

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM



*Watch
the
Signs*

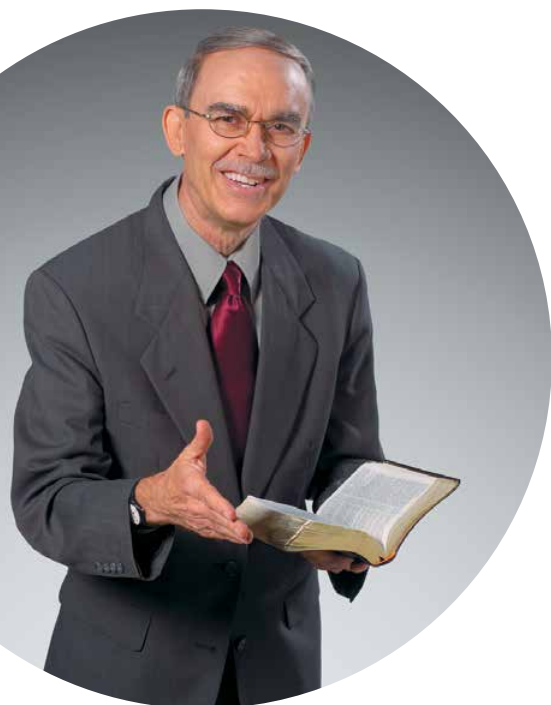
p. 2

*He
Knows*

p. 13

*Conversion
Testimony*

p. 8



From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

If You Are Loyal and True

When King Nebuchadnezzar had the three Hebrews cast into the fiery furnace (see Daniel 3), “his triumph suddenly came to an end. He saw something that he thought must be an illusion. ... With a voice trembling with excitement, he cried, ‘Lo, I see *four* men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.’ (Daniel 3:25). [Emphasis author’s.] ...

“History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. ...

“Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to the word of God, refuse to worship this false sabbath. Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The Papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so. ...

“‘If ye love Me,’ said Christ, ‘keep My commandments.’ ‘He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him’ (John 14:15, 21). And has not Christ manifested Himself to His faithful children? Did He not walk in the furnace with the captives who refused to yield to the golden image one tittle of the reverence which belonged to God? Did He not manifest Himself to John, banished to the Isle of Patmos for his faithfulness? ...

“Truth is to be obeyed at any cost, even tho gaping prisons, chain-gangs, and banishment stare us in the face. If you are loyal and true, that God who walked with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, who protected Daniel in the lions’ den, who manifested Himself to John on the lonely island, will go with you wherever you go. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain you; and you will realize the fulfilment of the promise, ‘If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him’ (verse 23).” *The Signs of the Times*, May 6, 1897. **LM**

HISTORIC

LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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

In this Issue



Watch the Signs

Jesus gave clear instruction to watch the signs just a few days before He was crucified.

By John J. Grosboll



The Trip That Changed My Life

A captivating journey of one man whom God called into His flock through nature. After all, nature is God's other lesson book.

By John Pearson



He Knows

Souls that have once borne the likeness of Satan can, by the deep mysteries of the Word, become transformed into the image of God.

By Revella Knight

More in this Issue

16 Bible Puzzle

Isaiah 51-54

18 Story Time

Keeper of the Light

20 Pen of Inspiration

Our Job of Restoration

21 Keys to the Storehouse

Exciting Times

23 13th Sabbath Offering

Sharing the Light in Guerrero, Mexico

24 From the Mission Fields

Ambassador in Chains

26 Nature

Sea Squirts aka Tunicates

27 Question & Answer

What is eye salve?

28 Health Nugget

Operation Whitecoat

31 Life Sketches

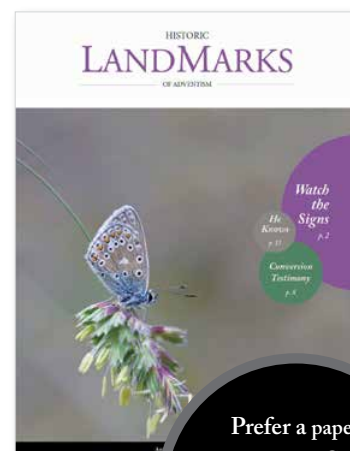
Brothers in Christ

36 Bible Study Guide

Educating the Last Generation

49 Recipe

Strawberry Guava Smoothie



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By John J. Grosboll

The “abomination of desolation” is first described in the book of Daniel (Daniel 11:31). A few days before His crucifixion, Jesus spoke to His disciples about this entity saying, “whoever reads, let him understand” (Matthew 24:15).

The meaning of the Hebrew word *abomination* in the book of Daniel is translated *abomination* or *a detestable thing*. Throughout the Old Testament the word is quite common and is almost always used in regard to detestable idols or something to do with idolatry.

In the New Testament the words *eramus* or *eromosis* are used for *desolation* or *devastation*.

Jesus said, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come [notice the context]. ‘Therefore when you see the “abomination of desolation,” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place’ (whoever reads, let him understand), ‘then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.’” (Matthew 24:14–18). (See also Mark 13:14–16).

The expression “abomination of desolation” is not used in the gospel of Luke, but it talks about the same thing. It says, “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her (don’t return). For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled” (Luke 21:20–22).

This was the clear instruction given by Jesus just a few days before He was crucified. When they saw the abomination stand where it should not, they were to flee out of Jerusalem. If they were in the country, they were not to return to the city.

What exactly is the abomination of desolation?

There have been many different explanations, but here we will stick with inspired statements that tell us what we need to know.

“Jesus declared to the listening disciples the judgments that were to fall upon apostate Israel, and especially the retributive vengeance that would come upon them for their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah. Unmistakable signs would precede the awful climax. The dreaded hour would come suddenly and swiftly. And the Saviour warned His followers: ‘When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains’ (Matthew 24:15, 16). When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight. When the warning sign should be seen, judgment was to follow so quickly that those who would escape must make no delay. He who



*Christians
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of Rome, today.
It is Sunday
worship.*

chanced to be upon the housetop must not go down through his house into the street; but he must speed his way from roof to roof until he reach the city wall, and be saved ‘so as by fire’ (1 Corinthians 3:15). Those who were working in the fields or vineyards must not take time to return for the outer garment laid aside while they should be toiling in the heat of the day. They must not hesitate a moment, lest they be involved in the general destruction.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 26, 27.

The signal to flee, according to this passage, was when the idolatrous standards of the Romans were set up outside the city walls. It was so important that they escape that there was no time for delay, not even to go to their house to get a coat.

Unmistakable signs were given by Jesus. “All the predictions given by Christ concerning the destruction of Jerusalem were fulfilled to the letter. The Jews experienced the truth of His words of warning, ‘With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again’ (Matthew 7:2).

“Signs and wonders appeared, foreboding disaster and doom.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 31.

What were some of these signs and wonders?

“A comet, resembling a flaming sword, for a year hung over the city. An unnatural light was seen hovering over the temple. Upon the clouds were pictured chariots mustering for battle. Mysterious voices in the temple court uttered the warning words, ‘Let us depart hence.’ The eastern gate of the inner court, which was of brass, and so heavy that it was with difficulty shut by a score of men, and having bolts fastened deep into the firm pavement, was seen at midnight to be opened of its own accord.

“For seven years a man continued to go up and down the streets of Jerusalem, declaring the woes that were to come upon the city.” Ibid.

How many Christians perished in the destruction of Jerusalem?

“Not one Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. Christ had given His disciples warning, and all who believed His words watched for the promised sign. After the Romans had surrounded the city, they unexpectedly withdrew their forces, at a time when everything seemed favorable for an immediate attack. In the providence of

“

The abomination of desolation today is Sunday worship, the symbol, sign, and mark of Rome's self-assumed authority.

God the promised signal was thus given to the waiting Christians, and without a moment's delay they fled [in the fall of A.D. 66] to a place of safety—the refuge city Pella, in the land of Perea, beyond Jordan.” Ibid., 32.

The greatest sign was when the abomination of desolation stood, but before that there were many other signs that told it was time to get ready to go. When the abomination of desolation appeared, it was the last call for Christ's followers who had listened to His warning to find safety in flight, and thus save their lives, so that not one Christian perished.

The first siege of Jerusalem, under the Roman army, happened under General Cestius.

He surrounded Jerusalem with the Roman armies but, when it seemed favorable to attack, he unexpectedly withdrew his forces. When Cestius began to retreat, he planted the abomination of desolation, the banner of Rome, on the holy ground. When the Roman standards were planted there, right outside the city of Jerusalem, it was the sign for the followers of Christ to flee. All the predictions that Christ gave concerning the destruction of Jerusalem were fulfilled to the letter.

Ellen White wrote in *Christ's Object Lessons*, 296, that when Jerusalem was destroyed, the whole area where the temple had been was plowed like a field.

In the spring of A.D. 70, when there were over a million Jews inside the city of Jerusalem for the Passover, the Roman army, with Titus at its head, returned and surrounded the city again. This second and final siege lasted from the time of the Passover in March/April until the city fell about August 30 of that same year.

Ellen White describes it this way: “Terrible were the calamities which fell upon Jerusalem in the siege of the city by Titus. The last desperate assault was made at the time of the passover, when millions of Jews had assembled within its walls to celebrate the national festival. Their stores

of provision, which if carefully preserved would have been sufficient to supply the inhabitants for years, had previously been destroyed through the jealousy and revenge of the contending factions, and now all the horrors of starvation were experienced.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 32.

Horrible things happened. “The Roman leaders endeavored to strike terror to the Jews, and thus cause them to surrender. Those prisoners who resisted when taken, were scourged, tortured, and crucified before the wall of the city. Hundreds were daily put to death in this manner, and the dreadful work continued until, along the valley of Jehoshaphat and at Calvary, crosses were erected in so great numbers that there was scarcely room to move among them.” Ibid., 33.

The destruction of Jerusalem is a type of what is going to happen at the end of the world. “The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible scene was but a faint shadow.” Ibid., 37.

This is a scary thought! History records that over a million Jews were slaughtered during the destruction of Jerusalem. We have no idea just how many were led away captive and taken to Rome. Some of them were killed by gladiators for their entertainment in the coliseum. Others were made slaves and sent all over the world. What happened then was to have another fulfillment.

Ellen White says that that terrible scene was “a faint shadow” of a future event. The word *faint* means *small, almost insignificant*.

She says, “The second advent of the Son of God is foretold by lips which make no mistake: ‘Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory’ (Matthew 24:30). ...

“Let men beware lest they neglect the lesson conveyed to them in the words of Christ. He has declared that He will come the second time, to gather His faithful ones to himself, and to take vengeance on them that reject his mercy. As He [Jesus] warned His disciples of Jerusalem's destruction, giv-

ing them a sign of the approaching ruin that they might make their escape, so He has warned His people of the day of final destruction, and given them signs of its approach, that all who will may flee from the wrath to come. Those who behold the promised signs are to 'know that it is near, even at the door' (verse 33, *last part*). Ibid., 38.

What is the abomination of desolation today?

Remember, this is a two-fold prophecy. We know what the abomination of desolation was to the Christians in Jerusalem, but what does it represent today? Christians must identify the banner or flag of Rome, today. It is Sunday worship. The abomination of desolation today is Sunday worship, the symbol, sign, and mark of Rome's self-assumed authority.

Look back again at Matthew 24:14–18. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. 'Therefore when you see the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place' [remember, Jerusalem was called the holy city] (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes."

Notice, the gospel goes to all the world and then the abomination of desolation is planted.

Let's look at the first fulfillment. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul said that the gospel had been preached throughout the world. He said, "If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister" (Colossians 1:23). This letter was written before A.D. 66.



There are many baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist church who do not know the historic fundamentals of Adventism.

"After the truth has been proclaimed as a witness to all nations, at a time when every conceivable power of evil is set in operation, when minds are confused by the many voices crying, 'Lo, here is Christ,' 'Lo, He is there,' 'This is truth,' 'I have a message from God,' 'He has sent me with great light,' and there is a removing of the landmarks, and an attempt to tear down the pillars of our faith—then a more decided effort is made to exalt the false sabbath, and to cast contempt upon God Himself by supplanting the day He has blessed and sanctified." *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, 406.

One of the signs that precedes the setting up of the abomination of desolation is a removing of the landmarks of the Seventh-day Adventist faith—a removing of the landmarks.

There is a good reason that the magazine we publish here at Steps to Life is called *LandMarks of Historic Adventism*. There are many baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist church who do not know the historic fundamentals of Adventism. That is why we hold that name—because a removing of the landmarks and the pillars of the Adventist church has been going on for a long time.

Let's review the history of ancient Jerusalem and pay particular attention to the events surrounding the planting of the abomination of desolation. In

The Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4, page 31, it says, "Signs and wonders appeared, foreboding disaster and doom."

She says, "A comet, resembling a flaming sword, for a year hung over the city." Ibid. Because the Chinese began documenting signs in heaven over 200 years before Christ, we have accurate records of the history of Halley's comet from that time clear up to the present day. And we know then, that Halley's Comet was seen by those in Jerusalem around February, of A.D. 66. Cestius began his siege a few months later. Halley's comet was one of the major signs warning of impending destruction in Jerusalem.

"At the time of the siege, the Jews were assembled at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of the Tabernacles, and thus the Christians throughout the land were able to make their escape unmolested. Without delay they fled to a place of safety." *The Great Controversy*, 31. This was in the fall and Halley's Comet was in the spring.

The siege was not resumed by Titus until Passover time, A.D. 70, which was a little over three years later. Why is it that Jesus said in both Matthew and Luke that when that happens, flee? Don't even come back down into your house. Don't even come back from the field. Flee, right then. I don't know if I know the complete answer to that question yet. I have been thinking

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*Removing the landmarks
and the pillars of the
Adventist church has been
going on for a long time.*

about this and studying it for a long time. But, part of the answer had to do with the internal corruption that occurred in Jerusalem during that time.

The people were instructed by false teachers that no matter what happened, you should stay in the city to be protected, but that was an error. What the people were taught was exactly opposite of what Jesus had predicted. So if you believed what Jesus said, you fled and got out. If you listened to what the church said, you stayed in and perished.

“In their blind and blasphemous presumption the instigators of this hellish work publicly declared that they had no fear that Jerusalem would be destroyed, for it was God’s own city. To establish their power more firmly, they bribed false prophets to proclaim, even when Roman legions were besieging the temple, that the people were to wait for deliverance from God.” Ibid., 29.

The leaders instructed not to flee. Stay right there, and God will save you. Everybody who listened to their lie got slaughtered. It says, “To the last, multitudes held fast to the belief that the Most High would interpose for the defeat of their adversaries.” Ibid.

The greatest danger of coming back to the city of Jerusalem was the risk of being deceived by the false teachers saying that safety and security was in staying there and waiting for deliverance that would never come. Sadly, the majority of the people obeyed man instead of God. They showed that they loved man and their church more than God whom they professed to follow and obey.

Who represents Jerusalem today?

Now we come to a critical question. As the abomination of desolation is a two-fold prophecy, meaning that it is going to have another occurrence in the last days, then who represents Jerusalem today? Who is God’s chosen church, as was Jerusalem, that has been given the oracles of God?

Referring to the Seventh-day Adventist church, Ellen White said, “Jerusalem is a representation of what the church will be if it refuses to walk in the light that God has given. Jerusalem was favored of God as the depositary of sacred trusts.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 67.

Has the Seventh-day Adventist Church been favored of God as the depositary of sacred trusts? Who is it that has all the publishing rights to the prophetic works of Ellen White? The Seventh-day Adventist Church is the depositary of sacred trusts.

“But her people perverted the truth, and despised all entreaties and warnings. They would not respect His counsels. The temple courts were polluted with merchandise and robbery.” Ibid.

“There was danger that Battle Creek would become as Jerusalem of old—a powerful center. If we do not heed these warnings, the evils that ruined Jerusalem will come upon us.” Ibid., 133.

“The same danger exists today among the people who profess to be the depositaries of God’s law. They are too apt to flatter themselves that the regard in which they hold the commandments will preserve them from the power of divine justice. They refuse to be reproved for evil, and charge God’s servants with being too zealous in putting sin out of the camp. A sin-hating God calls upon those who profess to keep His law to depart from all iniquity. Neglect to repent and obey His word will bring as serious consequences upon God’s people today as did the same sin upon ancient Israel. There is a limit beyond which He will no longer delay His judgments. The desolation of Jerusalem stands as a solemn warning before the eyes of modern Israel, that the corrections given through His chosen instruments cannot be disregarded with impunity.” Ibid., vol. 4, 166, 167.

If we don’t listen to the warnings God has given to us, the ruin that came upon Israel will come upon us. Ellen White said in a letter in *The Early Elmhaven Years*, 45, 46: “For a week before I fully consented to go to Battle Creek [church headquarters], I did not sleep past one o’clock. Some nights I was

up at eleven o'clock, and many nights at twelve. I have not moved from impulse, but from the conviction that at this time that I must begin at Jerusalem."

This is a very interesting statement. Jerusalem represents the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Will the abomination of desolation, that is, the banner of Rome, Sunday worship, be planted in the headquarters of the professed Seventh-day Adventist Church?

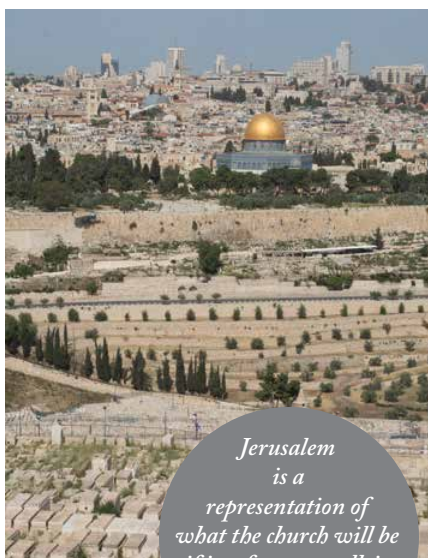
In Ezekiel 8, the prophet in vision is told about abominations in the temple in Jerusalem. Then in chapter 9, it tells about the destruction that is going to occur because of these abominations and about the people of God who are sighing and crying for these abominations that are occurring within the church.

Years ago, while I was attending Walla Walla college and studying these prophecies, my teacher tried to explain to me that this was all about something that was going on in Ezekiel's time. But that is not the case.

In *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, 338, it says, "Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us." They spoke more for our time.

"All the great events and solemn transactions of Old Testament history have been, and are, repeating themselves in the church in these last days." Ibid., 339.

"The last books of the Old Testament show us workers taken from the laborers in the field. Others were men of high ability and extensive learning, but the Lord gave them visions and messages. These men of the Old Testament spoke of things transpiring in their day, and Daniel, Isaiah, and Ezekiel not only spoke of things that concerned them as present truth, but their sights reached down to the future, and to what should occur in these last days." Ibid., 419, 420.



Jerusalem is a representation of what the church will be if it refuses to walk in the light that God has given.

Daniel, Isaiah, and Ezekiel are specifically mentioned that they had "their sights" clearly down on our time. When we read from Ezekiel, we are not just reading about something that happened several hundred years before Christ. We are reading about something that's going to happen in the last days.

Ellen White said that the prophecy in Ezekiel 9 will be fulfilled to the very letter. (See *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1303.)

When Ezekiel mentions Jerusalem, he is talking about the Seventh-day Adventist church. When He talks about the temple, He is talking about the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist church. These abominations in Ezekiel 8 will be seen occurring within the Seventh-day Adventist church and we need to be aware of these things.

Ezekiel 8 verse 16 states: "So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east."

This is what the faithful were sighing and crying about in chapter 9. Did you notice how many people there were? "About twenty-five men."

In the 1901 General Conference Bulletin, on page 378, it says, "The general conference constitution." Under article 1 it says, "This organization shall be known as the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists." [April 22, 1901-Extra # 17]

Under article 2, "Object. The object of this Conference shall be to unify and to extend to all parts of the world, the work of promulgating the everlasting gospel."

Article 4, on the executive committee, section 1, on page 379, says: "The Executive Committee of this Conference shall be twenty-five in number." Interesting!

This article is not intended to point a finger at anybody. God's people interpret prophecy that has been fulfilled in the past and we try to understand prophecy that will be fulfilled in the future. However, if you look at history you will find that we have a very poor track record at recognizing when a prophecy is being fulfilled right in front of us.

Remember, Jesus came to His people and said, "This day" this prophecy is "fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). And what happened? They tried to kill him.

We have a very poor track record.

My dear friends, prophecy is being fulfilled right in front of our eyes, and the question is, Will we not recognize it until it is too late?

We had better pay attention and recognize the signs. They are like the handwriting on the wall and we would not want to miss them.


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

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The Trip That Changed My Life

By John Pearson

In 1971, I was three years out of college and working as head of the operations department for a major department store in Dallas, Texas. A coworker with whom I had become a good friend who worked in the sporting goods department had acquired a large camping tent. We eventually formulated a plan to use it on a camping trip to the Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone national parks that summer.



The road ascends into the Chisos Mountains, the location of the Basin Campground in Big Bend National Park, Texas.

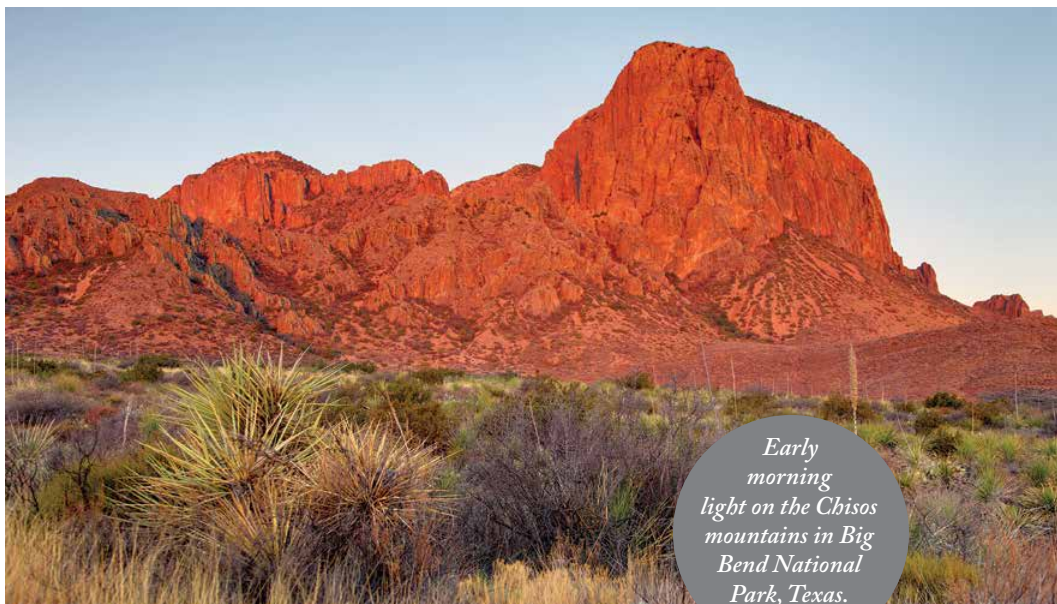
That was my first ever camping trip and re-ignited within me a love of the natural world that was first kindled when I briefly lived in rural east Texas, shortly after my grandfather's passing in November, 1955. My grandparents lived on a 40-acre farm in Cass County. After my grandfather passed away, my grandmother didn't want to leave the farm, but the family didn't want her to live there by herself. I was chosen to finish the school year down on the farm to keep her company and provide whatever help an eleven-year old could supply (which wasn't much).

What's a city boy to do when he suddenly finds himself in the country? I reveled in it! On weekends, my grandmother would pack a sack lunch for me and I would head off through the piney woods and spend the day absorbing nature—and loving it.

That same love lay dormant for over fifteen years until that July camping trip to the Rocky Mountains and Yellowstone. That trip began the process that the Lord was using to change my life. He “knows our frame,” and He knew exactly what it would take to pull me out of the world and set me on the straight and narrow path.

The summer following the trip to the Rockies and Yellowstone, I wanted to experience the beauties of another national park—but which one? Being a fifth-generation Texan (and misguidedly proud of it), I thought to myself that there must be a national park in *Texas* I could visit. Back in 1972, there was no web to surf to answer that question, but somehow I discovered that there was indeed a national park stuck way out in west Texas, in the bend of the Rio Grande, southeast of El Paso. It is aptly named Big Bend National Park.

So in August 1972, I borrowed the tent from my friend that we had used the summer before and packed up my camping gear in the trunk of my Pontiac Grand Prix—not your typical camping vehicle. But I was living the high life in



Early morning light on the Chisos mountains in Big Bend National Park, Texas.

Dallas, occupying a luxury apartment, driving a fancy car, doing all the preppy things a successful corporate executive was supposed to do. By then I was in charge of the receiving department, supervising about 30 employees, with two assistants.

This vacation, however, was indeed the trip that changed my life. I was smitten with the incredibly wide openness of Big Bend, the vistas that stretched for miles in every direction, without a single golden arch to be seen. The nearest town was 108 miles away. The nearest Walmart or McDonald's was a bit farther. The nearest airport was 225 miles away. It's about as remote a location as one can find in the United States.


I spent a week camping in The Basin campground, which is nestled in a huge igneous bowl about a mile in diameter in the heart of the Chisos Mountains. The campground occupied the site that was used by a 1930's Civilian Conservation Corps camp. Late summer is the rainy season there, and every afternoon there were fascinating thunderstorms that dumped buckets of rain in short order, giving life to the intermittent waterfalls that cascaded off the mountain ridges that surrounded the campground.

That week, I explored remote trails, soaking in the beauty of the Chihuahuan Desert and the astounding Chisos Mountains—the only mountain range that is wholly contained within the boundaries of a national park, whose highest peak tops out at 7,825 feet.

When I got back to Dallas, I bought every book I could find that had anything to do with Big Bend and read them voraciously. I couldn't get enough. The memories of that trip haunted me day and night, to the extent that I made plans to leave Dallas and move to Big Bend. The only hitch: to live in a national park, you have to work there, and in the early 1970s the park service was under orders to diversify. Consequently, they were not hiring white Anglo-Saxon males under 40—the only unprotected class under anti-discrimination regulations.

Then I discovered that there was a concessioner in the park that was always eager to hire minimum wage workers. I applied, but never received a job offer, only a letter asking me why I wanted to quit my present job.

I'm sure it seemed a bit odd to them for someone who lived in a big metropolitan area and held a responsible,



well-paying position to want to go to work in a very remote location for minimum wage. I responded with what to me was a plausible explanation, but never received a response.

Unable to get my mind off Big Bend, I eventually traded my Grand Prix for a Volkswagen, sold everything I had that wouldn't fit in it, quit my job, and headed for the park.

When I got there, with great anxiety, I went to the office of the concessioner and introduced myself, asking for the manager by name, which I knew from the last letter I had received from him a few months earlier. He came out immediately, saying that he knew who I was and why I was there. Whew—anxiety relieved a bit!

After a brief interview with him and his assistant, I was offered a job as a desk clerk for the lodge. Because I had a college degree, they agreed to pay me fifteen cents above minimum wage. The job came with free housing and three meals a day for one dollar per meal. What a deal!

So I moved into the men's dorm with seven or eight other workers, only one of whom spoke English. It was quite a difference from the luxury apartment I had lived in in Dallas, but it was in Big Bend!

I stayed there for a total of thirteen years. I met my wife there. We had three children there. We all still consider Big Bend our special place, although none of us lives there anymore.

As I look back on this wonderful experience, I don't think I'm stretching it too much to view my years in Big Bend as perhaps similar to Moses' four decades of tending sheep. The Lord knew that I had too much worldliness in me to walk the narrow way successfully. He lovingly ordered the providences in my life so that I could begin my exit from Babylon.

Because the school at Big Bend only went through the sixth grade, the family had to move as our children grew, first landing in San Diego. Talk about culture shock—moving from a remote residence with about a hundred neighbors to a metropolis of almost six million! We could tolerate that change for only about a year and a half and when I was

offered a job in Tucson, Arizona, we gladly accepted and relocated there. And it was in Tucson that the Lord helped me to take the next step in my exit from Babylon.

I was the chief financial officer for a multi-million-dollar non-profit corporation that operated book stores in National Park Service visitor centers. At that time, we had 66 outlets in 11 western states. I got paid to visit some of the most beautiful sites west of the 100th meridian. To this day, I continue to be awed at the gracious manner in which the Lord worked to lead me to His loving and patient side.

After I served several years in that position, the need arose in the organization for a controller, who would report to me. It turned out that one of the individuals who applied, a recent college graduate, asked in my initial contact with him if the job would require that he work on Saturday. I was puzzled by his question, but told him that I had worked there for eight years and had never had to work on Saturday. He responded that if that were the case, he would agree to an on-site interview.

During that interview, he again stressed that he would not want to be considered for the job if it would ever require him to work on Saturday, explaining that he was a Seventh-day Adventist.

I had initially heard of SDAs in 1975 when I spent the summer working in a seafood processing factory in Alaska. One day I saw the plant manager talking to three young men who had entered the plant. I couldn't hear the conversation, but I saw the manager shake his head and the three fellows leave. Later the manager told me that they were Seventh-day Adventists and wouldn't work on Saturday; so he wouldn't hire them.

The next time I heard of Seventh-day Adventists was following the siege at Waco in 1993. When we saw the story on the news, my wife wondered what her aunt thought about the incident, as she was a Seventh-day Adventist and the Davidians were considered by some to be an off-shoot of the SDA church.

On a later business trip to Washington, D.C., I stayed with my wife's aunt, who lived

in Silver Spring, Maryland, and with her attended the huge SDA church there on Sabbath. There was nothing particularly memorable about the service, other than that it was on Saturday. So I didn't make any inquiries about her faith.

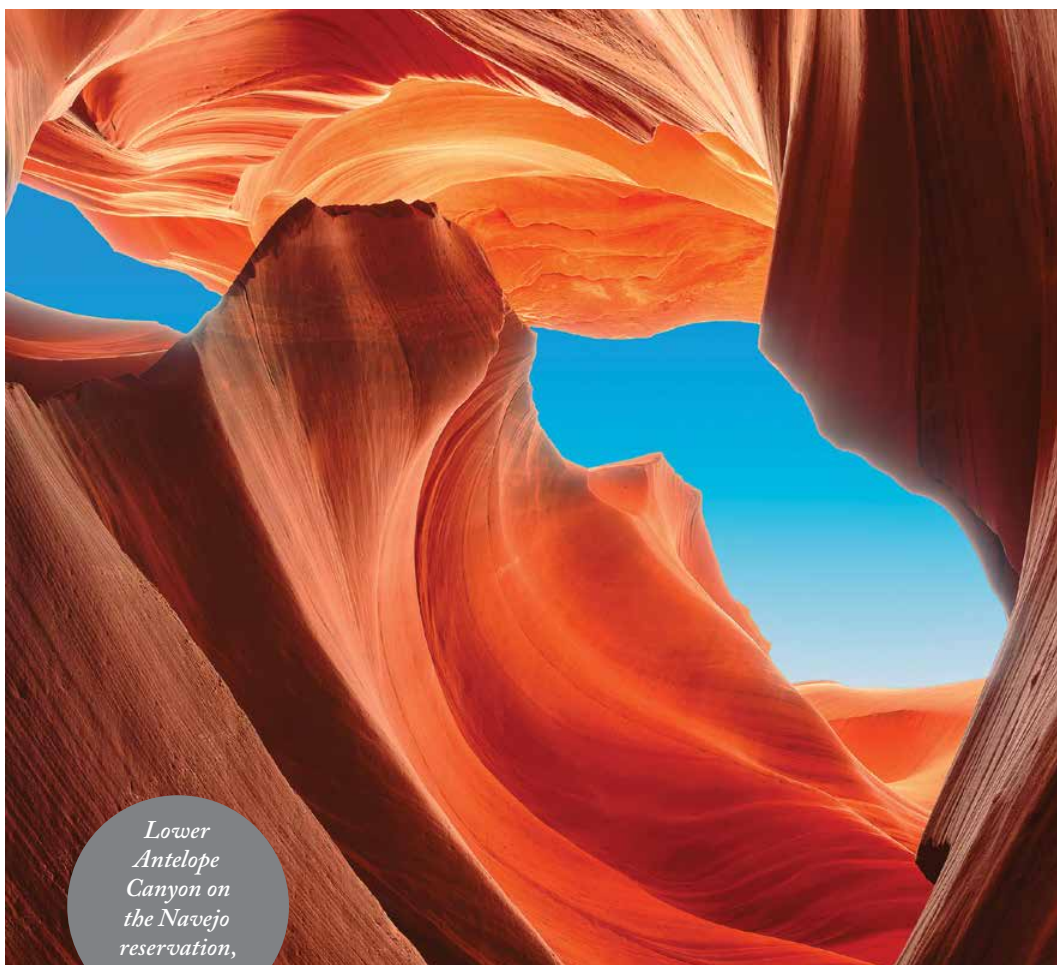
Well, we ended up hiring the young college graduate as the controller, admonishing him beforehand that he had to keep his religion to himself and not evangelize in the workplace—a stipulation to which he agreed.

One of the National Park Service outlets we operated was a trading post on the Navajo reservation. At the time it was our largest source of revenue. Since the controller was responsible for the financial accounting for that operation, it was important for him to become familiar with it right away. Because of its remote location, the only way to get there was to drive. So a day or two after he was hired, we began the six-hour trip.

As soon as we got out of town, I asked him about this “seventh day Sabbath thing.” He reminded me that he had agreed not to discuss his religion and didn't want to violate his agreement. I assured him that since I was the one who brought up the subject, he wouldn't get in trouble. He cautiously began to explain that the Bible was very clear that the seventh day was the Sabbath and that there was nothing in Scripture to justify worshipping on the first day.

Being a faithful SDA, he had his Bible tucked in his suitcase, brought it out and used it to skillfully address every question I raised — questions that every SDA is asked sooner or later. The two things he said that impressed me the most were that Seventh-day Adventists believe the whole Bible is true, and they believe that God has had His hand over the Scriptures to prevent any material changes from happening to them.

When we reached our destination, I got the Gideon Bible from my motel



*Lower
Antelope
Canyon on
the Navajo
reservation,
Arizona.*

room and joined him in his. We conversed and read Scripture until 11:00 that night. And at 11:00 that night, I became a Seventh-day Adventist.

I returned to Tucson with the joy of my new-found faith beaming from my countenance. Unfortunately, that joy was not shared by my wife. When my son, who was baptized the following year at the same camp meeting I was, later expressed a desire to become a Bible worker, my wife filed for divorce, declaring that she couldn't handle two Christians in the same household, admitting that she was a convicted atheist and always had been, a fact that she had concealed from me until I accepted Christ as my Saviour.

As I look back over the journey that brought me to where I am today, I can only praise a loving God who knew

exactly what was needed to draw me closer to Him and set me on the path of truth and righteousness, although that path has had a few bumps. I have no doubt that He is equally interested in the salvation of everyone. My prayer is that *all* will respond to the pleadings and leadings of the Holy Spirit and come out of Babylon.

Epilogue

My ex-wife has since passed away. Two of my children who were baptized into the church have since left the church and returned to the world. **LM**

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

Coming Again

Job 35:10, 11

There's a strain of sweet music abiding with me,
It maketh my spirit unharrassed and free;
'Tis a balm for earth's pain:
"Christ is coming again!"
And soon my Redeemer's dear face I shall see.

'Tis my song in the night, 'tis my joy when I wake,
It cheers and it sweetens each step that I take;
'Tis my anchor and hope,
And when storms interlope,
It holdeth my bark where no tempest can shake.

"Christ is coming!"—ah yes, He is coming again!
It is grief's antidote and a solace for pain.
Such a hope, truly blest,
To the weary brings rest:
The Saviour is coming, forever to reign.

Through the Waters, Pearl Waggoner Howard, 59.





He Knows



By Revella Knight

He knows all about us, each one of us—all our wants, desires, successes, failures, joy, pain, ups and downs. He hears every prayer, knows every thought. He knows all about us and He loves us! Sometimes I wonder how God can love us, but He does. The patience of our Lord is truly amazing.

About Jeremiah He said, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5).

So why do we try and hide anything from Him or even hold onto our past? So often, we give our sins to Jesus, and then we take them back out of His hands again by debriefings, hashing and rehashing, so that our joy is taken away. We cannot fix what is past and gone.

“

There is not one of us that has lived a pure life; all of us have sinned and are in need of our loving Saviour.

There is not one of us that has lived a pure life; all of us have sinned and are in need of our loving Saviour. We forget that He is all knowing and all powerful. You may say, Oh, you have no idea all the wicked things I have said and done. God knows, and He has a remedy that can help you and me.

Claim this promise: “And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and My people shall never be ashamed” (Joel 2:25, 26).

Jesus cares enough to save us dear friend. Who are we? Nobody! Nobody, without the power of God.

“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father” (Matthew 10:29).

A farthing was British money – it comes from the word for *fourth part*. Therefore, before the decimal system was established, a farthing was worth 1/4 of a penny.

Sparrows were not worth much—they had such little value, but if Jesus notices when even a little sparrow falls, how much more will He notice and care for you?

This next verse never ceases to amaze me: “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered” (verse 30). Have you ever wondered why? It is because of His watchcare over you. There is not a hair that falls off our head that Jesus does not know about. In other words, He is continually watching us with loving interest, and He knows EVERYTHING about us. Scary or comforting – which is it my friend?

Jesus loves us SOOO much!

I heard a sad story of a couple who stood by the grave of their small boy. As the coffin was lowered into the ground, they said repeatedly, “We loved you so much.” My heart aches as I think of those parents who had lost their son and John 3:16

took on a new meaning for me: “For God SO(OOOO) loved the world, that HE GAVE His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Jesus gave up everything to save us. He made the ultimate sacrifice. Let us not shun this free gift that is so priceless.

Yes, we can make it. Surrender the past, let go of it and let God work in us.

“Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command thee this day” (Deuteronomy 8:11).

“Only the love that flows from the heart of Christ can heal. Only He in whom that love flows, even as sap in the tree or the blood in the body, can restore the wounded soul.” *Education*, 114.

“The language of the soul should be that of joy and gratitude. If we have dark chapters in our experience, let us not keep their memory fresh by repetition. Forgetting the things that are behind, let us press forward to the things that are before. Cultivate only those thoughts and feelings which produce gratitude and praise. If you have been wronged, forget it, and think only of the great mercy, the loving-kindness, the inexpressible love of Jesus. Learn to praise rather than to censure. If you meet with insult and abuse, do not become discouraged, for Jesus met the same. Go forward, doing your work with fidelity. Store the mind with the precious promises of God’s word, and hold sweet communion with Him by frequently repeating them. Cease fretting, cease murmuring, cease finding fault, and make melody to God in your hearts. Think of everything you have to be thankful for, and then learn to praise God.” *The Signs of the Times*, September 27, 1883.

When the Lord knows all about us and still loves us so much that He wants us with Him for eternity, that is worth living for and worth giving our all to Him. The only time we should look back is to see the distance and direction the Lord has taken us in and to praise His name.

I want to share with you, one of my favorite poems:





“I see not a step before me as I tread on another year,
But the past is in God’s keeping, the future His mercy shall clear,
And what looks dark in the distance may brighten as I draw near,
Oh restful, blissful ignorance, ’tis blessed not to know,
It stills me in those mighty arms, which will not let me go,
And hushes my sad soul to rest in the bosom that loves me so.
So I go on not knowing, I would not if I might,
I would rather walk in the dark with God, than go alone in the light.
I would rather walk with Him by faith, than walk alone by sight.
My heart shrinks back from the trials which the future may disclose,
Yet I never have a sorrow but what the dear Lord chose.
So I send the coming teardrops back with the whispered word, ‘He knows.’”

Mary Gardiner Brainard

Yes friend, it is all right, and all is well, because, “He knows.” **LM**

Revella Knight is a registered nurse and writes from her home in Arkansas.



Isaiah

Clues – Isaiah 51–54

Across:

B6	The borders of our mansions in Heaven will be of these kinds of stones	54:12
C1	Like a lamb about to be slaughtered, Jesus would not open this	53:7
C14	In Heaven our children will be this of the Lord	54:13
D20	If we are truly God's people, this will be in our hearts	51:7
E4	It pleased God to make Jesus an _____ for sin	53:10
E13	Jesus did what to the sins of many?	53:12
F17	When sin is finally destroyed, even the heavens will vanish away like this	51:6
G10	Jesus was to die among these	53:9
H2	How good it is when someone brings good _____	52:7
I8	Jesus was to be "wounded" because of our _____	53:5
J1	Gladness and this will fill the new earth	51:3
K6	These, of our mansions in Heaven, will be made of agates (singular)	54:12
K19	God wants us to listen to Him, i.e., give Him our _____	51:4
L10	The wicked "continually every day" blaspheme God's _____	52:5
M14	Jesus was to have no outward beauty that people would _____ Him	53:2
N3	Jesus was to be despised, and the Jews _____ Him not	53:3
O13	If we are a child of God, we need not fear this of our enemies	51:7
Q2	In Heaven we will never experience this emotion	54:14
Q9	Jesus was to be _____ from among the living because of our sins (two words)	53:8
S5	Jesus is commended for being willing to be _____ with transgressors	53:12
S14	In the Earth made new God will make the wilderness of earth like this	51:3

Down:

A11	At the time of the end the earth itself will _____ old (Do you see this already?)	51:6
B2	Sapphires will make the _____ of our mansions in Heaven	54:11
B8	When we enter the New Jerusalem, we shall have what kind of joy?	51:11
B15	Christ's visage would be _____ more than any other man	52:14
B21	Though the earth fall apart, God's covenant of this shall remain	54:10
E19	Our God, the _____ of Israel is our Maker and Redeemer (two words)	54:5
G10	In the time of trouble if one of these is formed against us it will not prosper	54:17
G14	One day all the ends of this shall see the redeemed of the Lord	52:10
I6	Jesus shall see the travail of His soul and be this	53:11
I21	Jesus was to be a "man of _____"	53:3
J6	What God wants us to do and then put on garments of His righteousness	52:1
K11	Instead of loyalty to God, we have turned every one to our own _____	53:6
L18	Our iniquities caused Jesus to be this	53:5
M3	Jesus was to suffer lashes, or "stripes," so we could be _____ from sin	53:5
M9	Jesus would be despised and _____ of men	53:3
M14	With God on our side we need never be afraid of men that will do this	51:12
O20	Jesus was to become very familiar with this sad emotion	53:3
P5	What the Jews had done with the cup of God's fury	51:17
P7	This shall eventually eat up the wicked when they die	51:7, 8
P12	God's people had _____ themselves for nothing	52:3
Q14	In the new Jerusalem what will sorrow and mourning do?	51:11

A	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	A
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“All we like sheep have gone astray; ...and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” *Isaiah 53:6*

Keeper of the Light

Mary's father was the keeper of a lighthouse on the coast of England. The light of these lamps shines at night to guide ships on their way and to keep them from dangerous rocks and shoals. The lighthouse seems to say: "Take care, sailors, for rocks and sands are here. Keep a good lookout and mind how you sail, or you will be lost."

One afternoon Mary was in the lighthouse alone. Mary's father had trimmed the lamps, and they were ready for lighting when evening came. As he needed to buy some food, he crossed the causeway which led to the land. This causeway was a path over the rocks and sands, which could be used only two or three hours in the day; at other times, the waters rose and covered it. The father intended to hasten home before the tide flowed over this path. Night was coming on, and a storm was rising on the sea.

Waves dashed against the rocks, and the wind moaned around the tower.

Mary's mother was dead, and although she was alone, her father had told the girl not to be afraid, for he would soon return. Now there were some rough-looking men behind a rock, who were watching Mary's father. They watched him go to the land.

Who were they? They were "wreckers" who lurked about the coast. If a vessel was driven on the rocks by a storm, they rushed down—not to help the sailors, but to rob them, and to plunder the ship.

The wicked men knew that a little girl was left alone in the lighthouse. They planned to keep her father on the shore all night. Ships filled with rich goods were expected to pass the point before the morning and these men knew if the light did not shine, the vessels would run upon the rocks and be wrecked. How

cruel and wicked they were to seek the death of the ships' crews!

Mary's father had filled his basket, and prepared to return to the lighthouse. As he drew near the road leading to the causeway, the wreckers rushed from their hiding place and threw him on the ground. They quickly bound his hands and feet with ropes and carried him into a shed, where he had to lie until morning. It was in vain that he shouted for them to set him free; they only mocked his distress. They then left him in the charge of two men, while they ran back to the shore.

"Oh, Mary, what will you do?" cried the father as he lay in the shed. "There will be no one to light the lamps. Ships may be wrecked, and sailors may be lost."

Mary looked from a narrow window toward the shore, thinking it was time for her father to return. When the



clock in the little room struck six, she knew that the water would soon be over the causeway.

An hour passed. The clock struck seven, and Mary still looked toward the beach; but her father was not to be seen. By the time it was eight, the tide was nearly over the causeway; only bits of rock here and there were above the water. "O father, hurry," cried Mary, as though her father could hear her. "Have you forgotten your little girl?" But the only answer was the noise of the waters as they rose higher and higher, and the roar of the wind as it gave notice of the coming storm. Surely there would be no lights that night.

Mary thought of what her mother used to say: "We should pray in every time of need." Quickly she knelt and prayed for help: "O Lord, show me what to do, and bless my father, and bring him home safe."

The water was now over the causeway. The sun had set more than an hour ago, and, as the moon rose, black storm clouds covered it from sight.

The wreckers walked along the shore, looking for some ship to strike on the

coast. They hoped that the sailors, not seeing the lights, would think they were far at sea.

At this moment Mary decided she would try to light the lamps. But what could a little girl do? The lamps were far above her reach. She got matches and carried a small stepladder to the spot. After much labor she found that the lamps were still above her head. Then she got a small table and put the stepladder on it. But when she climbed to the top the lights were still beyond her reach. "If I had a stick," she said, "I would tie a match to it, and then I could set a light to the wicks." But no stick was to be found.

The storm was raging with almost hurricane force. The sailors at sea looked along the coast for the light. Where could it be? Had they sailed in the wrong direction? They were lost and knew not which way to steer.

All this time Mary's father was praying that God would take care of His child in the dark and lonely lighthouse.

Mary, frightened and lonely, was about to sit down again, when she

thought of an old book in the room below. It was a special book that belonged to her mother. She questioned, "If Mother were here, would she not allow me to take it?"

In a moment the large book was brought and placed under the steps, and up she climbed once more. Yes, she was high enough! She touched one wick, then another, and another, until the rays of the lamps shone brightly far above the dark waters.

The father saw the light as he lay in the shed, and thanked God for sending help in the hour of danger. The sailors saw the light, and steered their ships away from the rocks. The wreckers, too, saw the light, and were angry to see that their evil plot had failed.

All that stormy night the lamps cast their rays over the foaming sea; and when the morning came, the father escaped from the shed. Soon he reached the lighthouse and found out how his little girl had stood faithful to duty in the dark hours of storm.

Scrapbook Stories from Ellen G. White Scrapbooks, ©1949, 29–32. [LM](#)



Our Job of Restoration

In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, such a work as that of John the Baptist is to be done. God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was, “repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 3:2). As a people who believe in Christ’s soon appearing, we have a message to bear: “Prepare to meet thy God” (Amos 4:2). Our message is to be as direct as was the message of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding that his life was imperiled, he did not hesitate to declare God’s word. And our work in this age must be done as faithfully.

In order to give such a message as John gave, we must have a spiritual experience like his. The same work must be wrought in us. We must behold God, and in beholding Him lose sight of self.

John had by nature the faults and weaknesses common to humanity; but the touch of divine love had transformed him. When, after Christ’s ministry began, the disciples of John came to him with the complaint that all men were following the new teacher, John showed how clearly he understood his relation to the Messiah, and how gladly he welcomed the One for whom he prepared the way.

“A man can receive nothing,” he said, “except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:27–30).

Looking in faith to the Redeemer, John had risen to the height of self-abnegation. He sought not to attract men to himself, but to lift their thoughts higher and still high-

er, until they should rest upon the Lamb of God. He himself had been only a voice, a cry in the wilderness. Now with joy he accepted silence and obscurity, that the eyes of all might be turned to the Light of life.

Those who are true to their calling as messengers for God, will not seek honor for themselves. Love for self will be swallowed up in love for Christ. They will recognize that it is their work to proclaim, as did John the Baptist, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). They will lift up Jesus, and with Him humanity will be lifted up. “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Isaiah 57:15). *The Review and Herald*, November 28, 1907.

“The work of John the Baptist is our work.” *The Central Advance*, April 8, 1903. [LM](#)

Exciting Times

As I read the Ascension story of Jesus to heaven and all the beings awaiting His arrival, my heart just sang for joy and I prayed that I may be accounted worthy to see the heavenly country and all its peoples.

When John the Revelator was given a vision of heaven, Revelation 4:2–6 says that God the Father was there along with 24 elders and 4 beasts and many angels in Revelation 5:11. Perhaps this was the scene that awaited our Saviour when He ascended to heaven.

“There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. There are cherubim and seraphim. The commanders of the angel hosts, the sons of God, the representatives of the unfallen worlds, are assembled. The heavenly council before which Lucifer had accused God and His Son, the representatives of those sinless realms over which Satan had thought to establish his dominion—all are there to welcome the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King.” *The Desire of Ages*, 832.

What a welcoming party for Jesus! “But He waves them back. ... He enters into the presence of His Father. He points to His wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet; He lifts His hands, bearing the print of nails. He points to the tokens of His triumph; He presents to God the wave sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great

multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming. ...

“The voice of God is heard proclaiming that justice is satisfied. Satan is vanquished. ... The Father’s arms encircle His Son, and the word is given, ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him’ (Hebrews 1:6).” Ibid.

- The celebration began! “With joy unutterable, rulers and principalities and powers acknowledge the supremacy of the Prince of life.
- The angel host prostrate themselves before Him, while the glad shout fills all the courts of heaven, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing’ (Revelation 5:12).
- Songs of triumph mingle with the music from angel harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. Love has conquered. The lost is found.
- Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming, ‘Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever’ (Revelation 5:13).” Ibid.

I want to show that kind of love and honor also to the One who risked all to save mankind. We have the opportunity to meet all of these beings! Are you preparing for that day? We cannot afford to miss it!

Heavenly Father: Prepare our hearts at this moment and every moment up to the time of that wonderful second coming of Jesus to this earth. We want to join that heavenly ascension, to be welcomed into the heavenly country. What a day that will be. We thank You for the wonderful opportunity You have spread out before us. Please keep us faithful for that day. Amen. [LM](#)



Your Letters

"Very much I LOVE and appreciate the *LandMarks* every month, as well as the DVDs. The Lord I know guides you about what He wants us to know to get ready."

—JA, Colorado

"We pray for your ministry and the *LandMarks* magazine as we enjoy reading it."

—H&MR, Missouri

"I am really enjoying June *LandMarks*. What a blessing. I remember watching John and his brother on 3ABN about 1986 or 1987. May God bless you all. God keep you safe is my prayer."

—GT, New Mexico

"Thank you so much for the blessing each month with the DVDs and *LandMarks*. We very much enjoy them."

—D&LF, Florida

August Sermon of the Month

Methuselah's Grandchildren

By John J. Grosboll

Of all the grandchildren of Methuselah, who was born in the eighth generation after creation, only one, Noah, was saved when the flood came.

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

From the Desk of Pastor John J. Grosboll

August 2020

Dear Friend,

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, the last letter we have that he wrote while he was in the Mamertine prison in Rome awaiting his execution, he said to him, "Come before winter" (2 Timothy 4:21). Have you ever wondered about the urgency and whether Timothy arrived before winter? Paul was without sufficient clothing to survive the winter in that damp dark prison (see 2 Timothy 4:13) and secondly, "Under the most favorable circumstances several months must pass before Timothy could reach Rome from Asia Minor. Paul knew that his life was uncertain, and he feared that Timothy might arrive too late to see him. He had important counsel and instruction for the young man, to whom so great responsibility had been entrusted; and while urging him to come without delay, he dictated the dying testimony that he might not be spared to utter." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 499.

Do you have opportunities to spread the gospel and get the message of salvation to people who are not ready for the Lord to come who someday soon might be saying "the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20)?

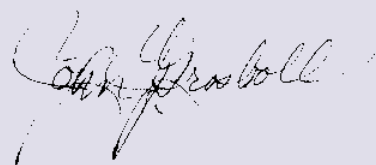
The summer of religious liberty that has been enjoyed in America for over 200 years because of our constitution and bill of rights, is soon to be over. Winter is coming. The secular press today is reporting the fact that the constitution has recently been thrown out the window in order to deal with a pandemic. This is the first time in my lifetime that churches have been closed. Surprisingly, most people don't think much about it, although we have lost a great deal of liberty that we thought we had just a few months ago.

If there are people that you have been planning on giving literature to or studying the Bible with or witnessing to in any other way, do not delay. The privileges that you have to share your faith today could suddenly be gone. When our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution, the opportunities that you have today will suddenly be gone forever. "We are now to make diligent work for eternity. Only for a very short time longer will the Lord bear with the gross wickedness that fills the world. Oh, how suddenly will the end come, surprising the world in their increasing iniquity." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, 65.

Sadly, some will say, "I wish I had told them about this when I had the opportunity."

"If every church member were a living missionary, the gospel would speedily be proclaimed in all countries, to all peoples, nations, and tongues." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 32.

Your brother in Christ,



John J. Grosboll

13th Sabbath Offering



Pastor Domingo Nunez (center) and Harold Cortez (extreme right) join in ministering to the faithful souls in Guerrero who are eager to share the light of the gospel.

Sharing the Light in Guerrero, Mexico

By Pastor Domingo Nunez

Guerrero is one of the poorest states in Mexico. Its citizens have been agriculture workers for many generations, but a new generation has decided to take a different path. Many are university graduates that have entered professional careers at all social and cultural levels.

All praises to God the Father that this new generation of young people has also left behind their traditional and at times radical upbringing that defended generational Catholic religious beliefs, customs, and traditions. Yes, the scales on their eyes have fallen off and the

Light of the World has lighted the darkness that once blinded their minds. How has this come about? The Lord of mercy whose eyes run to and fro throughout the entire world to seek those whose hearts are ready to receive Him used printed literature to reach them. Our all wise and powerful Lord and Saviour made it possible for the three angels' messages, printed in concise and convenient format, to be placed in the hands of those earnest seekers.

Through this method of spreading the last warning message, this new generation that was once trapped in

beliefs that had been passed blindly on from generation to generation has now accepted God's last warning message. Some of these converts are now distributing tracts and literature to their friends, neighbors, and the general public. The sad side to this report, however, is that there is a huge shortage of truth filled materials.

Join us in imploring the Lord of the Harvest to provide a means of obtaining printed materials for this area of evangelism with the purchase of copying equipment. Mark your support of this effort *Mexico*. [LM](#)

from the
Mission Fields



Ambassador in Chains

Light in a Dark Place

Every so often we receive a letter that indicates the serious situation in which God's people find themselves and that indicates how tirelessly Satan works wherever and however he can to suppress the truth.

We recently received just such a letter from an inmate in a Federal prison in Virginia. Following is an excerpt from that letter.

Staff of STL,

I pray that this letter finds all of you well. I am writing for a few reasons today. I will start with praise—I received some money from home today that was much needed. So be on the lookout for an institution check from me containing my tithe. Secondly, I received a rejection letter from our mailroom saying that they sent back a “Sermon of the Month” CD. It is B.O.P. [Bureau of Prisons] policy that inmates cannot receive CDs. ...

Lastly, I would like to ask for prayer for continued strength, wisdom, and knowledge for the spiritual warfare we are currently facing in this compound. I mentioned before that a new mailroom rule has made it so that we no longer receive Bible study courses due to not being allowed to receive anything over 5 single-sided pages per envelope. ...

Also, since 1 April 2020, we have exactly zero access to the chapel (we are locked in our cells all day everyday with the exception of an hour and a half on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, then we are still confined to our housing units and must take our turn—along with 120 other inmates—using the phones, showering, and getting our ice and hot water. ...)

Since this started, I have been “dressed down” (to borrow a military term) for seeing to the spiritual needs of the flock in my unit, specifically serving communion. ... I also have received a few other dressing-downs for having part of the 91st Psalm written on my facemask and was informed if I didn’t put a different mask on, I would be written up. Nothing is said to others in the unit with things like mustaches drawn on their masks.

This is a time when people here most need spiritual encouragement and to be able to partake in all aspects of our faith, but it seems like every time I try to help, I receive an over-enthusiastic push back. ...

The enemy is hard at work and pushing here. Christians are being denied even simple religious freedoms while the facility and psychology department not only approve but provide the means (hormone treatment and counseling—free of charge) for people to fall, no, run head-long into sin. I routinely find myself equating this place to a modern-day Sodom and Gomorrah. This is a very dark place and I continue to see spiritual lights flicker and be snuffed out here as more and more “professing” Christians find contentment in being a Christian in name only.

I was asked to pass a piece of paper from one cell to another the other day. I asked, “It’s not contraband, is it?” When I was told yes, but the C.O. won’t know, I replied, “I can’t; it goes against my walk.” The guy replied, and I quote: “Come on. It’s fine. I’m a Christian, too.” ...

I just don’t understand how someone can say “I am a Christian” and 1) sin immediately after saying it, and 2) not know or care to learn what it truly means to “be a Christian.”


OK, so I kind of got to rambling there. Sorry about that. I thank you for your prayers and for all you do. God bless all y’all.

Very respectfully and with Christ’s love,

J.S.

Warrior of Christ and His Ambassador in Chains

“We have far more to fear from within than from without. ... How often have the professed advocates of the truth proved the greatest obstacle to its advancement! The unbelief indulged, the doubts expressed, the darkness cherished, encourage the presence of evil angels, and open the way for the accomplishment of Satan’s devices.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 122.

To support the efforts of Steps to Life Ministry to keep the flame burning among the ambassadors in chains, please mark your offerings
Prison Ministry. 



Sea Squirts aka Tunicates

Tunicates, commonly called sea squirts, are a group of marine animals that spend most of their lives attached to docks, rocks or the undersides of boats. To most people they look like small, colored blobs. It often comes as a surprise to learn that they are actually more closely related to vertebrates like ourselves than to most other invertebrate animals.

Tunicates are part of the phylum Urochordata, closely related to the phylum Chordata that includes all vertebrates. Because of these close ties, many scientists are working hard to learn about their biochemistry, their developmental biology, and their genetic relationship to other invertebrate and vertebrate animals.

A tunicate is built like a barrel. The name, “tunicate” comes from the firm, but flexible body covering, called a tunic. Most tunicates live with the posterior, or lower end of the barrel attached firmly

to a fixed object, and have two openings, or siphons, projecting from the other. Tunicates are plankton feeders. They live by drawing seawater through their bodies. Water enters the oral siphon, passes through a sieve-like structure, the branchial basket that traps food particles and oxygen, and is expelled through the atrial siphon.

One clue that tunicates are related to vertebrates is found in the tunicate larva, or tadpole. It even looks like a tiny tadpole, and has a nerve cord down its back, similar to the nerve cord found inside the vertebrae of all vertebrates. The Cerebral Vesicle is equivalent to a vertebrate’s brain. Sensory organs include an eyespot, to detect light, and an otolith, which helps the animal orient to the pull of gravity.

Tunicate tadpoles mature extremely quickly, in a matter of just a few hours. Since the tadpoles do not feed at this

stage of their lives, they have no mouths. Their sole job is to find a suitable place to live out their lives as adults. When ready to settle, a sticky secretion helps them attach head first to the spot they have chosen. They then reabsorb all the structures within their tail and recycle them to build new structures needed for their adult way of life.

<https://depts.washington.edu/fhlk12/links/StudentProjects/Tun.biology.html>

God had a reason for creating these beautiful creatures just as He had a reason for each one of us. As the sole work of the Sea Squirts is to find a suitable place to live out their lives as adults, so our work, or contribution, is to “walk in the light of the LORD” (Isaiah 2:5) and to “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). **LM**



Q:

*What is
meant by eye
salve?*

A:



"I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see" (Revelation 3:18.)

"The eye salve is the true spiritual discernment that is so wanting among us, for spiritual things must be spiritually discerned." *The Review and Herald*, April 1, 1890.

"The eye is the sensitive conscience, the inner light, of the mind. Upon its correct view of things the spiritual healthfulness of the whole soul and being depends. The 'eye salve,' the word of God, makes the conscience smart under its application; for it convicts of sin. But the smarting is necessary that the healing may follow, and the eye be single to the glory of God. The sinner, beholding himself in

God's great moral looking-glass, sees himself as God views him, and exercises repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." *Ibid.*, November 23, 1897.

"... the oil for anointing is the oil of His grace, which will give spiritual eyesight to the soul in blindness and darkness, that he may distinguish between the workings of the Spirit of God and the spirit of the enemy. Open your doors, says the great Merchantman, the possessor of spiritual riches, and transact your business with Me. It is I, your Redeemer, who counsels you to buy of Me." *Ibid.*, August 7, 1894.

"God requires that the church arouse from her lethargy and see what is the manner of service demanded of her at this time of peril. The lambs of the flock must be fed. The Lord of heaven is looking on to see who is doing the work He would have done for the children

and youth. The eyes of our brethren and sisters should be anointed with heavenly eye salve, that they may discern the necessities of the time. We must be aroused to see what needs to be done in Christ's spiritual vineyard, and go to work." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, 42.

"The word of God is to be our spiritual food. 'I am that bread of life' (John 6:48), Christ said. ... The world is perishing for want of pure, unadulterated truth. Christ is the truth. His words are truth, and they have a deeper significance than appears on the surface, and a value beyond their unpretending appearance. Minds that are quickened by the Holy Spirit will discern the value of these words. When our eyes are anointed with the holy eye salve, we shall be able to detect the precious gems of truth, even though they may be buried beneath the surface." *Reflecting Christ*, III. [LM](#)

CONFIDENTIAL

CONSENT STATEMENT

Regraded *Unclassified*
authority of *US Dept of HHS*
by *Dr. M. P. ...* on *Oct 31 1955*

A program of investigation, sponsored by the United States Army, aimed toward determining the amount of a disease agent necessary to produce illness in man, has been explained to me. I understand that the only way in which this essential information can be obtained is by the exposure of volunteers to known amounts of the agent. I understand that such volunteers may become ill and that the program is not without hazard.

I further understand that the agent to be studied is *Coxiella burnetii*, which is the cause of Q fever. I understand that the organism(s) causing the disease will be suspended in air, and that by breathing this air I will expose myself to infection with this disease agent. I understand that within three (3) to twenty-one (21) days after the exposure I may become ill and that the expected symptoms are fever, headache, and generalized aching. I understand that the course of the disease may be from one (1) to three (3) weeks. I understand the decision as to appropriate treatment will be made by the attending physicians. I understand that such treatment, if employed, may have to be given in two (2) or more phases.

I further understand that I will be restricted to a single area for the period of this study, probably four (4) to six (6) weeks. I understand that various diagnostic procedures will be required.

There has been no exercise of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other ulterior forms of constraint or coercion in order to obtain this consent from me.

Of my own free will, and after consideration for a period of more than four (4) weeks, I affix my signature hereto, indicating my willingness, as a soldier, to serve voluntarily as a subject for these studies, with the understanding that I will not be required to participate in studies which, in themselves, are contrary to my religious beliefs.

Signature *[Signature]*

WITNESS: _____

ASN *[Signature]*

Date JUN 29 1955

CONFIDENTIAL

Operation Whitecoat volunteers signed this consent before tests performed on them.

Operation Whitecoat

We impatiently watch as scientists race to find vaccines for new viruses endangering our lives today. Our world is not in this situation for the first time. Most people today are unaware that lots of the antibiotics and vaccines that we use today required a great sacrifice of young Seventh-day Adventists. Many effective medical drugs bear a significant Adventist footprint. But first, a little history.

In 1945, the U.S. Army and the Soviet Red Army raced to reach Germany. In addition to the goal of liberating Europe from Nazi occupation, there was one more goal: find and capture German scientists who were the world's best at the time. Many of these scientists worked for the Nazi war machine, designing rockets and biological weapons. Many of them later stood trial for their war crimes. But the United States intervened in their favor in Operation Paperclip and whisked over 1,500 German scientists to the United States. Many of them found new high-ranking positions, eventually employed at NASA or in the U.S. biological weapon research where they could continue their research with no questions asked about their past.

One of those German scientists consulted by U.S. chemical warfare experts was Kurt Blome who tested chemicals on human prisoners in Nazi concentration camps. He was tried for his war crimes at the Nuremberg tribunal, but the United States intervened and acquitted him of his crimes in exchange for contributions to U.S. scientific research.

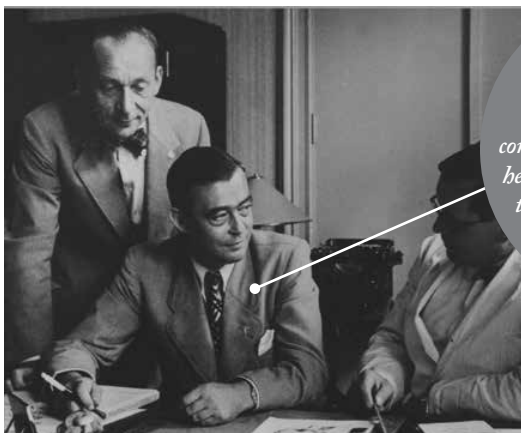
At the time, world leaders didn't envision lasting peace. Many countries advanced significantly in the development of biological weapons and the United States couldn't stay behind. The cold war was starting, and an armed conflict seemed often imminent.

The United States set up a biological warfare research facility in Fort Detrick, Maryland, in 1943. Aforementioned German scientist Kurt Blome was consulted for this camp research after the war. This facility's mission was top secret and no one in the military really knew what went on behind its walls. Officially, it was used by weapons storage.

Many ex-Nazi German researchers claimed that testing biological agents on animals wasn't adequate. No animal can substitute for testing on humans. Here the Seventh-day Adventist Church comes into place. Many young Adventists were conscientious objectors and



Kurt Blome was responsible for all Nazi biological warfare since 1943. He was tried at the Norimberg tribunal for his war crimes.



Although Bloome was proven guilty of chemical tests on concentration camp prisoners, he was acquitted and hired by the US Army, later aiding in the Operation Whitecoat.



Kurt Debus was another Nazi scientist who eventually became one of the top NASA officials.



*Operation
Whitecoat
volunteers at
SDA Church in
1956.*

were refusing to bear arms in the U.S. armed forces. So the U.S. military made an offer to the Seventh-day Adventist Church: Your young men can serve their country without bearing arms. They can help in biodefense of the United States. The Seventh-day Adventist Church accepted and signed an agreement.

Thousands of young Adventists started to enlist with the blessing of their church. Many of them ended up at Fort Detrick, Maryland, participating in the top-secret Operation Whitecoat, which ran from 1954 to 1973.

These Adventist young men were patriots. They were not indifferent to the accusations of being cowards, while their non-Adventist compatriots were sacrificing their lives in the U.S. military. These men were also the perfect bioresearch subjects. They were young, often vegetarian, in perfect health, their bodies unharmed by drinking or smoking. They were exactly what the U.S. military wanted.

These young men signed an agreement informing them that they would be exposed to harmful pathogens and chemicals. What will happen to them exactly? Will their health or life be endangered? No one had answers to these questions. While the research subjects were classified as “volunteers,” any kind of volunteerism is in doubt if the choices are violating one’s conscience or benefiting humanity as a human guinea pig.

Get dangerously sick or get drafted to war? Many took the first option.

What happened at this secret facility? The campus had a metal sphere with windows that were airtight. It was called the Eight Ball. The army volunteers were locked into this ball and aerosolized bio-agents were released into it. Researchers then monitored the subjects’ reactions. All subjects eagerly cooperated, which was a new experience for the German research team members. Afterward, these Adventist volunteers were quarantined and treated for any symptoms.

What were the experiments? The subjects were infected with Q-fever. The military was concerned that the disease, if weaponized, could incapacitate thousands of soldiers. The antidote tried was the antibiotic tetracycline. Another trial was yellow fever, which is a severe viral disease that kills the inhabitants of tropical areas. A vaccine was discovered at Fort Detrick for this infection. The portfolio of infections also included Rift Valley Fever (RVF) which is zoonotic, i.e., transferred from animals. We still have no cure, but an effective vaccine was discovered at Fort Detrick. Other examples are tularemia, Venezuelan equine encephalitis, sand-fly fever – all in the name of protecting the United States from the growing Soviet arsenal of biological weapons.

At other times the volunteers were accompanied by guinea pigs and macaques

in their tents, waiting until a virus jumped from the animals to the young men. “Then came fevers, convulsions, chills, absolute numbness alternating with the feeling that the skeleton jumps out of my body. Two or three days were really hard for me. I really have never been any sicker than that,” recalls Merlin Neff, who was 23 at the time.

There were reportedly hundreds of substances and drugs tested. Sometimes the subjects had to be bitten by mosquitoes. Other times, they were locked in a shipping container, bus, or wagon. Then it was monitored how many of them would passively become infected. With what? They usually didn’t know.*

Many of the participants became violently ill. How did these young men feel about these experiments? “Some of the guys said that first they were afraid to die, and then some of them were afraid they wouldn’t die,” said Richard O. Stenbakken, director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries.*

President Richard Nixon finally ended these experiments in 1973. And what happened to the Eight Ball? It still sits largely forgotten on the Fort Detrick campus, today owned by the National Cancer Institute. It has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1977.

Whitecoat volunteers made up one of the largest human testing programs in the nation’s history. Many of these volunteers’ health was severely impacted for the rest of their lives. Yet, they were bound by military oath to remain silent until 1994 when this program was declassified. Sadly, these Adventist military members were unsuccessful in their petition for veteran benefits.

Every year, there are fewer and fewer of these volunteers alive.

* www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/Bioter/frontlines-biowarfare.html LM

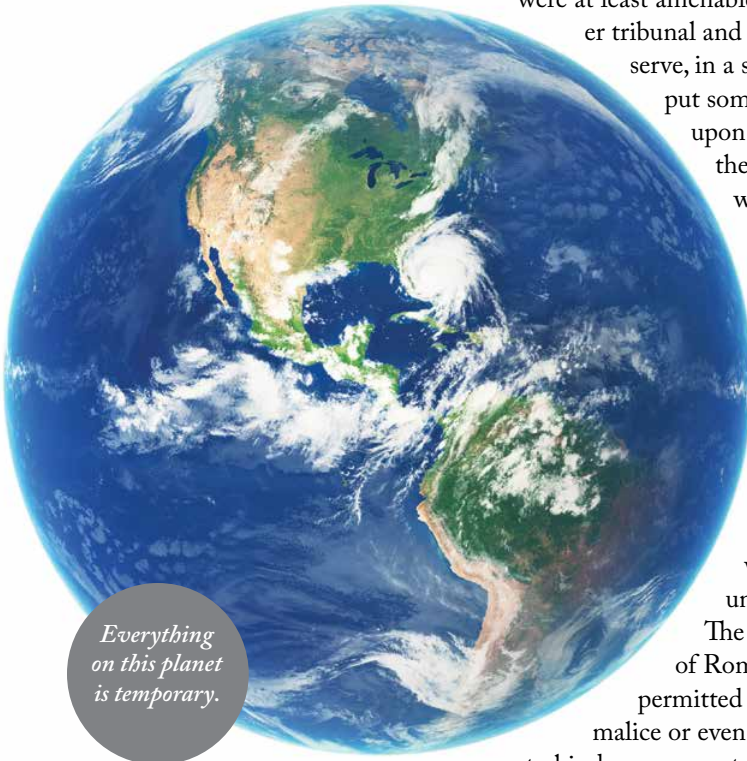
Martin Bernar is a graphic designer and writes from Dallas, Texas.

Brothers in Christ

By John J. Grosboll

According to Roman law, the trial of the apostle Paul could not take place until his accusers were able to present in person their charges against him. Because his accusers were in Jerusalem they were allowed time to make the journey to the city of Rome. In those days, little regard was shown for the rights of prisoners. An accused person could be kept in prison for a prolonged time due to the delay of the prosecutors to proffer their charges, or the trial could be deferred by the caprice of those in power.





*Everything
on this planet
is temporary.*

A corrupt judge could hold a prisoner in custody for years without a trial as Felix did in the case of Paul. These judges, however, were at least amenable to a higher tribunal and that would serve, in a sense, to put some restraint upon them. But the emperor was not subject to any such restraint. His authority was, from a worldly point of view, virtually unlimited. The emperor of Rome often permitted caprice or malice or even indolence to hinder or prevent the administration of justice. The Jews in Jerusalem were not in any hurry to come to the city of Rome. They knew the odds against them for Lysias, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, had all pronounced their accused innocent.

Paul's enemies could hope for success only in seeking by intrigue to influence the emperor in their favor. Delay would actually further their objective and would afford them time to perfect and execute their plans. This would seem to be a terrible setback to the apostle who had been in Rome for about two years before his trial. Acts chapter 28, verses 30, 31 say, "Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him."

Paul did not live a life of inactivity even though he was under what we would call house arrest. In the providence of God, this very delay resulted in the furtherance of the gospel in Rome and from there to all parts of

the world. He was allowed to freely receive friends and guests. He was daily presenting the truth to those who flocked to hear his words. In addition to this, he still had the care of the churches resting upon him. He supplied by written communications his personal instruction which they had formerly received. And so, from Rome, Paul sent out authorized delegates to labor among the churches that he had raised up.

These messengers rendered to him faithful service, and being in communication with them, he was informed about the condition and the dangers of the churches and was enabled to exercise a constant supervision over them. So, while he was apparently cut off from labor, he actually had a more powerful and more extensive influence during this period than any previous time of his life. He had a firmer hold upon the affections of his brethren in the faith. His words commanded even more interest, attention, and respect than when he was free and had been traveling among them.

When the Christians first learned that their beloved teacher had been made a prisoner, they mourned, they were despondent and would not be comforted, and they realized how heavy were the burdens that he had borne on their behalf. But now, they prized his counsel, his warnings and his instructions more than ever before. As they learned that their teacher still had courage, faith meekness, and gentleness in his long imprisonment, they also were stimulated to greater fidelity and zeal in the cause of Christ.

Among the assistance Paul had during this period of time was his fellow companion, Luke, the beloved physician, who had attended him on his journey from Jerusalem. Luke had been with him in Jerusalem. He had been with him on the ship when they had been shipwrecked. He had also been with him in Caesarea and remained a loyal companion and friend while in Rome. Timothy, one of his associate ministers that he himself had trained, also ministered to his comfort, and then there was Tychicus, his mail bearer who sent his messages to all the different churches that they had visited on their journey.



*Many
in their pride
and ignorance forget
that even if you gain the
whole world, if you lose
your own soul, you have
not really gained
anything.*

At the first, Demas and Mark were with him. Mark had once been refused by Paul as an unworthy Christian missionary, but since that time, Mark had reevaluated his position. He had come to see that the claims of God are above every other and that there is no release from the Christian warfare. Mark had obtained a more accurate and closer view of Paul's Pattern, the man Jesus Christ.

Mark had seen in his mind's eye the hands that were scarred from the conflict to save the lost and perishing and decided that he was going to follow his Master in a life of self-sacrifice and service. He understood, better than ever before, that it is infinite gain to win Christ at whatever cost. It is infinite loss to win the whole world and lose your soul for whose redemption Christ has paid the purchase price on the cross of Calvary. Through Mark's experience he had become a faithful helper of the apostle.

In 2 Timothy chapter 4, Paul said, "Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry" (verse 11). There was another person that did not remain faithful. His name was Demas. Paul said, "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica" (verse 10). Demas had been a faithful helper of the apostle, but for worldly gain he bartered away every high and noble consideration. Millions of people are making this same short-sighted exchange today. If you possess only worldly wealth or honor,

you are poor indeed, however much you may proudly call your own, while those who choose to suffer for Christ's sake will have eternal riches. They will be heirs of God, joint heirs with His Son. Like their loving Saviour, they may not have on this earth even a place to lay their head, but in heaven, He is preparing for them mansions.

Many in their pride and ignorance forget that even if you gain the whole world, if you lose your own soul, you have not really gained anything, because what you have gained you will soon have to give up. Everything on this planet is temporary. In order to be happy, we all must learn the lesson of self-denial at the foot of the cross. We don't want to have anything in this earth that is so firmly rooted to us that we cannot transplant it to paradise.

Paul's experience during this time has been shared ever since by others who are faithful in God's service. There are people who see that if you follow Christ all the way, there are going to be some trials to meet in this world. They seek to find for themselves some easier path where there are fewer risks and fewer dangers to meet by selfishly shunning the responsibilities that somebody needs to bear and thus increasing the burdens for the faithful Christian workers. At the same time they separate themselves from God and forfeit the reward that they might have won.

We need to always remember that Christ has hired us by the price of His

own blood and of every one of His followers He requires effort that shall in some degree correspond with the price that has been paid and the infinite reward offered. It was during this period of time of his confinement that Paul wrote some of his most powerful epistles in the New Testament such as Philippians and Colossians.

It was also during this time that we get an inside view about how the apostle Paul dealt with the subject of slavery. Throughout the Roman Empire less than 50% of the people were free while the majority were slaves. The laws concerning slaves were very rigid and unfortunately for them also unjust and cruel.

During this two year period while the apostle was living in a rented house under house arrest by the Roman government, one of the persons that found the gospel through his teaching and preaching was a fugitive, a man by the name of Onesimus, who had been a slave. His master, Philemon, was a Christian who lived in the city of Colossae. Onesimus had stolen from his master and had fled to the city of Rome where he was a fugitive. While in Rome he heard the gospel. The truths of the gospel had touched his heart and when he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Saviour and was converted to the faith of Christ, he then confessed his sin against his master and gratefully accepted the counsel of the apostle.

There is no such thing as being converted to Christ and choosing to follow Him if we do not repent of and

“

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

2 Corinthians 3:17

confess our past sins. The apostle sought to relieve Onesimus' poverty and the distress of the wretched fugitive and he endeavored to shed the light of truth into his mind. Paul endeared himself to this fugitive by his piety, meekness, and sincerity.

Onesimus was faced with a problem.

He was a slave who had stolen from his master and was now a fugitive. If he should go back, his master could do anything with him that he pleased.

But Paul told Onesimus to go back to his master and that he, Paul, would be responsible for the amount that had been robbed from Philemon. Onesimus did not have

the money to pay for it. So Paul sent Tychicus with letters to various churches in Asia minor, and he sent Onesimus in his company, and under his care.

This was a severe test for this servant to thus deliver himself back to his master that he had wronged. But he had been truly converted and as painful as it was, he did not shrink from doing his duty. He knew that if he was going to be part of the kingdom of Christ, he must make things right.

Paul made Onesimus the bearer of a letter to Philemon, in which the apostle Paul with great delicacy and yet kindness, pleaded the cause of the repentant slave, and intimated his own wishes concerning him. He wrote, "To Philemon our beloved friend and fellow laborer, to the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgement of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

"For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother. Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting, yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you—being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ" (Philemon 1:1–9).

Paul could have commanded this Christian what he should do, but instead he decided to entreat Philemon. He said, "I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me. I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel. But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

"For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever, no longer a slave but more than a slave—as a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord" (verses 10–16).

Paul requests Philemon to receive this repentant slave as his own child, and then he says, in verses 17 and 18, "If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me. But if he has wronged you or owes you anything, put that on my account."

This, by the way, is a wonderful illustration of the love of Christ toward a repenting sinner. As the servant who had defrauded his master, and had nothing with which to make restitution, so the sinner who has robbed God of years of service, has no means of cancelling the debt. But Jesus interposes, and appoints His mercy to the sinner's account, and says, "I will pay the debt. Let the sinner be spared the punishment of his guilt. I will suffer in his stead."

After assuming the debt of Onesimus, Paul gently reminded Philemon how greatly he himself was indebted to the apostle. He owed to him his own self in a special sense since God had made Paul the instrument of his conversion. So then in a most tender appeal, he says, "I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides. Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord: refresh my heart in the Lord.

"Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted [or released]

to you” (verses 19–22). This epistle of Philemon has great value as a practical illustration of the influence of the gospel in the relation between a master and a servant. Slave-holding was an established institution throughout the Roman empire. And there were both masters and slaves found in most of the Christian churches for whom Paul labored. In the cities, the slaves often outnumbered the free population and laws of the most terrible severity were considered necessary to keep them in subjection. A wealthy Roman often owned hundreds of slaves of every rank, of every nation, and of every accomplishment. The master had full control upon the souls and bodies of these helpless beings. He could inflict upon them any suffering he chose, but if one of them in retaliation or self-defense ventured to raise a hand against his owner the slave’s whole family could be inhumanly sacrificed as a result, even if they were totally innocent.

Even the slightest mistake, accident, or carelessness could be punished without mercy. There were some masters who were more humane than others. They were more indulgent to their servants, but the vast majority of slave-owners in the Roman empire, the wealthy and the noble, gave themselves up without restraint to the indulgence of lust, passion, and appetite, and they made their slaves the wretched victims of caprice and tyranny.

The tendency of the whole system was hopelessly degrading. It was not the apostle Paul’s work to violently overturn at that time the established order of society. If he had attempted that, he would have prevented the success of the gospel. But he taught principles that struck at the very foundation of slavery, and that if carried into effect, would undermine the whole system. For example, Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Corinthians 3:17). The religion of Christ has a transforming power upon the receiver. And the converted slave be-



*If
you possess
only worldly wealth
or honor, you are poor
indeed, however much
you may proudly call
your own.*

comes a member of the body of Christ and as such is to be loved and treated as a brother, a fellow heir with his Master, of the blessings of God and the privileges of the gospel.

At the same time, the converted slave was to perform his duties with fidelity, doing the will of God from the heart. Paul says in Ephesians 6, “Bondservants, be obedient [subject] to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him” (verses 5–9).

And then to the church at Colossae, the very same area where Philemon lived, Paul said, “Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.

And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven” (Colossians 3:22–25; 4:1).

You see, Christianity makes a strong bond of union between master and slave, king and subject. The gospel minister and the most degraded sinner, who has found Christ, is relieved of the burden of crime. They have been washed, all in the same blood. They are quickened by the same Spirit and they are made one in Christ Jesus. Remember what Paul said, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

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

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August 30 – September 5, 2020

The Work of the Missionary School

Key Text

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go” (Psalm 32:8).

Study Help: *Messages to Young People*, 176–180; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 592–602.

Introduction

“With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!” *Education*, 271.

Sunday

THE GREAT NEED

- a. What is the divinely appointed method of winning mankind to return to loyalty to God’s government? John 12:32.

Note: “While self is kept out of sight Jesus Christ must be ever lifted up and exalted.” *The Voice in Speech and Song*, 322.

“Lift Him up, the Christ of Calvary; lift Him up, that the world may behold Him. Talk of His goodness, sing of His love, and give Him the grateful thanks of your hearts.” *The Upward Look*, 37.

- b. How is this work to be accomplished? Proverbs 23:12; Matthew 28:19.

Note: “We must educate, educate, to prepare a people who will understand the message, and then give the message to the world.” *The Review and Herald*, February 6, 1908.

“Now, as never before, we need to understand the true science of education. If we fail to understand this, we shall never have a place in the kingdom of God.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 53.

“As long as time shall last, we shall have need of schools.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 417.

Monday

PHYSICAL TRAINING

- a. How does the call of Elisha highlight physical training as a preparation for spiritual work? 1 Kings 19:19.

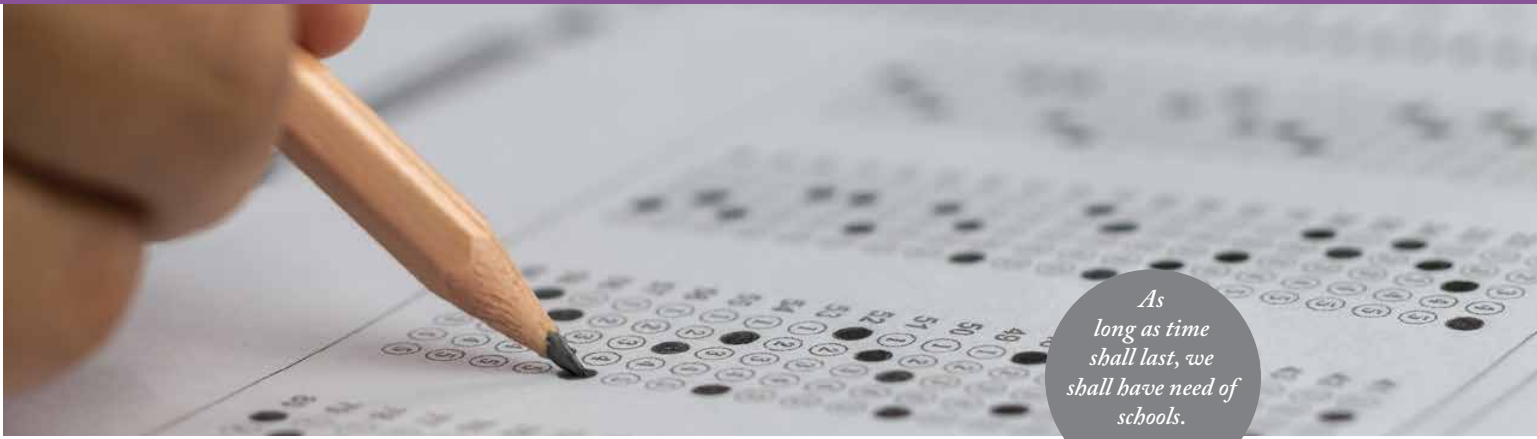
Note: “Practical work encourages close observation and independent thought. Rightly performed, it tends to develop that practical wisdom which we call common sense. It develops ability to plan and execute, strengthens courage and perseverance, and calls for the exercise of tact and skill.” *Education*, 220.

“In God’s plan for Israel every family had a home on the land with sufficient ground for tilling. Thus were provided both the means and the incentive for a useful, industrious, and self-supporting life. And no devising of men has ever improved upon that plan.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 275.

“Provision should have been made in past generations for education upon a larger scale. In connection with the schools should have been agricultural and manufacturing establishments. There should also have been teachers of household labor. And a portion of the time each day should have been devoted to labor, that the physical and mental powers might be equally exercised. If schools had been established upon the plan we have mentioned, there would not now be so many unbalanced minds.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 153.

“Working the soil is one of the best kinds of employment, calling the muscles into action and resting the mind. Study in agricultural lines should be the A, B, and C of the education given in our schools. This is the very first work that should be entered upon. Our schools should not depend upon imported produce, for grain and vegetables, and the fruits so essential to health. Our youth need an education in felling trees and tilling the soil as well as in literary lines. Different teachers should be appointed to oversee a number of students in their work and should work with them. ...

“Daily, systematic labor should constitute a part of the education of youth even at this late period. Much can now be



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schools.*

gained in this way. In following this plan the students will realize elasticity of spirit and vigor of thought, and in a given time can accomplish more mental labor than they could by study alone." Ibid., vol. 6, 179, 180.

"Some do not appreciate the value of agricultural work. These should not plan for our schools, for they will hold everything from advancing in right lines." Ibid., 178.

Tuesday

MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

- a. How does the study of the Bible affect a person's mind? Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23.

Note: "The mind will enlarge, if it is employed in tracing out the relation of the subjects of the Bible, comparing scripture with scripture, and spiritual things with spiritual. Go below the surface; the richest treasures of thought are waiting for the skillful and diligent student." *Messages to Young People*, 262.

"A familiar acquaintance with the Scriptures sharpens the discerning powers, and fortifies the soul against the attacks of Satan." Ibid., 397.

"Let the mind grasp the stupendous truths of revelation, and it will never be content to employ its powers upon frivolous themes; it will turn with disgust from the trashy literature and idle amusements that are demoralizing the youth of today. Those who have communed with the poets and sages of the Bible, and whose souls have been stirred by the glorious deeds of the heroes of faith, will come from the rich fields of thought far more pure in heart and elevated in mind than if they had been occupied in studying the most celebrated secular authors, or in contemplating and glorifying the exploits of the Pharaohs and Herods and Caesars of the world." Ibid., 255, 256.

- b. Through the influence of the Word, what is the New Covenant experience? Hebrews 8:10; Psalm 37:30, 31.

Note: "In the reverent contemplation of the truths presented in His word the mind of the student is brought into communion with the infinite mind. Such a study will not only refine and ennoble the character, but it cannot fail to expand and invigorate the mental powers." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 596–599.

"The precious faith inspired of God imparts strength and nobility of character. As His goodness, His mercy, and His love are dwelt upon, clearer and still clearer will be the perception of truth; higher, holier, the desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by intercourse with God through the study of His word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softened and subdued into humility, kindness, and love." *The Ministry of Healing*, 465, 466.

Wednesday

SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

- a. How will Bible study and instruction lead to a deeper spiritual experience in our missionary students? 1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 5:26.

Note: “In giving us the privilege of studying His word, the Lord has set before us a rich banquet. Many are the benefits derived from feasting on His word, which is represented by Him as His flesh and blood, His spirit and life. By partaking of this word our spiritual strength is increased; we grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth. Habits of self-control are formed and strengthened. The infirmities of childhood—fretfulness, willfulness, selfishness, hasty words, passionate acts—disappear, and in their place are developed the graces of Christian manhood and womanhood.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 207.

“As man uses his talents, however small, with faithfulness, the Holy Spirit takes the things of God, and presents them anew to the mind. Through His Spirit God makes His word a vivifying power. It is quick and powerful, exerting a strong influence upon minds, not because of the learning or intelligence of the human agent, but because divine power is working with the human power. And it is to the divine power that all praise is to be given.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 55.

- b. What is the goal of true missionary education?**
2 Peter 3:18.

Note: “The highest class of education is that which will give such knowledge and discipline as will lead to the best development of character, and will fit the soul for that life which measures with the life of God. Eternity is not to be lost out of our reckoning. The highest education is that which will teach our children and youth the science of Christianity, which will give them an experimental knowledge of God’s ways, and will impart to them the lessons that Christ gave to His disciples, of the paternal character of God.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 45, 46.

“The education and training of the youth is an important and solemn work. The great object to be secured should be the proper development of character, that the individual may be fitted rightly to discharge the duties of the present life and to enter at last upon the future, immortal life. Eternity will reveal the manner in which the work has been performed.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 418.

Thursday

THE ALL-ROUND MISSIONARY

- a. What did Christ’s work on earth involve? Matthew 4:23. How should we train our missionaries today to do a similar work? Why?

Note: “Let us remember that one most important agency is our medical missionary work. Never are we to lose sight of the great object for which our sanitariums are established—the advancement of God’s closing work in the earth.

“Loma Linda is to be not only a sanitarium, but an educational center. With the possession of this place comes the weighty responsibility of making the work of the institution educational in character. A school is to be established here for the training of gospel medical missionary evangelists.” *Counsels on Health*, 233.

“The school at Madison not only educates in a knowledge of the Scriptures, but it gives a practical training that fits the student to go forth as a self-supporting missionary to the field to which he is called. In his student days he is taught how to build, simply and substantially, how to cultivate the land and care for the injured. This training for medical-missionary work is one of the grandest objects for which any school can be established. ...

“The time is soon coming when God’s people, because of persecution, will be scattered in many countries. Those who have received an all-round education will have the advantage where they are. The Lord reveals divine wisdom in thus leading His people to the training of all their faculties and capabilities for the work of disseminating truth.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, 280.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is the special work of preparing missionaries more important now than ever before?
- 2 Explain the role of manual labor in education.
- 3 Why does the study of the Bible afford the best mental development?
- 4 What will be the result when students feast on the Word of God on a regular basis?
- 5 What skills help to make a well-rounded missionary?

September 6 – 12, 2020

Reaching the World

Key Text

“And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

Study Help: *Evangelism*, 15–18.

Introduction

“Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the unwearied servant of man’s necessity. ... It was His mission to bring to men complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 17.

Sunday

YOUR MISSION

- a. What was Christ’s mission while on earth? John 18:37. What did He focus on in order to fulfil His mission? Hebrews 12:2.

Note: “Ever before Him He saw the result of His mission.” *The Desire of Ages*, 410.

“He saw in all, souls whom it was His mission to save.” *Gospel Workers*, 117.

“In all things He brought His wishes into strict abeyance to His mission. He glorified His life by making everything in it subordinate to the will of His Father.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 19.

- b. What is to be our mission in life? John 15:12.

Note: “When we love the world as He [Jesus] has loved it, then for us His mission is accomplished. We are fitted for heaven; for we have heaven in our hearts.” *The Desire of Ages*, 641.

“The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 551.

Monday

A PLACE FOR ALL

- a. What is significant about a lighted city on a dark night? Matthew 5:14.

Note: “In the night of spiritual darkness God’s glory is to shine forth through His church in lifting up the bowed down and comforting those that mourn.

“All around us are heard the wails of a world’s sorrow. On every hand are the needy and distressed. It is ours to aid in relieving and softening life’s hardships and misery.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 417.

- b. What are we all called to be? Isaiah 43:10. Upon whom, then, does the responsibility of preaching the gospel fall?

Note: “Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary.” *The Desire of Ages*, 195.

“It is the privilege of every soul to be a living channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. ... All heaven is waiting for channels through which can be poured the holy oil to be a joy and blessing to human hearts.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 419.

- c. What responsibility is given to each lay member? Mark 13:34.

Note: “The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.” *Gospel Workers*, 352.

“Where there is an opening to obtain a livelihood, let families that are well grounded in the truth enter, one or two families in a place, to work as missionaries. ... They can distribute our publications, hold meetings in their homes, become acquainted with their neighbors, and invite them to come to these meetings.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 245.

“Let church-members awake. Let them take hold and help to stay up the hands of the ministers and the workers, pushing forward the interests of the cause. ... If a man exercises faith, and walks humbly with his God, he ... can fill his appointed place.” *The Review and Herald*, July 9, 1895.

Tuesday

A LIVING CHURCH

- a. What was Jesus’ parting instruction? Mark 16:15.

Note: “God calls for Christian families to go into the dark places of the earth and work wisely and perseveringly for those who are enshrouded in spiritual gloom. To answer this call requires self-sacrifice. While many are waiting to have every obstacle removed, souls are dying, without hope and without God. For the sake of worldly advantage, for the sake of acquiring scientific knowledge, men are willing to venture into pestilential regions and to endure hardship and privation. Where are those who are willing to do as much for the sake of telling others of the Saviour?” *Prophets and Kings*, 172, 173.

- b. What is God calling us to do right now? Why? Romans 13:11, 12.

Note: “A working church is a growing church. The members find a stimulus and a tonic in helping others.” *Gospel Workers*, 198.

“The only way to grow in grace is to be disinterestedly doing the very work which Christ has enjoined upon us—to engage, to the extent of our ability, in helping and blessing those who need the help we can give them. Strength comes by exercise; activity is the very condition of life.” *Steps to Christ*, 80.

- c. How may we hasten the second coming of Christ? Matthew 24:14.

Note: “It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 69.

“When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, III.

Wednesday

HOW JESUS WORKED

- a. What methods did Jesus use in His work for others? Matthew 9:35, 36.

Note: “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’” *The Ministry of Healing*, 143.

“He sought them in the public streets, in private houses, on the boats, in the synagogue, by the shores of the lake, and at the marriage feast. He met them at their daily vocations, and manifested an interest in their secular affairs. He carried His instruction into the household, bringing families in their own homes under the influence of His divine presence. His strong personal sympathy helped to win hearts.” *The Desire of Ages*, 151.

“Let the world see that we are not selfishly absorbed in our own interests, but that we desire others to share our blessings and privileges. Let them see that our religion does not make us unsympathetic or exacting. Let all who profess to have found Christ, minister as He did for the benefit of men.” *Ibid.*, 152.

- b. Who sought a private interview with Jesus? John 3:2. How does this visit illustrate a large part of Jesus' ministry?
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Note: "We are not to wait for souls to come to us; we must seek them out where they are. When the word has been preached in the pulpit, the work has but just begun. There are multitudes who will never be reached by the gospel unless it is carried to them." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 229.

"To a great degree this must be accomplished by personal labor. This was Christ's method. His work was largely made up of personal interviews. He had a faithful regard for the one-soul audience. Through that one soul the message was often extended to thousands." *Ibid*.

"He passed by no human being as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul. ... He sought to inspire with hope the roughest and most unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them manifest as the children of God." *The Ministry of Healing*, 25, 26.

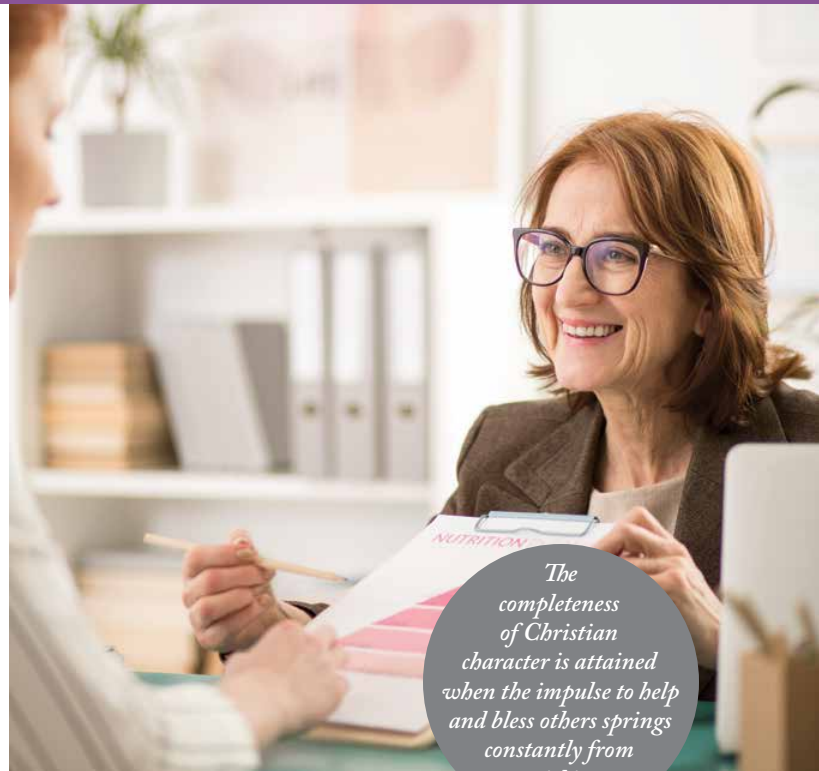
Thursday

SHINE

- a. What does Jesus direct us to do? Matthew 5:16.
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Note: "Christ does not bid His followers strive to shine. He says, *Let your light shine*. If you have received the grace of God, the light is in you. Remove the obstructions, and the Lord's glory will be revealed. The light will shine forth to penetrate and dispel the darkness. You cannot help shining within the range of your influence." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 420. [Emphasis in original.]

"Heavenly intelligences are waiting to co-operate with human instrumentalities, that they may reveal to the world what human beings may become and what, through their influence, they may accomplish for the saving of souls that are ready to perish. He who is truly converted will be so filled with the love of God that he will long to impart to others the joy that he himself possesses." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 30.



"There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God." *The Ministry of Healing*, 159.

- b. What impact is the church to have upon the world? Acts 17:6.
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Note: "When those who profess to serve God follow Christ's example, practicing the principles of the law in their daily life; when every act bears witness that they love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves, then will the church have power to move the world." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 340.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What can we learn from Jesus' mission as related to our own?
- 2 What personal mission has God given me?
- 3 How can a church remain a living church?
- 4 What was Jesus' method of reaching people?
- 5 How does a follower of Jesus shine their light?

September 13 – 19, 2020

Building for Eternity

Key Text

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

Study Help: *Education*, 301–309.

Introduction

“He who co-operates with the divine purpose in imparting to the youth a knowledge of God, and molding the character into harmony with His, does a high and noble work. As he awakens a desire to reach God’s ideal, he presents an education that is as high as heaven and as broad as the universe; an education that cannot be completed in this life, but that will be continued in the life to come; an education that secures to the successful student his passport from the preparatory school of earth to the higher grade, the school above.” *Education*, 19.

Sunday

A HIGHER PURPOSE

- a. What do we have to look forward to in eternity?
1 Corinthians 2:9; Isaiah 64:4.

Note: “God’s ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect’ (Matthew 5:48). This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan.” *The Desire of Ages*, 311.

“The education begun here will not be completed in this life; it will be going forward throughout eternity, ever progressing, never completed. Day by day the wonderful works of God, the evidences of His miraculous power in creating and sustaining the universe, will open before the mind in new beauty. In the light that shines from the throne, mysteries will disappear, and the soul will be filled with astonishment at the simplicity of the things that were never before comprehended.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 328.

Monday

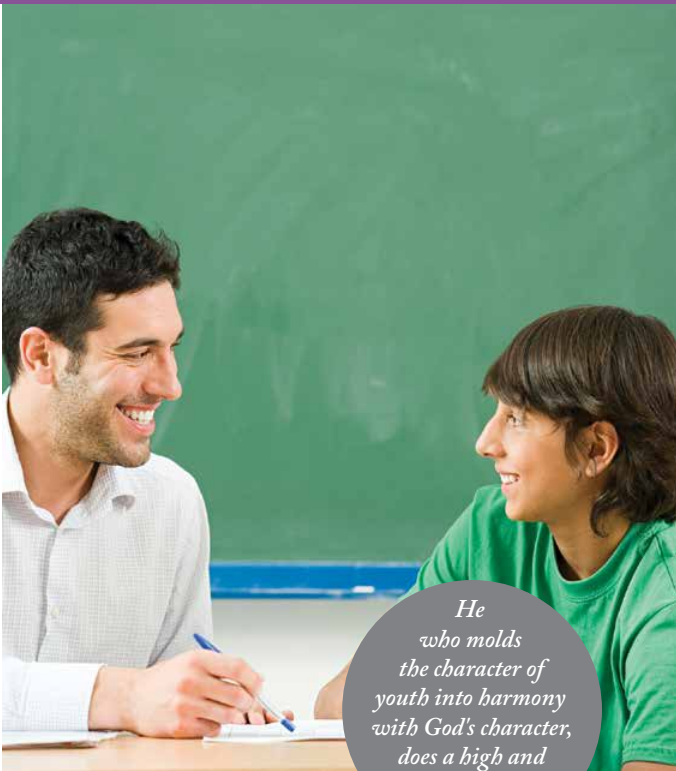
BUILDING IN YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE

- a. What often accompanies us in our Christian life, and what should our attitude be as a result? Why? 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

Note: “God’s children are always being tested in the furnace of affliction. If they endure the first trial, it is not necessary for them to pass through a similar ordeal the second time; but if they fail, the trial is brought to them again and again, each time being still more trying and severe. Thus opportunity after opportunity is placed before them of gaining the victory and proving themselves true to God. But if they continue to manifest rebellion, God is compelled at last to remove His Spirit and light from them.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1146.

- b. What is tested by the fire of trial? 1 Corinthians 3:9, 10, 12.

Note: “It makes every difference what material is used in the character building. The long-expected day of God will soon test every man’s work. ‘The fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is’ (1 Corinthians 3:13). As fire reveals the difference between gold, silver, and precious stones, and wood, hay, and stubble, so the day of judgment will test characters, showing the difference between characters formed after Christ’s likeness and characters formed after the likeness of the selfish heart. All selfishness, all false religion, will then appear as it is. The worthless material will be consumed; but the gold of true, simple, humble faith will never lose its value. It can never be consumed; for it is imperishable. One hour of transgression will be seen to be a great loss, while the fear of the Lord will be seen to be the beginning of wisdom. The pleasure of self-indulgence will perish as stubble, while the gold of steadfast principle, maintained at any cost, will endure forever.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1087, 1088.



He
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“This character building is a most important work. It is not a work that ends in this life, but which tells in the future life. What you make of yourself here through the merits and grace of Christ will be retained through eternal ages, and I am most earnest that you should not meet a low standard. ‘Learn of me,’ says the Great Teacher, ‘I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest to your soul’ (Matthew 11:29). The peace that Christ gives will never, never bring sorrow with it.” *This Day With God*, 37.

Tuesday

HOW GOD USES FIRE

- a. What is revealed by the fire? 1 Corinthians 3:13.

Note: “The angels of God are walking up and down the streets of these cities, and marking the deeds of men. They record in the books of God’s remembrance the words of faith, the acts of love, the humility of spirit; and in that day when every man’s work shall be tried of what sort it is, the work of the humble follower of Christ will stand the test, and will receive the commendation of Heaven.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 987.

“Young men and women should regard a good character as a capital of more value than gold or silver or stocks. It will be unaffected by panics and failures, and will bring rich returns when earthly possessions shall be swept away. ... Integrity, firmness, and perseverance are qualities which all should seek earnestly to cultivate; for they clothe the possessor with a power which is irresistible, a power which makes him strong to do good, strong to resist evil, strong to bear adversity.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 656.

- b. How were Lot and Solomon saved “as by fire?” Genesis 19:16, 17; 1 Kings 11:4.

Note: “Lot chose Sodom as a place of residence because he looked more to the temporal advantages he would gain than to the moral influences that would surround himself and his family. What did he gain so far as the things of this world are concerned? His possessions were destroyed, part of his children perished in the destruction of that wicked city, his wife was turned to a pillar of salt by the way, and he himself was saved ‘so as by fire’ (1 Corinthians 3:15). Nor did the evil results of his selfish choice end here; but the moral corruption of the place was so interwoven with the character of his children that they could not distinguish between good and evil, sin and righteousness.” *Messages to Young People*, 419.

“Solomon may have been saved ‘as by fire,’ yet his repentance could not efface those high places, nor demolish those stones, which remained as evidences of his crimes. He dishonored God, choosing rather to be controlled by lust than to be a partaker of the divine nature.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, 1031.

Wednesday

ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES

- a. How does the fire affect our learning and our future? 1 Corinthians 3:14, 15.

Note: “Eternity is before us. All improvements we make here of our mental powers, all the high attainments we make in refining and elevating ourselves by connecting closely with

heaven, will be translated with us, while if we dwarf our capabilities by inaction, if we deteriorate our talents, which are susceptible of the highest cultivation, we cannot in the better world redeem that past neglect of self-culture, that great loss.

“Some may be saved as by fire. Their useless life has brought to them infinite loss. We should make improvement in this life, all that we can by the help and grace of God, knowing we can take these improvements with us into heaven. We will glorify our Father in heaven in proportion as we purify and perfect our characters here.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 21.

“To go forth into the next, the future life, deprived of half the power which might be carried there is a terrible thought. The days of probation lost here in acquiring a fitness for heaven, is a loss which will never be recovered. The capacities of enjoyment will be less in the future life for the misdemeanors and abuse of moral powers in this life. However high we might attain in the future life, we might soar higher and still higher, if we had made the most of our God-given privileges and golden opportunities.” *This Day With God*, 350.

- b. How did Daniel and his companions show the results of building their education on the eternal Rock? Daniel 1:20.

Note: “The youth should be learners for the next world. Perseverance in the acquisition of knowledge, controlled by the fear and love of God, will give them an increased power for good in this life, and those who have made the most of their privileges to reach the highest attainments here, will take these valuable acquisitions with them into the future life. They have sought and obtained that which is imperishable. The capability to appreciate the glories that ‘eye hath not seen, nor ear heard’ (1 Corinthians 2:9), will be proportionate to the attainments reached in the cultivation of the faculties in this life.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 49.

Thursday

REDEEMING THE TIME

- a. How can we make up for lost opportunities? Ephesians 5:16.

Note: “We are admonished to redeem the time. But time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even one moment. The only way in which we can redeem our time is by making the most of that which remains, by being co-workers with God in His great plan of redemption.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 342.

“The greatest possible good we can do to our fellow men is to overcome our own faults and improve our characters, making them as excellent and symmetrical as possible.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 21.

- b. How much time are we given to make the right decision? Hebrews 3:12–15.

Note: “We should watch and work and pray as though this were the last day that would be granted us. How intensely earnest, then, would be our life. How closely would we follow Jesus in all our words and deeds.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 200.

- c. What should our prayer be? Psalm 139:23, 24.

Note: “Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 159.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How does education throughout our lifetime constitute only a beginning?
- 2 What purpose does testing and trial serve in the work of education?
- 3 How do our choices affect our usefulness and even our eternal destiny?
- 4 What does it mean to be saved “as by fire”?
- 5 How can we ensure that we do the best work for eternity?

September 20 – 26, 2020

The Promise of the Spirit

Key Text

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory” (Revelation 18:1).

Study Help: *The Acts of the Apostles*, 47–56.

Introduction

“Learning, talents, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner be won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 328.

Sunday

THE FORMER AND LATTER RAIN

- a. How was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the early church foretold? Luke 24:49; Joel 2:23.

Note: “Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seedtime and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God’s church.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 54.

- b. What prophecy will reach a dual fulfillment in the end of time? What should we be doing in anticipation of this time? Zechariah 10:1.

Note: “The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close.” *The Great Controversy*, 611, 612.

Monday

THE SPIRIT’S WORK OF EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATION

- a. What work does the Holy Spirit perform today? John 16:13.

Note: “The Comforter is called ‘the Spirit of truth’ (John 16:3). His work is to define and maintain the truth. He first dwells in the heart as the Spirit of truth, and thus He becomes the Comforter. There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood. It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the mind. By directing men to false standards, he misshapes the character. Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the heart. Thus He exposes error, and expels it from the soul. It is by the Spirit of truth, working through the word of God, that Christ subdues His chosen people to Himself.” *The Desire of Ages*, 671.

- b. What change does the Spirit make within the believer? 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

Note: “If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 53.

“Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul

winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness. ...

“Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day’s duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be ‘laborers together with God’ (1 Corinthians 3:9)” Ibid., 55, 56.

Tuesday

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT DISPLAYED

- a. What fruit does the Spirit of God produce? Galatians 5:22, 23. How?

Note: “In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.” *The Desire of Ages*, 671.

“What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? ... Every Christian saw in his brother a revelation of divine love and benevolence. One interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up all others. The ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ’s character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 48.

- b. What can God do for those who will fully surrender? Ephesians 5:18, *last part*.

Note: “To Jesus, who emptied Himself for the salvation of lost humanity, the Holy Spirit was given without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart is surrendered for His indwelling. Our Lord Himself has given the command, ‘Be filled with the Spirit’ (Ephesians 5:18), and this command is also a promise of its fulfillment. It was the good pleasure of the Father that in Christ should ‘all the fullness dwell,’ and ‘in Him ye are made full’ (Colossians 1:19, R.V.; 2:10, R.V).” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 21.

Wednesday

BEING READY

- a. What should we do in anticipation of the latter rain? Luke 11:13.

Note: “The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ’s parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 50.

“We need not worry about the latter rain. All we have to do is to keep the vessel clean and right side up and prepared for the reception of the heavenly rain, and keep praying, ‘Let the latter rain come into my vessel.’” *The Upward Look*, 283.

“I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His

sight. ... I saw that none could share the 'refreshing' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord." *Early Writings*, 71.

b. What can we learn from Elijah's prayer for rain?
1 Kings 18:41-44.

Note: "He [Elijah] kept reviewing his life, to see where he had failed to honor God, he confessed his sins, and thus continued to afflict his soul before God, while watching for a token that his prayer was answered. As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything; and when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came." *The Review and Herald*, May 26, 1891.

Thursday

THE CLOSING SCENE

a. What final work of education is still ahead of us?
Habakkuk 2:14.

Note: "As the time comes for it [the third angel's message] to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power—all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these." *The Great Controversy*, 606.



Learning, talents, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched.

"The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side." *Ibid.*, 612.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How will the experiences of the early Christian church (as described in Lesson 1) be of special importance to the final generation?
- 2 Why is reception of the former and latter rain part of the work of true education?
- 3 What fruit is to be developed as the result of the Spirit's work?
- 4 How can I be ready for the latter rain?
- 5 How will the church's work of education on this earth be completed?

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with
John Grosboll

September 11&12, 2020

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(Communion Sabbath afternoon)



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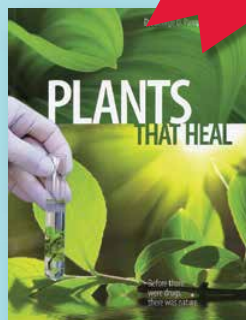
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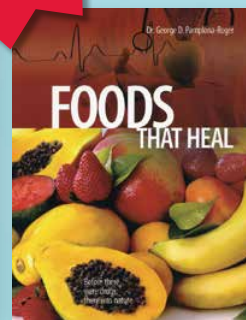


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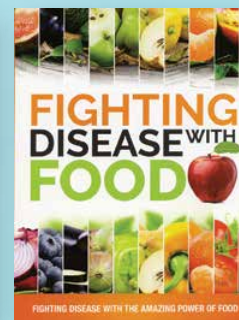


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STRAWBERRY GUAVA SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

1 cup quartered fresh strawberries
 ½ cup chopped guava (seeds removed first)
 ½ cup frozen mango cubes
 ¾ cup unsweetened coconut or other non-dairy milk
 If more sweetening needed, add a little honey or stevia drops to sweeten.

Process

- Prepare your strawberries by removing the stems and cutting into quarters. You should have 1 cup of quartered strawberries.
- Prepare your guava by cutting in half, scooping out the seeds, and roughly chopping. Measure out 1/2 cup chopped fresh guava.
- Blend together all ingredients until smooth.





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