

HISTORIC  
**LANDMARKS**  
OF ADVENTISM

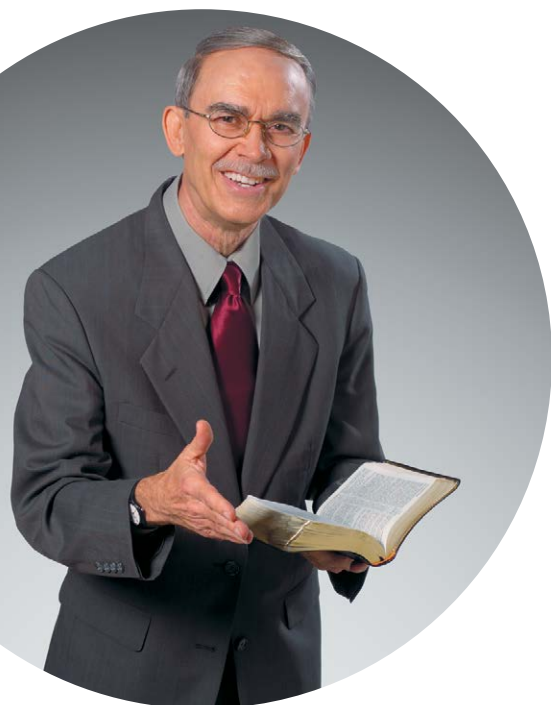
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## From the Editor

*John J. Grosboll*

# Assimilation

In physiology, assimilation refers to the conversion of absorbed food into the body. In other words it refers to the transforming of food into living tissue.

In a mental sense it means to absorb or incorporate knowledge into the mind. In a spiritual sense it refers to the process by which the feelings, thoughts, and character of one person become the same feelings, thoughts and character of another person so that there is a spiritual resemblance or similarity. This word is often used socially to refer to a minority or immigrant group of people gradually adopting the characteristics of the dominant culture where they are residing.

“Assimilation is a law of human nature. Satan works with untiring perseverance to use this law, ordained by God to be a power for good, to forward His plans. He seeks to blend together righteous and unrighteous principles in order that through this union sin may lose its offensive appearance. He mixes chaff with the wheat.” *The Upward Look*, 123.

“Christ saw Satan patterning after heaven by the use of human association, thus extending the contagion of evil, and He determined to make His church

a resisting element. His people are not to borrow the forms and customs of the world, but are to be instinct with the principles which make the church on earth a symbol of the church in heaven, a channel through which heaven’s rich blessings can flow.” Ibid.

“It is God’s plan that in His church heavenly influences shall be reinforced and stimulated by the cooperation of the members with Him. His people are to increase in strength and efficiency, knowing that the atmosphere which surrounds the souls of righteous believers is the same as the atmosphere in the heaven of purity and light and love.” Ibid.

“The great work of Christ’s disciples upon the earth is a daily assimilation to the character of our Saviour. . . . We must have the character of Christ, and then we shall better understand what heaven is like.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 376.

“Our message to the church and to our institutions is: ‘Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (Matthew 3:2). The attributes of Christ’s character are to be cherished, and these are to become a power in the lives of God’s people.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, Book 2, 559. **LM**

HISTORIC

## LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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LANDMARKS is a magazine of Steps to Life, a ministry established in 1988 by Seventh-day Adventists. It is dedicated to the publication of the historic doctrines held by God’s true people in all ages. Its special emphasis is to present truth (2 Peter 1:12)—those historic doctrines espoused by Seventh-day Adventist pioneers in the nineteenth century. Its purpose is to help all of God’s remnant people to press together in unity, holding high the banner on which is inscribed the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This magazine is designed to help believers to defend the faith and to expose the flood of false doctrine by which the truth is being assailed in these last days. It is the goal of LANDMARKS’ editors to present articles based on truth from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Viewpoints of writers and/or contributors expressed outside of articles printed in this publication are not necessarily the views of this magazine’s editors and are not endorsed by Steps to Life Ministries.

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# *Heaven's Plan of Government*

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By John J. Grosboll

**T**he history of God's church goes back thousands of years. Before Steven was martyred, he spoke of the "congregation in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38), referring to the wilderness wanderings.

During this time, the church was highly organized and there were certain ordinances that if violated would result in the death penalty. The book of Leviticus provides insight into the organizational instructions that the Lord gave to Moses to be used for His church.

Following the establishment of the children in the Promised Land, the church was located first at Shiloh. Later the headquarters were set up at Jerusalem. However, synagogues were set up throughout the land. When Jesus was on earth, He attended the synagogue every Sabbath and was an active participant in the worship services. In John 2 we read that Jesus was intensely interested in the church and respected the offices of the priests. Those He healed were instructed to go and show themselves to the priests as Moses had commanded.



In symbolic language the church is spoken of as a vineyard. In Matthew 21, Jesus told the parable of the husbandmen who killed the servants of the lord of the vineyard that were sent to them. When the son was sent to them, the vinedressers decided to murder him and take his inheritance. In this parable Jesus warned what was going to happen to the Jewish people because they decided to murder the Messiah. He said, "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it" (Matthew 21:43).

Because of their treachery, the kingdom of God would be taken away from the Jewish people. They were no longer going to be God's special chosen people. Jesus said to them, "See! Your house is left to you desolate" (Matthew 23:38).

Of course, any house becomes desolate when God leaves it. Before the final rejection of the Jewish people, Jesus provided a dwelling place for Himself, a church that would be the depository of God's truth on earth. In fact, a considerable time before the final rejection of the Jews as a nation, Jesus had laid the foundation of the Christian church, which was to take over the vineyard and become God's custodian of truth for the world.

Since His ascension, Jesus' chief work in heaven has been on behalf of His appointed church. John, in vision on the isle of Patmos where he had been banished, says, "Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me, And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands" (Revelation 1:12). Those are the seven golden lamp stands in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, and Christ is seen standing and walking amidst them (verse 13).

Notice what Jesus said in verse 20: "The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches."

Immediately after this is recorded the letters to the seven churches. The number *seven* represents *perfection*. This is a number that indicates that Jesus is giving a message to all the Christian churches from then until the end of time.

"Christ designs that heaven's order, heaven's plan of government, heaven's divine harmony, shall be represented in His church on earth." *The Desire of Ages*, 680. Notice the three things mentioned – heaven's order, heaven's plan of government, and heaven's divine harmony.

### What does heaven's order involve?

Heaven, at the present time, is the home of the angels. Christian's hope that heaven will also become their home where they will be able to live and associate with holy angels. O wondrous thought! Are you ready to live with angels? In His mercy God is allowing us this time to prepare ourselves for that blessed experience.

The church on earth and the church in heaven is just one church. When Jesus comes, He is going to take His church on earth to unite with the church in heaven.

### Have you studied about the angels, how they live, how they work, and what they do?

"Angels work harmoniously. Perfect order characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf. If we see no necessity for harmonious action, and are disorderly, undisciplined, and disorganized in our course

of action, angels, who are thoroughly organized and move in perfect order, cannot work for us successfully. They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and disorganization. All who desire the co-operation of the heav-

enly messengers must work in unison with them. Those

who have the unction from on high will in all their efforts encourage order, discipline, and union of action, and then the angels of God can co-operate with them. But never, never will these heavenly messengers

place their endorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder.

All these evils [that's irregularity, disorganization, and disorder] are the result of Satan's efforts to weaken our forces, to destroy courage, and prevent successful action.

"Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host." *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 649, 650.

*Subjection* is a concept that keeps coming up as you start studying about the angels and heaven's arrangement. "It is his [Satan's] studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality, that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies of Christians who are united and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of



action. All the efforts made to establish order are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These deceived souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. I was shown that it is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is in God's order for them to strike out for themselves and choose their own course, independent of their brethren." Ibid., 650.

Jesus designs that heaven's order be seen and represented in His church on earth. First of all, there are no politics in heaven, no political campaigns. The political campaign that Lucifer started resulted in a civil war and Lucifer, with his followers, were cast out of heaven. Since that time there have not been any political campaigns in heaven.

I have often studied and prayed about the perfect order in heaven. As a small child, I was very disorderly. I never wanted to go to sleep. I never wanted to take a nap or go to bed on time. I wanted to stay up and do something. When it came time in the morning to get up, I couldn't find my clothes because I just threw them off when

I went to bed. I seemed always to be looking to find my shoes because of my lack of order.

To be orderly does not just apply to our possessions. Order has to do with time. Those who understand order have a place for their things, and things are in their place, and there is a time for things, and things are on time.

God is so orderly that since ancient times clocks have been set by the revolutions of the heavenly bodies that He created.

One lesson that God has given right in the heart of the Ten Commandments has to do with time. As a young minister I decided that I would always endeavor to be early rather than late. This required me to start developing techniques. I knew what time the sun was going to go down, so I needed to start planning my day and figuring

out how to accomplish each task on time to avoid being late.

To be prepared to fit in with the perfect order in heaven it is necessary to learn the discipline of being perfectly orderly here on earth.

Another thing about heaven's order to be learned is that among the angels there are no star players, for all are team players. In other words, the angels work together for common goals and do not compete with one another.

We see team work at the resurrection of Jesus. "When the mighty angel came down to the tomb, he was joined by another, who with his company had been keeping guard over the Lord's body. As the angel from heaven rolled away the stone, the other entered the tomb, and unbound the wrappings from the body of Jesus." *The Desire of Ages*, 789. The angels worked together each doing his part.

There are many places in Inspired writings that describe the angels working together as a team. That type of order is to be represented and revealed in God's church on earth. There are orders of angels including supervising angels who give directions to the teams to which the angel team members obey.

Angels watched at the trial of Christ and were distressed at what they saw. Ellen White wrote, "Under God the angels are all-powerful. ... How easily could the angels, beholding the shameful scene of the trial of Christ, have testified their indignation by consuming the adversaries of God! But they were not commanded to do this." *The Desire of Ages*, 702.

How they wanted to step in and save their Commander! They were angry at what the people were doing to Jesus. The least powerful angel, the weakest angel, could have instantly destroyed them all. But they stayed still because they were not commanded to interfere. They follow orders. "It was difficult for the angels to endure the sight. They would have delivered Jesus, but the commanding angels forbade them, saying that it was a great ransom which was to be paid for man; but it would be complete and would cause the death of Him who had the power of death. ... The weakest angel could have

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*In symbolic language  
the church is spoken of as a  
vineyard.*



caused that mocking throng to fall powerless and could have delivered Jesus.” *Early Writings*, 170. What a temptation they denied because of obedience!

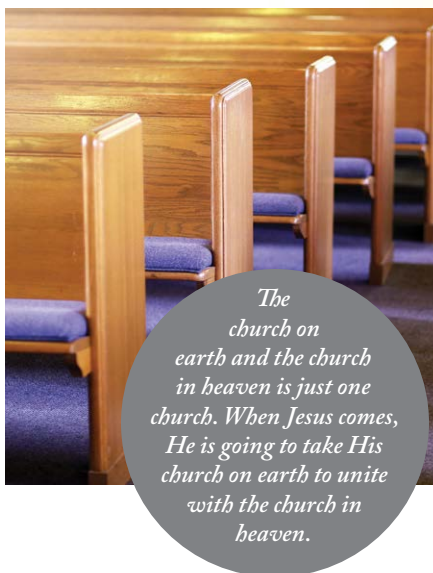
Again, “They [soldiers] covered His [Jesus’] head with an old garment, blindfolding Him, and then struck Him in the face and cried out, ‘Prophesy, who is it that smote Thee’ (Luke 22:64)?” Ibid.

When this happened, Ellen White says, “There was commotion among the angels. They would have rescued Him instantly; but their commanding angels restrained them.” *Early Writings*, 170. They obey orders. Are you prepared and ready to go into a society like that?

Unless the church members are directed, guided, and controlled by the Holy Spirit they cannot do their work of spreading the gospel to the world.

In *The Desire of Ages*, 803, 804, Ellen White quotes from John 20:21, 22. “Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you!’ ... ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” Then she wrote, “The Holy Spirit was not yet fully manifested; for Christ had not yet been glorified. The more abundant impartation of the Spirit did not take place till after Christ’s ascension. Not until this was received could the disciples fulfill the commission to preach the gospel to the world. But the Spirit was now given for a special purpose. Before the disciples could fulfill their official duties in connection with the church, Christ breathed His Spirit upon them. He was committing to them a most sacred trust, and He desired to impress them with the fact that without the Holy Spirit this work could not be accomplished.” Ibid., 805.

We must ask ourselves, Have we received the Holy Spirit? That was the question the apostle Paul asked when he met believers with whom he was not acquainted. One time in Corinth, “... and finding some disciples he [Paul] said to them, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?’ ... And he said to them, ‘Into what then were you baptized?’” (Acts 19:1–3) or what were you baptized for?



When Peter told the people that they were responsible for crucifying Jesus and they realized how guilty they were, they asked, What are we going to do? Peter said, Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 2:36–38.) God’s intention is for all who are baptized to receive the Holy Spirit. A person should not be baptized until they are prepared to receive the Holy Spirit. That is why we do not baptize infants, because you can’t receive the Holy Spirit without faith, and an infant cannot exercise faith. That does not mean they cannot be saved. There will be a multitude of people in the kingdom of heaven who died in infancy, many of them as martyrs.

However, to be a member of a church, to conduct the business of the church, and to do the mission of the church requires the Holy Spirit or the work cannot be done. So, after the ascension of Christ, it was God’s will that everyone, on becoming a member of the church, would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The statement that we read in *The Desire of Ages*, 680, indicated that not only was heaven’s order to be manifested in Christ’s church, but heaven’s plan of government was to be implemented as well.

Heaven’s government is not a hierarchy. The Jewish church was hierarchically organized and the work of Christ tended to break down that hierarchy.

Jesus explained clearly the problem with the hierarchical system. Rebuking the scribes and Pharisees He said, “They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi’ [or monsignor]; but you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Matthew 23:6–12).

The apostle Paul explains God’s government to the Corinthians. “Even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live” (1 Corinthians 8:5, 6).

If heaven’s plan of government is to be represented in God’s church on earth, it must mirror the heavenly church without competition, rivalry, contention, or fighting.

Consider these characteristics of the church in heaven:

1. It is a kingdom. That is a major subject of the gospel of Matthew. Christ’s church is a spiritual kingdom and He is the Lord of that kingdom.
2. All are subject to the King and the law of the King, including the angels. That was a point of contention at the beginning of the great controversy. Lucifer said that the angels should not be subject to or be under law. But all beings need law to be in harmony.

3. God's last church on earth will have the Spirit of Prophecy. Compare Revelation 12:17 and Revelation 19:10. Having the Spirit of Prophecy does not mean that you will have a series of black books, or red books, or some other kinds of books on your bookshelf. It means, "You were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you" (1 Corinthians 1:5, 6). To have the testimony of Christ confirmed in you means it is in your mind, that your life is in harmony with its principles. In order for heaven's plan of government to be manifested in God's church on earth that church has to be living in harmony with Inspired writings.

Heavenly angels are organized like an army. At the time of and before Satan's rebellion in heaven, "The angels were marshaled in companies, each division with a higher commanding angel." *Early Writings*, 145.

Ellen White saw in a vision that "There is perfect order and harmony in the Holy City. All the angels that are commissioned to visit the earth hold a golden card, which they present to the angels at the gates of the city as they pass in and out." *Ibid.*, 39.

Each angel has a special work to do. Angels just don't come down here and randomly decide what they should do each day. They are organized in their work.

From the beginning we read that "The happiness of the angelic host consisted in their perfect obedience to law. Each

had his special work assigned him; and until Satan rebelled, there had been perfect order and harmony among the angels in heaven." *The Signs of the Times*, January 9, 1879. They accepted the assignment that each of them was given.

To a young minister and his wife, Ellen White once wrote, "With the spirit of self-confidence that you now possess, neither of

you could be happy in heaven; for there all, even the exalted angels, are subordinate. You have yet to learn subordination and submission." *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 325. This same counsel applies to all today.

We are told: "Each angel has his particular post of duty, which he is not permitted to leave for any other place." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 103. Now that's interesting. Angels are not at liberty to go where they please. They are assigned duties which they happily perform.

Ellen White illustrates the order that the angels have in heaven by the order of the children of Israel while in the wilderness. In Egypt Moses had become a general who could not be overruled by any other man. His organizational skills were also apparent as he led the Children of Israel through the wilderness. Tents were pitched in their assigned places and they all marched in order, receiving orders from the front of the group. Those assisting Moses used trumpets to signal the leaders who were over each section, telling them exactly what was required. There was perfect order, being an example of what God desires among His people throughout all time.

The angels are available to assist those in this fallen world to help us come into the same kind of order and harmony that exists in heaven. Sadly we don't have it yet. "The Lord gives to every angel his work for this fallen world. ... Heavenly angels are working to bring the human family into a close brotherhood, a oneness described by Christ as like that existing between the Father and the Son." *The Review and Herald*, July 4, 1899.

"In our churches let companies be formed for service. In the Lord's work there are to be no idlers. Let different ones unite in labor as fishers of men. Let them seek to gather souls from the corruption of the world into the saving purity of Christ's love.

"The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented before me by One who can not err. If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members, but for unbelievers also." *Australasian Union Conference Record*, August 15, 1902.

In Malachi 3:6, it says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). So if God was a God of order then, He is still a God of order now.

Imagine what will be achieved when there is a church, anywhere in the world, governed by heaven's plan of government where harmony and order is developed. That will be the condition of the church, ready and waiting for the Lord's return and we can be part of it.

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

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*Jesus designs that  
heaven's order be seen and  
represented in His church  
on earth.*”





# Jesus and His Off-shoot Church

By Ivan Plummer

Over twenty years ago after I was dismissed as an ordained pastor from the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization and started a self-supporting church, I had a brief conversation with a fine SDA Christian man that I would like to share with you. This gentleman expressed to me that he really was planning to become a member of our self-supporting church because he was very dissatisfied with the direction the organized church was taking. It so happened that some SDA pastors heard of his intention and told him that Pastor Plummer's church is an off-shoot, and that "he cannot be saved if he is not under the conference." Consequently, he decided that he would remain with the SDA church organization because he did want to be saved.

The establishment of the New Testament experienced the rise of two significant off-shoot movements, namely, the John the Baptist ministry and the Jesus Christ Christian church. The existence of these two self-supporting churches created deep and far reaching concerns for the leaders of Judaism, the acknowledged God's true established church organization of that time.

*The Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 503, 504, informs us that "from the first century, relations between Jews and Christians were marked by hostility – the opposition between an established religion and an off-shoot claiming to have supplanted it." The leaders of the newly formed off-shoot church sought to prove the authenticity of their movement as a God ordained entity, while

on the other hand a slanderous biography of Jesus Christ circulated, with the diabolical intent to discredit the Leader and ultimately the movement!

This article will address two questions:

1. Why was there a need for Jesus to organize and lead an off-shoot church?
2. What is the meaning of "the Vine"?

The parable found in Matthew's gospel, chapter 21, verses 33–46, as told by Jesus is known as: The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen or The Parable of the False Husbandmen. In *Christ's Object Lessons*, 284, Ellen White calls it The Lord's Vineyard. This parable demonstrates the posture of Judaism while it was God's church and it likewise reveals the similar attitude of the SDA church.

“  
*God bestowed great  
favors and privileges  
upon the Jewish people in  
making them His church  
and peculiar inheritance  
as caretakers of His  
law.*”

Matthew records the parable as spoken by Jesus thusly: “Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet” (Matthew 21:33–46).

With reference to the narrative, Jesus specifically intended to convey that while God appoints pastors over His church, it is not His intention to communicate that they are the true proprietors. They are in fact just act-

ing in the same manner as when a proprietor would let out a vineyard to husbandmen who would labor in the cultivation of it and make an annual return. He had expended much labor and money on the vineyard without any corresponding returns due primarily to the attitude of the husbandmen. So in the parable, Christ accuses the vine-dressers, who, like base swindlers, appropriate to themselves the produce of the vineyard. Jesus says that the vineyard was well furnished and in excellent condition when the husbandmen received it from the proprietor.

The design of our Savior is to show the great favors and signal privileges God bestowed upon the Jewish people in making them His church and peculiar inheritance as caretakers of His law.

The design of Jesus is also to show the base ingratitude and abominable evils of both the Jews and especially their leaders, or husbandmen, specifically (1) In abusing and slaying the prophets and (2) In their laying violent hands upon the Son of God and in crucifying Him so that their evil purpose of taking control of the vineyard could be realized!

Furthermore, Jesus’ design in speaking the parable carries with it a prophetic application for it foretold the rejection of the Jews, the establishment of Jesus’ Christian off-shoot church and God’s calling of the Gentiles, as well as the destruction of Jerusalem, the ruin of the temple, and the reason thereof.

With reference to the lesson that Jesus wanted to convey concerning the parable of the Vineyard, the servant of the Lord states:

“Those who are true learners in the school of Christ will study with intense interest the parable of the vineyard. In this parable Christ presented the true condition of the once chosen people of God. He revealed to them their sinful breach of trust. He designed this parable to be a lesson to all, warning them that unless they walk in the ways of the Lord, keeping all His commandments, He can not bless and sustain them. The church on earth is greatly beloved by God. It is the fold provided for the sheep of His pasture. But the Lord will not serve with the sins of His people. Many times He has suffered calamity and defeat

to come upon them because they have glorified themselves, weaving false principles into their practise [sic]. He willingly forgives those who repent, but He will remove His favor from those who go on sinning, exalting self, and mingling the sacred with the common. Terrible judgments will destroy those who have misrepresented Him, saying, 'The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these' (Jeremiah 7:4), when their example is misleading." *The Signs of the Times*, October 31, 1900.

The essence of this parable is therefore seen in the question the Saviour posed to these leaders of His church and the answer that they gave. "When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto Him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons" (Matthew 21:40, 41). Ellen White commented, "The speakers had not at first perceived the application of the parable, but they now saw that they had pronounced their own condemnation. In the parable the householder represented God, the vineyard the Jewish nation, and the hedge the divine law which was their protection. The tower was a symbol of the temple. The lord of the vineyard had done everything needful for its prosperity." *The Desire of Ages*, 596.

### Who are husbandmen?

They are farmers, keepers of vineyard, caretakers of cattle (see Matthew 21:33; Joel 1:11; Zechariah 13:5).

### Whom do the husbandmen represent?

Firstly, the vineyard represents the Old Testament Hebrew church. God brought Israel from Egypt into Canaan, planted her a choice vine, fenced her, equipped her there, and placed her under spiritual leaders who are represented as husbandmen. That is why Jesus' words

in Matthew 21:33 were directed to the chief priests and elders.

David wrote, "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it" (Psalm 80:8).

The Prophet Isaiah penned, "For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant" (Isaiah 5:7).

Second, Ellen White shows also that the husbandmen represent the Jewish nation, "whom God had appointed to cultivate His vineyard, the world." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, 328.

### Whom do the servants represent?

"The servants whom God sent to receive the fruits of the vineyard were the prophets and teachers through whom God had called Israel to render to Him His dues." Ibid.

Christ was addressing people who were acquainted with the things of God. He was talking to His people, the stock of Israel, product of the wilderness church. Various prophets and patriarchs spoke of their heritage. For example, Isaiah beautifully records the parable of the vineyard in chapter 5 of his book, speaking of the house of Israel: "Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein" (Isaiah 5:1, 2).

And the prophet Ezekiel in his book declared of Israel, "Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters" (Ezekiel 19:10).

So, based upon the word of the Lord through the Prophet Isaiah, Israel was a vine planted in the Promised Land by the Lord. Yet, Israel was not the true vine. The Savior, as He looked sorrowfully on them, continued: "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become

the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Matthew 21:42-44). This replacement would be in consequence of their rejection of Him.

This parable spoken by our Lord specifically calls our attention to the vicious actions and outrageous conduct of the husbandmen who were in charge of God's vineyard! When they were called upon at the proper season to produce the fruit expected by the owner of the vineyard, they failed to do so. This was primarily due to the false belief that they adhered to and taught that they were and always would be the chosen people of God.

Jesus loves His church dearly, and that's why when He came on this earth He went directly to the Jewish church for the expressed purpose of working with His people in a united effort. (See Luke 4:16-30.) Sadly, however, "He came unto His own, and His own received him not" (John 1:11).

The question that we may rightly ask now is, Why is it that the very church



*Unless we walk in the ways of the Lord, keeping all His commandments, He cannot bless and sustain us.*



“

*In the parable of the vineyard Christ presented the true condition of the once chosen people of God. He revealed to them their sinful breach of trust.*

of His own planting rejected Him? As a preamble to answering this question, I share with you the following from John's gospel, chapter 15, verse 1, where Jesus taught, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." In the book, *The Desire of Ages*, 675, we

read, "Israel had been represented as a vine which God had planted in the Promised Land. The Jews based their hope of salvation on the fact of their connection with Israel. But Jesus says, I am the real Vine. Think not that through a connection with Israel you may become part-takers of the life of God, and inheritors of His promise. Through Me alone is spiritual life received."

Knowing that they were the chosen people of God, what was the attitude of the Jewish people? "The

Jewish people cherished the idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and that they were always to be exalted as the church of God. They were the children of Abraham, they declared, and so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights. But by lives of unfaithfulness they were preparing for the condemnation of heaven and for separation from God." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 294. Their favorite expression was, "The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these" (Jeremiah 7:4). This phrase, repeated three times, expressed the pride that the people felt in the greatness of their religious institution, represented by the temple.

Again Ellen White tells us, "The Jewish leaders looked with pride upon their magnificent temple, and the imposing rites of their religious service; but justice, mercy, and the love of God were lacking. The glory of the temple, the splendor of their service, could not recommend them to God; for that which alone is of value in His sight they did not offer. They did not bring Him the sacrifice of a humble and contrite spirit. It is when the vital principles of the kingdom of God are lost that ceremonies

become multitudinous and extravagant." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 297.

"The Jews" Ellen White wrote "looked upon Jerusalem as their heaven, and they were actually jealous lest the Lord should show mercy to the Gentiles." *The Desire of Ages*, 29. Similarly today, like the Jewish leaders, many SDA leaders and members are very proud of their organization and they believe that being affiliated with it will ensure them salvation.

### So why did the Jewish leaders and people reject Christ?

1. They wanted to be like other nations. "And the LORD said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7). "God brought His people out from slavery and idolatry that they might keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. He Himself ruled over them. But in their desire to be like the nations round them, they rejected the Lord's rule." *The Signs of the Times*, February 17, 1898. "Israel had become tired of pious rulers who kept God's purposes and God's will and God's honor ever before them according to God's instructions. They wanted a reformed religion that they might by external, flattering prosperity be esteemed great in the eyes of the surrounding nations." *Christ Triumphant*, 141.
2. Because of a deep-rooted, false belief which led them to confuse the purpose of their church organization with the purpose of Jesus. The Jews believed that affiliation with their established church organization would guarantee them salvation because, according to them, "Israel" was "the vine," the only source of salvation! How deceived were they because their own prophets have written, "Salvation is of the LORD" (Jonah 2: 9). "Salvation belongeth unto the LORD" (Psalm 3:8). Also, "The LORD is my light and my salvation" (Psalm 27:1); "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from Him cometh my

salvation" (Psalm 62:1). No church, religious organization, or a human being has ever been the source of salvation. Jesus is the source.

3. Because of envy and jealousy. "Christ would have averted the doom of the Jewish nation if the people had received Him. But envy and jealousy made them implacable [hardhearted]. They determined that they would not receive Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. They rejected the Light of the world, and henceforth their lives were surrounded with darkness as the darkness of midnight." *Prophets and Kings*, 712.

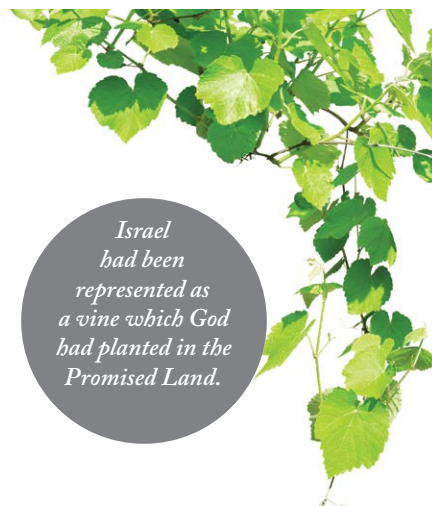
### Why were the Jews envious and jealous of Jesus?

This leads to the fourth reason why the Jews and their leaders rejected Christ.

4. Because the church leaders wanted the church and the glory for themselves. The gospel writer Mark tells us, "But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours" (Mark 12:7).

This intent to kill the heir was not just in their secret thoughts but was actually spoken by them. The gospel writer John reports the following:

"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this Man doeth many miracles. If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one Man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that



*Israel  
had been  
represented as  
a vine which God  
had planted in the  
Promised Land.*

were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death" (John 11:47-53).

These Jewish leaders rejected Christ and had Him killed in order to take full possession of His church. The husbandmen wanted the vineyard to do with as they pleased. Their focus was not Godward but self-centered! Ellen White accounts the following: "The husbandmen who had been placed in charge of the Lord's vineyard were untrue to their trust. The priests and teachers were not faithful instructors of the people. They did not keep before them the goodness and mercy of God and His claim to their love and service. These husbandmen sought their own glory. They desired to appropriate the fruits of the vineyard. It was their study to attract attention and homage to themselves." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 292.

The servant of the Lord also revealed the depth of the church leaders' envy and jealousy. She states, "The Jewish rulers did not love God; therefore they cut themselves away from Him, and rejected all His overtures for a just settlement. Christ, the Beloved of God, came to assert the claims of the Owner of the vineyard; but the husbandmen treated Him with marked contempt, saying, We will not have this Man to rule over us. They envied Christ's beauty of character. His manner of teaching was far superior to theirs, and they dreaded His

success. He remonstrated with them, unveiling their hypocrisy, and showing them the sure results of their course of action. This stirred them to madness. They smarted under the rebukes they could not silence. They hated the high standard of righteousness which Christ continually presented. They saw that His teaching was placing them where their selfishness would be uncloaked, and they determined to kill Him. They hated His example of truthfulness and piety and the elevated spirituality revealed in all He did. His whole life was a reproof to their selfishness, and when the final test came, the test which meant obedience unto eternal life or disobedience unto eternal death, they rejected the Holy One of Israel. When they were asked to choose between Christ and Barabbas, they cried out, 'Release unto us Barabbas' (Luke 23:18)!" *Ibid.*, 293, 294.

The reasons why Christ established His "off-shoot" church are quite evident. The Jewish leaders failed to realize that "Israel," "the choice vine," "the vineyard," was only an "off-shoot" of the "true vine" – Jesus Christ, who declares "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman" (John 15:1). He also said, "I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life ..." (John 14:6). It is Jesus who constitutes the true church; It is Jesus who is the true and only source of salvation. It is Jesus who said, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Indeed, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The great Protestant reformer Martin Luther wrote the following: "Christ, whom God the Father has raised from the dead is our righteousness and our victory." [LM](#)

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# *The Workings of His Providence*

*The hand that intervenes...*

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By John R. Pearson

*"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."*

Romans 8:28

**T**hroughout history, the providential hand of God has moved to guide His people and to fulfill His purposes in the execution of the plan of salvation. Incredible as it may seem, even the life and death of Jesus was part of that plan, as attested to by Peter in his sermon at Pentecost when he said, "Him [Jesus], being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death" (Acts 2:23).

The interesting portion of this statement is that Christ's being "taken by lawless hands, ... crucified, and put to death" was done "by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God."





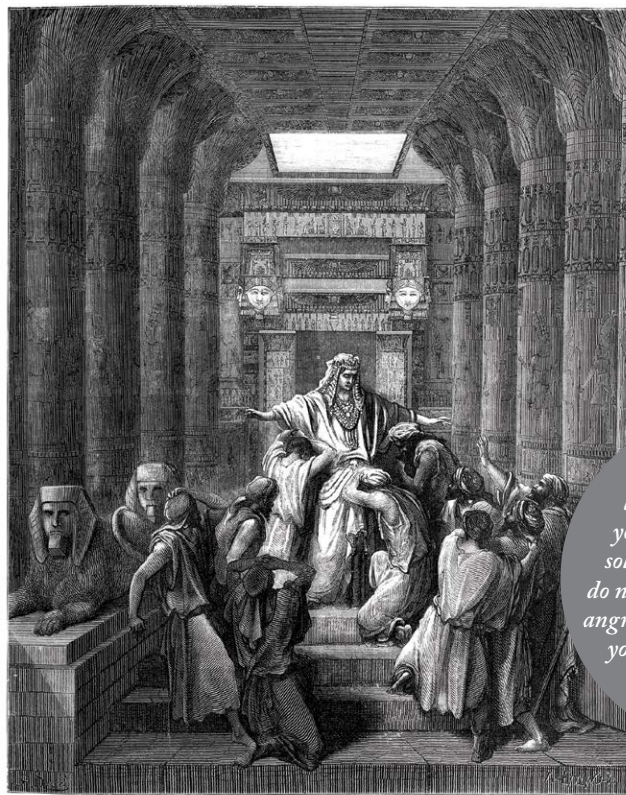
It is doubtful that anyone living today will suffer crucifixion, although no one knows what might happen to God's faithful during the time of trouble. However, it is undeniable that God's hand has sometimes moved in a manner that is puzzling at the least and absolutely mysterious and even sometimes painful—mentally if not physically—at the most. It often happened in the lives of God's faithful servants historically; it happened in Jesus' life; it happens in our lives today.

Think of the thorough education Moses received in the courts of Egypt. "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He received an education in the providence of God ..." Although much of that education was used in shepherding the children of Israel through the wilderness, "... a large part of that education had to be unlearned, and accounted as foolishness." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 360. Moses' learning as well as his "unlearning" were all within God's plan, not only His plan for Moses, but for the children of Israel as well.

Think also of Joseph's having been sold into slavery to save God's people and spread the truth in Egypt. "In the providence of God, even this experience was to be a blessing to him. He had learned in a few hours that which years might not otherwise have taught him." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 213.

One of the things Joseph learned in those first few hours of his "captivity," was to have a deeper trust in the providential and protecting hand of God—a lesson that it would be well for us to learn today.

Joseph's acknowledgment that he had learned this deeper trust is revealed by what he said as recorded in Genesis 45:4-8: "And Joseph said to his brothers, 'Please come near to me.' So they came near. Then he said: 'I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me



*Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.'*

here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."

It is interesting that even after five years of famine during which Joseph, as a result of the providential moving of God's hand in his life, was able to sustain his family in Goshen of Egypt, and not only his family but the entire nation of Egypt, his brothers still failed to recognize that God was leading throughout their experiences.

After Jacob died, Joseph's brothers expected him to exact due vengeance upon them for the cruelty of their deed, many years previously. Even though Joseph had explained to them years earlier that

God's providence had brought him to Egypt, they nevertheless expected that Joseph would extract revenge, once Jacob had died.

"When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, 'Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him.' So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, 'Before your father died he commanded, saying, "Thus you shall say to Joseph: 'I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you. Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father.'" And Joseph wept when they [the messengers] spoke to him. Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, 'Behold, we are your servants.' Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive' "(Genesis 50:15-20).

The witness of Daniel and the other three Hebrew worthies in the courts of Babylon provides another example of the hand of God moving to shed light in a dark world and fulfill His plan for the salvation of the human race.

In writing about God's faithful witnesses through time, Inspiration, in remarking about Joseph in Egypt and Daniel and his fellows in Babylon, notes that "In the providence of God these men were taken captive, that they might carry to heathen nations the knowledge of the true God. They were to be representatives of God in our world. They were to make no compromise with the idolatrous nations with which they were brought in contact, but were to stand loyal to their faith, bearing as a special honor the name of worshipers of the God who created the heavens and the earth." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 153.

Another example of God's hand moving behind the scenes to execute His will occurred when Esther was made a queen of the Medo-Persian kingdom, again through the providential moving of God's hand to save His people.

We know the story of Haman's rage at Mordecai because Mordecai would not bow down to Haman's authority to acknowledge his superior position in the government of the Medo-Persian kingdom. The spurious reasoning Haman gave to the king to do away with Mordecai is recorded in Esther 3:8: "Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, 'There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws. Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain.'"

Let's pause for a moment to let that sink in: "... their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws. Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain."

In other words, these "certain people" keep the law of God rather than the law of man.

Therefore, they should be exterminated. Inspiration tells us that the same reasoning will be used at the end of time as Satan makes one final effort to rid the earth of God's faithful people.

We know what happened next in the story of Esther: "Misled by the false statements of Haman, Xerxes was induced to issue a decree providing for the massacre of all the Jews 'scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces' (Esther 3:8) of the Medo-Persian kingdom. A certain day was appointed on which the Jews were to be destroyed and their property confiscated. Little did the king realize the far-reaching results that would have accompanied the complete carrying out of this decree. Satan himself, the hidden instigator of the scheme, was trying to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God. ...

"But the plots of the enemy were defeated by a Power that reigns among the children of men. In the providence of God, Esther, a Jewess who feared the Most High, had been made queen of the Medo-Persian kingdom. Mordecai was a near relative of hers. In their extremity they decided to appeal to Xerxes in behalf of their people. Esther was to venture into his presence as an intercessor. 'Who knoweth,' said Mordecai, 'whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?' (Esther 4:14, *last part*, KJV)." *Prophets and Kings*, 600, 601.

The end was that Haman was trapped in his own plot. He was the one who ended up being executed, while the object of his designs—God's commandment-keeping people—were spared. However, the salvation of God's people certainly was not in anyone's thoughts when Esther was made the queen—another example of the moving of the providential hand of God.

Let's move forward to the time of Christ. Although His entire incarnation and the events that occurred during His brief time on earth were all providential, let us focus on the final hours of that incarnation, to the time when Christ was lifted up on the cross.

In the providence of God, Pilate was moved to write an inscription in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin and place it on the cross above the head of Jesus.

“

*God's hand moves mysteriously—sometimes in a way that pleasantly surprises, but sometimes in a way that is decidedly unpleasant.*

“It read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews’ (John 19:19). . . .

“A higher power than Pilate or the Jews had directed the placing of that inscription above the head of Jesus. In the providence of God it was to awaken thought, and investigation of the Scriptures. The place where Christ was crucified was near to the city. Thousands of people from all lands were then at Jerusalem, and the inscription declaring Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah would come to their notice. It was a living truth, transcribed by a hand that God had guided.” *The Desire of Ages*, 745, 746.

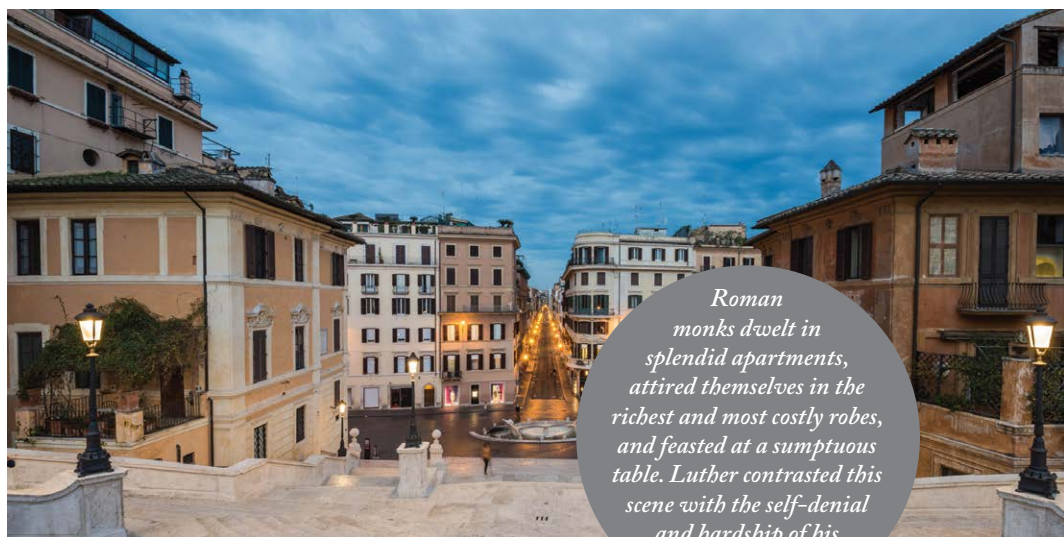
Decades after the crucifixion, God continued to thwart the unconsecrated purposes of man to accomplish His purposes. After failed attempts to silence the last surviving apostle, John, the soon-to-be Revelator, was banished to a lonely, remote, and rocky island.

“But the Lord’s hand was moving unseen in the darkness. In the providence of God, John was placed where Christ could give him a wonderful revelation of Himself and of divine truth for the enlightenment of the churches.

“In exiling John, the enemies of truth had hoped to silence forever the voice of God’s faithful witness; but on Patmos the disciple received a message, the influence of which was to continue to strengthen the church till the end of time. Though not released from the responsibility of their wrong act, those who banished John became instruments in the hands of God to carry out Heaven’s purpose; and the very effort to extinguish the light placed the truth in bold relief.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 581.

Let’s move forward another 1400 years or so to the time of Martin Luther.

According to Inspiration, even after he had found and studied the Bible and had begun to discern the errors of the teachings of the Catholic church, “Luther was still a true son of the papal church and had no thought that he would ever be anything else. In the providence of God he was led to visit



*Roman monks dwelt in splendid apartments, attired themselves in the richest and most costly robes, and feasted at a sumptuous table. Luther contrasted this scene with the self-denial and hardship of his own life.*

Rome. He pursued his journey on foot, lodging at the monasteries on the way. At a convent in Italy he was filled with wonder at the wealth, magnificence, and luxury that he witnessed. Endowed with a princely revenue, the monks dwelt in splendid apartments, attired themselves in the richest and most costly robes, and feasted at a sumptuous table. With painful misgivings Luther contrasted this scene with the self-denial and hardship of his own life. His mind was becoming perplexed.” *The Great Controversy*, 124.

The ultimate outcome of that providential visit was that Luther learned that neither he nor anyone else could “earn” salvation and that the just shall live—that is, be granted eternal life—by faith and faith alone.

Let us move up now another three centuries or so to relatively more modern times. The story of the tragedy that occurred when Ellen White was nine years old is a familiar one. The mental and physical anguish that she endured as the Lord was preparing her for His service is a puzzlement to us, at the least. After recurring doubt and much resistance to the obvious will of God, she received a detailed vision of the work that the Lord wanted her to do. Following that vision, she confided

in her mother, who suggested that she relate her perplexity to Elder Stockman, who was preaching the Advent doctrine in Portland, Maine, at the time.

She recorded later, “I had great confidence in him, for he was a devoted servant of Christ. Upon hearing my story, he placed his hands affectionately upon my head, saying with tears in his eyes: ‘Ellen, you are only a child. Yours is a most singular experience for one of your tender age. Jesus must be preparing you for some special work.’

“He then told me that even if I were a person of mature years and thus harassed by doubt and despair, he should tell me that he knew there was hope for me, through the love of Jesus. . . .

“He spoke of my early misfortune, and said it was indeed a grievous one, but he bade me believe that the hand of a loving Father had not been withdrawn from me; that in the future life, when the mist that then darkened my mind had vanished, I would discern the wisdom of the providence which had seemed so cruel and mysterious. Jesus said to His disciples: ‘What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter’ (John 13:7). In the great future

*Continued on page 34*



# *The People Demand a King*

## Clues – 1 Samuel 8-11 (KJV)

### *Across:*

B1	Samuel to the elders: a king will take your sons to make tools of _____	8:11, 12
B8	Samuel told Saul he'd meet a company of prophets with one of these	10:5
B17	The elders to Samuel: we want a king to _____ for us	8:20
C4	Saul sent word to Jabesh that they would receive this	11:9
C11	When did Saul arise to depart from Samuel after their first meeting?	9:26
E6	God to Samuel: Anoint Saul to be king that he may do this to My people	9:16
E16	God told Samuel to do this to the people's wishes	8:22
F1	Samuel to the elders: a king will take these from you	8:14
G7	Saul's response to the threat of the Ammonites	11:6
G14	All of these that Samuel had given Saul came to pass that very day (singular)	10:9
H2	Saul and company did this to almost all of the Ammonites	11:11
H18	The Ammonites proposed to put out these eyes of the Jabeshites	11:2
I10	God to Samuel: They have _____ Me, not you	8:7
J2	Samuel's reaction to the elder's request for a king	8:6
J18	The men of Jabesh were this upon hearing Saul was coming to their rescue	11:9
L8	Samuel to the elders: a king will take these to be his cooks and bakers	8:13
L18	Saul was accompanied home by a _____ of men	10:26
M2	Who shouted "God save the king?"	10:24
N8	Saul wanted to give the man of God this	9:7
N16	Samuel told Saul he'd meet a man carrying three of these	10:3
O2	The servant offered Saul part of his silver _____ to give the man of God	9:8
P13	Samuel to the elders: a king will take this much of your seed	8:15
P19	Saul came in from the field and asked why the people did this	11:5
Q6	Samuel's sons revealed their evil character by taking these	8:3
R12	Saul's father's asses became this	9:3
S1	Saul's servant knew a man of God was in this	9:6
S16	Samuel to the elders: a king will take these and you will be his servants	8:17

### *Down:*

A2	Saul was surprised Samuel chose him because his was the least of all _____	9:21
A9	The young maidens told Saul and his servant to look for Samuel with _____	9:12
A13	Samuel told Saul to do this in Gilgal for seven days	10:8
A15	The _____ of the people had come to God because of the Philistines	9:16
A18	Where Samuel took the people to renew the kingdom	11:14
B6	The young maidens told Saul that Samuel would do this to the sacrifice	9:13
B11	What Samuel's evil sons did to justice	8:3
C4	Saul and his servant had to climb this to reach the town where Samuel was	9:11
D21	What the people did to Saul when he tried to hide from Samuel	10:23
E8	Samuel to the elders: a king will take these from you (singular)	8:14
E16	Saul was this than any other of the people	9:2
G19	What contained the oil with which Samuel anointed Saul?	10:1
H5	The people of Gibeah did this upon hearing tidings from Jabesh	11:4
H13	God gave Saul another one of these	10:9

A		3	4	5	6	7	8		10	11	12		14		16	17		19	20	21	A
																					B
C																					C
D																					D
E																					
																					F
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																					S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		10	11	12		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22

I10 Even after reasoning with them the people \_\_\_\_\_ Samuel's counsel

8:19

J2 The sons of Belial did this to Saul

10:27

J18 Saul's home town

10:26

L4 God wanted Samuel to protest the elder's request how?

8:9

L16 Samuel told Saul three men would do this to him

10:4

N13 The elders to Samuel: we want a king to be like all the \_\_\_\_\_

8:4,5

N21 Saul was concerned that their bread was this

9:7

O7 Saul gave credit to the \_\_\_\_\_ for saving the people

11:13

P19 Samuel told Saul he'd meet a man carrying a bottle of this

10:3

Q9 Samuel to the elders: a king will take the \_\_\_\_\_ of your oliveyards

8:14

### Answer Key:

22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
S																					C
R																					R
O																					O
P																					P
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**T**he apostle Paul, who had received many revelations from the Lord, met difficulties from various sources, and amidst all his conflicts and discouragements, he did not lose his confidence and trust in God. Under the special tuition of the Holy Spirit, his judgment was purified, refined, elevated, sanctified. The devising of human beings and of the enemy against him, were to him a means of discipline and education, and he declares that thus he gained most excellent knowledge, because he made the Lord Jesus his dependence. “Yea,” doubtless he declares, “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord” (Philippians 3:8). How greatly this gospel enriches the garden of the soul, enabling it to produce most precious fruit!

The Lord Jesus has an interest in every phase of His work. The Lord will make all things work together for good, even


though for the present, His servants are inconvenienced, and greatly disappointed, by being hemmed in on every side. The Lord has a work to be done in this world, and it will be done, even though all the hosts of the powers of darkness shall be summoned to obstruct the way. In His own good time God will cause his truth to triumph.

We must be wide awake, quick to recognize the movings of the providence of God. We must keep our own counsel that we have entrusted to us by the Lord, not giving the enemy any advantage. The Lord is looking on; the Lord is opening ways, whereby the truth shall gain the ascendancy; for the truth is the habitation of His throne.

Jesus feels every pang of sorrow felt by those who are consecrated to His service, and who, under great difficulties are doing His work. Let us dwell upon the love of Jesus, that we may have

courage and faith. The Lord lives and reigns. There will be unwise advisers who will try to confuse us, but let us look to Jesus, and trust in Him at all times. He has been our helper and will continue to be our helper. Be of good courage in the Lord.

I say again, be of good courage, and watch unto prayer. Let us do our part to answer our prayers by living in harmony with them. We know something of what is before us. We know that trials await us. But those who are true and steadfast will have a strong and powerful defense in God. My trust is unwavering. I am not discouraged, because I can hold to the hand of Christ. Let us be always cheerful, that others may not catch from us the spirit of discouragement. Sing praises to the Lord; sing praises to His holy name.

*Bible Training School, November 1, 1903.* 



## Stand & Trust

**S**tand and trust in the word of God. We must stand my brother and my sister and trust in the word of God now. Consider some of those by whom we can be encouraged:

“How often those who trusted the word of God, though in themselves utterly helpless, have withstood the power of the whole world—

- Enoch, pure in heart, holy in life, holding fast his faith in the triumph of righteousness against a corrupt and scoffing generation;
- Noah and his household against the men of his time, men of the greatest physical and mental strength and the most debased in morals;
- The children of Israel at the Red Sea, a helpless, terrified multitude of slaves, against the mightiest army of the mightiest nation on the globe;

- David, a shepherd lad, having God’s promise of the throne, against Saul, the established monarch, bent on holding fast his power;
- Shadrach and his companions in the fire, and Nebuchadnezzar on the throne;
- Daniel among the lions, his enemies in the high places of the kingdom;
- Jesus on the cross, and the Jewish priests and rulers forcing even the Roman governor to work their will;
- Paul in chains led to a criminal’s death, Nero the despot of a world empire.

“Such examples are not found in the Bible only. They abound in every record of human progress. The Vaudois and the Huguenots, Wycliffe and Huss, Jerome and Luther, Tyndale and Knox, Zinzen-

dorf and Wesley, with multitudes of others, have witnessed to the power of God’s word against human power and policy in support of evil. These are the world’s true nobility.” *Education*, 254.


We need faith in Jesus. Now is the time to take a bold step out from the world and walk in His presence where you will find fullness of joy. Trust as did Enoch and Noah. Take your stand now. Proverbs 3:5–8 says, “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.”

It is time to stand and to trust. Stand my brother. Stand my sister. And trust in your Lord now—no matter what may happen. **LM**

*Heavenly Father: Give us the strength to take a stand right now. We have been withering away from standing for truth and we now choose to stand, no matter what, for Your truth and to live according to heaven’s standards and not this world’s standards. We love You Lord. Help us to be strong as our brothers during Bible times to the present. Thank You Lord, for we know it is Your will. Amen.*



# *Thanksgiving Day*



**E**very year, for many years, the good people of our land have kept Thanksgiving Day. It comes in the month of November, after the corn, the apples, and the pumpkins are gathered, and after the farmers have cut a pile of wood big enough to last all winter.

By that time, too, the boys and girls who live in the country have had a chance to gather the hickory nuts and walnuts, and the squirrels out in the woods have filled the hollow trees with nuts and acorns.

Then people remember that God has been very good. He has sent the rain and the sunshine, and has made the corn and the apples and the nuts grow. So we have Thanksgiving Day.

Sometimes a snow comes around Thanksgiving time. Then we may remember the little birds, and put out something for them to eat. We ought also to remember poor people and try to make them happy.

Do you know why they had pumpkin pies at the first Thanksgiving, long ago?

It was because they had no apples. So they took the big orange pumpkins and made pies of them. Now we have had pumpkin pies at Thanksgiving so many times that we do not want to do without them.

The first Thanksgiving was at a place called Plymouth. For almost a year the people there had been very hungry.

But God heard their prayers. One day two strangers called Samoset and Squanto visited the settlement. They were native Indians who lived on the land. They taught the settlers how to grow food on their new soil. So the pilgrims made new friends and learned how to grow food in their new home. With the help of Squanto and the other members of his tribe by the end of the season the Pilgrims had an abundant harvest.

To celebrate the harvest the Pilgrims invited the Indian tribes to the feast. The Indians helped the settlers hunt for the feast. And a large feast of corn, roasted meat, pumpkin pie, and fruits was shared. The Pilgrims dedicated this day to getting together with friends and family and thanking God for the abundance of good food and those they love.

And so began the tradition of Thanksgiving.

Night and morn  
Shocks of corn  
Stood 'round Plymouth Town;  
Then freeze  
Nipped the trees  
And the nuts came down.

Late that fall  
Indians tall  
Came to Plymouth Town,  
There to eat  
Corn bread sweet  
And turkey roasted brown.

All the men  
Quickly then  
To the feast sat down;  
Three whole days  
Thanks and praise  
Rose to God on high.

*History Stories for Children,*  
John W. Wayland,  
©1991, 23–26. **LM**





## Your Letters

"Thank you for sending us the *LandMarks* magazine. My wife reads it from cover to cover."

—D&JO, Wisconsin

"I thank you so much for *LandMarks* to read and to do better, to be an overcomer and be like Jesus—perfect! I love you in Jesus Christ's precious name."

—TM, Arizona

"Thank you so much for your ministry! You are a blessing to me and my family!"

—AB, Minnesota

### November Sermon of the Month

#### Written in the Heart

By John J. Grosboll

God's law is eternal; it always has been and it always will be—it had no beginning and will have no end.

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

## From the Desk of Pastor John J. Grosboll

### November 2019

Dear Friend,

Our mission is to take the three angels' messages to the world. "Our mission is to give to the world the message of warning and mercy." *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 163.

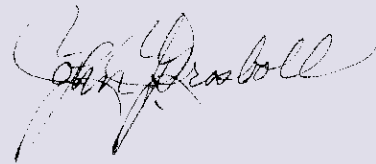
Every season and time of the year has its own unique witnessing opportunities. At the end of the year when people are exalting Santa Claus instead of Jesus Christ, we have an excellent opportunity to share our faith through the use of gifts of literature. People will accept it because it is customary to give gifts at that time of year.

In the spring when new life is appearing in the natural world, we have an excellent opportunity to give people literature about receiving new life and in the summer when people are thinking about liberty and freedom we have an excellent opportunity to give them material about the freedom from the bondage of sin.

On special occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries we have more unique opportunities. There are also opportunities when there is a birth or a death or a graduation or a sickness or some crisis that a person is going through. We need to learn not only to give out literature concerning our hope and containing the message of warning and mercy but we need to learn to share our hope verbally with people that we meet. Following is some inspired counsel on that point:

"As a people we should cultivate kindness and courtesy in our association with those whom we meet. Let us avoid any abruptness of manner, and strive always to present the truth in an easy way. This truth means life, eternal life, to the receiver. Study therefore to pass easily and courteously from subjects of a temporal nature to the spiritual and eternal. A most courteous manner characterized the work of the Saviour. Seek in the most gentle way to introduce your mission. While walking by the way, or seated to rest by the wayside, we may drop into some heart the seeds of truth." *The Review and Herald*, June 18, 1908.

Sincerely, your brother in witnessing,



John J. Grosboll

*Inspired:* "When we cease to fulfill our mission, when the candlestick refuses to reflect light, and the great truths committed to us individually in trust for the world, are not given to them, then the candlestick will be removed." *The Review and Herald*, June 7, 1887.

# *The Right Arm of the Gospel*

## *in Nigeria*

### *The Opening Wedge at Work*

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By Pastor Domingo Nunez

Steps to Life would like to be able to provide a shipment of herbal remedies for the medical missionary work in Nigeria. While relatively inexpensive here in the United States of America, the prices for herbs are prohibitively higher in Nigeria. Even with paying the high shipping costs to Africa, the total cost for sending herbs from the US to Africa remains below the cost of local acquisition.

Here is a letter from Brother Daniel Terence expressing their needs.

To assist us in moving the right arm of the gospel in Nigeria, please mark your donations *Nigeria*. [LM](#)

Dear Brethren in Christ:

We praise God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ for His faithful children and the kindness of sharing the blessings He provides. We are very thankful to Steps to Life Ministry for their assistance in appealing on behalf of the believers in Nigeria for the urgent need of supplies for their medical missionary work. While these material supplies make it possible to come near to the people for their physical suffering, it has opened the door to share the truths of the gospel that may be their only invitation to come to know the plan of salvation.

“Remember that there is a world to save. We are to act our part, standing close by the side of Christ as His collaborators. He is the head; we are His helping hand. He designs that we, by doing medical missionary work, shall undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free.” *Welfare Ministry*, 118.

Thank you once again to Steps to Life Ministry and all its supporters for being an instrument of God for these last days.

Your brother in Jesus,  
*Daniel Terence*





## *A "Proper Building"* *in Zambia*

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By Pastor Domingo Nunez

**A**s the gospel spreads in Zambia, the need for a permanent base from which to work has become evident. Pastor Henry Mwesa, who attended the Steps to Life camp meeting in 2018, has developed a dynamic program in his home country, with much needed assistance from the donations you have provided through this ministry. Here is a message we recently received from Pastor Henry explaining their needs. He also sent some photos of the building he hopes to acquire.





*Acquisition of this unfinished but sturdy cinderblock building would be an answer to prayer for the work in Zambia.*

Greetings from Pastor Henry of Lusaka West Church of Zambia. We give all praise and glory to the Father for His blessings to us since the beginnings of our little church established ten years ago. With His blessing we have been able to worship as an independent historic SDA church, but not without the enemy's attempts to destroy our efforts to stand in defense of the truth and purity of the Gospel.

Over the years our progress has been aided with the help of Steps to Life Ministry and with the guidance and assistance of Pastor Nunez. This blessed assistance has enabled us to expand beyond Lusaka to other areas of Zambia, and into Malawi as well.

Steps to Life made it possible for us to obtain a copier, enabling us to produce *LandMarks* as reported in a past issue. As a result of the expanded work our ministry is in dire need of a proper building to operate more effectively. This building would serve as a base for the printing office, a chapel for worship, a separate room for medical missionary counsel, and a room to lodge a Bible worker travelling from out of town.

As we presented this need to our Father in heaven, we were notified of an abandoned unfinished building in Lusaka that would suit the needs specified above. The building has been offered to us at a reasonable price of \$3,000.00 dollars and would be a tremendous blessing to the ministry work here in Lusaka. We humbly appeal for assistance in obtaining this unfinished structure that it may be completed by your brethren here in Lusaka to continue to share the truth and continue to warn those who will humbly listen to the three angels' messages.

Thank you in advance for your kind support,

*Pastor Henry*

Prairie Meadows Church, pastored by Pastor John Grosboll, has pledged to provide half of the requested \$3000.00. Please help to reach the full goal by contributing to this worthy project. Mark your donations *Zambia*. [LM](#)

# The Rainbow

When the sun darts his rays on the drops of water that fall from a cloud, and when we are so placed that our backs are towards the sun and the cloud is before us, then we see a rainbow.

The drops of rain may be considered as small, transparent globes on which the rays fall and are twice refracted and once reflected. Hence the colors of the rainbow, which are *seven* in number and are arranged in the following order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.

These colors appear the most vivid when the cloud behind the rainbow is dark and the drops of rain fall thick and fast. The drops falling continually produce a new rainbow every moment, and as each spectator has his particular situation, from which he observes this phenomenon, it so happens that no two people, properly speaking, can see the same rainbow. This rainbow can last no longer than the drops of rain continue to fall.

If we consider the rainbow merely as a phenomenon of nature, it is one of

the finest sights imaginable. It is the most beautiful colored picture which the Creator has placed before our eyes. But, when we recollect that God has made it a sign of His mercy and of the covenant which He has condescended to enter into with man, then we shall find matter in it for the most edifying reflection.

When the rain is general, there can be no rainbow. As often, therefore, as we see this beautiful symbol of peace, we may conclude with certainty that we need fear no deluge; for to effect one, there must be a violent rain from all parts of the heavens at once.

Thus, when the sky is only covered on one side with clouds, and the sun is seen on the other, it is a proof that these gloomy clouds shall be shortly dispersed, and the heavens become serene. Hence it is that a rainbow cannot be seen unless the sun be behind and the rain before us. For the formation of the bow, it is necessary that the sun and the rain should be seen at the same time.

*The Moore McGuffey Readers*, William H. McGuffey, Sturm, 1836, 58, 59.

“And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud. ... and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 77.

“As we gaze upon the beautiful sight, we may be joyful in God, assured that He Himself is looking upon this token of His covenant, and that as He looks upon it He remembers the children of earth, to whom it was given. Their afflictions, perils, and trials are not hidden from Him. We may rejoice in hope, for the bow of God’s covenant is over us. He never will forget the children of His care. How difficult for the mind of finite man to take in the peculiar love and tenderness of God, and His matchless condescension when He said, ‘I will look upon the bow in the cloud, and remember thee.’” *Our High Calling*, 314. **LM**



Q:

*How does fine  
gold become  
dim?*



A:

**H**ow is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed" (Lamentations 4:1)!

"Bathsheba observed the customary days of mourning for her husband; and at their close 'David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife' (2 Samuel 11:27). He whose tender conscience and high sense of honor would not permit him, even when in peril of his life, to put forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, had so fallen that he could wrong and murder one of his most faithful and most valiant soldiers, and hope to enjoy undisturbed the reward of his sin. Alas! how had the fine gold become dim! how had the most fine gold changed!" *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 720.

"The standard of holiness is the same today as in the days of the apostles. Neither the promises nor the requirements of God have lost aught of their force.

But what is the state of the Lord's professed people as compared with the early church? Where is the Spirit and power of God which then attended the preaching of the gospel? Alas, 'how is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!'" *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 240.

"Human beings have degenerated. One after another they fall under the curse, because sin has entered the world, and death by sin. The truth is not made precious by practise [sic]. It does not sanctify the soul. It fades from the mind because the heart does not appreciate its value. In consequence, the mind becomes more and more darkened by the atmosphere, which is malarious because of the perpetuating of Adam's sin. The conscience has lost its sensitiveness. Through a repetition of sin, the impression made on the conscience by sin has no longer force enough to arrest the transgressor,

diseased, depraved, and dying. The voice no longer echoes the voice of God, or gives expression to the music of a soul sanctified through the truth. The heart, in which God should be enthroned, is a place from which come forth all kinds of abominations. How has the fine gold become dim! Man has lost the reflection of God's character." *The Signs of the Times*, June 27, 1900.

"The church is not now the separate and peculiar people she was when the fires of persecution were kindled against her. How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! I saw that if the church had always retained her peculiar, holy character, the power of the Holy Spirit which was imparted to the disciples would still be with her. The sick would be healed, devils would be rebuked and cast out, and she would be mighty and a terror to her enemies." *Early Writings*, 227. **LM**





## *Is Diet a Salvational Issue?*

**S**ome time ago a Seventh-day Adventist pastor asked this question from the pulpit: “Is what you eat a salvational issue?” The response from the congregation was a very loud and overwhelming “NO!”

Since when does consensus establish truth? Let us take a long and intensive look at this question from Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy and see if we can determine the truth from Inspired writing.

We will first go to the very beginning of Scripture in Genesis, chapter 1.

The original diet was given to mankind by our Creator, who should know better than any other being what would be best for us. Genesis 1:29 states: “And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.” One can see that the original diet for mankind was a vegan diet. Absolutely no animal products or any refined or artificially manufactured products.

After the fall of man and his/her expulsion from the garden he was told to also eat "... the herb of the field." This verse gave man permission to now eat things that grow in the dirt, which are assumed to be vegetables.

At this point we need to determine what is a fruit and what is a vegetable. A botanical definition is that a fruit is something that the plant produces and a vegetable is part of the plant itself, such as the leaves, the stem, or the root. Most of what we eat is classified as fruit. All products of trees, vines or bushes are fruits, e.g., apples, pears, peaches, nuts, berries, grapes, tomatoes, and such. Grains are actually fruits of grasses, as is corn. Such things as beets, carrots, celery, cabbage, lettuce, and the like, are vegetables or herbs of the field. These things were probably added since the abundance of fruits in the garden were now not available.

Now we come to the time of Noah in Genesis 6–9. Notice that God instructed Noah to take into the ark, which he had spent 120 years building, two, a male and a female, of every unclean animal, and seven of every clean animal (Genesis 7:2). The distinction between clean and unclean animals can be found in Leviticus, chapter 11. The reason for this is because the flood was going to destroy all life, plant and animal, from off the face of the earth. Following the flood Noah and his family would need something to eat until the new growth upon the face of the earth could be well established. That would take at least a year or maybe two.

I firmly believe that the permission to eat animals was only supposed to be temporary until plant life was reestablished sufficiently to provide what God had originally intended that we should eat. I can't prove it, but since the Spirit of Prophecy states that man's intelligence before the flood was vastly superior to ours today that Noah most probably also took a great abundance of seed onto the ark to be able to reestab-

lish a productive garden and fruit trees in the "new" earth after the flood. He also had to have enough stored food for all the animals that were now released upon a devastated world. I personally do not think that God ever intended that mankind would continue to consume animals for any length of time.

There were many things that could make a person ritually "unclean," not just the use of an unclean animal for food: contamination with blood, or contact with a corpse to name a couple. The penalty for becoming ritually unclean was that the "unclean" individual was to leave the camp, wash himself and his clothes with water and wait until sundown, which began a new day. He then returned to the camp and went to the tabernacle where a specific offering was given. Afterwards he was then accepted back into full fellowship.

However, the penalty for the consumption of blood or fat from an animal was far more serious. Even Noah, in chapter 9 of Genesis, was told that when he began to use "clean" animals for food that he was in no way permitted to use any of the blood for food (verse 4). It was expressly forbidden by God to do so. Leviticus says in three places that it was a perpetual covenant that the fat and the blood were never to be consumed as food.

The penalty for the consumption of either fat or blood was that the individual was to be "cut off" from the camp." The Hebrew word used for *cut off* is *karath*. Daniel 9:26 states that, "After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be *cut off*." [Emphasis supplied.] The same Hebrew word for *cut off* is used here. The penalty for the consumption of blood or fat is far worse than just becoming "unclean." I dare say that today

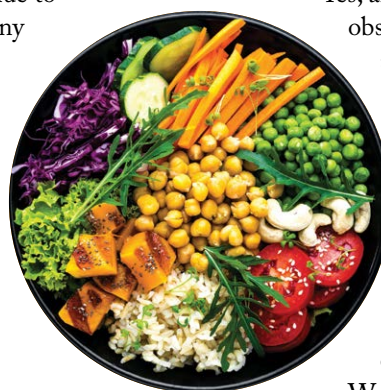
those who consume animal flesh are not using ritually slaughtered nor ritually prepared animals for the source of animal flesh. Just remember, God NEVER changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Yes, ancient Jews as well as observant Jews and even Jesus ate animal flesh at least on Passover. The lamb that was roasted was certainly ritually prepared so that it was not unclean nor did they eat any of the fat or blood. So Jesus would have eaten animal flesh at least once per year on Passover.

We also find a few occasions where He ate fish. Carnivores love to refer to this fact. In His 33 years upon this earth you can count on one hand the number of times that the Scriptures tell of Jesus eating fish. The carnivores use that as an excuse to consume animal flesh usually daily. "If meat eating was ever healthful, it is not safe now. Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat eating." *Counsels for the Church*, 236.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:17). I had a pastor tell me that this verse is in the plural and therefore does not apply to the individual, but the church body. After researching this verse in the writings of Ellen G. White, of the 42 times she references this verse, every time she applies it to the individual. So it becomes abundantly clear that if you do not take care of the physical body given you by Christ, you will not make it into the kingdom of God. Of course this applies to those who should know better, have access to Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy, or have the opportunity to find out the truth. LM

*Gene Swanson is a retired Adventist physician living in Montrose, Colorado.*





# *The Letter That Changed the World*

By John J. Grosboll

**H**ave you ever read the letter that changed the world? It was written to Christians in one of the most prominent cities of the world today, and it has been changing the history of the world ever since it was written.

A few days before His crucifixion, Jesus gave His disciples a little insight into what was going to happen in the future. Aghast at this news, they asked Him when these things were going to happen. Jesus told about the troubles that were going to come upon the world. He said, "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14).

What He said about the end coming after the gospel was preached to all the world was a dual prophecy. Jesus referred to two distinct events. In the first part of Matthew 24, Jesus predicted what would happen before the destruction of Jerusalem. This event was also a type of

the destruction that will come upon the whole world at the end of time. Jesus said that before the end would come, the gospel would be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations. And it was preached in all the world as a witness to all nations before Jerusalem was destroyed. We know this because Paul said, "If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister" (Colossians 1:23).

How was it that the apostles were successful in getting the gospel preached to every creature under heaven? Remember, no more than 30 years after the crucifixion of Jesus, the gospel had been preached to the entire world. It was a time when there was no radio, or television, telegraph, telephone, newspapers, or any of the modern media or means of communication that we have available

today. Yet the gospel was preached to all the world. It would never have happened without the special blessing and power of the Holy Spirit that came upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost.

After the apostle Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, he went on missionary tours and raised up churches in the prominent cities of the Roman Empire. Ephesus, Thessalonica, Corinth, Philippi, Antioch, as well as other places he visited to share the gospel. He greatly desired to establish the Christian religion in the city of Rome itself. In a sense, Rome was the capital city of the world in those days. People came and went from that city to and from all parts of the world and Paul knew that if Christianity could be established in Rome, it would go very quickly to all parts of the world. He was right and that is exactly what happened. The gospel at that time had already been preached to every creature under heaven.



But before that, while he was working in the city of Corinth, Paul wrote and sent a letter to the Christians in Rome. He said, “I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me” (Romans 1:8–12).

Continuing he said, “Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. I am a debtor both to Greek and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.” Paul said, “I’m ready as much as is in me to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome.” And then he said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek” (verses 13–16).

Paul then proceeded to show that the ancient nations, by not acknowledging God, lost sight of eternal realities. There are a large number of people today who are unaware that there was a time when all the nations in the world knew about the true God. Unfortunately, that knowledge has been lost. Information can be lost in one, or two, or three generations. Paul says, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the



*No more than 30 years after the crucifixion of Jesus, the gospel had been preached to the entire world. There was no radio, television, nor any of the modern means of communication.*

things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due” (verses 18–27).

Here we see clearly that the result of people knowing God but refusing to glorify Him as God, not being thankful and not wanting to keep God in their

remembrance, is a moral downhill slide. It says, “Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same

but also approve of those who practice them” (verses 28–32).

The description that the apostle gives is an accurate description of the exact conditions in which the Christians were living in the city of Rome. As one historian said, “Rome was the sewer of the nations.” *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy in the Christian Church*, by Henry Charles Lea, 1884.

The Christians in Rome were living in the place where idolatry and paganism reached its greatest heights, but where morality reached the lowest depths. By not acknowledging God, the nations lost sight of eternal realities. People want religion. They want to be saved some way. There are many people even today who believe that they will be saved by going through certain religious rituals or by making certain pronouncements. People claim that because they have made a profession and confessed their faith as a Christian they have a right to be saved. In fact, they quote a text from the book of Romans to try to prove it.

But Paul shows that there is no religious ritual or works that can save a person. Notice what he says in Romans 2:25. He says, “For circumcision [a religious rite] is indeed profitable if you

“  
*Rome was a place  
where idolatry and  
paganism reached its  
greatest heights and  
morality reached the  
lowest depths.*”

keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.” Concerning religious works, Paul said, “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:19, 20).

Paul says that not by the deeds of any law—the moral law, a ritual law, a religious law, a ceremonial law, whatever kind of law it is, by going through religious rituals, or doing certain things, making certain pronouncements—will you ever be saved.

Paul points out that we are all under condemnation and under the penalty of death because we are all violators of God’s law. It says in Romans 6:23, that “the wages of sin is death.” He says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). There is no such thing as a person who hasn’t sinned or who is not a sinner. The apostle John said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). Verse 10 says, “If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”

Everyone in the world has sinned and is under the sentence of death. In Romans 7:10, 11, it says, “And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.”

So, you cannot save yourself by any good work, by any religious ritual, or by any profession or confession. There is no ritual or ceremony you can do or be part of that can save. This is one of the first lessons you learn reading the book of Romans, but do not lose heart. God always has a solution to any problem we may have.

The book of Romans has had an effect that has changed the history of the world ever since it was written because it seems that the majority of people in the world have felt for

thousands of years that the way to be saved is to do some good thing, do some good work, go through some religious ritual, be circumcised, become a member of a certain church. However, the apostle Paul shows that none of these things can bring salvation. The Jews thought that if you become a member of their religious organization, you would be saved. Jesus told His disciples that this thought was just a delusion.

Jesus said that if you want to be saved, you had to be directly connected to Him. (See John 15.) The book of Romans teaches us that we cannot perform any good work that will save us from death. Notice what it says in Romans 3:20: “By the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Verses 27 and 28 say, “Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”

If we can’t do anything to save ourselves from the penalty of sin, which is death, and we are all sinners, guilty, and all doomed to die, then how are we going to be saved? There’s only one way. You can only be saved by the gift of the grace of God when you believe. Verses 24 to 26 say, “Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation [meaning somebody that paid the price] by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

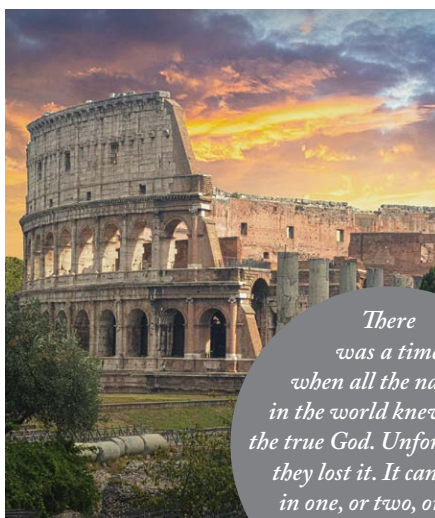
Romans 4:1–5 says, “What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.”

You can be saved only by the grace of God, when you believe. Salvation is a gift. As the apostle Paul stated to the church at Ephesus in Ephesians 2:8, salvation is a “gift of God.” Salvation is not of anything that you can work to achieve. However, when you read the rest of the chapter, you will see that to believe means to make a commitment. When Paul talks about believing, he is not just talking about giving an intellectual assent; he means making a life commitment.

Abraham is used as an example. Concerning him, Paul says, “Who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became of the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore ‘it was accounted to him for righteousness’ ” (Romans 4:18–22).

Notice, Abraham believed God, and he acted on that belief. He made a commitment. O, friend, have you made a commitment? There are many people in the world who say, “O, I believe that Jesus is the Christ. I believe that He died on the cross for the sins of the world.” But the Bible says, “The devils believe those things” (James 2:19). The devils believe all those things and tremble, but they are not going to be saved, because their intellectual belief does not lead them to make a commitment with the Lord.

Have you made a commitment with the Lord and committed your life to Him? Or is your religion just a matter of an intellectual assent, and hoping for the best? There are some people who think that because forgiveness comes by grace, by a gift of God, and not by anything that you can do, that you don’t have to do



*There was a time when all the nations in the world knew about the true God. Unfortunately, they lost it. It can be lost in one, or two, or three generations.*

anything. You don’t even need to worry about keeping God’s law anymore. Paul clearly teaches in the book of Romans that that is not the way it is.

He says in Romans 2:13: “For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified.” In Romans 3:31, he says, “Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.” Romans 7:7: “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, ‘You shall not covet’ ” (referring refers to the 10th commandment).

“But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good” (verses 8–12). Notice, he does not say the law has been done away; he says the law is holy. It

has not been made void but established (Romans 3:31). It is those who obey the law who will be justified and receive the gift of salvation. Paul says that the law is holy, and just, and good, and furthermore, he then states that the Christian who has received the Holy Spirit will, through the power of the Holy Spirit, keep God’s law. Notice what he says,

in Romans 8:4: “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.”

Notice, the person who is filled with the Holy Spirit will be keeping God’s law. Who is the person that will be breaking God’s law? Paul says that it’s the person who has not been converted. In fact, he says, the person who has not been converted *cannot* keep God’s law. “The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be” (verse 7). Who is it who is not subject to the law of God, nor can be? It is the carnal man with the fleshly mind, the unconverted man, the person who has not made a commitment to the Lord. When you make a commitment to Christ, you are forgiven by grace alone when you receive the Holy Spirit, without anything that you do. The Holy Spirit gives you the power to live a new kind of life, one that is in harmony with God’s law. O, friend, has that miraculous change happened in your life? Have you really been converted? Have you received the Holy Spirit and are you resting in the only One who is “able to save to the uttermost” (Hebrews 7:25)?

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

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*Continued from page 15*

we should no longer see as through a glass darkly, but come face to face with the great beauties of divine love.” *Life Sketches of James and Ellen G. White*, 1880, 157, 158.

After the beginning work that eventually led to the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist church, another great source of doubt occurred that resulted in a purifying shaking among the early professed second advent believers: the great disappointment of 1844.

In speaking of that disappointment, Inspiration noted: “They knew that God had led them by His unerring providence. Though, like the first disciples, they themselves had failed to understand the message

which they bore, yet it had been in every respect correct. ...” The hour of judgment had indeed come. “... In proclaiming it they had fulfilled the purpose of God, and their labor had not been in vain in the Lord. Begotten ‘again unto a lively hope,’ they rejoiced ‘with joy unspeakable and full of glory’ (1 Peter 1:3, 8).” *The Great Controversy*, 423.

There are many, many instances in the early development of the Adventist church in which the providential hand of God moved undeniably. Taking the time to review them is a great faith-builder. For an inspiring review of many instances in which God’s hand moved then, read *Life Sketches of James and Ellen White*. The first 250 pages or so were written by Ellen White and relate the trials and successes that led to the establishment of our church. To review each one here is beyond the scope of this article. So let us look at just one more: the providential manner in which the church’s property at Loma Linda was acquired.

In speaking of the property at Loma Linda, Inspiration wrote: “In the providence of God, this property has passed into our hands. The securing of this sanitarium, thoroughly equipped and furnished, is one of the most wonderful providences that the

Lord has opened before us. It is difficult to comprehend all that this transaction means to us.” *Loma Linda Messages*, 129, 130.

A short review of a few of the details of this acquisition is quite inspirational.

“The large main building is furnished in an expensive manner. There are also five cottages, one having nine rooms, the others four each. In some of these, the verandas are so arranged that beds can be rolled out from the rooms. The grounds are beautifully laid out. There are concrete walks between all the buildings. These walks are bordered with flowers. There is a good orchard, and ample grounds for garden. There are many eucalyptus, pepper trees, and many other varieties of ornamental trees and shrubbery. Meetings can be held in the open air on the beautiful lawns. There is also another building that has been used as a bowling alley and billiard hall. This can be utilized as a meeting-house.” *Ibid.*, 130.

The full story is given in more amazing and uplifting detail in the pamphlet *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 3b, entitled *Letters from Ellen G. White to Sanitarium Workers in Southern California* – b. This particular letter is headed simply, “The Loma Linda Sanitarium.” It is abbreviated SpTB03b and runs from pages 12–15 of that pamphlet.

A company had developed the property in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century at a cost of \$140,000 in hopes of making it a sanitarium. When that effort failed, they tried to promote it as a worldly resort, but those efforts proved unsuccessful as well. Following these failed attempts, the Adventist church was able to acquire the property in 1906 for \$40,000, paid out over several years. Truly the hand of God was guiding this entire situation.

Sometimes things happen that we cannot understand and are beyond our comprehension and even seem to be detrimental to our Christian walk. Be mindful of this promise from Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians: “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God” (1 Corinthians 4:5).

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*There are many, many instances in the early development of the Adventist church in which the providential hand of God moved undeniably.*

God's hand moves mysteriously—sometimes in a way that pleasantly surprises, but sometimes in a way that is decidedly unpleasant. He helps the tree bear fruit both by supplying sunshine and rain, but also by an occasional pruning. Often we long for understanding that never comes. That is when we must remember the promise of Romans 8:28. Following are a couple of passages from Inspiration that give hope and courage as we deal with life's daily challenges.

“Long have we waited for our Saviour's return. But none the less sure is the promise. Soon we shall be in our promised home. There Jesus will lead us beside the living stream flowing from the throne of God, and will explain to us the dark providences through which He led us in order to perfect our characters.” *The Review and Herald*, September 3, 1903.

“The mysterious providence which permits the righteous to suffer persecution at the hand of the wicked has been a cause of great perplexity to many who are weak in faith. Some are even ready to cast away their confidence in God because He suffers the basest of men to prosper, while the best and purest are afflicted and tormented by their cruel power. How, it is asked, can One who is just and merciful, and who is also infinite in power, tolerate such injustice and oppression? This is a question with which we have nothing to do. God has given us sufficient evidence of His love, and we are not to doubt His goodness because we cannot understand the workings of His providence. Said the Saviour to His disciples, foreseeing the doubts that would press upon their souls in days of trial and darkness: ‘Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you’ (John 15:20). Jesus suffered for us more than any of His followers can be made to suffer through the cruelty of wicked men. Those who are called to endure torture and martyrdom are but following in



*The  
just shall  
live—that is,  
be granted eternal  
life—by faith and  
faith alone.*

the steps of God's dear Son.” *The Great Controversy*, 47.

Describing the Loma Linda property, Ellen White wrote,

“I wish to present before our people the blessing that the Lord has placed within our reach by enabling us to obtain possession of the beautiful sanitarium property known as Loma Linda. This property lies sixty miles east of Los Angeles, on the main line of the Southern Pacific Railway. Its name, Loma Linda—*beautiful hill*—describes the place. Of the sixty acres comprised in the property, about thirty-five form a beautiful hill, which rises one hundred and twenty-five feet above the valley. Upon this hill the sanitarium building is situated.

“The main building is a well-planned structure of sixty-four rooms, having three stories and a basement. It is completely furnished, heated by steam, and lighted by electricity. It is surrounded with large pepper trees and other shade trees.

“About ten rods away and on the highest part of the hill there is a group of fine cottages. The central cottage has nine beautiful living rooms and two bath rooms. In the basement is a heating plant for the five cottages.

“Prettily grouped around this larger cottage are four smaller ones, having four rooms each, with bath and toilet.

An interesting feature of three of these cottages is that each room has its veranda, with broad windows running to the floor, so that the beds can be wheeled right out onto the veranda, and the patients can sleep in the open air.

“Between these cottages and the main building there is a recreation building, which can be used as a gymnasium, and for class rooms and meetings.

“In all, there are ninety rooms. The buildings are furnished throughout and are ready for use.

“There is a post-office in the main building, and most of the trains stop at the railway station, about forty rods from the sanitarium.

“The seventy-six acres of hill and valley land is well cultivated, and will furnish much fruit and many vegetables for the institution. Fifteen acres of the valley land is in alfalfa hay. Eight acres of the hill are in apricots, plums, and almonds. Ten acres are in good bearing orange orchard. Many acres of land round the cottages and the main building are laid out in lawns, drives, and walks.

“There are horses and carriages, cows and poultry, farming implements and wagons. The buildings and grounds are abundantly supplied with excellent water.

“This property is now in our possession. It cost the company from whom we purchased it about \$140,000. They erected the buildings, and ran the place for a time as a tourist hotel. But this plan did not succeed, and they decided to sell. It was closed last April, and as the stockholders became more anxious to sell, it was offered to us for \$40,000, and for this amount our brethren have purchased it.” *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 3b, 13.

All Bible quotes New King James unless otherwise noted. **LM**

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December 1 – 7, 2019

# Praying for the Holy Spirit

## Key Text

“Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field” (Zechariah 10:1).

**Study Help:** *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 506–512.

## Introduction

“We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today. Moral darkness, like a funeral pall, covers the earth. All manner of false doctrines, heresies, and satanic deceptions are misleading the minds of men. Without the Spirit and power of God it will be in vain that we labor to present the truth.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 158.

## Sunday

### THE PROMISED POWER

- a. What power is promised to us if we commit ourselves fully to God? Acts 1:5, 8. For what purpose is this power promised? Luke 6:38, *first part*.

**Note:** “It is not because of any restriction on God’s part that the riches of His grace do not flow to men. His gift is godlike. He gave with a liberality that men do not appreciate because they do not love to receive. If all were willing to receive, all would be filled with the Spirit. ... We are too easily satisfied with a ripple on the surface, when it is our privilege to expect the deep moving of the Spirit of God.

“With the reception of this gift, all other gifts would be ours; for we are to have this gift according to the plentitude of the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every

soul according to the capacity to receive. Then let us not be satisfied with only a little of this blessing, only that amount which will keep us from the slumber of death, but let us diligently seek for the abundance of the grace of God.” *My Life Today*, 57.

“That which we receive from Christ we must give to others. ... None who receive the grace of Christ can keep it to themselves.” *Medical Ministry*, 334.

## Monday

### PREPARING TO RECEIVE THE POWER

- a. How were the disciples to receive the promised blessing? Luke 24:49.

**Note:** “In obedience to Christ’s command, they waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father—the outpouring of the Spirit. They did not wait in idleness. The record says that they were ‘continually in the temple, praising and blessing God’ (Luke 24:53). They also met together to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 35.

“When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out His Spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain—‘Am I my brother’s keeper’ (Genesis 4:9, *last part*)?” *My Life Today*, 59.

- b. What was the condition of the disciples before they received this power? Acts 2:1.

**Note:** “The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. ...

“These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord



for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 37.

- c. What do each of us need to do to prepare to receive this power? Acts 3:19.

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**Note:** “Let there be a work of reformation and repentance. Let all seek for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As with the disciples after the ascension of Christ, it may require several days of earnestly seeking God and putting away of sin.” *My Life Today*, 58.

## Tuesday

### RECEIVING THE POWER

- a. What was the experience of the disciples as they received the power of the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:2–4. How will this experience compare to the experience of God’s church in the last days?

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**Note:** “The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the ‘former rain,’ and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant.” *My Life Today*, 60.

- b. What did they do with the power they received? Acts 4:33.

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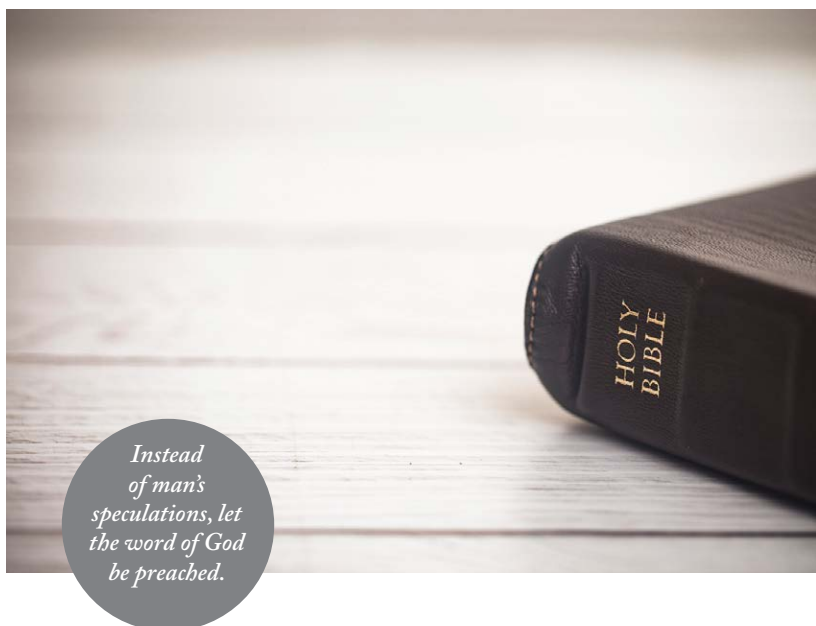


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**Note:** “The disciples ... were weighted with the burden for the salvation of souls. The gospel was to be carried to the uttermost parts of the earth, and they claimed the endowment of the



power that Christ had promised. Then it was that the Holy Spirit was poured out, and thousands were converted in a day.

“So may it be now. Instead of man’s speculations, let the Word of God be preached. Let Christians put away their dissensions and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the blessing, and it will come.

“Zeal for God moved the disciples to bear witness to the truth with mighty power. Should not this zeal fire our hearts with a determination to tell the story of redeeming love, of Christ, and Him crucified?” *My Life Today*, 61.

- c. What is the condition upon which we receive this power? Joel 2:15–17.

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**Note:** “Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home or in a public field of usefulness.” *My Life Today*, 60.

## Wednesday

### A PROMISE FOR US TODAY

- a. What promise is given to us today regarding the special power of the Holy Spirit? Joel 2:23.

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**Note:** “It is true that in the time of the end, when God’s work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor. Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seedtime and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God’s church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church.

“But near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’ In response, ‘the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.’ ‘He will cause to come down ... the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain’ (Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23).” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 54, 55.

- b. What work has been prophesied by John? Revelation 18:1. How can we have a part in the work of the fourth angel today?

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**Note:** “The Spirit of God is moving upon men’s hearts, and those who respond to its influence will become lights in the world. Everywhere they are seen going forth to communicate to others the light they have received as they did after the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. And as they let their light shine, they receive more and more of the Spirit’s power. The earth is lighted with the glory of God. ...

“Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the Word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence.” *My Life Today*, 63.

## Thursday

### PRAYING FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

- a. In view of the times in which we live, what is God’s desire for us today? Zechariah 10:1.

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**Note:** “The latter rain, ripening earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection. ...

“There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. ...

“Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 506, 507.

“Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us. At every meeting we attend our prayers should ascend, that at this very time God will impart warmth and moisture to our souls. As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain. If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised.” *Ibid.*, 509.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why do we need the power of the Holy Spirit even more than the disciples did?
- 2 What can we learn from the disciples’ experience in preparing for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?
- 3 Instead of looking to a future time when, through a special gift of spiritual power, we will be miraculously fitted up for soul winning, what can we do today?
- 4 How do we become lights in the world? What happens as we let our light shine?
- 5 What is the work of the former rain? How does it relate to the latter rain?

December 8 – 14, 2019

# Teach Us to Pray

## Key Text

“And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” (Luke 11:1).

**Study Help:** *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 102–122.

## Introduction

“Christ’s disciples were much impressed by His prayers and by His habit of communion with God. One day after a short absence from their Lord, they found Him absorbed in supplication. Seeming unconscious of their presence, He continued praying aloud. The hearts of the disciples were deeply moved. As He ceased praying, they exclaimed, ‘Lord, teach us to pray’ (Luke 11:1).” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 140.

## Sunday

### LESSONS FROM THE LORD’S PRAYER

- a. When the disciples heard the difference between the prayer of Christ and the formal prayers of their priests, what did they ask Jesus? What model prayer did the Lord give? Luke 11:1–4.

- b. How does Jesus teach us to begin our prayers? To whom are we praying? Matthew 6:6, 9. What does it mean to pray in Jesus’ name?

**Note:** “To pray in Christ’s name means much. It means that we are to accept His character, manifest His spirit, and work His works. The Saviour’s promise is given on condition. ‘If ye love Me,’ He says, ‘keep My commandments’ (John 14:15). He saves men, not in sin, but from sin; and those who love Him will show their love by obedience.” *The Desire of Ages*, 668.

“To pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of that name at the beginning and the ending of a prayer. It is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works.” *Steps to Christ*, 100, 101.

## Monday

### CONDITIONS FOR ANSWERED PRAYER

- a. What are the conditions upon which God answers prayer? 1 John 3:22; Matthew 21:22.

**Note:** “God’s promises are all made upon conditions. If we do His will, if we walk in truth, then we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. While we earnestly endeavor to be obedient, God will hear our petitions; but He will not bless us in disobedience. If we choose to disobey His commandments, we may cry, ‘Faith, faith, only have faith,’ and the response will come back from the sure Word of God, ‘Faith without works is dead’ (James 2:20). Such faith will only be as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal. In order to have the benefits of God’s grace we must do our part; we must faithfully work and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.” *Faith and Works*, 47.

- b. What is our duty toward those in need around us? Proverbs 3:27, 28. How does our behavior toward the needy reflect back upon us?

**Note:** “God demands that you open your hand wide to the needy, and have the tenderest compassion for those who are afflicted, or who are suffering from want. If you turn carelessly from their cry, the Lord will just as surely turn away from your prayer, and He will not hear you in your distress.” *The Review and Herald*, October 6, 1891.



**c. How does God want us to cooperate with Him in helping others? 1 Corinthians 3:9.**

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**Note:** “We are workers together with God. You are not to sit in indolence, waiting for some great occasion, in order to do a great work for the Master. You are not to neglect the duty that lies directly in your pathway, but you are to improve the little opportunities that open around you.” *Faith and Works*, 47.

“We should encourage [the afflicted ones] to try to help those more needy than themselves. The darkness will be dispelled from their own hearts as they try to help others. As we seek to comfort others with the comfort wherewith we are comforted, the blessing comes back to us.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 256.

## Tuesday

### APPROPRIATE POSTURES IN PRAYER

**a. What biblical examples of kneeling down to pray demonstrate this position as being both a duty and privilege? 1 Kings 8:54, 55; Ephesians 3:14.**

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**Note:** “Both in public and private worship it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him. This act shows our dependence upon God.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 312.

“Jesus, our example, ‘kneeled down, and prayed’ (Luke 22:41). Of His disciples it is recorded that they, too, ‘kneeled down, and prayed’ (Acts 9:40). Paul declared, ‘I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (Ephesians 3:14). In confessing before God the sins of Israel, Ezra knelt. (See Ezra 9:5.) Daniel ‘kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God’ (Daniel 6:10).” *Prophets and Kings*, 48.

**b. What was the position of Elijah when he prayed for rain? 1 Kings 18:42. Who else prayed in a similar position, and why is this attitude not suitable for public worship? Matthew 26:39.**

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**Note:** “Behold Him [Christ] contemplating the price to be paid for the human soul. In His agony He clings to the cold ground, as if to prevent Himself from being drawn farther from God. The chilling dew of night falls upon His prostrate form, but He heeds it not. From His pale lips comes the bitter cry, ‘O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.’ Yet even now He adds, ‘Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt’ (Matthew 26:39).” *The Desire of Ages*, 687.

“How much is lost in family worship when the one offering prayer bows the face down, and speaks in a low, feeble voice, as though just recovering from a long sickness. . . . Prayer that is thus uttered is appropriate for the closet, but not suitable for public worship; for unless those assembled with them can hear what is said, they cannot say Amen.” *Christian Education*, 127.

**c. What position did Jesus ask the multitude to take before He offered thanks for the forthcoming meal? John 6:10, 11.**

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## Wednesday

### PRAYING WITH A SUBMISSIVE SPIRIT

**a. How can we show submission to God in our prayers? 1 John 5:14, 15.**

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**Note:** “Jesus says, ‘What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them’ (Mark 11:24). There is a condition to this promise—that we pray according to the will of God. But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we *have* received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse.” *The Faith I Live By*, 141. [Emphasis author’s.]

“Whatever path God chooses for us, whatever way He ordains for our feet, that is the only path of safety. We are daily to cherish a spirit of childlike submission, and pray that our eyes may be anointed with the heavenly eyesalve in order that we may discern the indications of the divine will, lest we become

confused in our ideas, because our will seems to be all-controlling.” *That I May Know Him*, 249.

- b. How did Mary demonstrate submission to God?  
Luke 1:38. How can we have this same attitude?

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- c. What goes hand in hand with true submission?  
James 1:6.

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**Note:** “As stewards of the grace of heaven, we are to ask in faith and then wait trustingly for the salvation of God. We are not to step in before Him, trying in our own strength to bring about that which we desire. In His name we are to ask, and then we are to act as if we believed in His efficiency.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 467.

“Our languid, half-hearted prayers will not bring us returns from heaven. Oh, we need to press our petitions! Ask in faith, wait in faith, receive in faith, rejoice in hope, for everyone that seeketh findeth. Be in earnest in the matter. Seek God with all the heart.” *Our High Calling*, 131.

“The fervent prayer of the righteous is never lost. The answer may not come according as we expected, but it will come, because God’s word is pledged.” *Ibid.*, 134.

## Thursday

### WHEN TO PRAY

- a. What times during the day should we pray?  
Psalm 55:17.

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- b. Should we limit our prayers to these times? 1 Thes-  
salonians 5:17.

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**Note:** “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 send up a petition to God and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his request before King Artaxerxes.” *Steps to Christ*, 99.

“We may speak with Jesus as we walk by the way, and He says, I am at thy right hand.

“We may commune with God in our hearts; we may walk in companionship with Christ. When engaged in our daily labor, we may breathe out our heart’s desire, inaudible to any human ear; but that word cannot die away into silence, nor can it be lost. Nothing can drown the soul’s desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the noise of machinery. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard.” *Gospel Workers*, 258.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How are we to live if we pray in Jesus’ name?
- 2 When does God answer prayer?
- 3 Why should we bow upon our knees in our regular public and private prayers?
- 4 How can we pray with a submissive spirit? What answer will we be willing to accept?
- 5 How can we pray to God as we go about our duties of the day?

December 15 – 21, 2019

# Learning to Pray

## Key Text

“O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared Thy wondrous works” (Psalm 71:17).

**Study Help:** *Child Guidance*, 517–526; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 569–574.

## Introduction

“In the church at home the children are to learn to pray and to trust in God. . . . Come in humility, with a heart full of tenderness, and with a sense of the temptations and dangers before yourselves and your children; by faith bind them to the altar, entreating for them the care of the Lord. Train the children to offer their simple words of prayer. Tell them that God delights to have them call upon Him.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 110.

## Sunday

### TIMOTHY LEARNS TO PRAY

- a. Where and how did Timothy learn to pray? 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14, 15.

**Note:** “Timothy’s father was a Greek and his mother a Jewess. From a child he had known the Scriptures. The piety that he saw in his home life was sound and sensible. The faith of his mother and his grandmother in the sacred oracles was to him a constant reminder of the blessing in doing God’s will. The word of God was the rule by which these two godly women had guided Timothy. The spiritual power of the lessons that he had received from them kept him pure in speech and unsullied by the evil influences with which he was surrounded. Thus his home instructors had co-operated with God in preparing him to bear burdens.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 203.

“Timothy’s mother and grandmother were united in their efforts to train him for God. What was his lesson book?—the Bible. Paul, his father in the gospel, declares, ‘From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures’ (2 Timothy 3:15).” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 918.

## Monday

### SAMUEL LEARNS TO PRAY

- a. Did Samuel as a young child know how to recognize God’s voice and identify answers to his own prayers? 1 Samuel 3:7. Was this ignorance common in his day? Verse 1.

**Note:** “Samuel was a child surrounded by the most corrupting influences. He saw and heard things that grieved his soul. The sons of Eli, who ministered in holy office, were controlled by Satan. . . . He [Samuel] did not fellowship, or have the least delight in, the sins which filled all Israel with fearful reports. Samuel loved God; he kept his soul in such close connection with heaven that an angel was sent to talk with him in reference to the sins of Eli’s sons, which were corrupting Israel.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 472, 473.

“Before receiving this message from God, ‘Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him’ (1 Samuel 3:7); that is, he was not acquainted with such direct manifestations of God’s presence as were granted to the prophets. It was the Lord’s purpose to reveal Himself in an unexpected manner, that Eli might hear of it through the surprise and inquiry of the youth.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 582.

- b. How did Samuel confuse the voice of God with the voice of his earthly friend and mentor, Eli? What suggested to Eli that God was calling Samuel? 1 Samuel 3:2–6, 8.

**Note:** “Supposing the voice to be that of Eli, the child hastened to the bedside of the priest, saying, ‘Here am I; for thou calledst me.’ The answer was, ‘I called not, my son; lie down again’ (1 Samuel 3:5, 6). Three times Samuel was called, and thrice he responded in like manner. And then Eli was convinced that the mysterious call was the voice of God. The Lord had passed by His chosen servant, the man of hoary hairs, to commune with a child. This in itself was a bitter yet deserved rebuke to Eli and his house.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 581.



- c. Did God talk to Samuel when the boy realized He was calling? What did He say? 1 Samuel 3:11.

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## Tuesday

### DAVID LEARNS TO PRAY

- a. When David was a fugitive in his early life, running from an angry, mad king, what requests did he make, and how did God answer? 1 Samuel 23:1, 2, 4, 10–12.

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**Note:** “Still hunted by the king, David found no place of rest or security. At Keilah his brave band saved the town from capture by the Philistines, but they were not safe, even among the people whom they had delivered. From Keilah they repaired to the wilderness of Ziph.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 660.

- b. After David became king and fell into temptation, what prayer did he make to God? Psalm 51:1–4, 7.

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**Note:** “After his great sin, in the anguish of remorse and self-abhorrence he still turned to God as his best friend.” *Education*, 165.

“The prayer of David after his fall, illustrates the nature of true sorrow for sin. His repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his guilt; no desire to escape the judgment threatened, inspired his prayer. David saw the enormity of his transgression; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart.” *Steps to Christ*, 24, 25.



*Train the children to offer their simple words of prayer. Tell them that God delights to have them call upon Him.*

- c. What did David plead for, and for what purpose? Psalm 51:12, 13.

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**Note:** “God intended the history of David’s fall to serve as a warning that even those whom He has greatly blessed and favored are not to feel secure and neglect watchfulness and prayer. ... thousands have thus been led to realize their own danger from the tempter’s power. The fall of David, one so greatly honored by the Lord, has awakened in them distrust of self. They have felt that God alone could keep them by His power through faith.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 724.

## Wednesday

### MANASSEH LEARNS TO PRAY

- a. Who was Manasseh? Describe his character at the beginning of his reign. 2 Chronicles 32:33; 33:1–10.

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**Note:** “The kingdom of Judah, prosperous throughout the times of Hezekiah, was once more brought low during the long years of Manasseh’s wicked reign, when paganism was revived, and many of the people were led into idolatry. ‘Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen’ (2 Chronicles 33:9). The glorious light of former generations was followed by the darkness of superstition and error. Gross evils sprang up and flourished—tyranny, oppression, hatred of all that is good. Justice was perverted; violence prevailed.” *Prophets and Kings*, 381.

- b. What experience did God bring upon this proud king to get his attention and to teach him to pray? 2 Chronicles 33:11. What was the consequence of his waiting so long to pray?**

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**Note:** “As an earnest of what would befall the people should they continue impenitent, the Lord permitted their king to be captured by a band of Assyrian soldiers, who ‘bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon’ (2 Chronicles 33:11, *last part*), their temporary capital. This affliction brought the king to his senses; ‘he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto Him: and He was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord He was God’ (2 Chronicles 33:12–13). But this repentance, remarkable though it was, came too late to save the kingdom from the corrupting influence of years of idolatrous practices. Many had stumbled and fallen, never again to rise.” *Prophets and Kings*, 383.

- c. What was the result of Manasseh’s new-found prayer life? 2 Chronicles 33:12, 13, 15, 16. What was he known for at the time of his death? Verses 18, 19.**

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## Thursday

### PAGANS LEARN TO PRAY

- a. What led the pagan Naaman to accept the Creator as his God? 2 Kings 5:1, 9–15.**

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**Note:** “A slave, far from her home, this little maid was nevertheless one of God’s witnesses, unconsciously fulfilling the purpose for which God had chosen Israel as His people. As she ministered in that heathen home, her sympathies were aroused in behalf of her master. . . . She knew that the power of Heaven was with Elisha, and she believed that by this power Naaman could be healed.

“The conduct of the captive maid, the way that she bore herself in that heathen home, is a strong witness to the power of early home training.” *Prophets and Kings*, 244, 245.

- b. What experience led the once pagan monarch, Nebuchadnezzar, to humbly trust in God? Daniel 4:28–36. What was his religious experience after his humiliation? Verses 2, 3, 37.**

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**Note:** “King Nebuchadnezzar, before whom Daniel so often honored the name of God, was finally thoroughly converted, and learned to ‘praise and extol and honour the King of heaven’ (Daniel 4:37).

“The king upon the Babylonian throne became a witness for God, giving his testimony, warm and eloquent, from a grateful heart that was partaking of the mercy and grace, the righteousness and peace, of the divine nature.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1170.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How did Timothy’s mother and grandmother train him for God?
- 2 Why was it that God chose to communicate with the child Samuel?
- 3 What shows the sincerity of David’s prayer after his fall? Did David’s Friend fail him?
- 4 What does Manasseh’s prayer teach us about God?
- 5 How did God’s witnesses lead heathen rulers to pray to God?

December 22 – 28, 2019

# Prayer as a Way of Life

## Key Text

“The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer” (Psalm 6:9).

**Study Help:** *Steps to Christ*, 115–126.

## Introduction

“Cultivate the habit of talking with the Saviour when you are alone, when you are walking, and when you are busy with your daily labor. Let the heart be continually uplifted in silent petition for help, for light, for strength, for knowledge. Let every breath be a prayer.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 510, 511.

## Sunday

### CONTINUAL PRAYER

- a. How can we maintain a devotional attitude throughout the day? 1 Thessalonians 5:17. Does this mean we do nothing but pray all day?

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**Note:** “The life must be like Christ’s life—between the mountain and the multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or his prayers will become a formal routine. When men take themselves out of social life, away from the sphere of Christian duty and cross bearing; when they cease to work earnestly for the Master, who worked earnestly for them, they lose the subject matter of prayer and have no incentive to devotion. Their prayers become personal and selfish.” *Steps to Christ*, 101.

- b. Where does this work begin? Proverbs 23:7, *first part*; 2 Corinthians 10:5.

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**Note:** “Unless a determined effort is made to keep the thoughts centered on Christ, grace cannot reveal itself in the life. The mind must engage in the spiritual warfare. Every thought must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. All the habits must be brought under God’s control.” *In Heavenly Places*, 164.

## Monday

### POWERFUL PRAYERS

- a. What is the subject of many of the Psalms, most of which were written by King David? Psalms 61:1; 69:13.

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- b. For what other purpose were the psalms intended? Psalms 144:9; 149:1.

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**Note:** “There are few means more effective for fixing His words in the memory than repeating them in song. And such song has wonderful power. It has power to subdue rude and uncultivated natures; power to quicken thought and to awaken sympathy, to promote harmony of action, and to banish the gloom and foreboding that destroy courage and weaken effort. ...

“As a part of religious service, singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer. If the child is taught to realize this, he will think more of the meaning of the words he sings and will be more susceptible to their power.” *Education*, 167, 168.

- c. Tell of some powerful prayers made by other kings in the Old Testament. 1 Kings 3:6–9; 2 Kings 19:15–19; 2 Chronicles 20:5–12. How can we incorporate the scriptures into our prayers?

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**Note:** “There is one blessing that all may have who seek for it in the right way. It is the Holy Spirit of God, and this is a blessing that brings all other blessings in its train. If we will come to God as little children, asking for His grace and power and salvation, not for our own uplifting, but that we may bring blessing to those around us, our petitions will not be denied. Then let us study the Word of God that we may know how to take hold of His promises and claim them as our own. Then we shall be happy.” *In Heavenly Places*, 113.

“It is the glory of God to give His virtue to His children. He desires to see men and women reaching the highest standard; and when by faith they lay hold of the power of Christ, when they plead His unfailing promises, and claim them as their own, when with an importunity that will not be denied they seek for the power of the Holy Spirit, they will be made complete in Him.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 530.

## Tuesday

### MONUMENTS TO ANSWERED PRAYER

- a. After God worked a great miracle to bring the Israelites through the Jordan River, what did He ask them to do? Joshua 4:1–9.

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**Note:** “But before the priests had come up out of the river, that this wonderful miracle might never be forgotten, the Lord bade Joshua select men of note from each tribe to take up stones from the spot in the river bed where the priests had stood, and bear them upon their shoulders to Gilgal, and there erect a monument in remembrance of the fact that God had caused Israel to pass over Jordan upon dry land. This would be a continual reminder of the miracle that the Lord had wrought for them. As years passed on, their children would inquire concerning the monument, and again and again they would recount to them this wonderful history, till it would be indelibly impressed upon their minds to the latest generation.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 158.

- b. What should we avoid focusing on in our life? Psalms 25:7; 79:8.

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**Note:** “It is not wise to gather together all the unpleasant recollections of a past life—its iniquities and disappointments—to talk over them and mourn over them until we are overwhelmed with discouragement. A discouraged soul is filled with darkness, shutting out the light of God from his own soul and casting a shadow upon the pathway of others.” *Steps to Christ*, 117.

- c. What should we contemplate instead? Psalm 105:5; Hebrews 12:2, 3.

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**Note:** “Thank God for the bright pictures which He has presented to us. Let us group together the blessed assurances of His love, that we may look upon them continually: The Son of God leaving His Father’s throne, clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might rescue man from the power of Satan; His triumph in our behalf, opening heaven to men, revealing to human vision the presence chamber where the Deity unveils His glory; the fallen race uplifted from the pit of ruin into which sin had plunged it, and brought again into connection with the infinite God, and having endured the divine test through faith in our Redeemer, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and exalted to His throne—these are the pictures which God would have us contemplate.” *Steps to Christ*, 118.

## Wednesday

### PRAYER WITH HOPE

- a. What had been the experience of the disciples in prayer? John 16:24, *first part*.

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**Note:** “As yet the disciples were unacquainted with the Saviour’s unlimited resources and power. He said to them, ‘Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name’ (John 16:24). He explained that the secret of their success would be in asking for strength and grace in His name. . . . Every sincere prayer is heard in heaven. It may not be fluently expressed; but if the heart is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary where Jesus ministers, and He will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection.” *The Desire of Ages*, 667.

- b. How did Jesus encourage them to approach the Father in prayer? John 14:13, 14; 16:24, *second part*. For whom else are these promises?

**Note:** “All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matthew 21:22). These words are the pledge that all that an omnipotent Saviour can bestow will be given to those who trust in Him. As stewards of the grace of heaven, we are to ask in faith and then wait trustingly for the salvation of God. We are not to step in before Him, trying in our own strength to bring about that which we desire. In His name we are to ask, and then we are to act as if we believed in His efficiency.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 467.

“O, brethren and sisters, what we want is a living, striving, growing, faith in the promises of God, which are indeed for you and for me.” *Pacific Union Recorder*, December 26, 1912.

- c. What part does hope play as we approach God in prayer? How should we come before Him? Romans 5:5; Hebrews 4:16.

**Note:** “There is nothing that can make the soul so strong to resist the temptations of Satan in the great conflict of life, as to seek God in humility, laying before Him your soul in all its helplessness, expecting that He will be your helper and your defender.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 121.

## Thursday

### PRAYER AS THERAPY

- a. What promises can we claim so that we may have strength in our conflict with the enemy? Isaiah 40:29; 41:10; Psalm 31:24.

**Note:** “He who serves under the bloodstained banner of Immanuel will have that to do which will call for heroic effort and patient endurance. But the soldier of the cross stands unshrinking in the forefront of the battle. As the enemy presses the attack against him, he turns to the stronghold for aid, and as he brings to the Lord the promises of the word, he is strengthened for the duties of the hour. He realizes his need of strength from above. The victories that he gains do not lead to self exaltation, but cause him to lean more and more heavily on the Mighty One. Relying upon that Power, he is enabled to present the message of salvation so forcibly that it vibrates in other minds.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 362.

- b. What other promises can we claim in prayer in order to give us courage in the battle with sin? Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 49:25; 1 Corinthians 15:57.

**Note:** “What a source to which we can look in all times of trouble; the heart can have no misgivings! Man is erring, stubborn, rebellious, and defiant even against God; but the Lord is kind and patient and of tender compassion. He has heaven and earth at His command, and He knows just what we need even before we present our necessities and desires before Him.” *My Life Today*, 10.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why don't we need to withdraw from society and devote our entire lives to prayer?
- 2 How can we include God's Word in our prayers? What will this do for us?
- 3 What can we learn from the Israelites' use of monuments to remember God's leading in their lives? How can we do the same?
- 4 How can we have victory against temptation?
- 5 Describe God's power in helping us in our struggles.

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**B**lackstrap molasses is really a powerhouse of nutrition. It tastes delicious in your hot cereal. I also like it as a hot drink on cold winter days. It is a great addition, along with honey, to add to your granola mix before your bake it. Yes, I really enjoy blackstrap.

“Molasses is the by-product of sugar refining that contains all the nutrients from the raw sugar-cane plant. Since the roots of sugarcane grow very deep, they are able to receive a pretty broad range of minerals and trace elements usually lacking in the topsoil. During the refining of sugarcane, the plants are boiled to a syrup from which the crystals are extracted. Then they are boiled two more times, both of which produce molasses.

*Blackstrap* molasses, however, comes from the third and final boiling and is essentially the ‘dregs’ of the barrel.

“Blackstrap molasses is very dark and has a robust, somewhat bitter-tart flavor. It’s used in a variety of baked goods, particularly meat and vegetable dishes, as a sweetener and coloring agent. It is also widely accepted as a ‘health food.’ It can be used in any number of recipes and is particularly suitable to gingersnaps, soy-based sauces, licorice, canned baked beans, and fermentation systems.

“One of the reasons I like it so much is precisely because it has a low amount of sugar and a high amount of nutrients. As the only product from the third and final boil, blackstrap molasses

contains the lowest sugar content of the molasses, but many more of the vitamins, minerals, and trace elements found naturally in the sugarcane plant, making it more nutritious than most other sweeteners.

“Blackstrap molasses is a very good source of iron, potassium, calcium, and magnesium and an excellent source of manganese and copper. It also contains a small amount of the cancer-fighting mineral selenium. Look for unsulfured blackstrap molasses from organic sugar. Of the varieties of molasses, blackstrap molasses is richest in nutrients, such as iron, B vitamins, calcium, and potassium.” Excerpts from *The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth*, p. 314, 315, by Jonny Bowden, Ph.D., C.N.S. [LM](#)

Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



## BLACKSTRAP RAISIN ALMOND BALLS

### Ingredients

1 ¼ cups raw almonds  
2/3 cup raisins  
1 tsp. cardamom and coriander, optional  
pinch of salt  
4 Tbsp. blackstrap molasses

### Process

Grind almonds and salt in food processor until finely ground. Add raisins, molasses and spices. Process until mixture is sticking together and uniform. Form into little snack sized balls and store in refrigerator or freezer. These little balls taste good with or without the extra seasonings—your choice. Enjoy!





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*We have cracked wheat; for a change, cracked corn. We then take sorghum molasses, put water with it and boil it thoroughly, stir in a little thickening of flour, and this we eat on our puddings, graham or cracked wheat, or cracked corn. Why health reformers complain of poor diet is they don't know how to cook, and should learn.*

*Ellen White*

*Letter 5, April 3, 1870*

