

HISTORIC
LANDMARKS
OF ADVENTISM

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HAPPY NEW YEAR
HAPPY NEW YEAR



From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

Opened the Door

Nobody can be saved unless he has been transformed in character and his sins have been forsaken and forgiven. (Proverbs 28:13; Colossians 1:27). What prevents people from being saved is their love of sin.

“Every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they can find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart’s unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded. Those who will consent to enter into covenant relation with the God of heaven are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature. They are invited by the Saviour, ‘Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me’ (Isaiah 27:5).” *The Desire of Ages*, 258, 259.

So many people want to manage themselves and are not willing to forsake their darling sins and unaware that their lives are actually being controlled by the devil.

“He [Jesus] says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me’ (Revelation 3:20). How willing is Christ to take possession of

the soul temple if we will let Him! He is represented as waiting and knocking at the door of the heart. Then why does He not enter? It is because the love of sin has closed the door of the heart. As soon as we consent to give sin up, to acknowledge our guilt, the barrier is removed between the soul and the Saviour.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 325.

Referring to a wonderful work that could have been done in the vast company gathered in Battle Creek at the General Conference of 1901, Ellen White said: “The work that all heaven was waiting to do as soon as men prepared the way, was not done; for the leaders in the work closed and bolted the door against the Spirit’s entrance. There was a stopping short of entire surrender to God. Hearts that might have been purified from error were strengthened in wrong doing. The doors were barred against the heavenly current that would have swept away all evil. Men left their sins unconfessed. They built themselves up in their wrong doing, and said to the Spirit of God, ‘Go Thy way for this time; when I have a more convenient season, I will call for Thee’ (Acts 24:25, *last part*).” *The Kress Collection*, 95.

Very soon the invitation of mercy will end forever so don’t let this also be your experience. **LM**

HISTORIC

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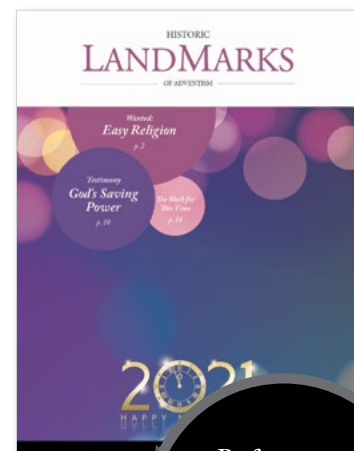
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Wanted: An Easy Religion

By Marshall Grosboll

The Gospel of Jesus has never been popular. The gospels reveal that Jesus “came to His own, and His own did not receive Him” (John 1:11).

Thus Jesus tells us to “enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13, 14).

Although there has always been a mass of professors of religion, there have been but few who have been willing to be truly converted thereby, willing to be broken on the Rock and to crucify self.



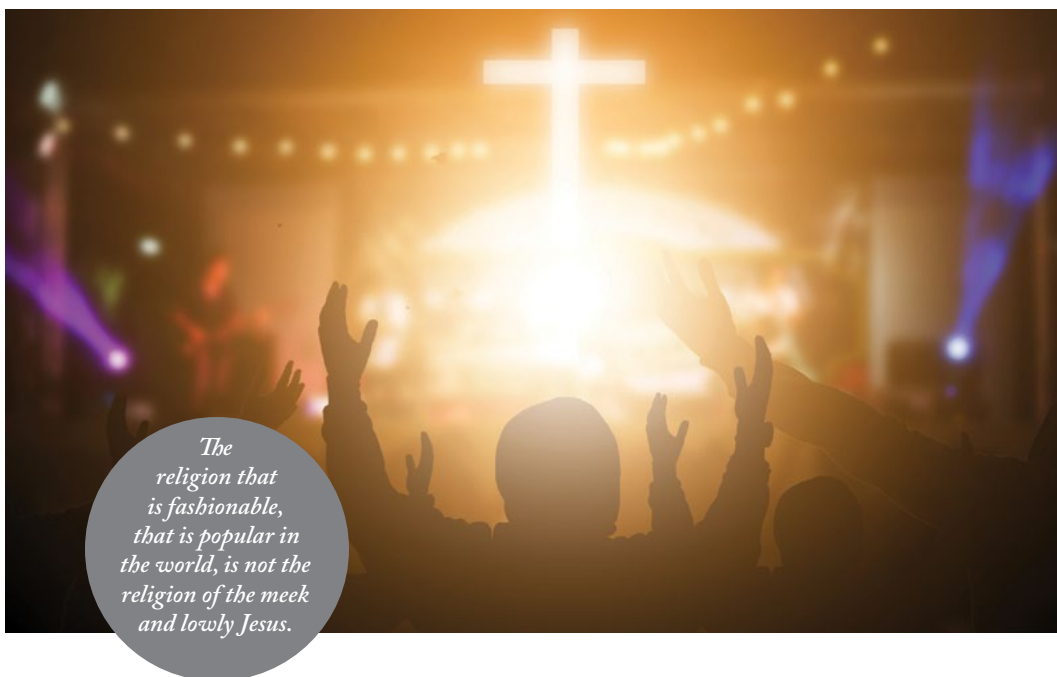
Religion has never lacked popularity. Throughout history, most people had “religion” and have even been proud of it. But “The religion that is fashionable, that is popular in the world, is not the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus.” *The Review and Herald*, June 14, 1892. “The religion of Christ permits no compromise, no yielding to the influences of the world.” Ibid. One of Satan’s goals in our church is to make religion fashionable; to lower the standards of truth so that our church may be filled with those who are professors of religion, but not truly converted.

“It has been the continual endeavor of the enemy to introduce into the church persons who assent to much that is truth, but who are not converted. Professed Christians who are false to their trust are channels through whom Satan works. He can use unconverted church members to advance his own ideas and retard the work of God. Their influence is always on the side of wrong.” *Notebook Leaflets from the Elmhaven Library*, vol. 1, 21.

The book of Revelation reveals that Satan has succeeded in diluting this church with professors of religion who are not converted. In prophecy, this church is pictured: “So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot . . . and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked” (Revelation 3:16, 17). But because of their profession, Laodiceans viewed themselves as being rich and having need of nothing.

No more fearful delusion can take a people captive, and no more accurate description could depict our church today. We are more intent on maintaining a good name than on living a godly life. We want to feel good about ourselves while maintaining our worldly lifestyle.

We want to be popular as are the churches of the world. Typical is our turning to non-Adventist church-growth experts to teach us how we can become popular and grow like the other churches. In the process, the offense of the cross has ceased. No longer is there persecution from without, only that



which comes from within when someone raises his voice calling for reform.

And yet for all the endeavors at popularity, we are not growing, at least not in the Western countries. Why should this be? In all our efforts to learn the secrets of growth employed by the churches from which we as Seventh-day Adventists were called out, is it possible that we have missed something? We have become Laodicean relatively slowly—adopting the ways of the churches which compose mystical Babylon by default rather than by intent.

As Elijah said, “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him” (1 Kings 18:21, KJV). Let us therefore choose to have either pleasing, popular religion, or accept the offense of the cross. And for those who want a pleasing and popular religion, not by default but by intent, here are three ways to have a pleasing religion like the world:

Preach Jesus, Without Requiring Perfect Obedience

Everyone has some besetting sin. From birth, Satan has been cultivating certain sins within each one of us.

I remember in a baptismal class, as we were reading from the Bible about jewelry, one young woman spoke up and said: “If I have to take off my wedding ring to go to heaven, I can’t go.” She had been married just six months and had a new diamond wedding ring. When I visited with her in her home two days later, she had two non-Adventist ministers there helping her to see that a little jewelry was not wrong.

She came to the baptism with all her jewelry on. She asked me to explain again the reasons why wearing it was wrong. We then went into the study and spent the next hour and a half reading again all the texts and discussing their meaning. Finally, with tears, she said, “I surrender!” From that moment on the Lord used her, and within a relatively short period of time she had brought several other people into the church.

But first, she had had to overcome her besetting sin, which probably an evil angel had worked to develop this love in her from the time she was a little girl. Presents of jewelry had probably been given to her. Prideful comments had undoubtedly been made about wearing jewelry, and how good it made one look.

Jewelry had become associated with femininity, sex appeal, marriage, wealth, success, and attractiveness.

How easy it would have been to have brought her into the church without counseling her about jewelry! And although she eventually made the decision to take it off, how many do not!

I remember another young woman who had three hundred pairs of earrings, several hundred pairs of shoes, and three mink coats. She was a personal acquaintance of some well-known movie stars. She came to every meeting and accepted every truth—but one. That again, was wearing jewelry. Consequently, she found a church that would accept her with her one besetting sin.

Some are lost when standards are held high. Jesus lost the rich young ruler. How much credit he could have been to the fledgling church. He had money, influence, and leadership. Moreover, he kept all the commandments, and even accepted Jesus in broad daylight and knelt down before Him—more so than Nicodemus.

Judas' keen perceptions immediately grasped what it would mean to their little group to have this respected leader in their company. If the young man needed any reforms, he felt these could come later.

"When Jesus presented to the rich young ruler the condition of discipleship, Judas was displeased. He thought that a mistake had been made. If such men as this ruler could be connected with the believers, they would help sustain Christ's cause. If Judas were only received as a counselor, he thought, he could suggest many plans for the advantage of the little church." *The Desire of Ages*, 719.

If Jesus had listened to Judas, the small group of disciples would not have lost the rich young ruler, nor the crowd of 5,000 when "many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more" (John 6:66). Jesus seemed to lose more disciples than He kept. Somehow, He had never been taught

the secrets of church growth. His standards were too high, in Judas' estimation.

Numerically, Jesus could have had much more success, and we can, too, if we will just be content to preach more of "Jesus" and not concern ourselves with obedience. As long as a person will accept Jesus as his Saviour and accept "most" of the standards of the church, surely the other points of godly living will come along as he sits in church Sabbath after Sabbath.

The only trouble is that as long as there is even one point not fully surrendered to the Lord, Satan has control of the life. Because conversion "requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him." *Steps to Christ*, 43.

"We are not God's children unless we are such entirely." *Ibid.*, 44. The more areas of godly living displayed in the life, while one sin is being cherished, the more deceptive is the Christian experience. As long as one point is unsundered, all the preaching in the world will not avail. Judas was not converted by his association with Jesus.

"Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire, persistently cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel. Every sinful indulgence strengthens the soul's aversion to God." *Ibid.*, 34.

Sin is like a cancer. Either it is completely eradicated, or it completely eradicates Christ. There are only two roads we can travel: one is the road of total victory, the other is the road of total defeat. All we have to do is take one step down, and the next one becomes easier. "After every advance step in the downward road, Satan has some special temptation to lead them [professed Christians] still further on the wrong track." *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 287.

But here is the problem: We do not know when we have been totally defeated. "When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrongdoer does not discern the defects of his character." *Steps to Christ*, 40. Sin blinds the perceptions. The Jewish leaders in Jesus' day came under Satan's complete control, but thought they were the guardians of the faith.

All Satan needs is for us to reject one standard. "The removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the failure to do the very thing

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There has always been a mass of professors of religion, there have been but few who have been willing to be truly converted.

that the Lord has marked out, one step in the path of wrong principle, often leads to an entire change of the life and action." *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 320.

And so, if we want to be popular like the other churches, just preach "Jesus." Call it "Christ our righteousness." Make the people active, happy Christians but allow them to retain their one cherished sin.

Tell People to Wait for Jesus to Overcome Their Sins for Them

If the lie that perfect obedience is unnecessary doesn't work and Satan cannot deceive us into thinking we can be saved while still cherishing sin, then he has another scheme that is just as effective. Preach Jesus, preach perfect obedience and sanctification, but tell them that Jesus will do the perfecting for them. Teach them to read the Bible and pray, and Jesus will do the rest.

This is a most deceptive, alluring philosophy. I remember talking with a leader in the church who was addicted to a certain caffeinated drink. She drank it all day long. She said she knew it was wrong, but could not quit. I asked her why she bought it and she said she was waiting for God to take the sin away from her. She even suggested that it would be wrong for her to quit unless God took it away.

It is true that we have no power to overcome sin in our own strength. But God has called us, with His power, to put sin out of our lives. Jesus gives the power, but we must do the overcoming.

"In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom. The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself. True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of



Everyone has some besetting sin. From birth, Satan has been cultivating certain sins within each one of us.

and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God." *The Desire of Ages*, 466.

When Judas came to Jesus, he thought that if he just associated with Him, that all his sinful traits would be washed away. How wrong he was!

"He [Judas] felt in his own person the evidence of Christ's power. ... He loved the Great Teacher, and desired to be with Him. He felt a desire to be changed in character and life, and he hoped to experience this through connecting himself with Jesus. ... [Christ] endowed him with power to heal the sick and to cast out devils. But Judas did not come to the point of surrendering himself fully to Christ. He did not give up his worldly ambition or his love of money." *Ibid.*, 717.

Judas wanted to be changed. He thought that by associating with Jesus he would be changed. He heard the words of Jesus day after day and talked with Him face to face. But because he himself did not give up his sins, his life was not changed as he hoped it would be. How many are going through a Judas experience today because of the Judas

philosophy? They have accepted the idea of just spending time with Jesus and letting Him change the life apart from their own endeavors.

"Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. ... Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians." *Steps to Christ*, 47, 48.

There is a work for man to do in overcoming sin that God will not do for him. God gave Samson superhuman strength, but he had to exercise every ounce of energy; he had to lift those gates off the city wall. He had no power to do it himself. But neither could he merely kneel beside those gates and wait for them to move. He had to exercise the power that God had given him. Likewise, we must exert effort in the expulsion of sin from the soul.

"There must be an earnest effort to conquer through the grace freely given of God." *The Review and Herald*, January 24, 1893.

“
*Sin is like a cancer. Either
 it is completely eradicated,
 or it completely eradicates
 Christ.*”

“The pleasing fable that all there is to do is to believe, has destroyed thousands and tens of thousands, because many have called that faith which is not faith, but simply a dogma. Man is an intelligent, accountable being; he is not to be carried as a passive burden by the Lord, but is to work in harmony with Christ.

Man is to take up his appointed work in striving for glory, honor, and immortality. God calls upon men for the use of every talent He has lent them, the exercise of every power He has given; for man can never be saved in disobedience and indolence.” *Ibid.*, April 1, 1890.

“Divine help is to be combined with human effort, aspiration, and energy. But we cannot reach the battlements of Heaven without climbing for ourselves. ... Not even divine power can lift one soul to Heaven that is unwilling to put forth efforts in his own behalf.” *The Signs of the Times*, August 14, 1884.

“God will work for His children, but not without their co-operation. They must have indomitable energy.” *The Review and Herald*, April 8, 1890.

“God will never deliver those who will not strive to free themselves [from temptation].” *The Signs of the Times*, October 8, 1885.

The counsel is clear. We must overcome as Jesus did, first by uniting our weakness to His strength, our human frailties to His divine omnipotence, our nature to His, and then, thus empowered, we must overcome sin by refusing to do evil and choosing to do right.

“If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live” (Romans 8:13).

But this work requires the crucifixion of self, not pleasing to the natural heart. It will not make for a large, popular church. If we want to have a pleasing doctrine that will gain more adherents, preach victory through Jesus, call it “righteousness by faith,” but teach that Jesus will do the overcoming for us.

Lead People to Worship the System

In all ages, worshiping the system has worked effectively. Get people to transfer their allegiance from the Creator to the created. In ages past, men worshiped the works of creation in the sun, moon, and stars, all in the name of religion.

However, in the New Testament era, Satan has found something new—the church. Throughout the Dark Ages, the idol and opiate of mankind was the church. People looked to the church to interpret the Scriptures, to set guidelines for their daily lives, and to fulfill the vacuum existing in the heart of every man and woman. They worked and sacrificed for the church. God was their Father, but the church became their mother, and their final allegiance was to their mother.

Do we have the same danger? In Laodicea, Jesus is pictured as standing outside the door, while the church within continues to function as though it needs nothing. The church has replaced Jesus.

We need the church, just as we need the sun, moon, and stars. But the church must never take the place of God. There must never be a creed to take the place of the Bible. There must never be a system to take the place of personal obedience. There must never be an official interpretation to take the place of personal conviction. This concern was one of Ellen White’s great burdens for the church, especially following 1888.

“The Jewish nation were not brought suddenly into their condition of thought and practice. From generation to generation they were working on false theories, carrying out principles opposed to the truth, and combining with their religion thoughts and plans that were the product of human minds. Human inventions were made supreme. ...

“Let no plans or methods be adopted in any of our institutions that will bind mind or talent under the control of human judgment. ...

“The high-handed power that has been developed, as though position has made men gods, makes me afraid, and ought to cause fear. It is a curse wherever and by whomsoever it is exercised. ...



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femininity, sex
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attractiveness.*

“We are not to bargain away our stewardship.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 359–362.

Ellen White’s great fear following 1888 was that we would do as did the Jewish nation in putting the system where God should be. She therefore warned: “Battle Creek is not to be the center of God’s work. God alone can fill this place. When our people in the different places have their special convocations, teach them, for Christ’s sake and for their own soul’s sake, not to make flesh their arm. . . . To place men where God should be placed does not honor or glorify God. Is the president of the General Conference to be the God of the people? . . . When the Lord shall work upon human hearts and human intellects, principles and practices different from this will be set before the people. ‘Cease ye from man’ (Isaiah 2:22).

“The Lord has a controversy with His people over this matter. . . .

“Just as soon as man is placed where God should be, he loses his purity, his vigor, his confidence in God’s power.” *Ibid.*, 375, 376.

Ellen White counseled us to teach our people, in all their important convocations, not to put confidence in human leaders, but in God. “Our churches are weak because the members are educated to look to and depend upon human resources.” *Ibid.*, 380.

“For many years an education has been given to the people which places God second, and man first. The people have been taught that everything must be brought before the council of a few men in Battle Creek.” *Ibid.*, 325.

“Men have assumed authority, but the people should not depend upon poor, finite, erring men. . . . The Lord alone is to be exalted.” *Ibid.*, 319.

But it is easy to turn our power of thought over to a committee and it is easy to work for something more tangible than God. Moreover, it seems so much more rewarding to work for man than for God. We can climb the system of human organization, but we cannot climb into prominence in God’s vineyard. He said, “Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:27, 28).

Organizational worship and service is easier, more pleasing, and more rewarding to the carnal heart than doing all for the Master. It is particularly deceptive because God has ordained organization. God is not leading discordant elements into the kingdom, but a well-disciplined army. But when we give allegiance to the army instead of to the King, then organization becomes a curse instead

of a blessing. Because of this problem, organization in the New Testament was kept very simple and unassuming. There was enough organization to propel the church into all the world, united by the cords of love for God and humbleness of service to mankind. All were servants of the One who had given His life for them. All were students of the Word. All were looked upon as brethren. As Jesus said, “all ye are brethren” (Matthew 23:8 KJV).

Thus, though this list does not claim to be exhaustive, there are three leading ways, all equally successful, of making the church popular and Laodicean:

- Preach Jesus, but do not require perfect obedience.
- Tell people to wait for Jesus to overcome their sins for them.
- Lead people to worship the system.

How is it with you?

All Bible texts NKJV, unless otherwise noted. **LM**

Pastor Marshall Grosboll, with his wife Lillian, founded *Steps to Life*. In July 1991, Pastor Marshall and his family met with tragedy as they were returning home from a camp meeting in Washington state, when the airplane he was piloting went down, killing all on board.



The Blessing of Simeon and Anna

By Patricia Smith

In modern America, we think of blessings usually in terms of material wealth, such as money, houses, cars, land, art, jewelry, and stocks and bonds. The young and wealthy, whether of Hollywood, sports fame, business, religion, or in government positions, are viewed as doubly blessed, having both material goods, and youth, which is greatly prized above being middle-aged or elderly.

But not so in the word of God, not so in the case of Simeon and Anna. They were two elderly people in the days of the infant Jesus. They are not as well-known as Moses, King David, Solomon, Queen Esther, Ruth, the 12 disciples, or the apostle Paul. Although no book of the Bible is named after them, yet they were highly favored of God before the ministry of Jesus even began, and before He was raised in Nazareth by His parents.

It was at the dedication of the baby Jesus, when He was about 40 days

old, that these two elderly believers in God were blessed. The days of Mary's purification were ended (See Luke 2:22; Leviticus 12:2-4). So Joseph and Mary "brought Him [Jesus] to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord: (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons" (Luke 2:22-24).

As we look closer at the sacrifice they brought, we shall discover one reason why the priest in the temple did not discern anything special about Joseph, Mary, or the child Jesus. They brought the offering that was accepted from those too poor to bring a lamb. "And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles [turtledoves],

or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean" (Leviticus 12:8).

It is our merciful God that makes provision for the poor to be accepted in presenting a less expensive offering than that of a lamb. Throughout Scripture, we see this mercy and care for the poor displayed time and time again: "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God" (Leviticus, 19:9, 10).

"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou



shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God" (Leviticus, 23:22).

"When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hath forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow" (Deuteronomy 24:19, 20.)

Joseph and Mary were poor, and did not merit any special consideration from the priest. Like so many today, even professed Christians, the priest took notice of people who came to present their children only if they were wealthy or of special rank.

"The presentation of infants was a common scene. Day after day the priest received the redemption money as the babes were presented to the Lord. Day after day he went through the routine of his work, giving little heed to the parents or children, unless he saw some indication of the wealth or high rank of the parents. Joseph and Mary were poor; and when they came with their child, the priest saw only a man and woman dressed as Galileans, and in the humblest garments. There was nothing in their appearance to attract attention, and they presented only the offering made by the poorer classes . . .

"Little did he think, as the babe lay in his arms, that it was the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory. The priest did not think that this babe was the One of whom Moses had written, 'A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you' (Acts 3:22). He did not think that this babe was He whose glory Moses had asked to see." *The Desire of Ages*, 52.

In light of the above paragraph, consider the truth of Peter's words in

Acts 10:34. He stated to Cornelius, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." In its context in Acts, this passage refers to the gospel being preached to the Gentiles also. But based on the passage from *The Desire of Ages*, it is clearly applicable in all situations of giving out blessings.

God does not play favorites arbitrarily as we often do. He does not look on the outward appearance to determine the worthiness of any of His earthly children. He blesses according to the openness of the mind to receive. He looks beyond the outer appearance to the heart.

With these truths understood, we know now why the lowly shepherds in the field were given the blessing that the dignified priest in the temple so sadly missed. Their minds were contemplating the prophecies of the Messiah's coming. Notice in this next quote from *The Desire of Ages*, p. 47, who were overlooked by the angels announcing Christ's birth.

"Above the hills of Bethlehem are gathered an innumerable throng of angels. They wait the signal to declare the glad news to the world. Had the leaders in Israel been true to their trust, they might have shared the joy of heralding the birth of Jesus. But now they are passed by."

Truth is readily given to those whose hearts are willing to believe. "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground" (Isaiah 44:3). The language of the soul should be, "Oh, to be so in tune with Heaven, that no divine ray of light will pass me by!"

In the temple at the dedication of Jesus, again the ones thirsty for truth

were granted the blessed understanding they desired, while the leaders in Israel were passed by. To Simeon, the Holy Spirit had revealed that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. "And he came by the Spirit

into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him after the custom of the law, Then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: For mine eyes have seen

Thy salvation, Which

Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel" (Luke 2:27-32).

Simeon was not the only one blessed to realize who Jesus was at the dedication. A faithful widow, 84 years of age, a prophetess, also recognized Him. Her name was Anna, and "she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (verse 38).

May you and I, dear reader, be among the poor in spirit who will receive the blessing of Simeon and Anna when Jesus returns! May we joyfully praise Him then, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us" (Isaiah 25:9). **LM**

Patricia J. T. Smith is a second generation Seventh-day Adventist who enjoys sharing the word of God. She likes spending time with family and friends, taking nature walks, rock collecting and reading. She has two adult children and lives in Louisiana with her husband.

“
*Like so many today,
even professed Christians,
the priest took notice of
people who came to present
their children only if they
were wealthy or of
special rank.*

God's Saving Power

By Bob Hambley

War is a terrible way to settle problems between nations, for it often results in the deaths of millions of innocent people. World War II was historically the bloodiest war ever. Today, there are more wars than ever.

My name is Gregg Richards. I am a teacher in a small Seventh-day Adventist group in Bishop, California. This is the story about a member of our small group who was a Navy fighter pilot in WW II. His name is Bob Hambley.

Bob is 98 years of age; he lives by himself and still drives. He joined the Navy to do his part in saving our country from the invasion of the Japanese and the Germans. Bob was 20 years old when he joined the military. He had never been exposed to God then, but he now knows that without God's intervention, he would have died at the age of 22. The following statements are just some of the dangers he faced as a fighter pilot. He has three fighter planes at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean and one he had to bail out of over land. He gives full credit to our great Saviour, because he knows that without God's intervention he would never have seen tomorrow. Written in his own words, Bob describes just a couple of the difficult situations he had to face.

Pilot Eject

Graduation Day was only two weeks away when we would receive our Gold Wings and Commission as Ensigns in the United States Naval Reserve. Some of us, however, had to make up two hours of night flying in order to fulfill graduation requirements.

Two of us took off about 9:00 pm and flew in formation for the required time and then were preparing to land at the airbase. I wiggled my wings as a sign that I was going to leave the formation and drop down from 3,000 feet to 800 feet and enter the traffic pattern. The other pilot was to stay at his altitude and make a 360-degree turn leaving sufficient space between our two planes so as to eliminate any mid-air collisions.

As I entered the traffic pattern at 800 feet, I was suddenly hit by the pilot who was supposed to have stayed up to prevent such an accident. When he hit my plane, I couldn't imagine what had happened. I knew I was in a dangerous situation. The other pilot told me sometime later, that he fell sound asleep and when he hit my plane, he said he could see me in the cockpit and could even see my instrument panel. He instantly hit his release button and bailed out. We were the only two aircraft flying in the area at this hour, with the whole sky to ourselves. The odds of having such an accident were astronomical.

Realizing the perilous condition I found myself in, I knew I had to leave the

plane instantly, so I released my seat belts and it felt like an arm lifted me right out of the cockpit. I reached for my ripcord but could not find it. After about three grabs, I pulled the ripcord and heard a pop, but I was swinging so far out that I feared all of the air would come out of the parachute and I would drop without it. I pulled on one of the shroud lines to stop the swinging and then I hit the ground. I remember when I hit the ground that I did a tuck and roll which is what we were taught to do in parachute school, but I did this automatically without thinking and wound up lying on my back. Looking at the stars above me I realized that I had been saved from certain death.

I lay there for a moment contemplating what had just happened and realized that God was the only answer to my still being alive. One minute I was safely flying my airplane and getting ready to land and five or six minutes later, I am lying on the ground without a scratch. I hit the ground about as hard as a mother would lay her baby in its crib. I did not land in a cactus patch, on a tree, or on a rooftop or any other hazardous terrain, but just where my Savior wanted me to land. I did not know what the surrounding territory was like because it was so dark, so I knelt and gave a prayer of thanks to God, who at that time I did not know.

In the distance I heard a cry for help. Now I knew that my fellow pilot had survived the collision, so I called and kept calling for him to answer so I could find

my way to where he was. When I found him, he was laying on his back and I told him not to move until I could see if he had broken bones or in any way was not able to move. He also had not been injured; so I helped him get up and he asked me, "What are we going to do now?"

In the distance we could see a big search light. It was our airbase. It was about 1:00 in the morning and they were waiting for us to come home. We started walking in that direction and after walking some distance, we heard the barking of a very large dog; so we knew there would be a home nearby. We just hoped that the dog was chained. We went to the house and knocked on the door and the man who answered had heard the collision. I asked if we could use his telephone to call the base. He did not have a telephone, but had a car and was willing to drive us to town where we could find a telephone. By then it was about 2:00 in the morning. After we contacted the base, a jeep was sent to pick us up.

The next morning, we were required to fly for one hour to be sure we were not affected by the collision in any way. We both passed the test and could now look forward to receiving our Gold Wings and Commission and to continue whatever assignment was ahead. We were looking forward to flying real fighter planes, whereas before we were flying advanced trainers. After graduation, I never again saw or heard from the pilot who had crashed into my plane.



Drama in the Storm

One of several other life and death experiences I had was when I was assigned to Melbourne, Florida, after coming back from overseas. I was to train four new ensigns and two instructors in Advanced Combat Training. None of the six had ever flown a real Navy fighter plane and we were going to train on the new Grumman Hellcat. My job was to familiarize them with navigation, gunnery and all the other things that a fighter pilot needed to know before going into combat.

One day, I had my group in the Gulf of Mexico and we were practicing making runs on a target that was towed by an airplane and learning the different approaches in confronting the enemy. My plane began to have engine problems; so I picked up my microphone and told my group to continue practicing the drills and that I would be back as soon as possible. When I landed at the airbase, I told one of the mechanics that I needed another plane and that my group was practicing in the Gulf and I needed to get back to them. He pointed to a Hellcat that was ready to go, so I jumped in and took off heading to the Gulf to join up with my group. Suddenly a terrific storm came up in the Gulf and all planes were to return to the base as soon as possible. This storm was one of the most severe I had ever encountered with lightning, thunder, and tremendously heavy rain and wind. I turned back toward the base and knew that if I flew east, I would hit the coast of Florida and then north to my base.

The Biscayne Highway goes from Maine to Miami and has four lanes traveling north and four lanes travelling south. This highway is located right along the east coast of Florida and my

airfield is located on the other side of this highway. At that time, the ceiling of the horrific storm was only 150 feet from the ground, so I could fly no higher than that. After crossing Florida to the ocean, I turned north. The thunder and lightning was so severe that I had to disconnect my headset. There were thousands of cars on the highway that could not move and were stacked up for miles going in both directions because the rain was so heavy that their windshield wipers could not clear enough to drive.

I was flying about 100 feet above the cars and when I glanced at my fuel gauge it showed that I was on empty. Here I was flying a seven-ton Hellcat just above the thousands of cars and my instruments tell me my engine will quit at any second. I moved to the right side of the highway so as not to be flying over the cars. The terrain was like a jungle without any trees and I thought at any second my 2000 horsepower engine would stop. I decided that when it did, I had no option than to roll my plane to the right and dive it into the ground. I did not want to try for a landing because I knew I could be badly injured and would not be rescued for hours. I would rather be killed instantly and not have to suffer. I knew that when the propeller stopped, I was going to die.

Looking to my left, I saw a lake and knew then that I was hopelessly lost because I had flown this area many times and had never seen a lake. My heart sank, but as I looked again I saw a tower in the lake and then noticed some hangars and realized that it was my airbase which was flooded. Now my problem was to get across the eight lanes of parked cars and get over the fence to the airfield. In my mind I thought I could make it without crash-

ing into the cars, even if the engine quit. I dropped my flaps to get more lift and made it over the fence onto the airbase. I dropped my landing gear and landed on a runway. The water was so deep that it was almost like a water landing. The water flew over my plane slowing me down immediately. I made a turn to the right and my engine quit. The plane was out of gas.

Had I gone a little further to my usual parking spot I would not have realized that my Savior had saved me again. My plane did not have a faulty gauge, I was out of gas and Jesus kept that engine running until I was safe. I jumped out of my plane into the driving rain and ran to my room in the Bachelor Officer Quarters (BOQ) and lay on my bed soaking wet, once again praising the Lord for giving me my life back.

In later years, I had a hip replacement which caused a great deal of pain. Physical therapy was not helping until a friend told me about a physical therapist who had helped him a great deal and suggested I make an appointment with him. His name is Gregg Richards, who not only relieved my hip pain, but invited me to attend his Sabbath Day meeting where he is a teacher. I started meeting with this group at the age of 90 and have stayed with them ever since. On September 15th 2012 I was baptized in an outdoor natural hot spring in Bishop, California.

In closing, I want to thank Gregg for all I have learned about the Bible. It has changed my life completely. Thank-you God for saving my life. May my life's story be a blessing to others.

Bob Hambley. [LM](#)

*As told to **Gregg Richards**, Three Angels Ministry. You can contact us at: rich-thumper@gmail.com*

Count the Mercies

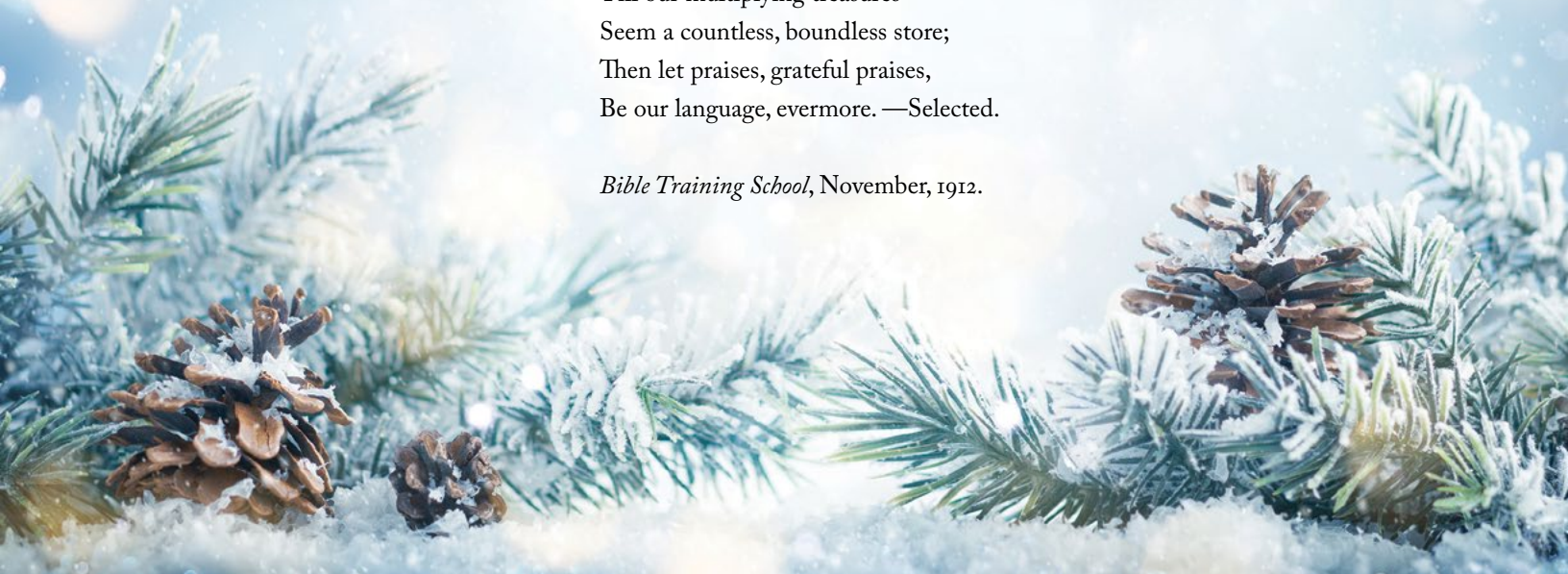
Count the mercies! Count the mercies!
Number all the gifts of love;
Keep a daily, faithful record
Of the comforts from above.
Look at all the lovely green spots
In life's weary desert way;
Think how many cooling fountains
Cheer our fainting hearts each day.
Count thy mercies! Count thy mercies!
See them strewn along our way!

Count the mercies, though the trials
Seem to number more each day,
Count the trials, too, as mercies
Add them to the grand array.
Trials are God's richest blessings,

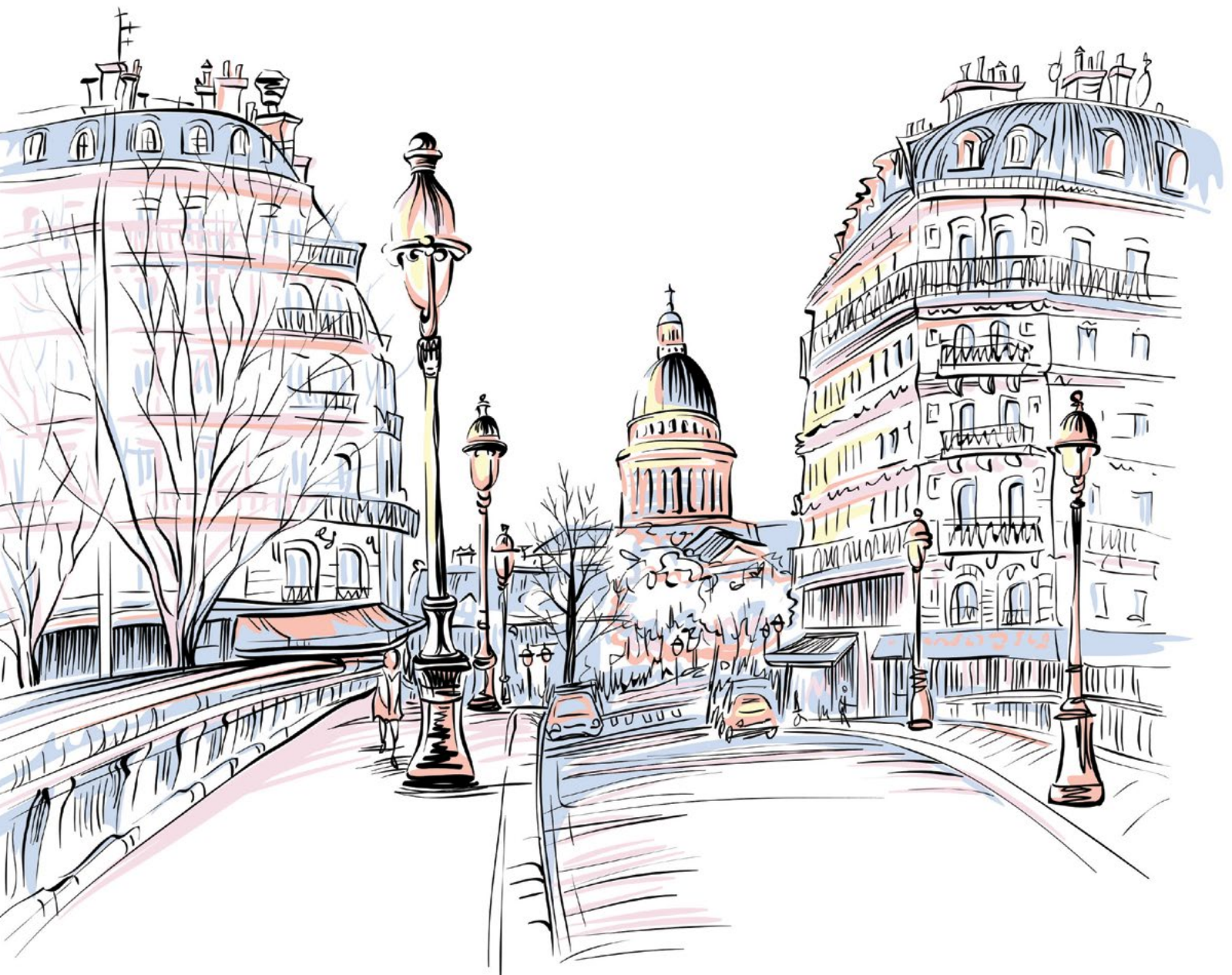
Sent to prompt our upward flight
As the eagle's nest — all broken,
Makes them fly to loftier heights.
Count the mercies! Count the mercies!
That bring heaven within our sight.

Let us number all our jewels,
Let us estimate their worth;
Let us thank the gracious giver,
Strewing blessings o'er the earth;
Let our hearts o'erflow with gladness.
Let us tell the wonders o'er,
Till our multiplying treasures
Seem a countless, boundless store;
Then let praises, grateful praises,
Be our language, evermore. —Selected.

Bible Training School, November, 1912.



Trust in the Lord



Looking up anxiously at his mother, Bobby pleaded earnestly. “Don’t cry, Mommy.”

“Bobby, we are in trouble,” answered his mother. “Daddy has left us, and he said he’ll never come back!”

Mrs. Smith’s tears fell over the baby she was nursing. She had five children younger than Bobby, who was eight. Their father, who had been out of work for some time, had just deserted them. What was she to do? They were so poor! Who would look after them?

“Mommy,” said Bobby, “that’s very bad news, but God knows our trouble. He will help us when we pray to Him. I heard a Bible story about God helping a poor widow with her boys.”

“But He doesn’t love me, Bobby,” sighed his mother. “I’m not as good as I ought to be, and I’ve not thought much about Him. No, he doesn’t love me,” she finished sadly.

“The Lord is so good. He has been good to us all the time!” answered Bobby eagerly. “When Emmie is naughty and stays out playing instead of coming in to bed when you call—you still love her, don’t you?”

“Yes, but that’s different,” said Mrs. Smith, “and you’ll see He won’t help me now when I’m in such trouble.”

“He will if we ask Him!” cried Bobby confidently. “It’s in the Bible! We learned it in Sabbath School. ‘Ask, and it shall be given you. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him’ (Matthew 7:7, 11)? Mother, let’s ask Him right now.”

“Well, all right,” said Mrs. Smith, wiping her eyes on her apron.

Calling his brothers and sisters together, Bobby made them all kneel down with clasped hands. Then he and his mother knelt too. “Now, Mother, pray,” Bobby whispered. But Mrs. Smith could not say a word. She felt as if there were a great lump in her throat. It was long ago that she had tried to pray.

So Bobby prayed. “God, Daddy’s left us. Make him come home. Help me and Mommy to earn money and get food for the children for Jesus’ sake. Amen.”

Mrs. Smith and the children said, “Amen.” And the children jumped up, eager to do something else. Bobby rose too, looking very serious. “Mommy,” he said, “my teacher says we must do our best and work hard. I must work as well as pray.”

“But Bobby, what could you do?” asked his mother.

“I can sell matchboxes or newspapers,” he answered eagerly.

“The streets?” exclaimed Mrs. Smith. “Oh my boy, I’ve always tried to keep you off of the streets!”

“God is everywhere, Mommy. Isn’t He in the streets, too?” asked Bobby, wonderingly.

“Yes, of course He is. Well, we have no choice, so you must work in the streets. I have just two coins left, Bobby. You may take one and see what you can do.” Mrs. Smith sighed in helpless frustration as she watched her young son set out to look for work.

Bobby, on the other hand, was delighted. A friend of his sold newspapers, and could make forty-four cents in one night by selling newspapers in the streets.

Bobby had a clear voice, and it seemed to carry everywhere as he walked proudly along, singing out the name of the newspaper like the other newsboys. Evening after evening he earned money in this way for his mother.

Each evening, before leaving for work, Bobby gathered his mother, brothers, and sisters around him. He would read the Bible and recite the texts he had learned in Sabbath School. Then he would ask God for His help and pro-

tection. He also prayed that God would save their father and return him to them.

All went well until one evening, when the rain came down in torrents. Mrs. Smith wanted to keep Bobby home, but she desperately needed the money so she reluctantly let him go out.

He came back soaked and chilled. Mrs. Smith hurried him to bed. He became very hot, and mumbled in his sleep. The next day he was worse, and could not even lift his head from the pillow. The following night his mother sat up with him, for he seemed barely conscious.

During the long, quiet night, Mrs. Smith thought about the stories and texts Bobby had learned in his Sabbath School classes, and she

prayed to the great Heavenly Doctor to heal her boy and return him to her.

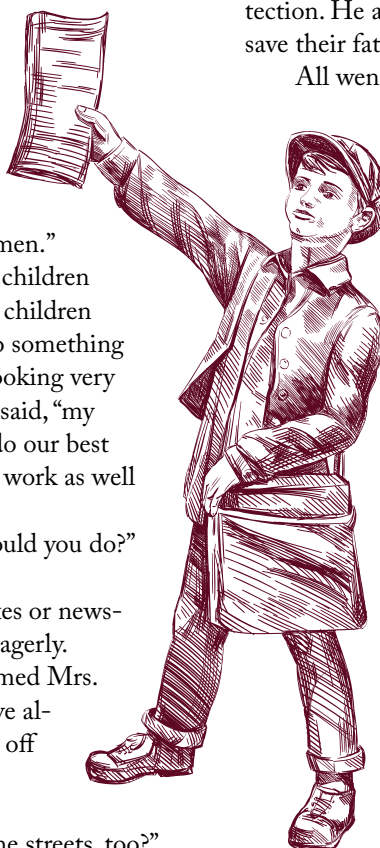
In the early morning Bobby opened his eyes, and recognized his mother. But his first words were, “Mommy, do I hear Daddy?”

Mrs. Smith looked up in amazement to see her husband entering the room.

“Hester,” he said to his wife. “I’m very sorry I’ve been such a bad husband to you. But I’m a changed man now, by the grace of God. And what’s more, I’ve found a very good job, thanks be to God. But what’s this? Is Bobby ill?”

“Bobby will get well now,” exclaimed Mrs. Smith. “Let’s thank God for it.”

Husband and wife knelt together beside Bobby’s bed, and with trembling voices thanked Him for His goodness. **LM**



How God Sent a Dog to Save a Family, Reformation Heritage Books, ©2007, by Joel R. Beeke and Diana Kleynm, 123–126.

Amos Sounds Warnings

Clues – Amos KJV

Across:

- C2 Because of their _____ Tyrus would be burned1:9, 10
 C17 Amos' prophecy came two ____ before the earthquake1:1
 E2 Since they had multiple warnings, they should prepare to _____ God's judgment4:12
 E9 Woe to those ease loving believers who "_____" themselves with lotions, but are not grieved by the sins and oppression of their brothers.....6:1, 6
 G4 The _____ of Judah had caused them to deserve punishment.....2:4
 G14 We should seek the Omnipotent Creator God who made this.....5:8
 H9 The sins of Israel had done this to God's holy name (present tense).....2:7
 I2 These to God from hypocritical sinners are only noise to Him (singular)5:23
 I17 Sinners will ultimately be destroyed from off this.....9:8
 J10 There will come a time of a famine of _____ the word of God.....8:11
 K4 The Ammonites were to be punished because they had done this to women.....1:13
 L11 The unsuccessful famine "wake up call" God had sent resulted in this of teeth.....4:6
 M4 God compared His warning through Amos to a lion that _____3:8
 N16 In the day of judgment, these will be turned into mourning.....8:10
 O1 Wicked people cause the poor to do this8:4
 P6 We should love good and hate this5:15
 P13 Some sinners in Israel have turned justice into this5:7
 Q1 The day of God's judgment will be this kind of day for sinners8:10
 Q9 When a sinner turns to God, he will do this.....5:4
 R15 To run from God is like doing this from a lion only to meet a bear5:19
 S1 In the coming judgment of God, many of these will be moved in silence.....8:3
 S8 God questions: Are the towns of the heathen _____ than your own country?6:2
 S18 The Edomites were to be punished because they had this perpetually1:11

Down:

- A3 Israel could not escape their punishment even by riding a _____ away2:15
 A9 This would be upon those who thought God's promised judgments won't come5:18
 A20 To escape God's judgment is as futile as thinking you are safe in your own house, but being bit by this5:19
 B12 When God punishes Israel, He'll also do this to the altars in Bethel3:14
 B17 Besides being a herdman, Amos was a gatherer of _____ fruit.....7:14
 C5 God does _____ without first revealing His intentions through a prophet.....3:7
 C7 God thought to use these to punish Israel, but Amos' plea changed His mind.....7:1-3
 C10 In the day of judgment, all these will die (singular)9:10
 C14 God can and will use another one of these to carry out His judgments.....6:14
 G2 Judah would be punished because they had _____ God's law (present tense).....2:4
 G15 If we promote justice, God will be gracious to this of His people.....5:15
 H13 Two cannot walk in harmony unless they are this.....3:3
 H19 The palmerworm's destruction of these was another unfruitful "wake up call".....4:9
 H21 God compared His burden over Israel to a cart full of these.....2:13
 L11 Because of having false gods, Israel would go into this5:26, 27
 L18 The day is coming when people will wander from _____ seeking the word of God, but shall not find it (three words)8:12

A	2		4	5	6	7	8		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		21	A
B																					B
C																					C
D																					D
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Answer Key:

22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
R	E	A	N	G	V	E	F	R	E	T	I	E	B	E	I	S	I	E	O	D	R
P	O	D	O	O	M	N	N	W	I	V	I	L	L	I	E	R	E	T	I	F	R
N	S	T	S	T	V	E	O	N	P	T	P	W	S	S	P	F	I	L	F	A	R
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A	B	W	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	O	E	W	E	E	E	E	E	E	A
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	

- M9 Punishment for oppressing the poor is not getting to _____ in their fancy houses5:11
N3 To separate God's true people from sinners all will be _____ as in a sieve9:9
N14 Before judgment begins, the sun will go down at8:9
N16 God likens His people to one big3:1, 2
O6 Because of their sins, this would happen to the remnant of the Philistines1:8
Q21 The _____ of God are always upon sinners.....9:8



The Work for This Time

Before It Is Too Late

When the storm of God's wrath breaks upon the world, it will be a terrible revelation for souls to find that their house is being swept away because it is built upon the sand. Let the warning be given them before it is too late. We should now feel the responsibility of laboring with intense earnestness to impart to others the truths that God has given for this time. We cannot be too much in earnest.



The heart of God is moved. Souls are very precious in His sight. It was for this world that Christ wept in agony; for this world He was crucified. God gave His only-begotten Son to save sinners, and He desires us to love others as He has loved us. He desires to see those who have a knowledge of the truth imparting this knowledge to their fellow men.

Now is the time for the last warning to be given. There is a special power in the presentation of the truth at the present time; but how long will it continue? Only a little while. If there was ever a crisis, it is now.

All are now deciding their eternal destiny. Men need to be aroused to realize the solemnity of the time, the nearness of the day when human probation shall be ended. Decided efforts should be made to bring the message for this time prominently before the people. The third angel is to go forth with great power. Let none ignore this work or treat it as of little importance.

The light we have received upon the third angel's message is the true light. The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll; but a most solemn work is to be accomplished in our world. The Lord's command to His servants is: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (Isaiah 58:1).

There is to be no change in the general features of our work. It is to stand as clear and distinct as prophecy has made it. We are to enter into no confederacy with the world, supposing that by so doing we could accomplish more. If any stand in the way, to hinder the advancement of the work in the lines that God has appointed, they will displease God. No line of truth that has made the Seventh-day Adventist people what they are is to be weakened. We have the old landmarks of truth, experience, and duty,

and we are to stand firmly in defense of our principles, in full view of the world.

It is essential that men be raised up to open the living oracles of God to all peoples. Men of all ranks and capacities, with their various gifts, are to co-operate harmoniously for a common result.

They are to unite in the work of bringing the truth to the people, each worker fulfilling his own special appointment. ...

Brethren and sisters, would that I might say something to awaken you to the importance of this time, the significance of the events that are now taking place. I point you to the aggressive movements now being made for the restriction of religious liberty. God's sanctified memorial has been torn down, and in its place a false sabbath, bearing no sanctity, stands before the world. And while the powers of darkness are stirring up the elements from beneath, the Lord God of heaven is sending power from above to meet the emergency by arousing His living agencies to exalt the law of heaven. Now, just now, is our time to work in foreign countries. As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example. Our people are not half awake to do all in their power, with the facilities within their reach, to extend the message of warning.

The Last Message of Mercy

The Lord God of heaven will not send upon the world His judgments for disobedience and transgression, until

He has sent His watchmen to give the warning. He will not close up the period of probation until the message shall be more distinctly proclaimed. The law of God is to be magnified; its claims

must be presented in their true, sacred character, that the

people may be brought to decide for or against the truth.

Yet the work will be cut short in righteousness.

The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel.

There is no work in our world so great, so sacred, and so glorious, no work that God honors so much, as this gospel work. The message presented at this time is the last message of mercy for a fallen world. Those who have the privilege of hearing this message, and who persist in refusing to heed the warning, cast away their last hope of salvation. There will be no second probation.

The word of truth, "It is written," is the gospel we are to preach. No flaming sword is placed before this tree of life. All who will may partake of it. There is no power that can prohibit any soul from taking of its fruit. All may eat, and live forever.

Mysteries into which angels desire to look, which prophets and kings and righteous men desired to understand, the remnant church will carry in messages from God to the world. The prophets prophesied of these things, and they longed to understand that which they foretold; but to them this privilege was not given. They longed to see what we see, and to hear what we hear; but they could not. They will know

“
*The passage from
place to place to spread the
truth will soon be hedged
with dangers... Everything
will be placed to obstruct
the way of the Lord's
messenger.*”



“

The heart of God is moved. Souls are very precious in His sight. It was for this world that Christ wept in agony.

all when Christ shall come the second time; when, surrounded by a multitude which no man can number, He explains the deliverance wrought out by the great sacrifice He made.

Let None Be Unwarned

While the angels hold the four winds, we are to work with all our capabilities. We must bear our message without any delay. We must give evidence to the heavenly universe, and to men in this degenerate age, that our religion is a faith and a power of which Christ is the Author and His word the divine oracle. Human souls are hanging in the balance. They will either be subjects for the kingdom of God or slaves to the despotism of Satan. All are to have the privilege of laying hold of the hope set before them in the gospel, and how can they hear without a preacher? The human family is in need of a moral renovation, a preparation of character, that they may stand in God's presence. There are souls ready to perish because of the theoretical errors which are prevailing, and which are calculated to counterwork the gospel message. Who will now fully consecrate themselves to become laborers together with God?

As you see the peril and misery of the world under the working of Satan, do

not exhaust your God-given energies in idle lamentations, but go to work for yourselves and for others. Awake, and feel a burden for those who are perishing. If they are not won to Christ they will lose an eternity of bliss. Think of what it is possible for them to gain. The soul that God has created and Christ has redeemed is of great value because of the possibilities before it, the spiritual advantages that have been granted it, the capabilities it may possess if vitalized by the word of God, and the immortality which through the Life-giver it may obtain if obedient. One soul is of more value to heaven than a whole world of property, houses, lands, money. For the conversion of one soul we should tax our resources to the utmost. One soul won to Christ will flash heaven's light all around him, penetrating the moral darkness and saving other souls.

If Christ left the ninety and nine, that He might seek and save the one lost sheep, can we be justified in doing less? Is not a neglect to work even as Christ worked, to sacrifice as He sacrificed, a betrayal of sacred trusts, an insult to God?

Sound an alarm throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Tell the people that the day of the Lord is near

and hasteth greatly. Let none be left unwarned. We might have been in the place of the poor souls that are in error. We might have been placed among barbarians. According to the truth we have received above others, we are debtors to impart the same to them.

We have no time to lose. The end is near. The passage from place to place to spread the truth will soon be hedged with dangers on the right hand and on the left. Everything will be placed to obstruct the way of the Lord's messengers, so that they will not be able to do that which it is possible for them to do now. We must look our work fairly in the face and advance as fast as possible in aggressive warfare. From the light given me of God I know that the powers of darkness are working with intense energy from beneath, and with stealthy tread Satan is advancing to take those who are now asleep, as a wolf taking his prey. We have warnings now which we may give, a work now which we may do; but soon it will be more difficult than we can imagine. God help us to keep in the channel of light, to work with our eyes fastened on Jesus our Leader, and patiently, perseveringly press on to gain the victory. *Testimony Treasures*, vol. 2, 371-375. [LM](#)

Faith Triumphs Over Fear

Life often deals out situations that seem so hard to navigate, and this past year surely has been no exception. On top of all the normal every-day struggles, we have had to survive the COVID-19 storm and for those living in the United States, the appalling lead-up to the Federal elections. It makes one wonder just how much they can endure. To cope, we can either choose faith or fear.

Think about the disciples on a boat when a life-threatening storm erupted on the lake. They were unprepared to face the danger, realizing that at any moment they might die. While they all panicked, Jesus, who was with them, slept peacefully through the storm. Instead of trusting His reaction to the storm, the disciples allowed the situation to dictate their reaction.

Jesus' gentle rebuke, asking them why they were afraid, was intended for them to realize their lack of faith that He could see them through the storm.

So how should we respond when passing through storms over which we have no control?

Trust in Him who does have control over the wind and waves of life. The situation may not change, but we can always choose to trust God. When storms come, do we focus on the size of the storm or on the One who already knows the outcome? Any situation can be navigated with His wisdom and peace.

It is so easy to be fearful when we are unable to control the outcome. We are called to live by faith and trust in the One who does know our future and is in the business of saving all who seek Him. There are always two choices when one is overwhelmed: either focus on the circumstances or on Jesus. He will walk by the side of those who depend on Him. No storm that anyone will ever face is more powerful than our Saviour. Remember, Jesus is always beside us and will guide us safely to the heavenly shore.

Father, thank You for the promise You have made to never leave us or forsake us. Give us the courage to always keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who alone can overpower any situation we find ourselves in and walk with us through the storms of life until we triumph at last. Amen. [LM](#)



Your Letters

"My son loves getting the *Landmarks* and so do I, please can you keep sending them to both of us."

—RE, Arizona

"I enjoy the *LandMarks* book. Here's a little to help."

—TW, Virginia

"I'm so grateful for this ministry and the wonderful articles in the *LandMarks*."

—JA, Colorado

"Thank you very much for *LandMarks*."

—CT, California

January Sermon of the Month

The New Covenant

By John J. Grosboll

God's desire is to recreate man, first by giving him a new heart and a new spirit to desire righteousness in this life, then a recreated body at the resurrection.

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

January 2021

Dear Friend,

"Our work will soon be closed up, and soon the time of trouble, such as never was, will come upon us, of which we have but little idea." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 240.

Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day; the night is coming in which no man can work" (John 9:4).

Because of the pandemic all over the world, we are getting reports from many places saying that various witnessing programs that people were formerly engaged in are closed up, so what should you do? Let us look at the life of Jesus.

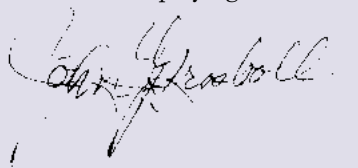
When Jesus' ministry closed up in Judea, He departed and spent the next year working mainly in Galilee. After the feeding of the 5000 He was rejected by the Galileans and made missionary trips to faraway places, later developing a ministry in Perea.

We must do the same. Little time remains before the missionary work that we have been doing could be closed up. Therefore, we must look for every opportunity to get the message of mercy and warning to the people. Their reception or rejection of the message will determine their eternal destiny.

Share the truths for this time with neighbors and friends and whoever will listen, being aware that the time could come suddenly when you will not be able to do this.

If you have a ministry involving the Internet, ask the Lord to help you maximize your contacts through this channel. The time will come when this channel to witness will close.

Your brother praying for a finished work,



John J. Grosboll

Inspired: "As long as the message of mercy is to be given to the world ... there will be opportunity for the canvasser to work. ... If in one place the persecution becomes severe, let the workers do as Christ has directed. 'When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another' (Matthew 10:23, *first part*). ... God will lead His people, making them a blessing in many places. Were it not for persecution they would not be so widely scattered abroad to proclaim the truth. And Christ declares: 'Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come' (Matthew 10:23, *last part*). Until in heaven is spoken the word, 'It is finished,' there will always be places for labor, and hearts to receive the message." *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 478.

13th Sabbath Offering



Left: Zachari Makwaro puts the new chairs to good use meeting with the children.

News from Nigeria

The responses for the needs in Nigeria have been very positive, and we thank you sincerely for your support of those needs. We were able to provide all of the equipment needed for a successful printing operation in eastern Nigeria and are well on the way to having sufficient funds to begin work on the outreach and medical missionary center there.

We frequently receive donations earmarked for “Missions,” without a specific effort designated. These funds allow us to provide assistance for smaller projects and needs that permit the work in the mission field to continue their efforts to hasten the return of our Lord and Saviour.

One of the needs that these kinds of donations have enabled us to meet was the result of a societal change that has occurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Nigerian government now requires all offices that allow public access to take the temperature of every individual who enters and certify with an official stamp that this action was taken.

While the cost of a touchless thermometer and a rubber stamp is virtually negligible in the U.S., in the developing countries of Africa where the average monthly wage is between \$200 and \$300 U.S., such an expenditure would likely cost a family a missed meal.

Using some of the undesigned mission donations we receive, we were able to immediately provide the necessary funds to allow our mission field office in Nigeria to comply with this new government mandate.

Using those same donated mission funds, we were able to provide much-needed chairs for one of the churches in Nigeria that your donations support. While such a purchase seems minor here in the U.S., the subsistence lifestyle in Nigeria makes such an expenditure almost impossible.

Please accept our gratitude and that of the beneficiaries of your support of the work in the vineyard in Nigeria and elsewhere.

To continue supporting the work in the mission field, mark your donations *Missions*. [LM](#)



Items purchased for our mission field office in Nigeria.

from the
Mission Fields



Spreading the Printed Page

Seizing an Opportunity in Central and South America

Over the years, Pastor Domingo Nunez, the Director of Outreach for Steps to Life, has made many trips to several different countries in Central and South America. During these visits, he has noticed a surprising lack of the availability of many of the writings of Ellen G. White in the local language. Being fluent in Spanish, he sensed an opportunity to help the citizens of these countries in their efforts to know and share the wise counsel provided by God's prophet to the remnant by initiating a program to make more of the Spirit of Prophecy available in Spanish. Following is his report on his plans toward that objective.

Populations of selected metro areas in Latin America



Mexico City, Mexico
21 mil.



Bogotá, Colombia
11 mil.



Buenos Aires, Argentina
15 mil.



Lima, Peru
10 mil.

There are more than 450 million native speakers of Spanish (additional 75 million people speak Spanish as their second language), making it second only to Chinese in terms of the most spoken languages in the world. English is third with 360 million of native speakers. Yet, only 60-70% of Spirit of Prophecy has been translated to Spanish.

Over the years that I have been traveling to Central and South America, working with many independent groups in several different countries, I realized that only 60% to 70% of the Spirit of Prophecy has been translated into Spanish, and much of what has been translated is no longer being printed. So over the years I have tried to envision a way that we can make more of the books available to the brothers in Central and South America—not only the major books but every piece of literature available for outreach work, literature distribution, and evangelism.

I thank God for His blessings that He has made it possible that brothers in the faith from Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Argentina are willing to work together as a team to translate into Spanish any literature that is needed. The Lord made possible for this group of brothers to volunteer and put together this team for His work in these end times.

We need to assist them by providing all the printing equipment needed to print and produce all of this material, not for money-making or profit, but to make available to every person the materials they need to be able to do effectively the work of literature distribution, outreach work and evangelism.

We are living in an extremely critical time in history. I believe that we are living in the last days of the history of this world. While we still have the freedom and opportunity to help each other and work together, we must continue looking for and exploring ways to make this project happen. We need your financial support—for literature translation, printing, and binding to help our brothers around Latin America and to help us to achieve this goal in the name of our Lord.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Domingo Nunez

“

There is much to be done in the way of establishing centers for our work in new fields. Missionary printing offices should be established in many places. In connection with our mission schools there should be facilities for printing and for training workers in this line. Where there are in training persons of various nationalities, speaking different languages, each should learn to print in his own tongue, also to translate into that tongue from the English.

Testimonies, vol. 7, 169 **LM**

Animal Self-Medication:

Do Wild Animals Heal Themselves?

Growing scientific evidence indicates that animals indeed have knowledge of natural medicines. In fact, they have access to the world's largest pharmacy: nature itself.

The emerging science of *Zoopharmacognosy* studies how animals use leaves, roots, seeds and minerals to treat a variety of ailments. Biologists witnessing animals eating foods not part of their usual diet realize the animals are self-medicating with natural remedies.

Researchers who observed a pregnant African elephant for over a year made an interesting discovery. The elephant kept regular dietary habits throughout her long pregnancy, but the routine changed abruptly towards the end of her term. Heavily pregnant, the elephant set off in search of a shrub that grew 17 miles from her usual food source. The elephant chewed and ate the leaves and bark of the bush, then gave birth a few days later. The elephant, it seemed, had sought out this plant specifically to induce her labor. The same plant also happens to be brewed by Kenyan women to make a labor-inducing tea.

Not only do many animals know which plant they require, they also know exactly which part of the plant they should use and how they should ingest it. The *Aspilia* shrub produces bristly leaves which the chimpanzees in Tan-

zania carefully fold up, then roll around their mouths before swallowing whole. The prickly leaves 'scour' parasitical worms from the chimps' intestinal lining.

The same chimps also peel the stems and eat the pith of the *Vernonia* plant (or bitter leaf). In bio-chemical research, *Vernonia* was found to have anti-parasitic and anti-microbial properties. Both *Vernonia* and *Aspilia* have long been used in Tanzanian folk medicine for stomach upsets and fevers.

It is only the sick chimpanzees that eat the plants. The chimps often grimace as they chew the *Vernonia* pith, indicating that they are not doing this for fun; healthy animals would find the bitter taste unpalatable.

Wild animals won't seek out a remedy unless they need it. Scientists studying baboons at the Awash Falls in Ethiopia noted that although the tree *Balanites aegyptiaca* (Desert date) grew all around the falls, only the baboons living below the falls ate the tree's fruit. These baboons were

exposed to a parasitic worm found in water-snails. *Balanites* fruit is known to repel the snails. Baboons living above the falls were not in contact with the water-snails and therefore had no need of the medicinal fruit.

Many animals eat minerals like clay or charcoal for their curative properties. Colobus monkeys on the island of Zanzibar have been observed stealing and eating charcoal from human bonfires. The charcoal counteracts toxic phenols produced by the mango and almond leaves which make up their diet.

Some species of South American parrot and macaw are known to eat soil with a high kaolin content. The parrots' diet contains toxins because of the fruit seeds they eat. The kaolin clay absorbs the toxins and carries them out of the birds' digestive systems, leaving the parrots unharmed by the poisons. Kaolin has been used for centuries in many cultures as a remedy for human gastrointestinal upset.

Particularly among primates, medicinal skills appear to be taught and learned. Adult females are often seen batting their infant's hand from a particular leaf or stem as if to say "No, not that one." Excerpts from www.natural-wonder-pets.com/do-wild-animals-heal-themselves.html

"All the creatures of the woods and hills are a part of His [God's] great household. He opens His hand and satisfies 'the desire of every living thing' (Psalm 145:16)." *Child Guidance*, 59. **LM**



Q:

*What
composes
a person's
"frame"?*

A:

"Our heavenly Father requires no more nor less than He has given us ability to do. He lays upon His servants no burdens that they are not able to bear. 'He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust' (Psalm 103:14). All that He claims from us we through divine grace can render." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 362.

"The Lord is full of compassion for His suffering ones. What sins are too great for His pardon? He is merciful, and as such is infinitely more ready and more pleased to pardon than to condemn. He is gracious, not looking for wrong in us; 'He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are but dust' (Psalm 103:14)." *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 231.

"Our life is in the hands of God. He sees dangers threatening us that we cannot see. He is the giver of all our blessings; the provider of all our mercies; the orderer of all our experiences. He sees the perils that we cannot see. He may permit to come upon His people that which fills their hearts with sadness, because He sees that they need to make

straight paths for their feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. He knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust. Even the very hairs of our head are numbered." *In Heavenly Places*, 265.

"Our heavenly Father measures and weighs every trial before He permits it to come upon the believer. He considers the circumstances and the strength of the one who is to stand under the proving and test of God, and He never permits the temptations to be greater than the capacity of resistance." *Mind, Character, and Personality*, Book 2, 473.

"God is longsuffering and of tender mercy. Should He deal with us according to our perversity, according to our foolish, erratic course, our changeableness, where would we be? But 'He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust' (Psalm 103:14)." *This Day With God*, 258.

"The Lord Jesus gave Himself a sacrifice for us. He knows us and He knows just what we need. Trial lasts only for a season. Encourage your heart in faith. We must not look on trial as punishment." *That I May Know Him*, 277. **LM**

**Know that the LORD,
He is God;**

**It is He who has made
us, and not we ourselves;**

**We are His people and
the sheep of His pasture.**

Psalm 100:3





"Give Us Our Daily Bread"

Matthew 6:11

The above title is a well-recognized phrase from a prayer recorded in the Bible. It's not just any prayer. This one was recited by Jesus Himself and lists several petitions to our Heavenly Father. These few simple words tell us much more about life in the period of ancient Rome:

1. Bread was a daily staple.
2. It's listed as the first petition, therefore, an issue of the utmost importance.

The text confirms that bread has been the food staple for thousands of years. We know from later history that lack of bread spelled trouble for the ruling class who could easily lose their power if their subjects lacked bread. Bread is often consumed at every meal in many cultures. Wheat is the world's #1 cultivated plant by far.

Even in modern history, if the price of bread goes too high, food riots and revolutions can unfold. The Arab Spring in 2010 in part happened because bread prices spiked, and political unrest followed. The price of wheat on international markets, hence the price of bread, can spin the world into trouble, especially in the Arab world.

What is bread? Three simple ingredients: flour, water, salt. If we consumed these three ingredients separately, we wouldn't survive for too long. Yet, these three simple ingredients baked into bread can sustain us indefinitely.

A little grain of wheat is a miracle of life. It contains the nutrients to sustain life: carbohydrates, protein, minerals, vitamins. They're locked in the little kernel, which is not digestible for humans. It becomes digestible once it is ground into flour and then fermented, which is the art of bakery. Fermentation unlocks the nutrients. Natural bacteria will take care of the fermentation process. Where does the bacteria come from? From the air! Once you leave wet flour on the table, the bacteria from the air will start working its magic and the process of fermentation begins. It is called the natural starter.

All of a sudden, we have a very nutritious substance. Working with the natural starter is more difficult than commercially purchased yeast, but worth the effort. Fast-acting commercial yeast does not unlock all the nutrients, which results in digestion problems in many people.

Natural bacteria will cause a glutenous mass to form that sticks together, hence the word *gluten*, which is a wheat protein. As the bacteria works and creates gases, a loaf of bread becomes full of air bubbles. Interestingly, we like bread because of the air bubbles inside. They deepen the natural flavor of grain. The air bubbles also make bread voluminous, which gives us the feeling of being full even if in reality we haven't consumed much. This feeling of fullness, physical satisfaction, has been so important throughout history when other food was scarce. Bread has been our staple for generations reaching back to ancient Egypt.

The Gluten Free Trend

Yet in our modern times, a gluten-free craze has engulfed the western food scene. Intolerance to gluten is being widely reported. Scientists at first couldn't figure out the problem of how possibly so many people can be gluten-intolerant if we have been eating bread for thousands of years. Sure, there are a few people who suffer from the celiac disease who should not consume gluten, but that's only one percent of the population.

This whole gluten-free trend started in the United States and a little misunderstanding helped the gluten-free industry to take off. The food industry is always looking for gaps in the market. Some marketer realized that the tiny population of people with celiac disease would also like to indulge in pastries and pasta, but had no gluten-free alternative. So a small gluten-free shelf appeared in grocery stores. An unsuspecting consumer sees a sign that reads "gluten free." The consumer has no idea what gluten is, but thinks "Oh, gluten free, it's probably better for me." Suddenly, mainstream consumers for whom these products were never intended started creating a huge market out of ignorance. Food companies didn't waste any time and enlarged their gluten-free portfolio. This gluten-free illiteracy can go to extremes, such as a bag of potato chips labeled "gluten free." Potatoes have never contained any gluten in the first place. It is as if a spaghetti box were labeled "pineapple free."

When researching websites of companies producing gluten-free products, one can hardly find any evidence or benefit of a gluten-free diet. Often, the strongest argument one finds on such websites is that many people are gluten-intolerant and don't know it. Therefore, should all of us quit eating bread? An educated consumer can make his/her own conclusion for such logic.

There are people intolerant of peanuts, strawberries, and a wide variety of foods. It doesn't mean that the rest of us can't enjoy strawberries.



Chemical Cocktail

Yet still, is it somehow possible that an increased number of people are really intolerant to gluten? Scientists did discover one reason. It appears in the ingredients listed on bread packages.

As already mentioned, bread should contain just three ingredients: flour, water, salt. Bread purchased in the supermarket has 25–35 ingredients listed on the package. For two reasons:

- Bread manufacturing has to be a fast process to be profitable.
- Commercial bread has to last for weeks or months on the shelf.

Both goals can be achieved by using artificial fermentation starters and adding a myriad of chemicals to the process.

Raising dough the traditional way takes more time. Our grandmothers who made bread at home dedicated time and effort. Such bread we call today sourdough, which is how bread was historically made. Until about 100 years ago, no other bread than sourdough existed. Some independent bakeries still may bake bread this way, but the price will be premium. A supermarket consumer got used to packaged bread lasting for months for a negligible price.

Let's not get confused, however. Packaged bread labeled "sourdough" is most likely not the real deal unless you're sourcing your bread from a small independent baker who doesn't use commercial yeast. Such bakeries are hard to come by.

Large factories' profits would be gone if they took 2–3 days to make a loaf of bread. So they found ways to speed

up the process. Commercial yeast will do wonders in minutes, a process that naturally takes long hours or days. The product has to last for months, and a load of chemical preservatives will assure a long shelf life.

This chemical cocktail and super speedy yeast take a health toll – health issues that people attribute to gluten, when in reality they're consuming an artificial product that our grandmothers wouldn't even call bread.

Commercial bread is made of white flour because it is shelf stable, nonperishable. We have removed all nutrients from bread by removing the outer layer of the grain which is needed for digestion. This is another reason why so many consumers experience an uneasy feeling in their stomach – there is no nutrition in modern "bread."

Food scientists soon realized this mistake, so they found a way to put the nutrients back. Not by leaving the grain in its natural state, but by artificially adding back some minerals and vitamins. This product is called "enriched flour" which consumers will find listed on nearly every baked goods package.

Most of us are bread and pastry lovers. So where can we source these goodies in our chemical-laden world? Try our ancestors' way. The Internet can come to the rescue! There are various YouTube channels and other resources that will teach you how to make your own bread with no commercial starters. Often there are local courses that will teach you this long-lost art. Once you master bread making, you'll have a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Bake such bread with freshly ground whole wheat flour.

Do you think you are gluten intolerant? Unless you have been diagnosed with the celiac disease, taste such bread, made the natural sourdough way, which makes grains digestible, and see what your stomach and taste buds will say. [LM](#)



Unlike fast-acting commercial yeast, homemade starter unlocks the grain nutrients necessary for digestion and our health.

Heaven-born Peace

By John J. Grosboll

Often people wonder why bad things happen to good people and why God has allowed millions of His faithful followers to be martyred by governments or various religious groups over the years.

Just before Jesus was betrayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, He said to His disciples, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master’ (John 13:16). If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me” (John 15:18–21).



“

There were multiple attempts to kill all the apostles, and all but John met with violent deaths.

People who do not understand God, have a problem believing the one who comes to them with a message from God. When that message is diametrically opposed to the way they are used to living, they object to having their sins reproved. Just a few

days before the crucifixion, Jesus again warned His disciples that they would be persecuted and delivered up to the synagogues and prisons. Although they would be brought before kings and rulers for His name's sake, it would be an occasion for a testimony. They need not worry beforehand how to answer the charges, because they would be given an answer at that time which their adversaries would not be able to contradict or resist. They would even be betrayed by their family members and some of them would even be put to death. (See Luke 21:12–16.)

This prophecy by Jesus was fulfilled in a marked manner. In fact, there were multiple attempts to kill all the apostles, and all but John met with violent deaths. Because God had more work for John to do, he was miraculously delivered from a violent attempt on his life.

After the resurrection, Jesus predicted that Peter would glorify God by dying a martyr's death. Notice what He said in John 21:18, 19: “Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.” This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me.”

That prediction was fulfilled right to the letter. When Peter was old, he and the apostle Paul both yielded up their lives as martyrs for Christ in the city of Rome, as seed for a vast harvest of millions of saints and martyrs since that time. About the time of Paul's second arrest in Rome, Peter was also apprehended and thrust into prison.

Peter had made himself especially obnoxious to Nero because he had had great success in exposing the deceptions and defeating the plots of Simon Magus, the sorcerer who had followed him to Rome to oppose and hinder the work of the gospel.

Nero was a believer in magic, and therefore he was greatly incensed against the apostle and was prompted to order his arrest. The emperor's malice against Paul was also heightened by the fact that there were members of the imperial household, Caesar's household, as well as other persons of distinction who had become Christians in the city of Rome as a result of Paul's being a prisoner there for two years prior to his arrest.

Because of his malice, Nero decided to cut Paul's life short as soon as he could find a plausible pretext for so doing. Nero's mind had been so impressed by the force of the apostle's words at his last trial that he deferred making a decision in the case. Paul was neither acquitted nor condemned. However, the sentence was only deferred, and it was not long before a decision was reached and pronounced that consigned the apostle to a martyr's grave. Being a Roman citizen, he could not be subjected to torture. Therefore, he was sentenced to be beheaded.

Peter, being a Jew and a foreigner and not a Roman citizen, was condemned to be scourged and crucified. In prospect of this fearful death, the apostle remembered his great sin when he had denied Jesus during the time of His trial. His only thought was how unworthy he was to be put to death in the same manner as was his Master. Peter had sincerely repented of his sin and had been given a high commission by the Lord, but he could never forgive himself.

The two apostles, Paul and Peter, had been separated for many years in their labors because of their different commissions. Peter's commission was to preach the gospel especially to the Jews. Paul had been commissioned to preach the gospel especially to the Gentiles. But the time and place of their martyrdom was similar, both in the region of Rome. Peter entreated his executioners as a last favor that he might be nailed to

the cross with his head downward. His request was granted and, in this manner, died the great apostle Peter.

Paul was led in a private manner to the place of his execution. His persecutors were alarmed at the extent of his influence and were afraid that converts might be won to Christianity even by the scenes of his death. Few spectators were allowed to be present. But even the hardened soldiers, who attended him and listened to his words saw with amazement that he was cheerful, and even joyous, at the prospect of such a death. His spirit of forgiveness toward his murderers and his unwavering confidence in Christ right up to the end, proved a fragrance of life unto life to some who witnessed his martyrdom.

More than one person ere long accepted Christ due to Paul's witness. To the latest hour of his life, Paul demonstrated the truth of what he had written to the Corinthian church. It says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels [that is, the gospel] that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man



*Often
people
wonder why bad
things happen to
good people.*

is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:17, 18).

In his life, Paul demonstrated the truth of which he spoke and wrote, which gave such convincing power to his preaching and to his deportment. The prophet Isaiah said, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You" (Isaiah 26:3).

Paul experienced heaven-born, heaven-generated peace. It was written on his countenance, and responsible for winning so many souls to the gospel. Paul had what so many desired and did not have.

As Paul walked toward the place of his execution, he did not see the glimmering sword that was so soon to make him a martyr, nor did he see his

executioner. Rather, his mind was in a conversation with the Eternal, saying, "O, Lord, You are my comfort, and You are my portion. When will I embrace you? When will I see You for myself with no dimming veil between?" Since his conversion, Paul had carried with him the very atmosphere of heaven. Everyone who had associated with him had seen this. They had felt the influence of his connection with Christ and the companionship of angels. "The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity." *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, 331. Allowing yourself to get into an argument may simply provoke opposition, but a godly example has a power that is impossible to completely resist.

Paul lost sight of his own sufferings, but he was concerned about his associates that were with him. He knew that in a few minutes he would be leaving them to cope with prejudice, and hatred, and persecution; so he endeavored to strengthen and encourage the few Christians who had accompanied him to the place of his execution. He repeated

“
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to them the exceeding precious promises given to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. He assured them that nothing would fail of all that the Lord had spoken concerning His tried and faithful ones. He assured them as he wrote to

Timothy, “I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day” (2 Timothy 1:12).

Christians might be oppressed for a little season with heaviness because of manifold trials and temptations. They may be destitute of earthly comfort, but they can encourage their hearts by those words. That day will come, the glad morning of peace. The perfect day will come.

Paul declared to his brethren that it had not appeared to those who lived in the times of the Old Testament, the great and good things that were going to be given to those who believed in Jesus. Those who lived in Old Testament times desired, he said, to see the things that we see, and to hear the things which we hear. But they died without the sight or the knowledge. The greater light which we have received since Christ has come has made us more accountable because we know more.

Jesus said, “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches” (Luke 16:10, 11)? Again in Luke 12:47, 48, Jesus said, “That servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.”

Christians can behold the ladder that Jacob saw, the ladder that stretches from earth to heaven. That ladder represents Jesus Christ, who connected this earth with the infinite resources of heaven. Paul, looking toward the future, saw that there would be men and women in future ages who would not consider or hold their lives dear to themselves, but they would hold aloft the banner of the cross amid the dark mazes of infidelity. He heard in his mind these witnessings to Jesus as the Son of the Most High God, the Saviour of the world. He heard the martyrs' shout of triumph, their fearless testimony for the faith that they know is true. It fell upon his ear from the rack, the torture chamber, the stake, the dungeon, from the dens and caves of the earth where, as he wrote, “They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth” (Hebrews 11:37, 38).

With a continually increasing assurance, he heard the Christian of future ages saying, “I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.” He knew that for him there awaited a crown of life. He knew the promise that Jesus gave in John 6:40 where He said to the Jews, “This is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

The Jews wanted deliverance from the Romans. They wanted a Messiah that would set up a temporal kingdom in this world. When Pilate asked Jesus if He was a king, the Jews interjected, “This man is against Caesar because He calls Himself a king.” And Pilate said to Him, “Are you a king” (John 18:37, *first part*)? And Jesus said, “You say rightly that I am a king.” But “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here” (verses 37, *last part*, 36).



The kingdom of God is within you; it has to do with a change in heart, a change in spirit that is worked out by the Holy Spirit.

The kingdom that the Lord came to set up is a kingdom of righteousness. It is a kingdom that is established in the heart. Until the heart is cured from the leprosy of sin, no person can be given the gift of eternal life. For this reason, Jesus said to the Jews, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:20, 21).

The kingdom of God is within you; it has to do with a change in heart, a change in spirit that is worked out by the Holy Spirit. The kingdom that Jesus came to establish was not a physical kingdom, but a spiritual kingdom, one of righteousness.

Revelation 11:15 says, “The seventh angel sounded: and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” The time is

coming when the nations of this world will all come to an end and Christ will establish a kingdom that will last forever (Daniel 2; Revelation 11). That was the kingdom that the apostle Paul was looking forward to. He was looking forward to that time when the Lord would come and he would be given a crown of life. He would be resurrected. Therefore he wasn’t afraid to die; he knew that death was just a moment of silence and darkness until his Lord would return and take him and all the other saints out of this world. He says, “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:6–8).

It has been almost 20 centuries since Paul, the aged, poured out his blood as a witness for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. No faithful hand recorded for the generations to come the last scenes in the life of this holy man, but inspiration has preserved his dying testimony. Like a trumpet peal his voice has rung out through the ages, nerving with his own courage thousands of faithful witnesses for Christ, and awakening in thousands of sorrow-stricken hearts the echo of his own triumphant joy.

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

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January 31 – February 6, 2021

The Rebellion at Kadesh

Key Text

“But My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it” (Numbers 14:24).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 387–394.

Introduction

“The Lord promised to spare Israel from immediate destruction; but because of their unbelief and cowardice He could not manifest His power to subdue their enemies. Therefore in His mercy He bade them, as the only safe course, to turn back toward the Red Sea.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 391.

Sunday

1 SPIES SENT INTO CANAAN

1.a. For what purpose were spies sent from Kadesh into the land of Canaan? Actually, whose idea was it for the spies to go into the land of Canaan? Numbers 13:1–3; 17–20; Deuteronomy 1:20–25.

1.b. After how many days did the spies return to Kadesh, and what visible tokens of the fertility of the land did they bring back? Numbers 13:21–26.

Note: “They went, and surveyed the whole land, entering at the southern border and proceeding to the northern extremity. They

returned after an absence of forty days. The people of Israel were cherishing high hopes and were waiting in eager expectancy. The news of the spies’ return was carried from tribe to tribe and was hailed with rejoicing. The people rushed out to meet the messengers, who had safely escaped the dangers of their perilous undertaking. The spies brought specimens of the fruit, showing the fertility of the soil.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 387.

Monday

2 THE SPIES’ REPORTS

2.a. What report did ten of the spies bring? Numbers 13:27–29, 31–33.

Note: “They [the ten spies] were resolved to discourage all effort to gain possession of Canaan. They distorted the truth in order to sustain their baleful influence. ... When men yield their hearts to unbelief they place themselves under the control of Satan, and none can tell to what lengths he will lead them.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 389.

2.b. What was the response of Caleb and Joshua? Numbers 13:30; 14:6–9. What is one of our greatest needs today?

Note: “Calebs have been greatly needed in different periods of the history of our work. Today we need men of thorough fidelity, men who follow the Lord fully, men who are not disposed to be silent when they ought to speak, who are as true as steel to principle, who do not seek to make a pretentious show, but who walk humbly with God, patient, kind, obliging, courteous men, who understand that the science of prayer is to exercise faith and show works that will tell to the glory of God and the good of His people.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1113.

2.c. How did the people receive the conflicting reports of the spies? Numbers 14:1–4, 10.

Note: “Hope and courage gave place to cowardly despair, as the spies uttered the sentiments of their unbelieving hearts, which were filled with discouragement prompted by Satan. Their unbelief cast a gloomy shadow over the congregation, and the mighty power of God, so often manifested in behalf of the chosen nation, was forgotten. The people did not wait to reflect; they did not reason that He who had brought them thus far would certainly give them the land; they did not call to mind how wonderfully God had delivered them from their oppressors, cutting a path through the sea and destroying the pursuing hosts of Pharaoh.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 388.

“Revolt and open mutiny quickly followed; for Satan had full sway, and the people seemed bereft of reason.” *Ibid.*, 389.

Tuesday

3 THE PEOPLE MURMUR

3.a. How did Moses and Aaron act when they saw that the people had accepted the cowardly report and were getting rebellious? Numbers 14:5.

Note: “In humiliation and distress ‘Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel’ (Numbers 14:5). not knowing what to do to turn them from their rash and passionate purpose. Caleb and Joshua attempted to quiet the tumult. With their garments rent in token of grief and indignation, they rushed in among the people, and their ringing voices were heard above the tempest of lamentation and rebellious grief: ‘The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not’ (verses 7–9).” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 389, 390.



3.b. How did the Lord intervene at this crucial moment, and what did He say? Numbers 14:10–12.

Note: “The unfaithful spies were loud in denunciation of Caleb and Joshua, and the cry was raised to stone them. The insane mob seized missiles with which to slay those faithful men. They rushed forward with yells of madness, when suddenly the stones dropped from their hands, a hush fell upon them, and they shook with fear. God had interposed to check their murderous design. The glory of His presence, like a flaming light, illuminated the tabernacle. All the people beheld the signal of the Lord. A mightier one than they had revealed Himself, and none dared continue their resistance. The spies who brought the evil report crouched terror-stricken, and with bated breath sought their tents.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 390.

3.c. As Moses pleaded with the Lord, what reason did he give for the Lord to pardon and spare the people of Israel? Numbers 14:13–19.

Wednesday

4 THE MURMURERS ARE PUNISHED

4.a. What sentence did the Lord pronounce upon the murmurers and rebels? Numbers 14:22, 23, 29–33.

Note: “In their rebellion the people had exclaimed, ‘Would God we had died in this wilderness’ (Numbers 14:2, *last part*)! Now this prayer was to be granted. ... As the spies had spent forty days in their journey, so the hosts of Israel were to wander in the wilderness forty years.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 391.

4.b. How did God punish the ten spies who gave the evil report? Numbers 14:36, 37.

Note: “When Moses made known to the people the divine decision, their rage was changed to mourning. They knew that their punishment was just. The ten unfaithful spies, divinely smitten by the plague, perished before the eyes of all Israel; and in their fate the people read their own doom.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 391.

4.c. What sin of presumption did the murmurers commit the next day, and with what results? Numbers 14:39–45.

Note: “Forced to submission at last, the survivors ‘returned, and wept before the Lord;’ but ‘the Lord would not hearken’ to their voice (Deuteronomy 1:45). By their signal victory the enemies of Israel, who had before awaited with trembling the approach of that mighty host, were inspired with confidence to resist them. All the reports they had heard concerning the marvelous things that God had wrought for His people, they now regarded as false, and they felt that there was no cause for fear. That first defeat of Israel, by inspiring the Canaanites with courage and resolution, had greatly increased the difficulties of the conquest. Nothing remained for Israel but to fall back from the face of their victorious foes, into the wilderness, knowing that here must be the grave of a whole generation.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 394.

Thursday

5 FALLING SHORT OF GODLY SORROW

5.a. What kind of repentance leads to salvation? 2 Corinthians 7:10. What was missing in the sorrow of the Israelites?

Note: “Now they [the people] seemed sincerely to repent of their sinful conduct; but they sorrowed because of the result of their evil course rather than from a sense of their ingratitude and disobedience. When they found that the Lord did not relent in His decree, their self-will again arose, and they declared that they would not return into the wilderness. In commanding them to retire from the land of their enemies, God tested their apparent submission and proved that it was not real. ... Their hearts were unchanged, and they only needed an excuse to occasion a similar outbreak. ...

“Had they mourned for their sin when it was faithfully laid before them, this sentence would not have been pronounced; but they mourned for the judgment; their sorrow was not repentance, and could not secure a reversing of their sentence.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 391, 392.

5.b. What accompanies true repentance? Acts 3:19.

Note: “In order to stand forgiven, the sinner must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed, and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice. Without true repentance, there can be no true conversion.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 298.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What was shown by the fact that the people were eager to send spies to survey the land?
- 2 How did unbelief affect the ten spies and the congregation as a whole? How can we show the same unbelief?
- 3 How does a true leader attempt to counteract the work of complainers?
- 4 Would you like God to take you at your word when you speak in haste?
- 5 If I am truly sorry for my sins, what will it lead to in my own life?

February 7 – 13, 2021

The Rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram

Key Text

“And they [Korah, Dathan, and Abiram] rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown” (Numbers 16:2).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 395–405.

Introduction

“The former rebellions had been mere popular tumults, arising from the sudden impulse of the excited multitude; but now a deep-laid conspiracy was formed, the result of a determined purpose to overthrow the authority of the leaders appointed by God Himself.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 395.

Sunday

1 A CONSPIRACY

1.a. What conspiracy developed among the Israelites while they were chafing under the Lord’s decision that they must wander in the wilderness forty years? Who were the main conspirators? Numbers 16:1–3.

1.b. What test did Moses propose to the conspirators to prove the divine call? Numbers 16:4–7, 16–18. Why were the people inclined to sympathize with the rebels?

Note: “To those who are in the wrong, and deserving of reproof, there is nothing more pleasing than to receive sympathy and praise.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 397.

“The people thought if Korah could lead them, and encourage them, and dwell upon their righteous acts, instead of reminding them of their failures, they should have a very peaceful, prosperous journey, and he would without doubt lead them, not back and forward in the wilderness, but into the promised land. They said that it was Moses who had told them that they could not go into the land, and that the Lord had not thus said.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, 31.

Monday

2 MOSES’ APPEALS AND WARNINGS

2.a. How did Moses try to reason with the main rebels, and of what did they accuse him? Numbers 16:8–15.

Note: “Dathan and Abiram had not taken so bold a stand as had Korah; and Moses, hoping that they might have been drawn into the conspiracy without having become wholly corrupted, summoned them to appear before him, that he might hear their charges against him. But they would not come, and they insolently refused to acknowledge his authority. ...

“Thus they applied to the scene of their bondage the very language in which the Lord had described the promised inheritance. They accused Moses of pretending to act under divine guidance, as a means of establishing his authority. ...

“It was evident that the sympathies of the people were with the disaffected party; but Moses made no effort at self-vindication. He solemnly appealed to God, in the presence of the congregation, as a witness to the purity of his motives and the uprightness of his conduct, and implored Him to be his judge.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 399.

2.b. What efforts did Moses and Aaron make to save the congregation from destruction? Numbers 16:22–30. What was the result of their efforts?

Note: “They [Moses and Aaron] fell upon their faces, with the prayer, ‘O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation’ (Numbers 16:22)?

“Korah had withdrawn from the assembly to join Dathan and Abiram when Moses, accompanied by the seventy elders, went down with a last warning to the men who had refused to come to him. The multitudes followed, and before delivering his message, Moses, by divine direction, bade the people, ‘Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.’ (verse 26). The warning was obeyed, for an apprehension of impending judgment rested upon all. The chief rebels saw themselves abandoned by those whom they had deceived, but their hardihood was unshaken. They stood with their families in the door of their tents, as if in defiance of the divine warning.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 400.

Tuesday

3 THE REBELS PUNISHED

3.a. What fate befell the rebels? Numbers 16:31–35.

Note: “The eyes of all Israel were fixed upon Moses as they stood, in terror and expectation, awaiting the event. As he ceased speaking, the solid earth parted, and the rebels went down alive into the pit, with all that pertained to them, and ‘they perished from among the congregation’ (Numbers 16:33, *last part*). The people fled, self-condemned as partakers in the sin.

“But the judgments were not ended. Fire flashing from the cloud consumed the two hundred and fifty princes who had offered incense. These men, not being the first in rebellion, were not destroyed with the chief conspirators. They were permitted to see their end, and to have an opportunity for repentance; but their sympathies were with the rebels, and they shared their fate.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 400, 401.

3.b. How do we know that God does not punish indiscriminately? Who was spared? Deuteronomy 24:16; Numbers 26:9–11; 1 Chronicles 9:19. What lessons can we learn from this?

Note: “The children were not condemned for the sins of the parents; but when, with a knowledge of all the light given to their parents, the children rejected the additional light granted to themselves, they became partakers of the parents’ sins, and filled up the measure of their iniquity.” *The Great Controversy*, 28.

“When Moses was entreating Israel to flee from the coming destruction, the divine judgment might even then have been stayed, if Korah and his company had repented and sought forgiveness. But their stubborn persistence sealed their doom. ... God in His great mercy made a distinction between the leaders in rebellion and those whom they had led. The people who had permitted themselves to be deceived were still granted space for repentance. Overwhelming evidence had been given that they were wrong, and that Moses was right. The signal manifestation of God’s power had removed all uncertainty.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 401.

3.c. What use was made of the censers of the rebels? For what purpose? Numbers 16:36–40.

Wednesday

4 THE PEOPLE ARE PUNISHED

4.a. Despite the evidences that were given to the congregation, what course did they pursue toward Moses and Aaron on the next day? Numbers 16:41.

Note: “It is hardly possible for men to offer greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities He would use for their salvation. The Israelites had not only done this, but had purposed to put both Moses and Aaron to death. Yet they did not realize the necessity of seeking pardon of God for their grievous sin. That night of probation was not passed in repentance and confession, but in devising some way to resist the evidences which showed them to be the greatest of sinners. They still cherished hatred of the men of God’s appointment, and braced themselves to resist their authority. Satan was at hand to pervert their judgment and lead them blindfold to destruction.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 402.

4.b. In what way did the Lord intervene once more with a severe punishment, and what did Moses and Aaron do to avert the judgment? Numbers 16:44–49.

Note: “Even after God stretched forth His hand and swallowed up the wrong-doers, and the people fled to their tents in horror, their rebellion was not cured. The depth of their disaffection was made manifest even under the judgment of the Lord. The morning after the destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their confederates, the people came to Moses and Aaron, saying, ‘Ye have killed the people of the Lord.’ (Numbers 16:41, *last part*). For this false charge on the servants of God, thousands more were killed, for there was in them sin, exultation and presumptuous wickedness.” *Ellen G. White Comments, The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1114.

“The guilt of sin did not rest upon Moses, and hence he did not fear and did not hasten away and leave the congregation to perish. Moses lingered, in this fearful crisis manifesting the true shepherd’s interest for the flock of his care. He pleaded that the wrath of God might not utterly destroy the people of His choice. By his intercession he stayed the arm of vengeance, that a full end might not be made of disobedient, rebellious Israel. ...

“As the smoke of the incense ascended, the prayers of Moses in the tabernacle went up to God; and the plague was stayed; but not until fourteen thousand of Israel lay dead, an evidence of the guilt of murmuring and rebellion.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 402, 403.

Thursday

5 A TESTIMONY AGAINST REBELLION

5.a. What test settled the question of the priesthood forever, and where was Aaron’s rod kept as a witness? Numbers 17:1–11.

Note: “All the remarkable changes in the rod occurred in one night, to convince them that God had positively distinguished between Aaron and the rest of the children of Israel.” *Ellen G. White Comments, The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1115.

5.b. What warning comes to us from that great rebellion? 1 Corinthians 10:10, 11.

Note: “Do not the same evils still exist that lay at the foundation of Korah’s ruin? Pride and ambition are widespread; and when these are cherished, they open the door to envy, and a striving for supremacy; the soul is alienated from God, and unconsciously drawn into the ranks of Satan. Like Korah and his companions, many, even of the professed followers of Christ, are thinking, planning, and working so eagerly for self-exaltation that in order to gain the sympathy and support of the people they are ready to pervert the truth, falsifying and misrepresenting the Lord’s servants, and even charging them with the base and selfish motives that inspire their own hearts. By persistently reiterating falsehood, and that against all evidence, they at last come to believe it to be truth. While endeavoring to destroy the confidence of the people in the men of God’s appointment, they really believe that they are engaged in a good work, verily doing God service.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 403, 404.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What attitude is pleasing to the natural heart when we are in the wrong?
- 2 When Dathan and Abiram refused to come and speak to Moses, what was significant about their families standing next to them?
- 3 What lesson can we learn from God’s treatment of the children of Korah?
- 4 After the destruction of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their confederates, what was the response of the people? Why is this attitude so dangerous?
- 5 What cherished attitudes lay at the foundation of rebellion against God?

February 14 – 20, 2021

Wandering Through the Wilderness

Key Text

“And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no” (Deuteronomy 8:2).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 406–410.

Introduction

“The wilderness wandering was not only ordained as a judgment upon the rebels and murmurers, but it was to serve as a discipline for the rising generation, preparatory to their entrance into the Promised Land.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 407.

Sunday

1 A DELAYED ENTRANCE INTO THE PROMISED LAND

1.a. How long did the children of Israel wander in the wilderness before they came again to Kadesh and crossed the Brook Zered? Deuteronomy 2:14. Why did it take so long?

Note: “God gave positive evidence that He rules in the heavens, and rebellion was punished with death. Only two of those who as adults left Egypt, saw the promised land. The wanderings of the people were extended until the rest were buried in the wilderness.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1113.

“Had Israel obeyed the directions given them by Moses, not one of those who started on the journey from Egypt would in the wilderness have fallen a prey to disease or death. They were under a safe Guide. Christ had pledged Himself to lead them safely to the promised land if they would follow His guidance. This vast multitude, numbering more than a million people, was under His direct rule. They were His family. In every one of them He was interested.” *Ibid.*, 1118.

Monday

2 GOD PROVIDES AND INSTRUCTS

2.a. What evidences do we have of God’s care for His people during their time of wandering in the wilderness? Nehemiah 9:19–21; Psalm 105:37.

2.b. How was the wilderness wandering a discipline for the rising generation? Deuteronomy 8:2, 3.

Note: “God permitted these lonely travels through the wilderness that His people might obtain an experience in enduring hardship, and that when they were in peril they might know that there was relief and deliverance in God alone. Thus they might learn to know and to trust God, and to serve Him with a living faith.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 409.

“As the people journeyed through the wilderness, many precious lessons were fixed in their minds by means of song. ... The commandments as given from Sinai, with promises of God’s favor and records of His wonderful works for their deliverance, were by divine direction expressed in song, and were chanted to the sound of instrumental music, the people keeping step as their voices united in praise.

“Thus their thoughts were uplifted from the trials and difficulties of the way, the restless, turbulent spirit was soothed and calmed, the principles of truth were implanted in the memory, and faith was strengthened.” *Education*, 39.

2.c. What was the main reason why many of the Israelites were unable to enter the Promised Land? How can we avoid falling into the same sin? Hebrews 3:7–14.

Note: “It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness. ... In like manner, it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed and His people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But unbelief separated them from God. As they refused to do the work which He had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message. In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning and find in Him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out.” *The Great Controversy*, 458.

Tuesday

3 THE INFLUENCE OF THE UNCONVERTED

3.a. What class of people often proved to be troublemakers? Numbers 11:4.

Note: “The mixed multitude that came up with the Israelites from Egypt were a source of continual temptation and trouble. They professed to have renounced idolatry and to worship the true God; but their early education and training had molded their habits and character, and they were more or less corrupted with idolatry and with irreverence for God. They were oftenest the ones to stir up strife and were the first to complain, and they leavened the camp with their idolatrous practices and their murmurings against God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 408.

3.b. What was God’s command with regard to uniting with unbelievers? Deuteronomy 7:3, 4; 2 Corinthians 6:14. What about today?

Note: “They [the Israelites] were warned not to have any connection with idolaters, not to intermarry with them, nor in any way put themselves in danger of being affected and corrupted by their abominations. They were counseled to shun the very appearance of evil, not to dabble around the borders of sin, for this was the surest way to be engulfed in sin and ruin.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, 1000.



*It is wrong
for Christians to
associate with those
whose morals are
loose.*

“God strictly forbade the intermarrying of His ancient people with other nations. ... But the heathen were in a more favorable condition than are the impenitent in this age, who, having the light of truth, yet persistently refuse to accept it.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 508.

3.c. What is always the result of being closely associated with the unconverted? 1 Corinthians 15:33, 34.

Note: “It is wrong for Christians to associate with those whose morals are loose. An intimate, daily intercourse which occupies time without contributing in any degree to the strength of the intellect or morals is dangerous. If the moral atmosphere surrounding persons is not pure and sanctified, but is tainted with corruption, those who breathe this atmosphere will find that it operates almost insensibly upon the intellect and heart to poison and to ruin.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 125.

Wednesday

4 CONTEMPT FOR DIVINE AUTHORITY

4.a. How was contempt for divine authority and violation of the third commandment punished? Leviticus 24:10–16, 23.

Note: “On one occasion the son of an Israelitish woman and of an Egyptian, one of the mixed multitude that had come up with Israel from Egypt, left his own part of the camp, and entering that of the Israelites, claimed the right to pitch his tent there. This the divine law forbade him to do, the descendants of an Egyptian being excluded from the congregation until the third generation. A dispute arose between him and an Israelite, and the matter being referred to the judges was decided against the offender.

“Enraged at this decision, he cursed the judge, and in the heat of passion blasphemed the name of God. . . . God Himself pronounced the sentence; by the divine direction the blasphemer was conducted outside the camp and stoned to death. Those who had been witness to the sin placed their hands upon his head, thus solemnly testifying to the truth of the charge against him. Then they threw the first stones, and the people who stood by afterward joined in executing the sentence.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 407, 408.

4.b. Why was the punishment for these offenses so severe? Exodus 20:7.

Note: “There are those who will question God’s love and His justice in visiting so severe punishment for words spoken in the heat of passion. But both love and justice require it to be shown that utterances prompted by malice against God are a great sin. The retribution visited upon the first offender would be a warning to others, that God’s name is to be held in reverence. But had this man’s sin been permitted to pass unpunished, others would have been demoralized; and as the result many lives must eventually have been sacrificed.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 408.

4.c. How do we sometimes show contempt for God’s authority today? Judges 17:6.

Note: “The sin of this age is disregard of God’s express commands.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 483.

Thursday

5 CHOOSING OBEDIENCE INSTEAD

5.a. Why did the Lord require obedience of His ancient people? Deuteronomy 6:1, 2, 24, 25. Where does true obedience spring from? Deuteronomy 6:5, 6.

Note: “All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.” *The Desire of Ages*, 668.

5.b. Where should we begin to teach obedience and why? Deuteronomy 6:7–9.

Note: “From their earliest life children should be taught to obey their parents, to respect their word, and to reverence their authority. . . . In respecting and rendering obedience to their parents, they may learn how to respect and obey their heavenly Father.” *Child Guidance*, 82, 83.

“Let the youth and the little children be taught to choose for themselves that royal robe woven in heaven’s loom—the ‘fine linen, clean and white’ (Revelation 19:8), which all the holy ones of earth will wear. This robe, Christ’s own spotless character, is freely offered to every human being. But all who receive it will receive and wear it here.

“Let the children be taught that as they open their minds to pure, loving thoughts and do loving and helpful deeds, they are clothing themselves with His beautiful garment of character.” *Ibid.*, 190.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Had the Israelites obeyed Moses, what would have happened to them?
- 2 What role did singing have in the wilderness journey?
- 3 What is to be our sole purpose in associating with unbelievers?
- 4 How can we reverence God’s name today?
- 5 How may we be daily clothing ourselves with Christ’s character?

February 21 – 27, 2021

The Smitten Rock

Key Text

“And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed Me not, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them” (Numbers 20:12).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 411–421.

Introduction

“To dispel forever from the minds of the Israelites the idea that a man was leading them, God found it necessary to allow their leader to die before they entered the land of Canaan.”
“Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1116.

Sunday

1 GOD SUPPLIES ALL NEEDS

1.a. How were the Israelites supplied with water during their wilderness wanderings? Psalm 105:41; Isaiah 48:21.

Note: “From the smitten rock in Horeb first flowed the living stream that refreshed Israel in the desert. During all their wanderings, wherever the need existed, they were supplied with water by a miracle of God’s mercy. The water did not, however, continue to flow from Horeb. Wherever in their journeyings they wanted water, there from the clefts of the rock it gushed out beside their encampment.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 411.

1.b. Who was the source of all their temporal as well as spiritual blessings during their wanderings? Psalm 78:52–55.

Note: “He [Christ] is the source of all power, the giver of all temporal and spiritual blessings. He employs human beings as co-workers, giving them a part to act with Him as His helping hand. We are to receive from Him, not to hoard for self-gratification, but to impart to others.” *The Review and Herald*, April 4, 1907.

Monday

2 THE FAITH OF THE PEOPLE TESTED

2.a. What trial of faith did the people of God have when they again came to Kadesh, and what was their reaction? Numbers 20:1–5.

Note: “Just before the Hebrew host reached Kadesh, the living stream ceased that for so many years had gushed out beside their encampment. It was the Lord’s purpose again to test His people. He would prove whether they would trust His providence or imitate the unbelief of their fathers.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 413.

“Before God permitted them to enter Canaan, they must show that they believed His promise. The water ceased before they had reached Edom. Here was an opportunity for them, for a little time, to walk by faith instead of sight. But the first trial developed the same turbulent, unthankful spirit that had been manifested by their fathers. No sooner was the cry for water heard in the encampment than they forgot the hand that had for so many years supplied their wants, and instead of turning to God for help, they murmured against Him.” *Ibid.*, 414.

2.b. What did Moses and Aaron do when they heard the complaints of the people? Numbers 20:6.

2.c. What were Moses and Aaron directed to do to satisfy the needs of the people? Numbers 20:7, 8. What mistaken idea, still cherished by the people, was the Lord trying to correct?

Note: “In all their wanderings, the children of Israel were tempted to attribute to Moses the special work of God, the mighty miracles that had been wrought to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. They charged Moses with bringing them out of the land of Egypt. It was true that God had manifested Himself wonderfully to Moses. He had specially favored him with His presence. To him God had revealed His exceeding glory. Upon the mount He had taken him into a sacred nearness to Himself, and had talked with him as a man speaks to a friend. But the Lord had given evidence after evidence that it was He Himself who was working for their deliverance.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, III5, III6.

Tuesday

3 MOSES AND AARON FAIL

3.a. How did Moses dishonor God when addressing the people? Numbers 20:9–11.

Note: “By his rash act Moses took away the force of the lesson that God purposed to teach. The rock, being a symbol of Christ, had been once smitten, as Christ was to be once offered. The second time it was needful only to speak to the rock, as we have only to ask for blessings in the name of Jesus. By the second smiting of the rock the significance of this beautiful figure of Christ was destroyed.

“More than this, Moses and Aaron had assumed power that belongs only to God. The necessity for divine interposition made the occasion one of great solemnity, and the leaders of Israel should have improved it to impress the people with reverence for God and to strengthen their faith in His power and goodness. When they angrily cried, ‘Must we fetch you water out of this rock?’ (Numbers 20:10)? they put themselves in God’s place, as though the power lay with themselves, men possessing human frailties and passions.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 418.

3.b. What punishment did Moses and Aaron bring upon themselves? Why? Numbers 20:12; Deuteronomy 3:23–27.

Note: “God did not on this occasion pronounce judgments upon those whose wicked course had so provoked Moses and Aaron. All the reproof fell upon the leaders. ... Moses and Aaron had felt themselves aggrieved, losing sight of the fact that the murmuring of the people was not against them but against God. It was by looking to themselves, appealing to their own sympathies, that they unconsciously fell into sin, and failed to set before the people their great guilt before God.

“Bitter and deeply humiliating was the judgment immediately pronounced. ... With rebellious Israel they must die before the crossing of the Jordan.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 418, 419.

“The transgression was known to the whole congregation; and had it been passed by lightly, the impression would have been given that unbelief and impatience under great provocation might be excused in those in responsible positions. But when it was declared that because of that one sin Moses and Aaron were not to enter Canaan, the people knew that God is no respecter of persons, and that He will surely punish the transgressor.” *Ibid.*, 420.

Wednesday

4 THE SMITTEN ROCK, A TYPE

4.a. Of whom was the smitten rock a type, and why was it wrong to smite the rock again? Isaiah 53:3–5.

Note: “The smitten rock was a figure of Christ, and through this symbol the most precious spiritual truths are taught. As the life-giving waters flowed from the smitten rock, so from Christ, ‘smitten of God,’ ‘wounded for our transgressions,’ ‘bruised for our iniquities’ (Isaiah 53:4, 5), the stream of salvation flows for a lost race. As the rock had been once smitten, so Christ was to be ‘once offered to bear the sins of many’ (Hebrews 9:28). Our Saviour was not to be sacrificed a second time; and it is only necessary for those who seek the blessings of His grace to ask in the name of Jesus, pouring forth the heart’s desire in penitential prayer. Such prayer will bring before the Lord of hosts the wounds of Jesus, and then will flow forth afresh the life-giving blood, symbolized by the flowing of the living water for Israel.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 411.

4.b. On what occasion and how was the flowing of water from the rock celebrated by the Jewish people in the days of Christ? John 7:37–39.

“

We are to receive from Him, not to hoard for self-gratification, but to impart to others.

The Review and Herald, April 4, 1907



Note: “The flowing of the water from the rock in the desert was celebrated by the Israelites, after their establishment in Canaan, with demonstrations of great rejoicing. In the time of Christ this celebration had become a most impressive ceremony. It took place on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, when the people from all the land were assembled at Jerusalem. On each of the seven days of the feast the priests went out with music and the choir of Levites to draw water in a golden vessel from the spring of Siloam. They were followed by multitudes of the worshipers, as many as could get near the stream drinking of it, while the jubilant strains arose, ‘With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation’ (Isaiah 12:3). Then the water drawn by the priests was borne to the temple amid the sounding of trumpets and the solemn chant, ‘Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem’ (Psalm 122:2). The water was poured out upon the altar of burnt offering, while songs of praise rang out, the multitudes joining in triumphant chorus with musical instruments and deep-toned trumpets.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 412.

Thursday

5 A LESSON FOR US

5.a. What lesson should we learn from the mistake of Moses? Psalm 106:33.

Note: “Moses was not guilty of a great crime, as men would view the matter; his sin was one of common occurrence. The psalmist says that ‘he spake unadvisedly with his lips’ (Psalm 106:33). To human judgment this may seem a light thing; but if God dealt so severely with this sin in His most faithful and honored servant, He will not excuse it in others. ... The more important one’s position, and the greater his influence, the greater is the necessity that he should cultivate patience and humility.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 420.

5.b. What warnings are calculated to keep us from self-exaltation? James 4:6, 7; 1 Corinthians 10:12.

Note: “However great one’s spiritual light, however much he may enjoy of the divine favor and blessing, he should ever walk humbly before the Lord, pleading in faith that God will direct every thought and control every impulse. ...

“However great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, transgression is our own act. It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel anyone to do evil. Satan attacks us at our weak points, but we need not be overcome. However severe or unexpected the assault, God has provided help for us, and in His strength we may conquer.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 421.

Friday

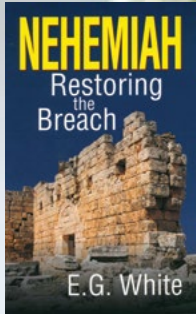
PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How did God supply water for the Israelites as they traveled? How does He supply our needs today?
- 2 How did the people react when God tested their faith? What about me?
- 3 Where was the focus of Moses and Aaron when they failed? Where is my focus, and what will the result be?
- 4 How was the beautiful lesson of the smitten Rock ruined by Moses?
- 5 How can I be kept safe from self-exaltation?

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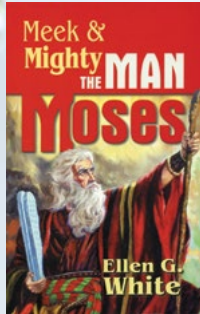
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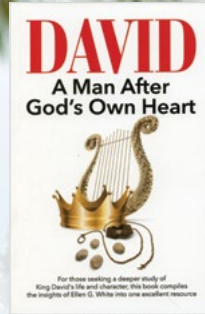
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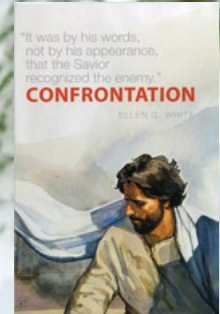
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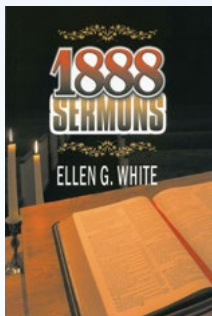
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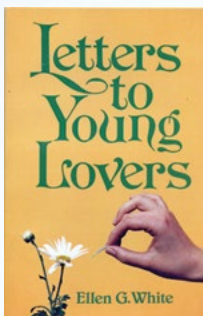
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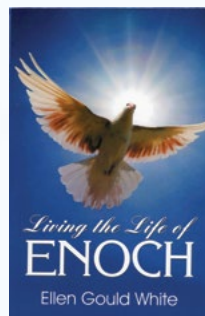
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Fruit

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WALNUT SPREAD

(A Steps to Life camp meeting favorite)

Ingredients 1

1 cup walnuts, finely chopped
1 cup water
6 oz. tomato paste
2 Tbsp. onion powder
1 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. cumin

Blend together.

Ingredients 2

Add
2 cups breadcrumbs
¼ cup green onions, chopped
¼ cup black olives, sliced
¼ cup celery, chopped (optional)

Mix well.





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