

HISTORIC
LANDMARKS
OF ADVENTISM

*It Is
Finished*

p. 7

*God Is
Stronger*

p. 18

*Full &
Final
Display*

*Christ's riches of mercy,
grace, and love to appear
in full and final display.*

p. 2



From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

Harvest Time

One of the saddest texts in all the Bible is Jeremiah 8:20: “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” Do not let any preacher or religious teacher rob you of the inheritance of eternal life that Jesus died on the cross to provide for you by persuading you that you do not need to keep God’s law or that you can be saved without keeping it. The forgiveness that Jesus provided on the cross of Calvary is for sins that you have committed in the past (Romans 3:25, 26; Romans 6:18–23), not so that you can continue to sin in the future. Every person who receives the Holy Spirit will quit sinning. (See Romans 8:1–14.) The standard for the judgment that every person in this world is to face is the law of God. (See James 2:8–12.) God’s children in the last days will be obedient to His law (Revelation 12:17, 14:12; 22:14) and those who claim to be Christians and yet break God’s law will not be accepted by Jesus in the judgment. (See Matthew 7:21–23.) Don’t let the religious delusions of this age rob you of eternal life.

“All the inhabitants of earth are soon to meet the great Lawgiver over His broken law. There are many, many in the popular churches who know little of the real meaning of the message for this time. I appeal to them not to disregard the fulfilling of the signs of the times, which say so plainly that the end is near. O how many who have not sought their soul’s salvation, will soon make the bitter lamentation, ‘The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved!’

“When will men learn that God is God, not man, and that He does not change? Every calamity, every death, is a witness to the power of evil and to the truth of the living God. The word of God is life, and it will abide forever. Through all eternity it will stand fast. How can man, knowing what God is and what He has done, choose Satan’s way instead of God’s way? There is only one path to Paradise restored—the path of obedience.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 25, 1910. **LM**

HISTORIC

LANDMARKS

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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.

In this Issue



2

Full and Final Display

The church endowed with the righteousness of Christ is His depositary, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display.

By John J. Grosboll



7

It Is Finished

Those divine words, “It is finished,” mean that redemption was no longer a possibility but was now an accomplished fact, not only for us but for the peace of the unfallen worlds.

By Lawrence Nelson



12

Angelic Watchcare

Christ would have us look to the things which are not seen, to the armies of heaven encamped about all who love God, to deliver them.

By John J. Pearson

More in this Issue

16 Bible Puzzle

Isaiah

18 Pen of Inspiration

God Is Stronger

20 Story Time

Who Will Be in Heaven?

21 Keys to the Storehouse

Warning Signs

23 13th Sabbath Offering

An Angel Named Angel

24 From the Mission Fields

Providence and a Book

26 Nature

Pelorus Jack

27 Question & Answer

Least in the Kingdom

28 Health Nugget

Mood Food

29 Life Sketches

Differences and Persecution

33 Bible Study Guide

Deliverance

49 Recipe

Cream of Asparagus Soup



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Full & Final Display

By John J. Grosboll

It is an awesome thought that if you do not resist, the angels of God will see to it that you are saved. Ellen White wrote, “Under God, the angels are all-powerful.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1900.

“Angelic agencies are standing firm, determined that he [Satan] shall not obtain the victory. They would recover every soul in our world who is under Satan’s banner if these poor souls would not so eagerly seek to keep out of and away from their merciful ministrations and rescuing power. Their deep and earnest love for the souls for whom Christ has died is beyond measurement. They would make these deceived souls intelligent in regard to how they might arm themselves and break the spell which Satan has cast upon them.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 922.

Angels have been commissioned to rescue every single person in our world who does not resist. “Christ designs that heaven’s order, heaven’s plan of government, heaven’s divine harmony, shall be represented in His church on earth. Thus in His people He is glorified. Through them the Sun of Righteousness will shine in undimmed luster to the world. Christ has given to His church ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. He has bestowed upon His people capabilities and blessings that they may represent His own sufficiency. The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display.” *The Desire of Ages*, 680.



A full display of the mercy of Christ means that its manifestation is complete. The church could display a fuller manifestation of His mercy, grace and love. This is going to be the experience of God's church when heaven's plan of government and heaven's harmony are developed and it is necessary now to show the world the character of God before the return of Jesus.

At no other time in eternity will this display of mercy be necessary, for heavenly intelligences are not in need of mercy or grace. They do not need to learn of the gospel of Christ and His saving grace because they have never sinned. Throughout eternal ages there will never again be another display of the mercy of God. Before sin entered the world everything was perfect and angels had no concept of mercy because there was no need. Grace is another attribute of the character of God that was not understood until sin entered the world. But when sin entered and the plan of salvation was instituted, the universe began to see that mercy was an integral part of God's character.

The psalmist says, "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne" (Psalm 89:14). Righteousness is doing right. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's throne. The devil knew that and made the claim that God could not be both just and merciful. He said that you can be merciful, and you can be just, but you cannot be both. Incidentally, Ellen White says there was no finite intelligence who could answer that challenge or charge. That same accusation that Satan had brought against the Lord for thousands of years was finally answered at the cross where it was demonstrated beyond doubt that God can be both just and merciful and forgive sins.

The cross demonstrated that God is a God of justice, and as David said, "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth go before Your face" (Psalm 89:14). A just



Christ designs that heaven's order, heaven's plan of government, heaven's divine harmony, shall be represented in His church on earth.

price was paid for the sins of the world. Angels who had heard Satan's unjust accusations for thousands of years saw at the cross mercy and justice demonstrated and were convinced without question of Satan's error and lies which ultimately led to the crucifixion of his Creator.

Psalm 85:10 KJV says, "Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." So, "According to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 3:5).

It is stated explicitly in the second commandment that God is merciful. He shows "mercy to thousands" (Exodus 20:6). God is merciful and He tells those who love Him to also be merciful. In fact, Micah 6:8 says, "What does the LORD require of you but to do justly [do what is right], to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Those are the three things God requires. James 2:13 says, "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment." Paul said "... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We are all in need of great mercy, therefore we must show mercy to others.

Mercy is an attribute of character shown when a child is not punished for every infraction he commits against a command. It may be just and right to punish every time a child does wrong,

but if you exercise mercy sometimes, especially for minor infractions, the child is more likely to overcome that problem, using the mistake as a learning experience. Parents need to understand that if a child is never shown mercy and all he understands is justice, that child will grow up to be a hard-hearted man or woman.

Mercy is one of the characteristics of God of which the church is to make a full display to the whole world. It will be complete, "full and final," because those characteristics will never need to be demonstrated again. Mercy has been demonstrated millions of times in the past, but as we approach the end, there will be a full, that is, a complete, and final display of God's mercy.

"The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in *full* and *final* display." *The Desire of Ages*, 680. [Emphasis added.]

Grace is another attribute of the character of God that was not understood until sin entered the world. Notice what Paul says about it in Ephesians 1:7: "We have ... the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." It is through His grace that we receive forgiveness of sins.

He wrote in Ephesians 2:8, "By grace you have been saved through faith."

And he says in Ephesians 4:7, that “To each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift.” James says, “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).

There is a good reason that Hebrews 4:14–16 is a favorite text to Seventh-day Adventists. It says, “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

It is through grace that we receive forgiveness of sins, but it is also through grace that we receive help. Paul said in Romans 1:5 that we receive grace for the “obedience to the faith.” God does not only forgive our sins through the grace of Christ, but through the grace of Christ, we receive help to do what is right, help to be obedient to the faith.

Zechariah 12:10 says, “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”

The church in the very last days of earth’s history is going to receive the Spirit of grace. Today we have the opportunity while time lasts to show grace and mercy to people who are in various kinds of trouble. Once sin has been eradicated there will be no more need for either.

Jesus said in Luke 6:27 and 28 to love our enemies, a concept that is completely alien from most religions. Jesus told His disciples the night before He left, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for one another” (John 13:34, 35).

To do that is an external sign that you are a Christian. Paul said the love of God is “poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (Romans 5:5).

Paul also told us in Romans 12:9 that we were to have love without hypocrisy. Love is the first fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5. He said in 1 Corinthians 13 that no matter what else you have, if you do not have love, you do not have anything, and you cannot really gain anything in your spiritual life. Remember, there is going to be a full and final demonstration of the love of Christ by the church before Jesus comes and you can be part of it.

The love of Christ was a love for people who were undeserving and unappreciative. His love went out to people who never reciprocated that love. In heaven, the angels love each other, but the love that goes out is not unrequited. They are loved in return. Sadly, there are many times in this world when you have love for somebody with no response. Or maybe it is even worse than that. Maybe you love them, and they hate you, but you can keep loving the person who hated you.

When Jesus was nailed to the cross, He said to His Father in Luke 23:34: “‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.’” Angels watching the scene knew that God was love, but they had never seen a love like this before. This love for your enemies, love for the people who do not return your love or maybe even hate you in return—this is the type of love that is going to have a full and a final display in God’s church.

Some people have become quite indignant at this message, claiming that this condition refers to the church triumphant but at present we are in the church militant. However, the church representing Christ on earth before He returns will be endowed with His righteousness living in harmony with heaven’s plan of government in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display.

As I studied the statement in *The Desire of Ages*, 680, it talked about His mercy, grace and love as full, as complete, and as final.

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Before sin entered the world everything was perfect and angels had no concept of mercy because there was no need.

After this final display, it will not be necessary again. The whole world and the whole universe are going to see this display. The full and final external display of the mercy, of the grace, and of the love of Christ by the church to the world, before Jesus comes, will be what the world and the whole universe can see. But before that can happen, something has to happen internally to the people who are to make that display.

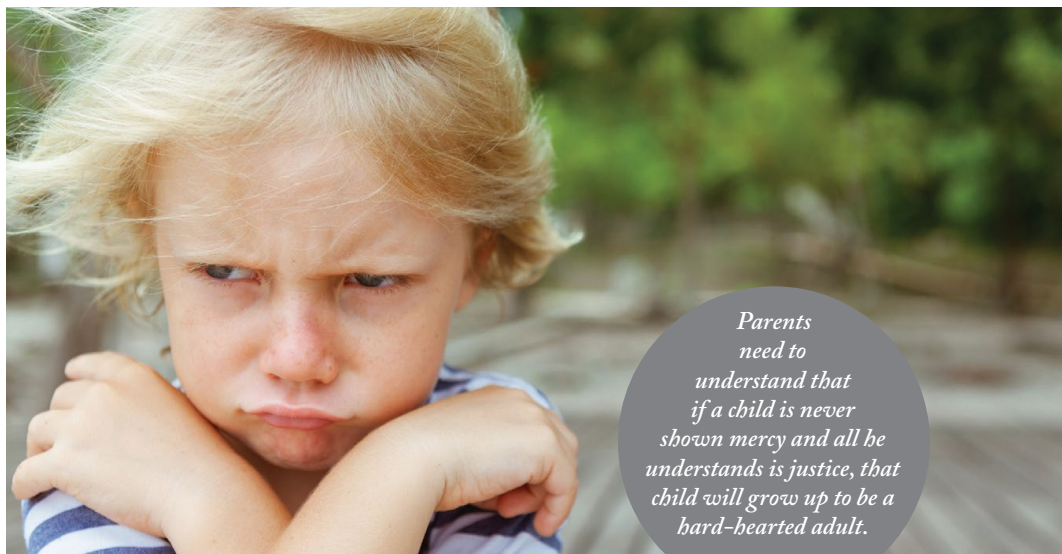
The Bible tells us that there is an internal work in people's character that has to take place before they can display God's character. Let's take a look at a couple of Scriptures about this.

Isaiah said, "The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," says the LORD. 'As for Me,' says the LORD, 'this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants,' says the LORD, 'from this time and forevermore'" (Isaiah 59:20, 21).

"Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth [in the last days], and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising" (Isaiah 60:1-3).

Isaiah here is referring to the full and final display of the mercy, and grace, and love of God that will occur among God's people just before the second coming.

Peter also talks about this. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy" (1 Peter 2:9, 10).



Parents need to understand that if a child is never shown mercy and all he understands is justice, that child will grow up to be a hard-hearted adult.

1 The church must be endowed with the righteousness of Christ.

An endowment is something that you are given. It is not something earned. The church is endowed with the righteousness of Christ. It says, "The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display." *The Desire of Ages*, 680.

2 They must have purity.

The church is going to have purity and the church is going to have perfection. "Christ looks upon His people in their purity and perfection, as the reward of His humiliation, and the supplement of His glory—Christ, the great Center, from whom radiates all glory." Ibid.

3 They must have moral perfection of character—character perfection.

God has a training program in which Jesus Christ is performing some experiments. Inspiration says, "God has in training a people chosen, elect, precious. They were once the children of disobedience, disloyal to God. But now 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye

should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy' (1 Peter 2:9, 10)." *The General Conference Daily Bulletin*. February 27, 1893, 409.

These people that God has in training and on whom Jesus is performing divine experiments are in a divine laboratory in this world. "The Lord Jesus is making experiments on human hearts through the exhibition of His mercy and abundant grace." Ibid. It is impossible to make a display of the mercy and grace of God until you have received it yourself.

"The Lord Jesus is making experiments on human hearts through the exhibition of His mercy and abundant grace. He is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan with all his triumphant boasting, with all his confederacy of evil united against God and the laws of his government, stands viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. [Oh to be part of that experiment!] They are to him [the devil] an incomprehensible mystery. The angels of God, seraphim and cherubim, the powers commissioned to co-operate with human agencies, look on with

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*By this all will know
that you are My disciples,
if you have love for one
another.*

John 13:35



astonishment and joy, that fallen men, once children of wrath, are through the training of Christ developing characters after the divine similitude, to be sons and daughters of God, to act an important part in the occupations and pleasures of heaven.” Ibid.

We can be part of those divine experiments designed to transform our characters after the divine similitude and be a reflection of His own character.

This condition in the church is what has been predicted to happen before Jesus returns.

However, before that display can be made, there is an internal work that must be done on the people who are going to make that display.

The question is, do you want to be part of these divine experiments?

“To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father’s love is as great towards us as toward Himself, the only begotten Son, and that they shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against it.” Ibid.

4 We are in training.

The Lord is performing experiments on us and we are to receive the Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, which will be as a wall of fire which all the forces of hell cannot overcome. “In their untainted purity and spotless perfection Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the sup-

plement of His glory—Christ the great center from which radiates all glory.

‘Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb’ (Revelation 19:9).” Ibid.

Jesus wants to perform a divine experiment on you. He wants to pour His mercy, His grace, His love into your heart so that you will become a reflection of His own character so that He can use you to make a full, and complete, and final display of His mercy, grace, and love in this world before He comes. He wants to give you the gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, as an encompassing wall of fire against which the powers of hell shall not prevail.

The devil has been saying for thousands of years that this is not possible and many people in the church today have bought into this lie. However, this is what the Lord says He is going to do and if we refuse His invitation to be part of this experiment, He will choose somebody else. There will be people who are willing to cooperate.

It would be wonderful if each of us could be involved in that full and final display. Today decide to be willing to yield yourself to Him, allowing Him to perform that divine experiment in your life. Do not murmur or complain when troubles and trials and things happen that you do not understand, but trust that God is working something out for your good.

Pray that God’s love will transform us in character so that we can be people whose names are written in heaven as having spotless purity and character perfection, not for ourselves, but for the glory and honor of our Redeemer.

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

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It Is Finished

By Lawrence Nelson

For many years I have been intrigued with a verse of Scripture which I believe is one of the most sublime of all inspiration. It is found in Psalm 85 verse 10: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

When one reads this text for the first time, he is captured by its poetic nature and aroused by its romantic thought, but when one gives himself to prayerful study of this text he is filled with amazement as he begins to realize the very thoughts of God in achieving victory in the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

Today, mankind is faced with many unsolved questions. Each differs widely depending on where one lives, but our subject is of more importance than any problem found in this world today. We are dealing with a question of how to find permanent peace. I am not talking about the present war with terrorists around the world, nor the present peace movements on foot, yet in a way, these world efforts to obtain peace are connected with Satan's ambition to destroy the peace of the universe.



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*All heaven
 participated in the
 Savior's victory. Shouts of
 triumph echoed from one
 unfallen world to another
 throughout the vast
 universe.*

Perhaps we should first question, How can this be? And the answer is: Because Satan had attempted to prove that the righteousness of God's law is the enemy of peace. This is why the Son of God came to live on this earth, to reveal His Father's eternal peace plan proving that His law and everlasting peace are inseparably joined together, that mercy and truth cannot exist without each other.

May the Holy Spirit guide us in our search for Divine understanding that we may realize the meaning of Christ's final words on the cross when He cried, "It is finished." His words forever ended any doubt throughout the universe as to the final outcome of the war with Satan.

The Scripture declares without question in Psalm 119:142, *last part*, "Thy law is the truth."

The life of Christ on this earth proved beyond a doubt that God's law is righteous and can be perfectly obeyed with Divine help. By the death of Christ on the cross He proved that Satan's charges were utterly false, that justice did not destroy mercy in forgiving sin, that heaven's peace will extend throughout all eternity and can be realized only on God's terms.

I trust by now that we are beginning to comprehend a small portion of those dramatic words that Christ uttered on the cross when He cried, "It is finished." It is no wonder when these words were uttered from His dying lips that all heaven broke forth in a mighty shout of victory. Usually when death comes in this life, it brings great anguish, for all hope has finally vanished. Death is the state of hopelessness. But this was not so when Christ died. Those dying words of Christ, "It is finished" was a cry of victory. The battle had been won. It was a time for rejoicing, for Christ had accomplished the task He had come to do. In dying He became a conqueror. All heaven participated in the Savior's victory. Shouts of triumph echoed from one unfallen world to another throughout the vast universe.

Do you question why? Because Heaven's peace had now become a reality. Satan, who for ages had harassed the angels of God and the inhabitants of sinless worlds, was no longer permitted to disrupt heaven's harmony. He had become a defeated foe and, what's more, he knew it. This is why his hatred for God has now turned to revenge. This is why he is going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Those divine words, "It is finished," mean that redemption was no longer a possibility but was now an accomplished fact, not only for us but for the peace of the unfallen worlds. It was not until the moment of Christ's death on the cross that the character of Satan was clearly revealed to the angels of God and to the unfallen worlds. The arch apostate had so clothed himself with deception that even the remaining holy angels did not fully understand the principles of Satan's kingdom. How could this be? We must realize that Satan was a created being, so wonderful, so powerful, and so great in his glory that he was above all created beings. He was actually next to the divine Godhead.

Inspiration speaks of him as "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty" (Ezekiel 28:12, *last part*). Lucifer was of the highest order of all creation. He was used by God to carry out the purposes of the Godhead to the universe. Angels trusted him. They never questioned any of his commands, but after Satan made the decision to take the place of Christ, God could no longer use him. The power and wisdom that he had used to achieve God's purposes he now used to deceive. It was a most difficult task for God to unveil Satan's character.

One often wonders why God didn't immediately destroy Satan when he determined to overthrow God's throne, but at that time, only God in His divine wisdom knew that rebellion is never overcome by force. Therefore, God rightly chose to resist such evil by revealing His goodness, His mercy, His truth and His love. Henceforth Satan would try to prove his false claims by using the power of force while God chose His divine principles as the only means to prove that truth and love can achieve a peaceful kingdom.



Usually when death comes in this life, it brings great anguish, for all hope has finally vanished. Not so in the case of Jesus.

So, in Heaven's council God took action with eternity in mind. It was decided that time should be given Satan to develop his government so that the universe might see the final results.

Thus, during the next four thousand years Christ worked by truth and love to uplift man while Satan worked with his deception to ruin man.

Finally, the time came for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem. Satan immediately attempted to kill the Babe. No child has ever been tried as the Christ Child. Satan used every possible means within his power to keep Christ from developing a perfect character in childhood and to prevent Him from maintaining a faultless manhood. The devil did everything possible to disrupt His three years of holy ministry, which was dedicated to providing an unblemished sacrifice. Satan's storm of wrath continually beat upon Him, but the more Satan attempted to force Him to sin the more firmly Christ clung to His Father.

Unnumbered created beings were absolutely captivated as they beheld Christ's struggle with death in the Garden of Gethsemane, a death that exceeded that of the cross, forcing bloody sweat that fell to the ground from His pores. These sinless creatures watched and

wondered. Three times they heard Him pray for deliverance until heaven could no longer endure the sight and the angel Gabriel was sent to strengthen Jesus.

All heaven beheld as Christ was betrayed into murderous hands. They watched the violence with which He was treated as He was hurried from one tribunal to another. They heard the sneers spoken of His lowly birth. The angels were amazed at the denial and cursing of His beloved disciple. They beheld thousands of demons turning the hearts of men against their Creator. What a picture is revealed! Jesus seized at midnight in the garden and mistreated from palace to judgment hall, two times arraigned before priest, twice before the Sanhedrin. By mob violence He is taken to Pilate who chastised Him and then sent Him to King Herod who cruelly handled Him. Finally, He is brought back to Pilate who condemned and scourged Him.

All heaven was watching as that whip with sharp metal attached to the many strands dug deep into the Saviour's back, removing strength from His body, making it impossible for Him to carry the cross and He falls to the ground. Surely your heart is touched as we have joined with the universe in watching the

nails driven through His hands and feet. We can actually sense the pain as the cross is lifted and dropped into the hole. And our eyes fill with tears as we watch His labored breath grow quick and deep. All this and more because the sins of the world have been heaped upon Him.

We cannot but marvel with heaven that Jesus prays amid such suffering, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Watch with contempt as we see the devil's legions of demons inspiring the mob with the words, "If Thou be Christ, save Thyself" (Luke 23:39, *last part*). But in all this Satan gained absolutely nothing. Not one sin could be found in Jesus Christ. Suddenly Jesus gives that astonishing cry, "It is finished" as His head falls forward in death.

John tells us what happened in heaven at that very moment. Revelation 12:10 says, "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." At last Satan's disguise is torn away. His administration is laid wide open before the unfallen angels and the universe. Satan had revealed

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Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

himself a murderer. How true were the words of Christ, “He was a murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44). Never again would the angels of God in heaven have to listen to Satan’s accusations as he had taunted them at Jerusalem’s pearly gates. The last link of sympathy for Satan was forever broken.

Yet the angels of God did not know the depth of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. This mystery of iniquity must be fully revealed, so Satan’s existence must continue a little longer. For some two thousand years more they must see the full contrast between the Prince of Life and the prince of darkness.

Satan had declared that God’s law could not be obeyed, that God’s justice was inconsistent with His mercy, that it was impossible for a sinner to be pardoned for sin. He must be punished. And if sin should be forgiven, God could no longer be a God of justice because Satan himself had been banished from heaven and refused pardon. But beloved, let us pause for a moment and think this thing through clearly. Lucifer had been the covering cherub next to God. No one in the universe knew more fully and understood more clearly God’s government of love. Yet he openly rebelled, knowing full well that God is a God of love. But man was deceived by Satan’s sophistry. Man, at creation, had lived but a very short time and did not know the height and breadth and the depth of God’s love. There was hope for fallen man when given time to realize God’s love and thus be drawn back to God by beholding His character. God’s mercy and justice must be made manifest to sinful man. He must understand that mercy did not set aside God’s justice, that God’s law revealed the attributes of His character and in heaven’s sanctuary not one jot or tittle could be changed in that divine law.

So, wonder of wonders, what does the Godhead do? In order to prove to man that God is filled with love and mercy, Christ

sacrifices Himself. We read in 2 Corinthians 5:19: “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” Since the law requires righteousness, no man of himself can become righteous, but Christ can embrace men with God’s attributes. Jesus can give to us His character; thus, the righteousness of the law can be fulfilled in the believer. God can be just, “the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:26). Thus, Jesus revealed the way to God. Since the law is truth, Christ revealed that mercy and His law were insolubly joined together, that one cannot exist without the other. This is why our text states, “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”

This brings us to the most important truth for those living in this end time. It is here that we discover Satan’s final deception. Since the cross reveals such unquestionable love of Divinity, Satan now declares that Christ’s love had destroyed the law. Let’s think this through. If it had been possible for God to alter or to change His law, Christ need not have died. So, Satan in this end time has decided to use the love of God to immortalize transgression. Since Jesus’ love was so great that He died for mankind, Satan now uses God’s mercy as the means to do away with the requirements of the law. So today we need only to love God and not obey Him. This is the final deception of Satan in this end time.

Satan is working through the fallen Protestant churches and the Papacy to lead men to disobey one precept of God’s law, knowing full well that God has stated, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10). Thus, in our world today most all have swallowed Satan’s lie, hook, line, and sinker, which is his masterly deception in keeping Sunday holy instead of the seventh day Sabbath. And by doing this they are making it possible for Satan to be worshiped as the God of this world.

I am sorry to say that this deception is gaining ground in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Never before has there been so much love-preaching. Never has there been so little preaching of obedience. The

result is very obvious. Since God loves you so much, you do not have to obey Him anymore; you may sin until Jesus comes. The results are very evident. Two separate classes are being developed within God's true church: those who love Jesus so much that they would rather die than sin, and, on the other hand are those who only want to hear of love and no obedience, believing that God's mercy is so great that they can continue to sin and still be saved.

Beloved, Jesus is soon coming and will vindicate His law with the seven last plagues while at the same time He will deliver those who keep the commandments of God. Sin and sinners will be punished both root and branch – Satan the root, and those who accept his last deception, the branches. God's word will be fulfilled of Satan and his followers. "I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire" (Ezekiel 28:16, *last part*). "Thou shalt be a terror, and never shall be any more" (Ezekiel 27:36). "The wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be" (Psalm 37:10). They shall be as though they had not been.

To those individuals who chose to believe Satan's final deception that God's love is so great that He will save them even in their sins will discover that they have actually cut themselves off from the peace of eternal life, for as Proverbs 8:36 states, "All they that hate Me love death." The glory of God's love will destroy them.

Let us never forget that at the beginning of the great controversy one third of the angels in heaven were deceived. The unfallen worlds did not comprehend what you and I have discovered in this study. If Satan and his angels had been destroyed by God the moment they had rebelled, the universe would never have known the results of sin and they may also have produced the deadly roots of rebellion, but this will not be so when this controversy ends, for God's charac-



"It is finished," means that redemption was no longer a possibility but was now an accomplished fact.

ter will be fully vindicated. Every created intelligence of heaven and on earth will fully understand the character of God and they will know His precepts are perfect and immutable. Every created being will delight to do God's will, for in their heart God's love has been fully understood. Love has not destroyed His law but established His law. Peace, perfect peace will eternally reign, for mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

"And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.

"And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the

earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever' (Revelation 5:13).

"The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love." *The Great Controversy*, 678. **LM**

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



Angelic Watchcare

Protection Under Persecution

By John R. Pearson

“But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated.”

Hebrews 10:32, 33

There are three provocative phrases in the above text:

- “You endured a great struggle with sufferings”
- “You were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations”
- “You became companions of those who were so treated”

If you have been raised as an Adventist from birth, it is less likely that you have had this experience, but Paul was writing to Hebrews who had converted to Christianity later in life.

“The Jerusalem Council had already released Gentile converts to the Christian faith from the ritual requirements of Judaism, but the silence of the Council with respect to the duty of Jewish Christians in this matter implied that the latter were still obliged to comply with them. Nevertheless, a large and influential body of Jewish Christians never assented to the release of the Gentile believers from the requirements of the Jewish legal system, and actively sought to impose their point of view on Paul’s converts.” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, 452.

Historically, decades—even centuries—prior to Christ’s advent, there were certain faithful souls who had maintained faith in a coming Redeemer.

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve were promised a Redeemer following their fall from grace. In fact, they hoped that the power of redemption would be vested in their firstborn.

Moses, who forsook the pleasures of sin, communed with his Redeemer on a regular basis and knew Him to be the salvation of Israel.

Abraham, who “waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God,” “command[ed] his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him” (Hebrews 11:10; Genesis 18:19).

Job “was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1). Even in the midst of his tremendous afflictions, Job maintained his faith in his Redeemer. “And he said: ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.’ In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong” (Job 1:21, 22). Even when provoked by these three “miserable comforters,” Job maintained his faith by declaring, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him” (Job 13:15).

Enoch is another example of one who foresaw a coming Redeemer. Jude wrote of him, “Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him’” (Jude 1:14, 15).

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel—all the Old Testament prophets—maintained faith



Even in the midst of his tremendous afflictions, Job maintained his faith in his Redeemer.

in a Messiah to come. However, by the time the Messiah actually appeared, centuries after the last book of the Old Testament was written, faith in the atoning blood of a self-sacrificing Saviour had shifted to faith in the blood of bulls and goats.

Thus, when a Hebrew, a member of the established church, chose to turn from the centuries-old ritual of animal sacrifices and follow this radical Upstart who claimed to bring salvation through faith rather than force, that converted soul indeed suffered reproaches and tribulations—even to the point of execution.

My personal experience confirms the validity of Paul’s assertion. When I accepted the Advent truth, I faced extreme opposition from my wife—who eventually filed for divorce, and from my employer—who threatened me with isolation and brought my refusal to work on the seventh day before the board of directors.

Not only did I suffer reproaches and tribulation for my decision to follow Christ, the young man who introduced me to the truth, with whom I became a Christian brother in the fullest sense of the term, a “companion so treated,” suffered as well. He eventually had to seek employment elsewhere and resign his position.

Incurring this kind of treatment is not a pleasant thing to experience. Were it

not for the cautions in God’s word that warn us to “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8), we would easily be caught off-guard and dislodged from the path of truth and righteousness.

In my particular case, I was not familiar enough with Scripture at that time to know the many promises God’s word contains nor the cautions it gives about the persecutions of Christ’s followers. And interestingly also, when I tried to share my newfound faith with professed Christians, I usually met the same kind of opposition that I had received from my wife and my employer. One faithful Sunday keeper, when I explained from Scripture that the true Sabbath was the seventh day, replied, “I just don’t think it’s that important.”

However, although we are cautioned about the determination of the enemy of souls to “devour” Christ’s followers, we are also given many wonderful promises in God’s word to enable us to endure his efforts—the reproaches and tribulations that seem to inevitably come with a decision to walk in the light.

One promise we are given that is especially appropriate is found in Isaiah 9:6, 7: “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Coun-

selor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from *that time* forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

“That time,” referred to in verse 7, could reasonably be reckoned to have begun with Christ’s presence on this earth when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. It was confirmed when His apostles asked Him about the destruction of Jerusalem. We know that His answer addressed not only the fate of Jerusalem, but the events leading up to His second coming as well. There is a passage in *The Great Controversy* that summarizes that confirmation of “that time” very well.

“When Jesus revealed to His disciples the fate of Jerusalem and the scenes of the second advent, He foretold also *the experience of His people* [Who are “His people?” We are not left in doubt about that. They are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).] ... He foretold also *the experience of His people* from the time when He should be taken from them, to His return in power and glory for their deliverance. From Olivet the Saviour beheld the storms about to fall upon the apostolic church; and penetrating deeper into the future, His eye discerned the fierce, wasting tempests that were to beat upon His followers in the coming ages of darkness and persecution. [538–1798—the 1260 years of Daniel’s and John’s prophecies.] In a few brief utterances of awful significance, He foretold the portion which the *rulers of this world* would mete out to the church of God.

“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. [That happened during the Dark Ages when the Catholic church ruled

the world—at least that part of the world that played a role in the great controversy, and it will happen again just before Christ’s second coming.] ... For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened’ (Matthew 24:9, 21, 22).

“The followers of Christ must tread the same path of humiliation, reproach, and suffering which their Master trod. The enmity that burst forth against the world’s Redeemer would be manifested against all who should believe on His name.” *The Great Controversy*, 39.

We are warned about that troubling path of humiliation, reproach, and suffering throughout Scripture. Let’s look at just a couple of the most familiar ones.

In Philippians 1:29 Paul tells God’s people, “For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”

In 2 Timothy 3:12, Paul advised Timothy, “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” However, in the previous verses, Paul had preceded that hard saying with words of comfort: “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And *out of them all the Lord delivered me*” (verses 10, 11).

We have that same promise that the Lord will deliver us out of all persecutions, afflictions, and trials. We who are Christ’s faithful followers have that same assurance that the Lord will deliver us out of them all! There are many confirmations in Scripture and in the Spirit of Prophecy that give us that assurance.

One of the strongest is in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians: “No temptation has overtaken you except such as

is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

This promise can be claimed by anyone who is facing difficulties of any kind in their daily walk, whether it is the enemy of souls seeking to devour you or persecution for your faith in any form.

One of the most uplifting assurances of divine assistance in our daily walk with Christ is in *The Desire of Ages*:

“In all ages, angels have been near to Christ’s faithful followers. The vast confederacy of evil is arrayed against all who would overcome; but Christ would have us look to the things which are not seen, to the armies of heaven encamped about all who love God, to deliver them. From what dangers, seen and unseen, we have been preserved through the interposition of the angels, we shall never know, until in the light of eternity we see the providences of God. Then we shall know that the whole family of heaven was interested in the family here below, and that messengers from the throne of God attended our steps from day to day.” *The Desire of Ages*, 240.

There is also an especially reassuring promise in the devotional *Maranatha*.

“In the day of fierce trial He [Christ] will say, ‘Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast’ (Isaiah 26:20). What are the chambers in which they are to hide? They are the protection of Christ and holy angels. The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth.

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

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

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

“In the closing period of earth’s history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. ... In the midst of the time of trouble—trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—His chosen ones will stand *unmoved*. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God’s saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a ‘God of gods,’ able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him.” *Maranatha*, 270.

“Trust in Him” is an essential key to the fulfillment of God’s promises in your life. Another essential key—maybe even more important—is obedience to His will.

There is a passage in *Christ’s Object Lessons* that brings to view a third key to the fulfillment of God’s promises.

“To human beings *striving* for conformity to the divine image there is imparted an outlay of heaven’s treasure, an excellency of power, that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 163.

Thus, we see three essentials to a successful Christian walk: trust, obedience,



Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God’s saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them.

and striving—personal effort. Scripture makes it clear that we have divine in each one of those essentials.

Let’s continue by looking at a few of the wonderful promises from God’s word. These are only a few of the hundreds or actually, thousands, that it contains.

“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You” (Isaiah 26:3).

Who are those whose minds are “stayed on” God? Again, they are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).

One of the most wonderful promises for maintaining the peaceful assurance of God’s protection is contained in Philippians 4:6, 7: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Peter gives an equally assuring promise in 1 Peter 1:3–5: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance

incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Claiming these promises by faith, and acting on them, will enable us to say with confidence, as Paul wrote to Timothy in the last letter he wrote before his execution, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7, 8).

How could those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus not love His appearing, as Peter referred to in his last epistle—an event that will end the sin and suffering of this corrupt world and bring an absolute end to sin and affliction forever.

[All emphasis supplied.]

[All Bible quotes NKJV unless otherwise noted.] **LM**

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Isaiah

Clues – Isaiah 1–9, KJV

Across

- B2 What God pleads with us to do with evil..... 1:16
 B14 God likens His church to a pampered _____ that did not respond to His care 5:1–7
 C6 In the day of the Lord those who are this will be brought low (two words)..... 2:12
 E12 All God’s people did evil and were this 9:17
 F1 In Isaiah’s vision God asked, “Who will...” (three words)..... 6:8
 G8 God did this to His children, yet they rebelled against Him 1:2
 H17 One of the descriptive titles of Jesus, our Savior, is our everlasting _____ 9:6
 I2 One sin is to do this to something made with our own hands 2:8
 J12 Woe to those who indulge in this kind of drink..... 5:11
 K8 Obedience yields heaven, but if we _____ to obey God’s laws we will die 1:19, 20
 K19 A seraphim over God’s throne: Holy, holy, holy is the _____ 6:2, 3
 L13 Isaiah’s answer to God’s question (two words)..... 6:8
 M1 In pride the people wanted fancy houses of _____ stone instead of brick..... 9:9, 10
 M7 God: I get no _____ in forms and ceremonies of habit without obedience..... 1:11
 N18 Women are condemned for wearing these 3:18–23
 P2 After seeing God in vision Isaiah realized how _____ he was..... 6:5
 P15 Anciently, as now, the _____ have led their flock astray 9:16
 R10 There will come a day when the remnant of God’s people will be this 4:3
 S3 God will _____ our prayers made with “dirty” hands and deeds (two words)..... 1:15, 16
 S18 Woe to those who are this in their own eyes 5:21

Down:

- A4 If a prophet’s messages are not in harmony with this they are a false prophet..... 8:20
 A6 God’s sinful people going into captivity will seem as this to them 5:13, 14
 A8 These looks and attitude will be humbled..... 2:11
 A10 Women are condemned who deceive with these 3:16
 A12 In the day of the Lord this trait in men will be brought low 2:17
 A17 In pride the people wanted _____ instead of sycamores for their houses 9:9, 10
 A19 Woe to those who are given to iniquity in their _____ 5:18
 D2 In God’s mercy the record of our sins can be wiped as clean as _____ 1:18
 E4 There will never be an end to the _____ and peace of Jesus 9:7
 F10 The extreme, blatant sinfulness of God’s people is to Him as _____ sores 1:6
 H6 In the day of the Lord He will do this to the earth..... 2:19
 H19 The false prophets are represented by the _____ the Lord would cut off 9:14, 15
 H21 Women are condemned for wearing these (singular) 3:20
 I2 One of the titles of Jesus, our Savior..... 9:6
 I8 In Isaiah’s vision his sin was _____ by a live coal..... 6:6, 7
 I15 One of the descriptive titles of Jesus, our Savior..... 9:6
 J13 If a prophet’s messages are not in harmony with this they are a false prophet..... 8:20
 M19 In Isaiah’s vision what kind of coal did the seraphim take to Isaiah?..... 6:6
 O5 In the day of the Lord sinners will try to hide in the _____ of rocks 2:21
 O17 Many women “do their own thing” wanting to be known by God’s _____ 4:1
 [woman = church (Isaiah 54:5, 6; Jeremiah 6:2; John 3:29)]

A	2	3		5		7		9		11		13	14	15	16		18		20	21	A
B																					B
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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	E	S	W	I	S	E				L	A	R	E	H	T	O	N			S	
L	R				E					H	O	L	Y		G	F				R	
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A	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

- P7 The apostasy of God's people has provoked Him to this 1:4
P11 In the day of the Lord sinners will discard these to the moles and bats 2:20
P21 God's people were (think are?) corrupt from head to _____ of their foot 1:6

"The LORD Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son." Isaiah 7:14



"God is Stronger Than All the Powers of the Fallen Foe"

My mind has been burdened over the matter of writing on Old Testament history. I am troubled to see my brethren and sisters bringing into the daily life so little Bible truth. In order for us to be overcomers we must realize that there is a battle to be fought. We rejoice to know that through the strengthening power of God's grace we are sure to win. God is stronger than all the powers of the fallen foe.

The apostle Paul says: And now abideth faith, hope, and charity [love]. In all our words and acts these three Christian graces are to be interwoven. “The greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). If we will cultivate Christlike love, we can have this grace in large measure.

The early Christian church left their first love. To John on the Isle of Patmos was given the message: “Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne and hast patience, and for My name’s sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou has left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent” (Revelation 2:1–5).

As members of God’s remnant church, we must pray with firm faith for the gift of the grace of love. Love is the fulfilling of the law, and is manifested altogether too little among those upon whom has been shining great light. Genuine religion is life and light to every believer.

The Christian graces are given not as ornaments to win admiration, but as talents to be used in accomplishing a work for God. We are to heed the words of Paul, “Quit you like men, be strong” (1 Corinthians 16:13). “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of

righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ephesians 6:10–18).

If it was impossible for us to meet these requirements, they would never have been given. In divine grace there is a wonderful power. It can subdue the outbursts of passion in professing believers.

No one should ever permit his mind to get into such a state that he will speak the words prompted by Satan. To accuse the brethren, to discourage them in their work, is to personify Satan and to be his helping hand by putting into the minds of others the evil leaven of criticism, as leaven is put into meal. This evil leaven, so thoughtlessly introduced, leavens the whole lump. The apostle Paul says: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled” (Hebrews 12:14, 15).

How long will those who claim to be Christians tolerate the evil of listening to the criticisms of their brethren, and, in turn, communicate these criticisms to others, thus strengthening one another in an evil work? How long will they question the good work that is being done by a few, and stand in the way as hindrances? To clear the pathway of the accumulated rubbish placed there by accusers of the brethren takes precious time, and robs faithful workers of their strength and hope and faith. God’s work can be carried on among unbelievers with far greater success than among those who, like the Pharisees, desire to have all things shaped and carried on in accordance with their ideas and preferences.

Bible Training School, June 1, 1903. LM



Love is the fulfilling of the law, and is manifested altogether too little among those upon whom has been shining great light.

Who Will Be in Heaven?

"Mother, who will be in heaven?" Scott asked one bright sunny day as he watched her weed the garden.

Mother looked up from her weeding.

"Who will be in heaven?" Mother repeated the question. "Hmmm, let's see." Scott knew this meant she was thinking what to tell him.

"You know, I believe this garden has the answer for you," Mother told him after awhile. "Let's look at it." She pointed to the plants she had been weeding.

"What plants are these?" she asked.

"Carrots," Scott answered. He knew because he had eaten them.

"And these?" she asked, pointing to a different row.

"Onions."

"And these?" Mother asked again.

"Corn," Scott answered quickly.

"Why do carrots grow in one place, onions in another, and corn over there?" Mother asked.


Scott grinned. He thought that everyone should know the answer to that question. "Because that's what was planted," Scott said.

"True," Mother told him. "And this is the thing you should remember. Like seeds, people die and are buried in the ground. If they belong to Jesus when they die, they will belong to Him when they are raised from the dead. God has said this is so. So, the people who go to heaven will be the ones who love Jesus here on earth."

Just as the old seed dies in the ground, our bodies will disappear and we will get new bodies for heaven. We will be with Jesus forever if we loved and served Him when we lived on earth.

"Not everyone who says, Lord, Lord, shall enter into heaven, just those who do the will of their Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

Dear Jesus, we thank You because You are the Resurrection and Life. We know no one will come to the Father but by You. Help us to love You always so that when You come to get us we will be ready to go to heaven. In Thy dear name, Amen.

Happy Moments With God, Margaret Anderson, ©1962, 141, 142. 





Warning Signs

CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION

As I was washing dishes recently, I became aware of some deep scratches in my dishes. As I am a real health-nut and always concerned about lead and other impurities, the horror of the reality struck me that when hot food is placed on those plates or cups, dangerous metals can seep into the food and into our bodies, which can gradually cause health issues. We have had these dishes for many years and after inspecting every plate, bowl and cup and finding that all of them were scratched I discarded them and decided it was time for a change. I am very thankful that the Lord warned me and brought the danger to my attention.

When the Lord shows us danger in anything, it is the time to take a stand for the right and remove the item or stumbling blocks—right then. Do you choose life in all the areas of your home and in your life? Satan would love to destroy us by causing health issues. If he can do this through our food or housewares, he will do it.

Our God tells us through Joshua, “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19).

This means we are to represent God in all areas of our lives, including the kitchen. He says, “Thou shalt not kill” (Exodus 20:13). Anything that may cause physical or spiritual life to wither and weaken must be thrown out or removed in one way or another.

A key to eternal life begins on this earth with our choices in the home. We are God’s children and as such we want to glorify Him in all areas of our life. Shun the wrong and choose the right, whether it be in the kitchen or in our choice of entertainment or clothing, before it overcomes us in one way or another. The moment by moment choices we make each day lead us either to eternal life or eternal death. Many times, the choices we make also affect other people for good or for bad.

We have been warned to keep our eyes and ears open. Peter said, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

Devour means to consume destructively, demolish. Just think how many people believe all is well when in reality they are being destroyed or demolished by the devil, little by little.

Watch for the warning signs in your life and in your home and make a stand—no matter what.

Heavenly Father: We need more spiritual discernment in our lives and in our homes, for the devil is trying to destroy us in any way he can. Wake us up Lord. Alert us to the physical and spiritual dangers present in our homes before we or family members are harmed through our ignorance. Open our eyes to the warning signs around us. Protect us Lord. Thank You. Amen. LM



"I have received the *LandMarks* magazines. I really love the messages. I also have been listening to your sermon videos on the Internet. Thank you so much. Blessings."

—PR, Michigan

"Thank you for your continued efforts in spreading the gospel message. May the Lord truly bless each one of you. We love the *LandMarks* magazine."

—E & SS, New York

April Sermon of the Month

Strangers and Pilgrims

By John J. Grosboll

Faithful church members who are pilgrims and strangers will escape the time of trouble while all the earth dwellers will find themselves trapped in Satan's snares.

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

April 2020


Dear Friend,

A friend of mine said to me yesterday, "It is difficult for me to witness in this place." There are many people who have thoughts like this. During this same conversation my friend mentioned to me concerning a certain law officer who recognized religious leaders and evidently had made comment about it. What does this tell you? The people whom you least expect are being affected by what you say or do are watching you more closely than you think, if you are a professed Christian. Many people do not read the Bible or go to church or make any profession of any religion, but they are constantly observing professed Christians. When they see them say or do something that they recognize as contrary to the teachings of Jesus they say inside—it is just as I thought, he (or she) is phony. When they witness hypocrisy, the non-religious person eventually believes all Christians to be phony. This is one of the main reasons why many people who are not Christians are so skeptical of Christians and their religion. It is up to you and me to demonstrate the character of Christ to an unbelieving world.

The reason we have had so little influence upon unbelieving relatives and associates is that we have manifested little decided difference in our practices from those of the world.

"Tell the people of Him who is 'the Chiefest among ten thousand,' and the One 'altogether lovely' (The Song of Solomon 5:10, 16). Words alone cannot tell it. Let it be reflected in the character and manifested in the life. Christ is sitting for His portrait in every disciple. Every one God has predestinated to be 'conformed to the image of His Son' (Romans 8:29). In every one Christ's long-suffering love, His holiness, meekness, mercy, and truth are to be manifested to the world." *The Desire of Ages*, 827.

Your brother in Christ,



John J. Grosboll

13th Sabbath Offering

An Angel Named Angel *Success in Following the* *Great Commission in Mexico*

By Pastor Domingo Nunez



Angel Damien Serrano



For the second quarter of 2020, your thirteenth Sabbath offerings will be directed toward assistance for a group of churches in Guerrero, Mexico.

About twenty years ago, a dedicated soul, having converted to the Seventh-day Adventist faith in the United States, resolved to return to his homeland in Guerrero, Mexico, to share the wonderful news of salvation through Jesus Christ that he had learned in the U.S.

Brother Angel Damien Serrano worked diligently to share his faith, eventually establishing a group determined to know and follow the truth. As their size and influence grew, the SDA conference became aware of their presence and began to collect tithes from them. The story unfolds on the following pages.

Brother Angel's story is a good example of what happens when God's people follow the commission given in Matthew 28. **LM**

“Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, the evangelist's work will not, can not, be without fruit. Think of the interest that the Father and the Son have in this work. As the Father loves the Son, so the Son loves those that are His—those who work as He worked to save perishing souls. None need feel that they are powerless; for Christ declares, ‘All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth’ (Matthew 28:18). He has promised that He will give this power to His workers. His power is to become their power.”

The Review and Herald, June 2, 1903.

from the
Mission Fields



One of several churches under construction as the result of Brother Angel's evangelistic efforts.

Providence and a Book

By Pastor Domingo Nunez

Cópala is one of the 81 municipalities of Guerrero, in southwestern Mexico. The town is known for its beach, Playa Ventura and has a population of almost 12,000.

Angel Damien Serrano is from there and at the age of 24 he decided to travel in search for something better. When he came to the U.S. in 1991, he found most of the people that he met were religious. Angel soon met some people in Santa Ana, California, and for economic reasons he decided to join them in renting a house. The housemates invited him to visit a Pentecostal church which he found exciting but after a few months he realized that though they did a lot of praising God and singing, he had not learned anything from the word of God.

After the service one Sunday, Angel decided that he would no longer return to that Pentecostal church and while walking home he found a book lying next to a trash can. That book was *The National Sunday Law*. The title caught his attention, making him curious, and he felt compelled to pick up the book. When he started reading, he felt alarmed and shocked by the contents. Something inside urged him to finish reading the book and continue his search to learn more from the word of God.



Pr. Domingo holds services in one of the completed churches.



The youth Sabbath school class studies their lesson for the week.

After moving to Utah he attended several churches before meeting two men who invited him to a group Bible study of the books of Daniel and Revelation. Soon after, he accepted the three angels' messages and was baptized. As he continued reading the writings of Ellen G. White he was convicted of his need to return to Mexico and share the messages of the three angels.

It was in 2001 that he arrived in his town of Cópala. There was no Seventh-day Adventist presence there at that time. Deciding to look for souls for Christ he went to a larger nearby town, Cruz Grande, where there were more churches of different denominations and made himself known.

One day an invitation was given for him to preach at Dios es Universal. After the church service one entire family of seven came to Angel inviting him to their family home to study the word of God. Soon after a Seventh-day Adventist colporteur arrived in the area and a Seventh-day Adventist church was formed. At that time Jair, a Bible worker,

and Doroteo, a Seventh-day Adventist and another brother from the nearby village came and started working unpaid to look for fervent souls. Five weeks later, the first person to open their heart to the message was Sofia Tejada Perez.

At first the meetings began in the house of Angel Damian and family and when the group grew it had to move to one larger house after another. The message of the three angels was spread and the news went out throughout the state of Guerrero. Soon after, a group of representatives from the Seventh-day Adventist conference church came into town asking for the tithes and offerings. Each Sabbath they came to the houses to collect.

Over the years the church outgrew the homes where they worshiped so a group of brothers gathered together in the house of Angel Damian to pray and discuss how they could acquire a church. They had asked for help from the conference which fell on deaf ears causing the members to believe all the conference was interested in was the tithes and offerings. Angel Damian

along with all the brothers in the faith decided to retain the tithes and offerings to use locally. This started a war between the brethren and the conference church which has not been resolved.

This conflict has caused a separation. A small group sided with the Seventh-day Adventist church, but most of the brethren continue to preach the mission left to them by Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:19, 20.

Today, all those who remain standing faithfully and independently have decided to build churches and go forward faithfully preaching and teaching the three angels' messages. The churches are not completely finished and they are in need of help to complete the churches and other equipment to advance the work of God in Guerrero, Mexico. The board of Global Evangelism of Free Seventh-day Adventists and the ministry of Steps to Life are collaborating with the board of the administrative division of Guerrero, Mexico. To help in this endeavor, please mark your donations *Mexico*. **LM**

Pelorus Jack

Pelorus Jack was a dolphin famous for meeting and escorting ships through a stretch of water in Cook Strait, New Zealand, between 1888 and 1912. Pelorus Jack was usually spotted in Admiralty Bay between Cape Francis and Collinet Point, near French Pass, a notoriously dangerous channel used by ships travelling between Wellington in the North Island and Nelson in the South Island.

Pelorus Jack was approximately 13 feet (4 m) long and was of a white color with grey lines or shadings, and a round, white head. Although its sex was never determined, it was identified from photographs as a Risso's dolphin, *Grampus griseus*. This is an uncommon species in New Zealand waters, and only 12 Risso's dolphins have been reported in that area.

Pelorus Jack guided the ships by swimming alongside a watercraft for 20 minutes at a time. If the crew could not see Jack at first, they often waited for him to appear.

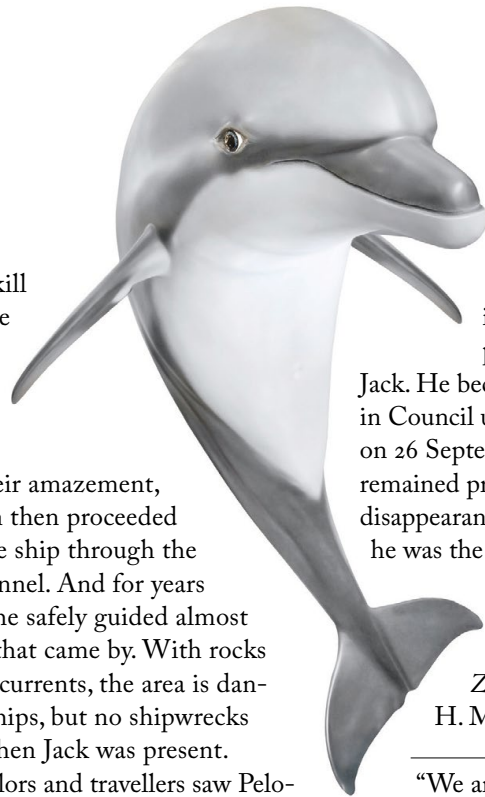
Pelorus Jack was first seen around 1888 when the dolphin appeared in front of the schooner *Brindle* when the ship approached French Pass, a channel located between D'Urville Island and the South Island. When the members of the crew saw the dolphin bobbing up and down in front of the ship, they

wanted to kill him, but the captain's wife talked them out of it. To their amazement, the dolphin then proceeded to guide the ship through the narrow channel. And for years thereafter, he safely guided almost every ship that came by. With rocks and strong currents, the area is dangerous to ships, but no shipwrecks occurred when Jack was present.

Many sailors and travellers saw Pelorus Jack, and he was mentioned in local newspapers and depicted in postcards.

In 1904, someone aboard the *SS Penguin* tried to shoot Pelorus Jack with a rifle. Despite the attempt on his life, Pelorus Jack continued to help ships. According to folklore, however, he no longer helped the *Penguin*, which shipwrecked in Cook Strait in 1909.

Jack was last seen in April 1912. There were various rumours connected to his disappearance, including fears that foreign whalers might have harpooned him. However, research suggests that Pelorus Jack was an old animal; his head was white and his body pale, both indications of age, so it is likely that he died of natural causes.



Following the shooting incident, a law was proposed to protect Pelorus Jack. He became protected by Order in Council under the Sea Fisheries Act on 26 September 1904. Pelorus Jack remained protected by that law until his disappearance in 1912. It is believed that he was the first individual sea creature protected by law in any country.

An Encyclopedia of New Zealand (1966), edited by A. H. McLintock.

"We are not merely to tell the child[ren] about these creatures of God's. The animals themselves are to be his teachers." *Child Guidance*, 58, 59.

If God can use a dolphin to guide ships through troublous waters, He is able also to guide all who put their trust in Him through any rough experience.

"Balaam owed his life to the poor animal he had treated so cruelly. The man who claimed to be a prophet of the Lord was so blinded by covetousness and ambition that he could not discern the angel of God visible to his beast. ...

"Few realize as they should the sinfulness of abusing animals or leaving them to suffer from neglect. The animals were created to serve man." *From Eternity Past*, 313. **LM**

Q:

Explain the “least in the kingdom” and if they will be in heaven?

A:

Jesus said, “Whosoever ... shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:19.

After stating Matthew 5:19, Ellen White says: “That is, he shall have no place therein. For he who willfully breaks one commandment, does not, in spirit and truth, keep any of them. ‘Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all’ (James 2:10).” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 51.

“It is not the greatness of the act of disobedience that constitutes sin, but the fact of variance from God’s expressed will in the least particular; for this shows that there is yet communion between the soul and sin. The heart is divided in its service. There is a virtual denial of

God, a rebellion against the laws of His government.

“Were men free to depart from the Lord’s requirements and to set up a standard of duty for themselves, there would be a variety of standards to suit different minds and the government would be taken out of the Lord’s hands. The will of man would be made supreme, and the high and holy will of God—His purpose of love toward His creatures—would be dishonored, disrespected. ...

“By venturing to disregard the will of God upon one point, our first parents opened the floodgates of woe upon the world. And every individual who follows their example will reap a similar result. The love of God underlies every precept of His law, and he who departs from the commandment is working his own unhappiness and ruin.” *Ibid.*, 51, 52. **LM**



He who willfully breaks one commandment, does not, in spirit and truth, keep any of them.

Mood Food

Growing up, if a person was in a sour mood or being difficult, they were often asked jokingly, “What did you have to eat today?” Back then the connection between food and mood wasn’t really connected but today it is a different matter.

“Researchers from New Zealand wondered if the mental health benefits of fruits and vegetables were greater when eaten raw, compared to canned, cooked or processed. The following is an interesting study that took place. 422 Americans and New Zealanders were enrolled aged 18 to 25. The researchers chose people in this age group because they have a higher risk of mental health disorders and tend to consume low levels of fruits and vegetables. The participants completed a survey to assess diet and lifestyle, and there were questions relating to depression, anxiety and mood states.

“In addition, the researchers asked them about factors that could influence the outcome of the study. These included gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, physical activity, smoking, alcohol use and sleep.

“After taking all these into consideration, the research team found a significant association between consuming raw fruits and vegetables and better mental health outcomes. More raw meant a better mood, life satisfaction and overall psychological well-being compared to eating cooked, canned or processed.

“According to psychologist Tamlin Conner from the University of Otago, who led the study, ‘We used to think about what we ate in relation to our physical health, but now there is more evidence suggesting it also impacts on how we feel.

“‘This research is increasingly vital as lifestyle approaches such as dietary change may provide an accessible, safe, and adjuvant approach to improving mental health.’



Raw Contains More Brain-Healthy Micronutrients

“This is the first study to look specifically at this issue, although three previous studies found raw fruit and vegetable intake was associated with lowered feelings of depression and stress.

“Cooking, canning and processing are known to decrease the nutrient content of some produce, so while the mechanisms that would explain the results of the study were not tested, the authors

believe foods in their raw state deliver more micronutrients.


“They write, ‘Cooking fruits and vegetables can alter the bioavailability of nutrients which may ... play an influential role in the neurotransmission systems involved in mood and well-being.’

“Cooking and processing also diminish the quantity and activity of antioxidants. This too can negatively affect mental functioning.

“But cooking does have some benefits. It sometimes enhances bioavailability – it has this effect on lycopene in tomatoes, for example – so the situation isn’t clear-cut.

“Nevertheless, the authors continue, ‘for key micronutrients that have been linked to mental health such as vitamin C and carotenoids, cooking and canning would most likely lead to a degradation in nutrients, thereby limiting their beneficial impact on mental health.’

“These were the top 10 raw foods tied to better mental health in the study: carrots, bananas, apples, dark leafy greens like spinach, grapefruit, lettuce, citrus fruits, fresh berries, cucumber and kiwifruit.” www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/04/180416101403.htm

So, what did you eat today? Was your mental stability a consideration or are you walking around biting and chewing on anybody around you? 



Differences & Persecution

By John J. Grosboll

One may wonder why religious discussion and persecution provoke conflict on both a personal and often on an international level as well. The worst wars of all time have been those that have been fought over religion. The imprisonment of the apostle Paul provides abundant testimony concerning the real issues that result in the white-hot heat of human conflict.

It is very common for people in the world to be proud of their race or nation of their birth. That is not a problem unless because of our pride we begin to look down on other people of other races or other nations and believe they are inferior to us. Eventually, as a result of those feelings, animosity and hatred develop between the people of different nations and different races. This happened in ancient times and is still happening today.

“

*Death is just a moment
of silence and darkness, a
sleep until awakened at the
resurrection.*

Ethnic prejudice and hatred is what caused the animosity against Paul when he was sent by the Lord as the apostle to the Gentiles. If you are non-Jewish and a Christian today, you owe a great debt of gratitude to the apostle Paul, who originally took the gospel to the Gentiles all over the world. His opening the gospel to the Gentiles caused the Jews to hate him. Eventually, he was captured in the temple by the outraged Jews who intended to kill him.

The Roman soldiers were oblivious to this intent. Being instructed by the Jewish leaders, the Roman commander figured that this fellow, Paul, must be a terrible criminal because of the way the Jews acted. So, as was customary in the Roman government, they decided to find out who this fellow really was. They would torture him until he told them the truth about what he had done. They stretched out Paul's body to be scourged, but he had something at his disposal that the Roman commander did not know: the apostle was a citizen of Rome. The Bible says, "As they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, 'Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?' When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, 'Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman'" (Acts 22:25, 26).

Hearing that, the Roman commander was then very afraid. He knew that if Paul should report him to the authorities, he would be in trouble for even having bound an uncondemned Roman citizen. The commander asked Paul, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes." The commander answered, "With a large sum I obtained this citizenship." And Paul said, "But I was born a citizen" (verses 27, 28).

Paul was now safe in the Roman barracks, but the next day the Roman commander wanted to know why he was accused by the Jews. The Roman commander commanded the chief priests and all their council to

appear. Paul was released from his bonds and brought down before the council so the matter could be settled. "Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, 'Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day'" (Acts 23:1).

When he said that, the high priest was livid and commanded those that stood by him to slap him on the mouth (verse 2). Now this was contrary, not only to Roman law, but also to Jewish law. Paul could not legally be punished as a Roman citizen and scourged when he had not been convicted of a crime.

The same is true in the law of Moses, recorded in Deuteronomy 25. A man could not be punished until he had been convicted of a crime. The high priest was acting contrary to the law of Moses in commanding that Paul be slapped when he had not been convicted of any crime. So Paul said, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law" (Acts 23:3)?

When Paul said this, "Those who stood by said, 'Do you revile God's high priest?' Then Paul said, 'I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people' ' ' (verses 4, 5).

Paul's prophetic denunciation that God would strike the high priest was not made because of human passion. It was made under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The judgment pronounced by the apostle was terribly fulfilled when this hypocritical and iniquitous high priest was murdered by assassins in the Jewish war just a few years later. So now, as the apostle looked over the people who had come to question him, he was able to penetrate their minds and perceive the group he was dealing with and understood that there was nothing he could do to explain anything concerning his mission, and whatever he said would make them white-hot with anger.

Paul decided his best move was to let them fight among themselves instead of fighting with him. "When Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, 'Men

and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged' ” (verse 6)!

Immediately at hearing these words a fight broke out among the people in front of him between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, as the former did not believe in the resurrection, while the Pharisees did. Why is it that religious discussion always stirs up such controversy and often passion? It is not only because of ethnic pride, but also because of the human tendency to say, “I’m right, and if you don’t think the way I do, you’re wrong.”

The Pharisees and the Sadducees belonged to the same Jewish faith, yet their beliefs were at the opposite ends of that spectrum of that faith. Today, the Pharisees would be called the conservative faction and the Sadducees would be called the liberal faction. The Sadducees did not believe in the inspiration of all the Old Testament, but only the Pentateuch or the law of Moses. The Sadducees claimed that there was no resurrection and also claimed that there were no angels or spirits. The Pharisees believed in angels and spirits and in the resurrection. When Paul said he was a son of a Pharisee and was there because of the resurrection which can only come through the grace and power of Jesus Christ, whom they were rejecting, it caused an argument between the two Jewish factions.

All Christians want to be in the first resurrection. The Bible says, “The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). Dying is not a problem if you are a Christian. Death is just a moment of silence and darkness, a sleep until awakened at the resurrection to be



People are often proud of their race or nation of their birth. That is not a problem unless because of our pride we begin to look down on people of other races or other nations and believe they are inferior to us.

taken to heaven with the Lord and with all the others who have died in Christ.

All of God’s children are going to be caught up together to meet the Lord in the clouds. Jesus made it very clear that everyone who dies is going to be raised at some time. John 5:28 and 29 say, “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and will come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”

Now, there was a fight between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The religious discussion over Paul had progressed into a physical fight because some believed in the resurrection and some did not. The result was that the Roman soldiers looking on saw that in the midst of the fight Paul could get killed. So they intervened and pulled him out and brought him back again to the barracks ending the scenes of that eventful day.

Paul then was in essence in a Roman prison, a barracks with Roman soldiers.

He had been rescued temporarily from the Jews and their contention, but he knew they were desperate to kill him and would do anything to put him to death. The question that arose in his mind was whether his work for the churches was now closed. Was it now the time that he had already predicted that ravaging wolves were going to enter in and not spare the church? The cause of Christ was near to the heart of the apostle Paul. With deep anxiety he contemplated the perils of the scattered churches exposed to the persecutions of just such men as he had encountered in the Sanhedrin council.

The Lord was not unmindful of His servant. The Bible says that “The following night the Lord stood by him and said, ‘Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome’” (Acts 23:11). Now the Lord revealed that it was His will for Paul to bear witness to the gospel at Rome. At this time Paul had no idea that the way he would do that was by going to Rome as a prisoner. But the Jews had other things in mind

for him. They decided that the very next day they were going to kill him. They had to find a way to get him out of the Roman barracks, for the Roman soldiers would not allow that to happen in the barracks. More than 40 men banded together and they said, “‘Now you, therefore, together with the council, suggest to the commander that he be brought down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to make further inquiries concerning him; but we are ready to kill him before he comes near’” (verse 15).

One question that needs to be asked is, “What was the church doing during this upheaval?” Remember, the reason Paul was in this predicament was because of the unwise course of some of the apostles and elders of the Christian church in Jerusalem. Were they praying for his release? When Peter was put in prison, the church prayed night and day for his release and the Lord answered their prayer. But there is no record of the church praying night and day for the apostle Paul, because many of the people, even in the Christian church, believed in keeping the ceremonial law and thought Paul was an apostate from Moses and a teacher of dangerous doctrines.

Paul did not owe his escape from violent death on this occasion to anybody in the Christian church except his sister’s son, his nephew, who heard about this plot, and came and told Paul about it. “Then Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, ‘Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him’” (verse 17). The young man told the commander the plot that the Jews had in mind and the commander understood that they had an extremely dangerous situation. He instructed the young man, “‘Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me’” (verse 22). The commander then immediately made his plans. It says that, “He called for two centurions, saying, ‘Prepare two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen to

go to Caesarea at the third hour of the night (9 o’clock); and provide mounts to set Paul on, and bring him safely to Felix the governor’” (verses 23, 24). And then he wrote a letter to the governor:

“‘Claudius Lysias, To the most excellent governor Felix: Greetings. This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them. Coming with the troops I rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. And when I wanted to know the reason they accused him, I brought him before their council. I found out that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but had nothing charged against him deserving of death or chains. And when it was told me that the Jews lay in wait for the man, I sent him immediately to you, and also commanded his accusers to state before you the charges against him. Farewell’” (verses 26–30).

The apostle Paul was taken that very same evening to Caesarea. It says, “The soldiers, as they were commanded, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. The next day they left the horsemen to go on with him, and returned to the barracks. When they came to Caesarea and had delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him” (verses 31–33). Paul then was at Felix’s headquarters in Caesarea, dozens of miles away from Jerusalem to appear before Felix, the governor, and be accused by the Jews before him. We see in this story many of the reasons for religious persecution.


When Jesus was on earth, He presented before His hometown, Nazareth, a fearful truth when He declared that with backsliding Israel there was no safety for the faithful messenger of God. They would not know his worth or appreciate his labors while they professed to have great zeal for the honor of God and the good of Israel. They were actually the worst enemies of both. These cutting reproofs that Jesus gave (see Luke 4), the Jews of Nazareth refused to hear. They had,

but a moment before, acknowledged the gracious words which proceeded out of His lips. The Spirit of God was speaking to their heart, but the instant the possibility was cast upon them that persons of other nations, other religions, other races, could be more worthy of the favor of God than they, those proud, unbelieving Jews were enraged.

They would have taken the life of the Son of God right then had not angels interposed for His deliverance. The men of Nazareth manifested the same spirit toward Christ which their forefathers had manifested against Elijah. That same bigoted spirit was now being manifested against the apostle Paul. The same spirit is still in the world today. A neglect to appreciate and improve the provisions of divine grace has deprived God’s people of many a blessing.

O, friend, how is it with you? Are you looking to your own heart and asking yourself the question, “Am I really converted? Do I really love God with all my heart and my neighbor as myself?” Remember, your neighbor is the human being that needs your help. Or, are you a victim of religious prejudice, racial prejudice, national pride, looking down on others as not as good as yourself, so that eventually you have hatred in your heart toward certain groups, certain religions, certain races, certain nations?

It is easy to profess religion with the lips while the heart is contrary to the most basic principles of the Christian religion. We must not fool ourselves. We must ask, is my heart pure? Have I been converted? Am I filled with the Holy Spirit?

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

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April 26 – May 2, 2020

Deliverance from Death

Key Text

“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory”
(1 Corinthians 15:55)?

Study Help: *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 351–369; *Sons and Daughters of God*, 229, 230.

Introduction

“God’s chosen ones may fall at their post of duty, but they have only fallen asleep, to rest till Jesus awakes them to share with Him an eternal weight of glory.” *The Upward Look*, 272.

Sunday

COMPONENTS OF LIFE

- a. Describe the process of how God gave life to man.
Genesis 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:45, *first part*.

Note: “When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were set in action. ... Man became a living soul.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 415.

- b. When man dies, how does this process work in reverse? Psalms 146:4; 104:29.

Note: “Physical life is something which each individual receives. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Life-giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life.” *Maranatha*, 302.

Monday

WHAT IS DEATH?

- a. What is the condition of man in death? Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6; Psalm 6:5.

Note: “If the dead are already enjoying the bliss of heaven or writhing in the flames of hell, what need of a future judgment? The teachings of God’s word on these important points are neither obscure nor contradictory; they may be understood by common minds. But what candid mind can see either wisdom or justice in the current theory? Will the righteous, after the investigation of their cases at the judgment, receive the commendation, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord’ (Matthew 25:21), when they have been dwelling in His presence, perhaps for long ages? Are the wicked summoned from the place of torment to receive sentence from the Judge of all the earth: ‘Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire’ (Matthew 25:21, 41)? Oh, solemn mockery! shameful impeachment of the wisdom and justice of God!” *The Great Controversy*, 549. [Emphasis author’s.]

“A correct understanding of ‘what saith the Scriptures’ in regard to the state of the dead is essential for this time. God’s word declares that the dead know not anything, their hatred and love have alike perished.” *Evangelism*, 249.

- b. What happens to the physical body when we die?
Ecclesiastes 3:20; Genesis 3:19.

Note: “God declared that as a penalty for his [Adam’s] sin, man should return to the ground whence he was taken: ‘Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return’ (Genesis 3:19).” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 352.

- c. To what is death compared? John 11:11–14.

Note: “To the believer, death is but a small matter. Christ speaks of it as if it were of little moment. ‘If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death,’ ‘he shall never taste of death.’ To the Christian, death is but a sleep, a moment of silence and darkness. The life is hid with Christ in God, and ‘when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory’ (John 8:51, 52; Colossians 3:4).” *The Desire of Ages*, 787.

Tuesday

THE PLACE OF THE DEAD

- a. How is the permanence of death described? Job 7:9, 10; Psalm 146:4. As we consider these thoughts, what should this lead us to do? Psalm 90:12.

Note: “It is a solemn thing to die, but a far more solemn thing to live. Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity. Death brings dissolution to the body, but makes no change in the character. The coming of Christ does not change our characters; it only fixes them forever beyond all change. ...

“I appeal to the members of the church to be Christians, to be Christlike. Jesus was a worker, not for Himself, but for others. ... If you are Christians you will imitate His example.” *The Faith I Live By*, 169.

“Look upon every duty, however humble, as sacred because it is part of God’s service. Do not allow anything to make you forgetful of God. Bring Christ into all that you do. Then your lives will be filled with brightness and thanksgiving.” *In Heavenly Places*, 226.

“Every moment is freighted with eternal consequences. We are to stand as minute men, ready for service at a moment’s notice. The opportunity that is now ours to speak to some needy soul the word of life may never offer again. God may say to that one, ‘This night thy soul shall be required of thee’ (Luke 12:20) and through our neglect he may not be ready.” *The Faith I Live By*, 158.

- b. Where do all men go when they die? Acts 2:29, 34, 35; Psalm 89:48; Ecclesiastes 9:10.

Note: “Nowhere in the Sacred Scriptures is found the statement that the righteous go to their reward or the wicked to their punishment at death. The patriarchs and prophets have left no such assurance. Christ and His apostles have given no hint of it. The Bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:14; Job 14:10–12). In the very day when the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken (Ecclesiastes 12:6), man’s thoughts perish. They that go down to the grave are in silence. They know no more of anything that is done under the sun (Job 14:21). Blessed rest for the weary righteous!” *The Great Controversy*, 549, 550.

Wednesday

DELIVERANCE FROM DEATH

- a. What is the sting of death? 1 Corinthians 15:56.

Note: “Let us have the spirit of Christ. He left His royal throne, clothed His divinity with humanity, and came to this earth, all marred and seared by the curse, to meet man’s adversary, and deliver us from the bondage of sin and death.” *The Review and Herald*, July 16, 1889.

- b. What can we then say as we see the triumph of Christ? 1 Corinthians 15:55, 57. How does He deliver us from death? Verse 3; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6.

Note: “With His life Christ has purchased every human being. He died a cruel death to save human beings from eternal death. He gave His sinless life to obtain for the sinner a life that measures with the life of God. Through His death, He provided a way whereby man may break with Satan, return to his allegiance to God, and through faith in the Redeemer obtain pardon. ...

“He who has all power in heaven and earth will restore every repenting, believing soul. ... He has a deep interest in every soul, for He paid the price of His own life that no one should be eternally lost.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 230.

c. **Through His own death, what does Christ destroy?**
Hebrews 2:14.

Note: “In the Saviour’s expiring cry, ‘It is finished,’ the death knell of Satan was rung. The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain. The Son of God passed through the portals of the tomb, that ‘through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil’ (Hebrews 2:14). Lucifer’s desire for self-exaltation had led him to say: ‘I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: ... I will be like the Most High.’ God declares: ‘I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth ... and never shalt thou be any more’ (Isaiah 14:13, 14; Ezekiel 28:18, 19).” *The Great Controversy*, 503, 504.

Thursday

DELIVERANCE FROM THE FEAR OF DEATH

a. **What fear places many in bondage today? Through His death, what does Christ desire to do for us?** Hebrews 2:15.

Note: “In every time of distress, Christ turned to His Father. He ‘resisted unto blood’ (Hebrews 12:4) in that hour when the fear of moral failure was as the fear of death. As He bowed in Gethsemane, in His soul agony, drops of blood fell from His pores, and moistened the sods of the earth. He prayed with strong crying and tears, and He was heard in that He feared.



God strengthened Him, as He will strengthen all who will humble themselves, and throw themselves, soul, body, and spirit, into the hands of a covenant-keeping God.” *Selected Messages*, Book 3, 131.

b. **Of what should we not be afraid? Why?** Matthew 10:28–31; 1 John 4:4.

Note: “God has always had a care for His people. ... Christ taught His disciples that the amount of divine attention given to any object is proportionate to the rank assigned to it in the creation of God. He called their attention to the birds of the air. Not a sparrow, He said, falls to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father. And if the little sparrow is regarded by Him, surely the souls of those for whom Christ has died are precious in His sight. The value of man, the estimate God places upon him, is revealed in the cross of Calvary.” *My Life Today*, 292.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe the process of how man became a living soul.
- 2 What is death to a Christian?
- 3 How does death affect the character?
- 4 How did Christ triumph over death?
- 5 How did Christ experience the fear of death, and how did He gain the victory?

Deliverance Through the Resurrection

Key Text

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this” (John 11:25, 26)?

Study Help: *The Desire of Ages*, 779–787.

Introduction

“Jesus Christ has triumphed over death and rent the fetters of the tomb, and all who sleep in the tomb will share the victory; they will come forth from their graves as did the Conqueror.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 272.

Sunday

A BLESSED HOPE

- a. What assurance did Job have of a future life? Job 19:25–27; 14:14.

Note: “The patriarch Job in the night of his affliction exclaimed with unshaken trust: ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: ... in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another’ (Job 19:25–27).” *Maranatha*, 13.

- b. What promises do we have of a resurrection? Hosea 13:14; 2 Timothy 4:7, 8.

Note: “The question, ‘If a man die, shall he live again’ (Job 14:14)? has been answered. By bearing the penalty of sin, by going down into the grave, Christ has brightened the tomb for all who die in faith. God in human form has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. In dying, Christ secured eternal life for all who believe in Him. In dying, He condemned the originator of sin and disloyalty to suffer the penalty of sin—eternal death.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 230, 231.

Monday

AN AMAZING CHANGE

- a. What happens to the body after death? John 11:39.

Note: “Lazarus had been laid in a cave in a rock, and a massive stone had been placed before the entrance. ‘Take ye away the stone’ (John 11:39), Christ said. Thinking that He only wished to look upon the dead, Martha objected, saying that the body had been buried four days, and corruption had already begun its work.” *The Desire of Ages*, 534.

“There lay the body of Lazarus in its rock grave, cold and silent in death.” *The Youth’s Instructor*, May 4, 1899.

- b. What change takes place at the resurrection? 1 Corinthians 15:51–54.

Note: “The living righteous are changed ‘in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye’ (1 Corinthians 15:52). At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Angels ‘gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other’ (Matthew 24:31).” *The Great Controversy*, 645.

“Our loved ones are torn from us by death. We close their eyes and habit them for the tomb, and lay them away from our sight. But hope bears our spirits up. We are not parted forever, but shall meet the loved ones who sleep in Jesus. They shall come again from the land of the enemy. The Life-giver is coming. Myriads of holy angels escort Him on His way. He bursts the bands of death, breaks the fetters of the tomb, the precious captives come forth in health and immortal beauty.” *The Faith I Live By*, 185.

“Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1093.

Tuesday

LOOKING FOR THE BLESSED HOPE

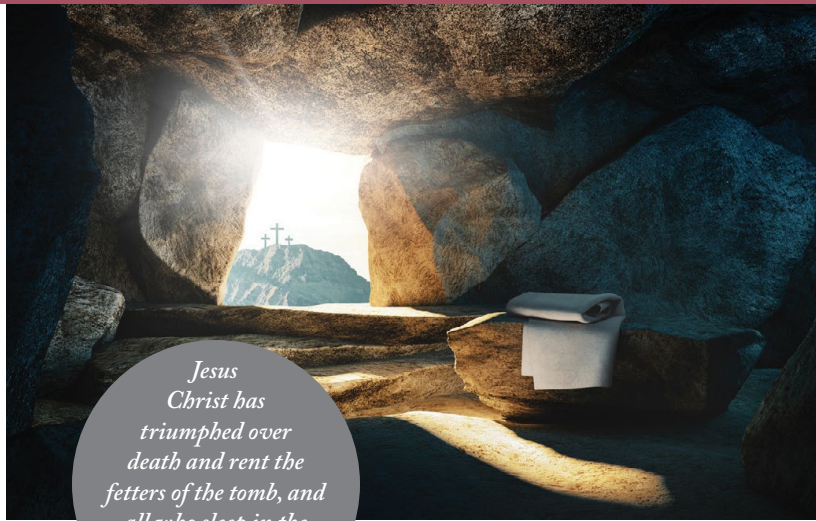
- a. What event is tied to the resurrection? John 14:1-3.

Note: “Long have we waited for our Saviour’s return. But nonetheless sure is the promise. Soon we shall be in our promised home.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 254.

“The object of Christ’s departure was the opposite of what the disciples feared. It did not mean a final separation. He was going to prepare a place for them, that He might come again, and receive them unto Himself. While He was building mansions for them, they were to build characters after the divine similitude.” *The Desire of Ages*, 663.

- b. What encouragement do we have concerning those who have died? What is the assurance we have that the resurrection will take place? 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

Note: “The life-giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour, when the last trump shall sound and the vast army shall come forth to eternal victory, every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name. By the power of the Saviour that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead. ...



Jesus
Christ has
triumphed over
death and rent the
fetters of the tomb, and
all who sleep in the
tomb will share the
victory.

“Jesus Christ has triumphed over death and rent the fetters of the tomb, and all who sleep in the tomb will share the victory; they will come forth from their graves as did the Conqueror.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 271, 272.

- c. With what attitude should this inspire us? Titus 2:13.

Note: “Wherever we go, we should carry an atmosphere of Christian hopefulness and cheer; then those who are out of Christ will see attractiveness in the religion we profess; unbelievers will see the consistency of our faith. We need to have more distinct glimpses of heaven, the land where all is brightness and joy.” *Lift Him Up*, 244.

“Christ is soon to come the second time. Of this we should often talk. It should be the uppermost thought in our minds.” *The Upward Look*, 311.

Wednesday

THE RESURRECTION: A PROOF OF DIVINITY

- a. How does the resurrection of Christ become a focal point of our faith and hope? 1 Corinthians 15:16-22.

Note: “Christ made it possible that every child of Adam might, through a life of obedience, overcome sin and rise also from the grave to his heritage of immortality purchased by the blood of Christ.” *In Heavenly Places*, 44.

- b. What words of Christ showed that He had the power of life within Himself? John 10:17, 18; 2:19–21.

Note: “When the voice of the mighty angel was heard at Christ’s tomb, saying, Thy Father calls Thee, the Saviour came forth from the grave by the life that was in Himself. ...

“Over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, Christ had proclaimed in triumph, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life’ (John 11:25). These words could be spoken only by the Deity. All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life. Only He who is one with God could say, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. In His divinity, Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death.” *The Desire of Ages*, 785.

“The spirit of Jesus slept in the tomb with His body, and did not wing its way to Heaven. ... All that comprised the life and intelligence of Jesus remained with His body in the sepulcher; and when He came forth it was as a whole being; He did not have to summon His spirit from heaven. He had power to lay down His life and to take it up again.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, 203, 204.

- c. What prophecy was also fulfilled at Jesus’ resurrection? Psalm 68:18.

Note: “Those who came forth from the grave at Christ’s resurrection were raised to everlasting life. They were the multitude of captives that ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 304, 305.

Thursday

RAISING OTHERS TO LIFE

- a. Whom did Elisha raise to life through the miracle-working power of Christ? 2 Kings 4:32–37.

Note: “So was the faith of this woman rewarded. Christ, the great Life-giver, restored her son to her. In like manner will His faithful ones be rewarded, when, at His coming, death loses its sting and the grave is robbed of the victory it has claimed. Then will He restore to His servants the children that have been taken from them by death.” *Prophets and Kings*, 239.

- b. Whom did Jesus raise to life near the end of His earthly ministry? John 11:38, 39, 43. What was His purpose in performing this miracle?

Note: “Christ had now fully made manifest His control of death and the grave. That mighty miracle was the crowning evidence offered by God to men that He had sent His Son into the world for their salvation. It was a demonstration of divine power sufficient to convince every mind that was under the control of reason and enlightened conscience. Many who witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus were led to believe on Jesus. But the hatred of the priests against Him was intensified. They had rejected all lesser evidence of His divinity, and they were only enraged at this new miracle. ... They were more than ever determined to put a stop to Christ’s work.” *The Desire of Ages*, 537.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How does Christ give us hope of a resurrection?
- 2 What changes occur in the resurrection, and what remains the same? Why?
- 3 How carefully is each sleeping saint looked after?
- 4 What is significant about Jesus having the power to lay down His life and to take it up again?
- 5 What did the miracle of Lazarus’ resurrection demonstrate?

May 10 – 16, 2020

The Ministry of Deliverance

Key Text

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Isaiah 61:1).

Study Help: *The Desire of Ages*, 547–551.

Introduction

“Through yielding to sin, man placed his will under the control of Satan. He became a helpless captive in the tempter’s power. God sent His Son into our world to break the power of Satan, and to emancipate the will of man.” *Australasian Union Conference Record*, June 1, 1900.

Sunday

ESTABLISHING GOD’S KINGDOM

- a. What question did Jesus ask regarding God’s kingdom? Mark 4:30. To what did He desire to draw the people’s attention?

Note: “Christ found the kingdoms of the world corrupt. ... When Christ came to the world to establish a kingdom, He looked upon the governments of men, and said, ‘Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God’ (Mark 4:30)? Nothing in civil society afforded Him a comparison. ...

“In striking contrast to the wrong and oppression so universally practised [sic] were the mission and work of Christ. ... He planned a government which would use no force; His subjects would know no oppression. ... He came as the divine Restorer, bringing to oppressed and downtrodden humanity the rich and abundant grace of Heaven, that by the power of His righteousness, man, fallen and degraded though he was, might be a partaker of divinity.” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 14.

“Christ was establishing a kingdom on different principles. He called men, not to authority, but to service, the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. Power, position, talent, education, placed their possessor under the greater obligation to serve his fellows.” *The Desire of Ages*, 550.

Monday

THE MISSION OF CHRIST

- a. How is the character of the coming Deliverer described? In what power did He work? Isaiah 42:1–4.

Note: “The dimly burning wick of faith and hope, He [Christ] would encourage, and not quench. He would feed His flock like a shepherd; He would gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1146.

- b. What royal title was the Messiah to carry? Isaiah 9:6.

Note: “Christ is ‘the Prince of Peace’ (Isaiah 9:6), and it is His mission to restore to earth and heaven the peace that sin has broken. ... Whoever consents to renounce sin and open his heart to the love of Christ, becomes a partaker of this heavenly peace. ...

“The heart that is in harmony with God is a partaker of the peace of heaven and will diffuse its blessed influence on all around.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 27, 28.

- c. What sums up Christ’s lifework? Acts 10:38. What practical things did Christ’s work include? Matthew 4:23, 24.

Note: “With a heart ever touched with the feelings of our infirmities, an ear ever open to the cry of suffering humanity, a hand ever ready to save the discouraged and despairing, Jesus, our Saviour, ‘went about doing good’ (Acts 10:38).” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 14.

“The sick came to the places through which He would pass, that they might call on Him for help. Hither, too, came many anxious to hear His words and to receive a touch of His hand. Thus He went from city to city, from town to town, preaching the gospel and healing the sick—the King of glory in the lowly garb of humanity.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 22.

“Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He [Christ] represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man.” *Ibid.*, 423.

Tuesday

CHRIST’S WORK IS TO BE OUR WORK

- a. How extensive was the work Christ did under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? Isaiah 61:1–3.

Note: “The mission described by the prophet is the mission of every disciple of Christ. We are to practice the words of Christ, and present before others the covenant of grace, the righteousness of Christ. We are to make it manifest to the world that we have the oil of grace in our vessels in our lamps. The work of every representative of Christ, both in the ministry and among the laymen, is to tell of the great salvation brought to them as God’s free gift.” *The Review and Herald*, March 27, 1894.

- b. What are we called to do as followers of Christ? Isaiah 58:6, 7.

Note: “All who are members of the kingdom of Christ will represent Him in character and disposition.” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 14.

“Through yielding to sin, man placed his will under the control of Satan. He became a helpless captive in the tempter’s power. God sent His Son into our world to break the power of Satan, and to emancipate the will of man. He sent Him to proclaim liberty to the captives, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free.” *Our High Calling*, 104.

“Find out what the poor and suffering are in need of, and then, in love and tenderness, help them to courage and hope and confidence by sharing with them the good things that God has given you. Thus you will be doing the very work that the Lord means you to do.” *The Medical Missionary*, June 1, 1891.

“Christ’s work is to be our example. Constantly He went about doing good. In the temple and the synagogues, in the streets of the cities, in the marketplace and the workshop, by the seaside and among the hills, He preached the gospel and healed the sick. His life was one of unselfish service, and it is to be our lessonbook. His tender, pitying love rebukes our selfishness and heartlessness.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 31.

- c. What promise did Christ make to His disciples concerning the power which was to attend the spreading of the gospel? Acts 1:8.

Wednesday

WITNESSES TO DELIVERANCE

- a. What encouraging words should inspire us to follow in Jesus’ footsteps in reaching out to others? Isaiah 52:7; 61:6–9.

Note: “He [God] wants you to go forth to our churches to labor earnestly for Him. He wants you to institute meetings for those outside the churches, that the people may learn the truths of this last message of warning. There are places where you will be gladly received, where souls will thank you for coming to their help. May the Lord help you to take hold of this work as you have never yet taken hold of it.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 107.

“It will require moral courage to do God’s work unflinchingly. Those who do this can give no place to self love, to selfish considerations, ambition, love of ease, or desire to shun the cross.” *The Review and Herald*, February 7, 1893.

- b. What is a wonderful example of what Jesus wants those who have been delivered from sin to do? Matthew 8:28; Mark 5:6–8, 18–20.

Note: “The two restored demoniacs were the first missionaries whom Christ sent to preach the gospel in the region of Decapolis. For a few moments only these men had been privileged to hear the teachings of Christ. Not one sermon from His lips had ever fallen upon their ears. They could not instruct the people as the disciples who had been daily with Christ were able to do. But they bore in their own persons the evidence that Jesus was the Messiah. They could tell what they knew; what they themselves had seen, and heard, and felt of the power of Christ. This is what everyone can do whose heart has been touched by the grace of God. John, the beloved disciple, wrote: ‘That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; ... that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you’ (1 John 1:1–3). As witnesses for Christ, we are to tell what we know, what we ourselves have seen and heard and felt. If we have been following Jesus step by step, we shall have something right to the point to tell concerning the way in which He has led us. We can tell how we have tested His promise, and found the promise true. We can bear witness to what we have known of the grace of Christ. This is the witness for which our Lord calls, and for want of which the world is perishing.” *The Desire of Ages*, 340.

Thursday

WORKING IN HUMILITY

- a. What attitude did Jesus have as He worked for others, and what can we learn from this? John 6:38; James 4:6, 10.

Note: “The greatest possible kindness and freedom are to be granted to the purchase of the blood of Christ. Over and over again in His teaching, Christ presented the value of true humility, showing how necessary it is that we exercise helpfulness, compassion, and love toward one another. ...

“No confidence can be placed in human greatness, human intellect, or human plans. We must place ourselves under the guidance of an infinite mind, acknowledging that without Jesus we can do nothing.” *The Review and Herald*, August 18, 1896.

- b. How far should we go in reaching out to those in need? Job 29:15, 16; Matthew 25:34–40.

Note: “Notice, you are not to comfort only the few whom you are inclined to regard with favor, but all that mourn, all who apply to you for help and relief; and more, you are to search for the needy. Job says, ‘The cause which I knew not I searched out’ (Job 29:16). He did not wait to be urged, and then turn away, saying, ‘I will not help him.’” *The Review and Herald*, October 15, 1901.

“The world is full of men and women who carry a heavy burden of sorrow and suffering and sin. God sends His children to reveal to them Him who will take away the burden, and give them rest. It is the mission of Christ’s servants to help, to bless, to heal.” *Ibid.*, October 29, 1903.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How is Christ’s kingdom different from worldly kingdoms?
- 2 How can I be a part of Jesus’ mission to restore the peace that sin has destroyed?
- 3 As we are rescued from the slavery of sin, what is our duty?
- 4 How can I show my gratitude for God’s unselfish interest in me?
- 5 Whom should I help? What should my mission be?

May 17 – 23, 2020

Delivering Our Neighbor

Key Text

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over” (Luke 6:38).

Study Help: *The Ministry of Healing*, 161–182.

Introduction

“He who owns the world is rich in resources, and will bless every-one who is seeking to bless others.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 200.

Sunday

FOLLOWING JESUS’ EXAMPLE

- a. What was the new commandment Jesus gave to His disciples? John 13:34.

Note: “The Saviour’s example is to be the standard of our service for the tempted and the erring. The same interest and tenderness and long-suffering that He has manifested toward us, we are to manifest toward others. ... If Christ dwells in us, we shall reveal His unselfish love toward all with whom we have to do. As we see men and women in need of sympathy and help, we shall not ask, ‘Are they worthy?’ but ‘How can I benefit them?’” *The Ministry of Healing*, 162.

- b. How did Jesus teach the value of the soul? Luke 15:4–10. What can we learn from this?

Note: “The lost coin, in the Saviour’s parable, though lying in the dirt and rubbish, was a piece of silver still. Its owner sought it because it was of value. So every soul, however degraded by sin, is in God’s sight accounted precious. ...

“The love of Christ, manifested in word and act, will win its way to the soul, when the reiteration of precept or argument would accomplish nothing.

“We need more of Christlike sympathy ... for poor, suffering, struggling souls, who are often overtaken in fault, sinning and repenting, tempted and discouraged.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 163, 164.

Monday

WORKING FOR THE TEMPTED

- a. With what urgency should we work for those outside the fold? Luke 14:23.

Note: “Christian motives demand that we work with a steady purpose, an undying interest, an ever-increasing importunity, for the souls whom Satan is seeking to destroy. Nothing is to chill the earnest, yearning energy for the salvation of the lost.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 164.

- b. What attitude should we have toward those struggling with sin? Why? Galatians 6:1; Romans 14:10.

Note: “It was a continual pain to Christ to be brought into contact with enmity, depravity, and impurity; but never did He utter one expression to show that His sensibilities were shocked or His refined tastes offended. Whatever the evil habits, the strong prejudices, or the overbearing passions of human beings, He met them all with pitying tenderness. As we partake of His Spirit, we shall regard all men as brethren, with similar temptations and trials, often falling and struggling to rise again, battling with discouragements and difficulties, craving sympathy and help. Then we shall meet them in such a way as not to discourage or repel them, but to awaken hope in their hearts. ...

“With a sense of our own infirmities, we shall have compassion for the infirmities of others. ...

“A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 165, 166.

- c. What teaching of Jesus should we ever keep in mind while trying to help the tempted? Matthew 7:12.

Note: “We need to put ourselves in the place of the tempted ones. Consider the power of heredity, the influence of evil associations and surroundings, the power of wrong habits. Can we wonder that under such influences many become degraded? Can we wonder that they should be slow to respond to efforts for their uplifting?” *The Ministry of Healing*, 168.

Tuesday

HELPING THE INTEMPERATE

- a. What should we remember when trying to help those overcome by besetting sins? Galatians 6:9; Jude 23.

Note: “In dealing with the victims of intemperance we must remember that we are not dealing with sane men, but with those who for the time being are under the power of a demon. Be patient and forbearing. Think not of the repulsive, forbidding appearance, but of the precious life that Christ died to redeem. As the drunkard awakens to a sense of his degradation, do all in your power to show that you are his friend. ...

“Open the Bible before the tempted, struggling one, and over and over again read to him the promises of God. ... Patiently continue your efforts, until with grateful joy the trembling hand grasps the hope of redemption through Christ.

“You must hold fast to those whom you are trying to help, else victory will never be yours. They will be continually tempted to evil. Again and again they will be almost overcome by the craving for strong drink; again and again they may fall; but do not, because of this, cease your efforts.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 172, 173.

- b. How can those who are caught up in evil habits have victory? Psalm 119:11; 17:4.

Note: “Bid the tempted one look not to circumstances, to the weakness of self, or to the power of temptation, but to the power of God’s word.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 181.

“The victims of evil habit must be aroused to the necessity of making an effort for themselves. ... All will be in vain unless they themselves are roused to fight the battle in their own behalf. ...

“God calls upon them to arouse and in the strength of Christ win back the God-given manhood that has been sacrificed through sinful indulgence.” *Ibid.*, 174.

- c. In order to gain victory, what should their focus be? Philippians 4:8; Ecclesiastes 9:10, *first part*.

Note: “Occupation of mind and body in useful work is essential as a safeguard against temptation.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 177.

Wednesday

MINISTRY FOR THE POOR

- a. Whom first and foremost among the needy should we help? Galatians 6:10.

Note: “In a special sense, Christ has laid upon His church the duty of caring for the needy among its own members. He suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and He places upon the members of the church a personal responsibility to care for them.

“As the members of a true family care for one another, ministering to the sick, supporting the weak, teaching the ignorant, training the inexperienced, so is ‘the household of faith’ (Galatians 6:10) to care for its needy and helpless ones. Upon no consideration are these to be passed by.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 201.

b. What do the poor often lack? Proverbs 13:23.

Note: “By instruction in practical lines we can often help the poor most effectively. As a rule, those who have not been trained to work do not have habits of industry, perseverance, economy, and self-denial. ...

“Real charity helps men to help themselves. ... True beneficence means more than mere gifts. It means a genuine interest in the welfare of others. ... To give thought and time and personal effort costs far more than merely to give money. But it is the truest charity.

“Those who are taught to earn what they receive will more readily learn to make the most of it.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 194, 195.

c. What promise is there for those who help the poor? Proverbs 28:27.

Note: “None need fear that their liberality would bring them to want. Obedience to God’s commandments would surely result in prosperity.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 187.

“It is God’s purpose that the rich and the poor shall be closely bound together by the ties of sympathy and helpfulness. Those who have means, talents, and capabilities are to use these gifts in blessing their fellow men.” *Ibid.*, 193.

Thursday

HELPING THE HELPLESS

a. What other Christian work is always a part of true religion? James 1:27; Deuteronomy 10:18. What blessing is attached to this work?

Note: “When all has been done that can be done in helping the poor to help themselves, there still remain the widow and the fatherless, the aged, the helpless, and the sick, that claim sympathy and care. Never should these be neglected. They are committed by God Himself to the mercy, the love, and the tender care of all whom He has made His stewards.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 201.

“The Lord provides for the widow and the fatherless, not by a miracle in sending manna from heaven, not by sending ravens to bring them food; but by a miracle upon human hearts, expelling selfishness, and unsealing the fountains of Christlike love.” *Ibid.*, 202.

“There is a blessing in the association of the old and the young. The young may bring sunshine into the hearts and lives of the aged. ... And the young may be helped by the wisdom and experience of the old.” *Ibid.*, 204.

b. What do we know about the helpless and poor? Mark 14:7; Deuteronomy 15:11. Why does God allow this?

Note: “In placing among them the helpless and the poor, to be dependent upon their care, Christ tests His professed followers. By our love and service for His needy children we prove the genuineness of our love for Him. To neglect them is to declare ourselves false disciples, strangers to Christ and His love.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 205.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How can we follow Jesus’ example in working for the erring?
- 2 What can we learn from how Jesus met depravity and impurity?
- 3 How can we help those battling with addictions? What should we remember?
- 4 What class of needy people should we never neglect?
- 5 Why has God placed the poor among us? How can we best help them?

May 24 – 30, 2020

Deliverance from Disease

Key Text

“And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee” (Deuteronomy 7:15).

Study Help: *Sons and Daughters of God*, 168–176.

Introduction

“The body must be kept in a healthy condition in order that the soul may be in health. The condition of the body affects the condition of the soul. He who would have physical and spiritual strength must educate his appetite in right lines. He must be careful not to burden the soul by overtaxing his physical or spiritual powers. Faithful adherence to right principles in eating, drinking, and dressing is a duty that God has laid upon human beings.” *Evangelism*, 261.

Sunday

SIN AND DISEASE

- a. What is the relationship between sin and disease? Psalm 103:3, 4; John 5:14.

Note: “There are today thousands suffering from physical disease who, like the paralytic, are longing for the message, ‘Thy sins are forgiven’ (Luke 5:20). The burden of sin, with its unrest and unsatisfied desires, is the foundation of their maladies. They can find no relief until they come to the Healer of the soul. The peace which He alone can impart would restore vigor to the mind and health to the body.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 77.

- b. Who only can provide the antidote? Malachi 4:2.

Note: “Many are suffering from maladies of the soul far more than from diseases of the body, and they will find no relief until they shall come to Christ, the wellspring of life.” *My Life Today*, 154.

Monday

THE EXPERIENCE OF ISRAEL

- a. What promises did God make to Israel regarding their health, and how was He going to fulfill these promises? Exodus 23:25.

Note: “The Lord gave His word to ancient Israel, that if they would cleave strictly to Him and do all His requirements, He would keep them from all the diseases such as He had brought upon the Egyptians; but this promise was given on the condition of obedience. Had the Israelites obeyed the instruction they received, and profited by their advantages, they would have been the world’s object lesson of health and prosperity. The Israelites failed of fulfilling God’s purpose, and thus failed of receiving the blessings that might have been theirs. But in Joseph and Daniel, in Moses and Elijah, and many others, we have noble examples of the results of the true plan of living. Like faithfulness today will produce like results.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 165.

- b. What was the physical condition of the Israelites as they journeyed through the wilderness? Psalm 105:37. What does this tell of the power of God?

Note: “By a miracle of mercy He fed them with the bread of heaven. The food provided for them was of a nature to promote physical, mental, and moral strength, and ... the wisdom of God’s choice for them was vindicated in a manner that they could not gainsay. Notwithstanding the hardships of their wilderness life, there was not a feeble one in all their tribes.” *This Day With God*, 77.

- c. How does obedience to God bring deliverance from disease? Exodus 15:26; Deuteronomy 7:12, 15.

Note: “God desires us to reach the standard of perfection made possible for us by the gift of Christ. He calls upon us to make our choice on the right side, to connect with heavenly agencies, to adopt principles that will restore in us the divine image. In His written word and in the great book of nature He has revealed the principles of life. It is our work to obtain a knowledge of these principles, and by obedience to co-operate with Him in restoring health to the body as well as to the soul.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 114, 115.

Tuesday

JESUS, THE HEALER

- a. What did Christ suffer so that we might have deliverance from both sin and disease? Isaiah 53:5.

Note: “Behold the Son of God in the wilderness of temptation, in the time of greatest weakness assailed by the fiercest temptation. See Him during the years of His ministry, attacked on every side by the forces of evil. See Him in His agony on the cross. All this He suffered for us.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 209.

- b. What brings healing to body and soul? Proverbs 4:20–22; 3:7, 8.

Note: “The assurance of God’s approval will promote physical health. It fortifies the soul against doubt, perplexity, and excessive grief, that so often sap the vital forces and induce nervous diseases of a most debilitating and distressing character. The Lord has pledged His unfailing word that His eye

shall be over the righteous, and His ear open to their prayer, while He is against all them that do evil.” *The Review and Herald*, October 16, 1883.

“The exalting influence of the Spirit of God is the best restorative for the sick. Heaven is all health, and the more fully the heavenly influences are felt the more sure the recovery of the believing invalid.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 556.

- c. How does Jesus help us when we are ill? Matthew 8:17; 11:28–30.

Note: “The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy—joy in the Holy Spirit—health-giving, life-giving joy.

“Our Saviour’s words, ‘Come unto Me, ... and I will give you rest’ (Matthew 11:28), are a prescription for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual ills. Though men have brought suffering upon themselves by their own wrongdoing, He regards them with pity. In Him they may find help. He will do great things for those who trust in Him.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 115.

Wednesday

LIVING IN HEALTH

- a. What is God’s desire for His people today? 3 John 2.

Note: “You are the Lord’s; for He created you. You are His by redemption; for He gave His life for you. ... Preserve every portion of the living machinery, that you may use it for God. Preserve it for Him. Your health depends upon the right use of your physical organism. Do not misuse any portion of your God-given powers, physical, mental, or moral. All your habits are to be brought under the control of a mind that is itself under the control of God.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 171.

- b. What attitude assists us in overcoming disease?
Proverbs 17:22; 13:12.

Note: “The consciousness of right-doing, is the best medicine for diseased bodies and minds. He who is at peace with God has secured the most important requisite to health. The blessing of the Lord is life to the receiver.” *The Signs of the Times*, June 15, 1882.

“The condition of the mind has much to do with the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, under a consciousness of rightdoing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it will create a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood and a toning up of the entire body.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 60.

- c. What selfless actions help in the restoration of our health? Isaiah 58:6–8, 10, 11.

Note: “You who are suffering with poor health, there is a remedy for you. If thou clothe the naked, and bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, and deal thy bread to the hungry, ‘then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily’ (Isaiah 58:8). Doing good is an excellent remedy for disease.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 29.

“If you forget self in your interest for others, you gain a victory over your infirmities. The satisfaction you will realize in doing good will aid you greatly in the recovery of the healthy tone of the imagination. The pleasure of doing good animates the mind and vibrates through the whole body.” *Ibid.*, 534.

Thursday

FINDING DELIVERANCE TODAY

- a. What does God require of us today in regards to our physical life? Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.

Note: “The Lord requires a living sacrifice of mind, soul, body, and strength. All that we have and are is to be given to Him, that we may answer the purpose of our creation. But unless we take heed to the light and instruction given us in the word of God, that in the matter of eating and drinking we may speak and act intelligently, we shall bring feebleness upon ourselves. ...

“It is necessary for every believer to be strictly temperate. The people of our world indulge pernicious habits, thus destroying their God-given susceptibility and the power of discerning sacred things. The moral sense of many of those living at the present day is clouded by wrong habits.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, 3, 4.

- b. What prayer can we offer to the Lord for help? Psalm 119:153, 154.

Note: “God has not changed, neither does He propose to change our physical organism, in order that we may violate a single law without feeling the effects of its violation. But many willingly close their eyes to the light. ... By indulging their inclinations and appetites, they violate the laws of life and health; and if they obey conscience, they must be controlled by principle in their eating and dressing, rather than be led by inclination, fashion, and appetite.” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 161.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How does forgiveness of sin affect the physical health?
- 2 What keeps us from being the world’s object lesson of health today?
- 3 How does living with God’s approval affect my health? How can I have this approval?
- 4 What is the best medicine for those with physical and mental illnesses?
- 5 How can I be “strictly temperate” today? Why is this so important?

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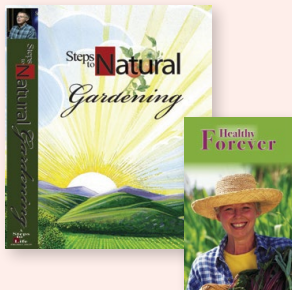
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Spring Spears

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Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



CREAM OF ASPARAGUS SOUP

Ingredients

1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. olive oil, divided
1 medium onion, diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 pounds fresh asparagus spears, cut into 1 ½ inch pieces (reserve 8 spears)
4-6 cups vegetable broth
1 cup russet potato, diced
½ cup raw cashews
1 ½ Tbsp. lemon juice
2 Tbsp. nutritional yeast
salt, to taste
coconut milk or other non-dairy milk, for serving
fresh chives, for serving

Process

Sauté onion in 1 Tbsp. oil until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes.
Add garlic and all but 8 asparagus spears. Sauté until asparagus begins to soften (another 5 minutes).
Stir in 4 cups of broth, potato, and cashews.
Bring liquid to a boil. Lower heat; simmer for about 20 minutes until potato and asparagus are soft.
Transfer mixture to food processor in batches; blend until smooth.
Return mixture to pot. Thin with up to 2 cups of additional broth, if desired. Stir in lemon juice and nutritional yeast; season with salt. Reheat.
Coat bottom of skillet with remaining tsp. oil; add reserved asparagus spears and cook just until bright green and tender-crisp.
Ladle soup into bowls. Drizzle with non-dairy milk, sprinkle with chives; arrange asparagus spears on top. Serve!



Change Service Requested

“

Respecting the dignity of a spectacular food means enjoying it at its best. Europeans celebrate the short season of abundant asparagus as a form of holiday. In the Netherlands the first cutting coincides with Father's Day, on which restaurants may feature all-asparagus menus and hand out neckties decorated with asparagus spears.

Barbara Kingsolver (2010). "Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: Our Year of Seasonal Eating," p. 30, Faber & Faber

