danger, can thus commit themselves to Heaven’s protection. In times of sudden difficulty or peril the heart may send up its cry for help to One who has pledged Himself to come to the aid of His faithful, believing ones whenever they call upon Him.” *Prophets and Kings*, 631, 632.

Monday

SEEKING TO PRAY BY OUR ACTIONS

- a. When the demoniac dwelling among the tombs by the countryside of Gadarenes saw Jesus for the first time, what did he try to do? Mark 5:5, 6.

- b. As Satan did not allow this man to pray, what came out of his mouth instead? Mark 5:7. What did Jesus do for this coarse and abandoned man and his companion (Matthew 8:28)? Mark 5:8.

Note: “His words penetrated the darkened minds of the unfortunate men. They realized dimly that One was near who could save them from the tormenting demons. They fell at the Saviour’s feet to worship Him; but when their lips were opened to entreat His mercy, the demons spoke through them.” *The Desire of Ages*, 337, 338.

- c. What was the result of the first, silent prayer of the two men? Luke 8:35. What can we learn from the demoniacs’ unuttered prayer?

Note: “None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they can find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart’s unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded. Those who will consent to enter into covenant relation with the God of heaven are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature. They are invited by the Saviour, ‘Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me’ (Isaiah 27:5). The spirits of darkness will battle for the soul once under their dominion, but angels of God will contend for that soul with prevailing power. The Lord says, ‘Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? ... Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children’ (Isaiah 49:24, 25).” *The Desire of Ages*, 258, 259.

Tuesday

THE UNSPOKEN DESIRE FOR FORGIVENESS

- a. How does God relate to righteousness and wickedness? Psalm 45:7; Hebrews 1:8, 9.

Note: “While He [Jesus] does not palliate sin, nor lessen the sense of guilt, He seeks not to condemn, but to save. The world had for this erring woman only contempt and scorn; but Jesus speaks words of comfort and hope. The Sinless One pities the weakness of the sinner, and reaches to her a helping hand. ... “Men hate the sinner, while they love the sin. Christ hates the sin, but loves the sinner. This will be the spirit of all who follow Him. Christian love is slow to censure, quick to discern penitence, ready to forgive, to encourage, to set the wanderer in the path of holiness, and to stay his feet therein.” *The Desire of Ages*, 462.

- b. What was the attitude of those who brought forth the woman taken in adultery? John 8:3–5.

- c. How did Jesus respond to this woman’s unspoken request for forgiveness? John 8:10, 11.

Note: “The woman had stood before Jesus, cowering with fear. His words, ‘He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone’ (John 8:7), had come to her as a death sentence. She dared not lift her eyes to the Saviour’s face, but silently awaited her doom. In astonishment she saw her accusers depart speechless and confounded; then those words of hope fell upon her ear, ‘Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more’ (verse 11). Her heart was melted, and she cast herself at the feet of Jesus, sobbing out her grateful love, and with bitter tears confessing her sins.

“This was to her the beginning of a new life, a life of purity and peace, devoted to the service of God. In the uplifting of this fallen soul, Jesus performed a greater miracle than in healing the most grievous physical disease; He cured the spiritual malady which is unto death everlasting. This penitent woman became one of His most steadfast followers. With self-sacrificing love and devotion she repaid His forgiving mercy.” *The Desire of Ages*, 462.

Wednesday

SPEAKING THROUGH ACTIONS OF DESPERATION

- a. How interested was a poor paralytic in seeing Jesus? Luke 5:18, 19.

Note: “I will refer to the paralytic who had not used his limbs for many years. There he was. The priests, the rulers, and scribes examined his case and pronounced it hopeless. They told him that by his own sin he had brought himself into this condition, and there was no hope for him. But the word was brought to him that there was a man called Jesus who was doing mighty works. He was healing the sick, and He had even raised the dead. ‘But how can I go to Him?’ he said.

“‘We will carry you to Jesus,’ his friends replied, ‘right into His presence; we have heard He has come to such a place.’

“And so they took the hopeless man and bore him to where they knew Jesus was. But the multitude surrounded the building so closely where Jesus was that there was no chance for them, not so much as to come at the door. What were they going to do? The paralytic suggested that they open the roof and take off the tiling and let him down through the roof.”

Faith and Works, 67.

- b. What unspoken desire of the paralytic did Jesus meet? Luke 5:20. How did Jesus reveal that He could read everyone's thoughts, not just those of this man? Verses 21–23.

Note: “Jesus knew just what that sin-sick soul needed. He knew that he had been tortured on account of his own conscience, so He said, ‘Thy sins be forgiven thee’ (Luke 5:20). What a relief came to his mind! What hope filled his heart!”

Faith and Works, 67.

- c. What did the actual healing of the man show about the power Jesus had? Luke 5:24–26.

Note: “He who at the creation ‘spake, and it was,’ who ‘commanded, and it stood fast’ (Psalm 33:9), had spoken life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins. The healing of the body was an evidence of the power that had renewed the heart. Christ bade the paralytic arise and walk, ‘that ye may know,’ He said, ‘that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins’ (Matthew 9:6).” *The Desire of Ages*, 270.

Thursday

PRAYING THROUGH TOUCHING

- a. How did a woman, after suffering with a serious disease for 12 years, choose to express to Jesus her timid request for healing? Mark 5:25–29.

Note: “The golden opportunity had come, she was in the presence of the great Physician! But amid the confusion, she could not be heard by Him nor catch more than a passing glimpse of His figure. Fearful of losing the one chance of relief from her illness, she pressed forward, saying to herself, If I but touch His garment I shall be cured. She seized the opportunity as He was passing and reached forward, barely touching the hem of His garment. But in that moment she felt herself healed of her disease. Instantly health and strength took the place of feebleness and pain. She had concentrated all the faith of her life in that one touch that made her whole.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, 320.

- b. How did Jesus then publicly acknowledge her unspoken prayer of faith? Mark 5:30–34. What does this teach us about faith?

Note: “Jesus does not fail to answer the silent prayer of faith. He who simply takes God at His word, and reaches out to connect himself with the Saviour, will receive His blessing in return.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, 322.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What privilege do we have when we are in need, even though we may not be able to kneel before God? How can we do this?
- 2 Does Jesus hear the secret, silent prayers coming from an honest heart?
- 3 Can our actions serve as a prayer? How?
- 4 What type of healing do we all need, and how willing is Jesus to help us?
- 5 Does Jesus act upon the words that come out of our mouths only or the silent thoughts of the heart as well?

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Green Peas

In our garden this year we planted green peas. I was amazed how well they did along with the green beans.

I just love to pop them out of their shells and eat them fresh. The following gives you a little health information about how good they are for your body.

“Peas are actually legumes that originated in western Asia. In Switzerland, traces of peas have been found near homesites, where they were probably being eaten during the Bronze Age, more than 5,000 years ago. Traveling from Greece to India, the pea arrived in China during the seventh century,

where it was named *bo tou*, or ‘foreign legume.’ Peas were popular during the Middle Ages in Europe, being easy to grow, inexpensive, hearty, and a source of protein. ...

“There are probably more than 1,000 varieties of garden peas, the most common of which are the smooth peas you usually find frozen in the supermarket. Some varieties, like the snow pea have edible pods. Peas are available fresh in the pod, dried (either whole or split), and frozen. ...” *The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth*, p. 86, Jonny Bowden, Ph.D., C.N.S.



Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



PEA SALAD

Ingredients

2 cups peas
¼ cup celery, diced
¼ cup onion, chopped
1 cup tomatoes, chopped
½ tsp. salt (optional)
Mayo (Vegenaise/plant-based Mayo)

Process

Mix all vegetables together. Add your mayo, mix again. Enjoy!



Change Service Requested

“

There is real common sense in health reform. People cannot all eat the same things. Some articles of food that are wholesome and palatable to one person, may be hurtful to another. ... For some, dried beans and peas are wholesome, while others cannot digest them. ... So it is impossible to make an unvarying rule by which to regulate every one's dietetic habits.

Ellen White

