

HISTORIC  
**LANDMARKS**  
OF ADVENTISM

*The  
Alabaster  
Box*

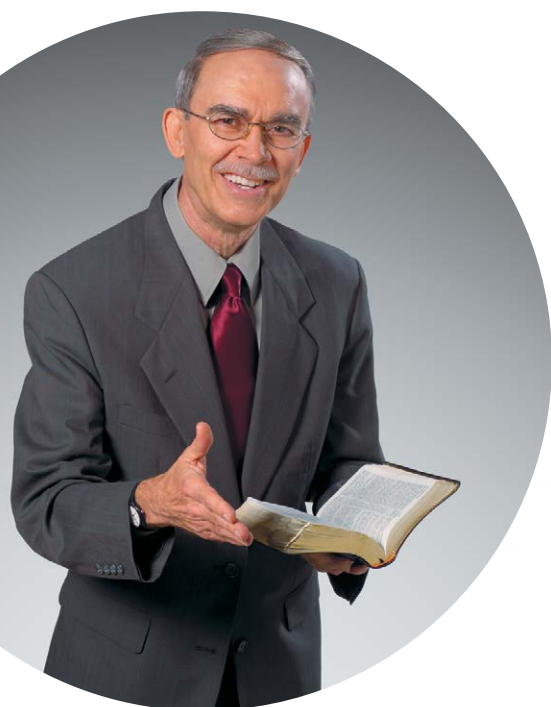
*Mary displayed her love  
for Jesus by breaking the  
alabaster box. Do we  
appreciate what He has  
done in our lives?*

*p. 2*

*Keys to  
Stress  
Control*

*p. 10*

*Happy  
New  
Year*



## From the Editor

*John J. Grosboll*

# Seekest Thou Great Things for Thyself? Seek Them Not.

John Harvey Kellogg was a visionary who also had the ability to get the entire Adventist denomination deeply in debt with his propositions for many medical buildings in the United States and Mexico for which there was not adequate funding. At the turn of the twentieth century the Adventist institutional indebtedness was approximately half a million dollars. To give some perspective regarding the size of this debt, physicians and ministers working for the denomination were only paid \$12–\$15 per week. Dr. Kellogg had a vision for Battle Creek to be the worldwide headquarters for the Adventist medical work.

At the same time, the leaders in the Adventist publishing work wanted to make Battle Creek a worldwide publishing center with the publishing house in Oakland, California, and the publishing work in Nashville, Tennessee, simply subsidiaries directed and controlled from Battle Creek.

Many reproofs and cautions against centralization were delivered, apparently in vain. But on February 18, 1902, the Battle Creek Sanitarium burned to the

ground. On December 30, 1902, the Review and Herald building burned to the ground. God's word does not return to Him void. If men will not listen to warning or reproof, He has other ways of speaking.

What happened in Battle Creek at the turn of the twentieth century is a warning to the whole world today. God gives warnings, reproofs, and rebukes. For 177 years, He has sent messengers all over the world with the three angels' messages, the last message of warning and available mercy for the repentant. If we do not listen, what is going to happen?

"We are warned that the Lord will come suddenly, surprising the world in their idolatrous wickedness." *Letter 243*, 1903

"The solemn fact is to be kept not only before the people of the world, but before our own churches also, that the day of the Lord will come suddenly, unexpectedly. The fearful warning of the prophecy is addressed to every soul. Let no one feel that he is secure from the danger of being surprised." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 336 **LM**

HISTORIC

## LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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

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# *The Alabaster Box Needs Rebreaking*

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By John J. Grosboll

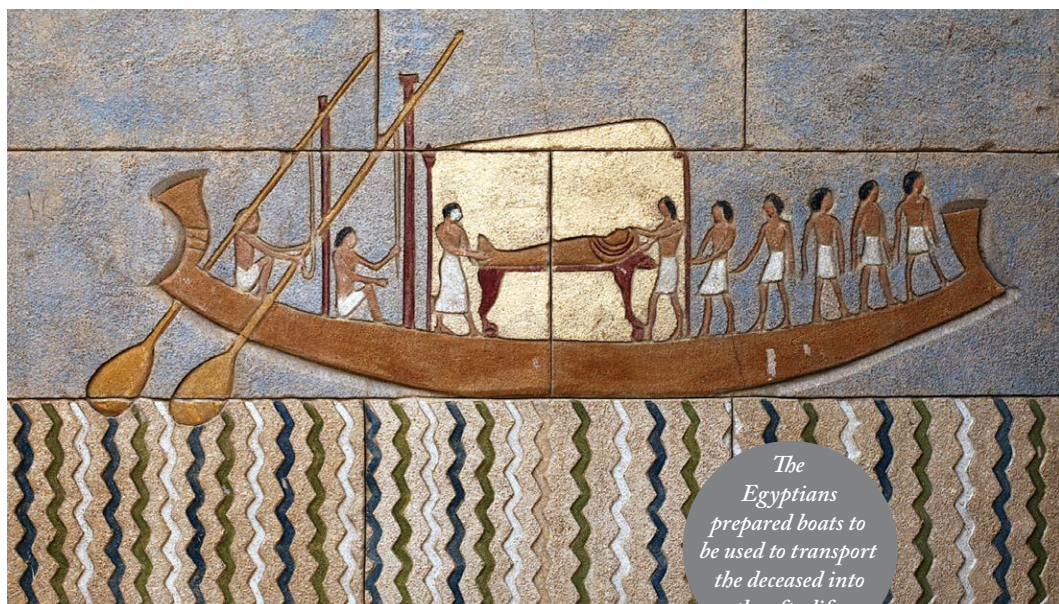
**J**ohn 11 tells the story of the resurrection of Lazarus. We find early in the chapter that a message was sent to Jesus that Lazarus was sick, and He was asked to come and heal him. But Jesus tarried. It is significant to note that Jesus did not come until Lazarus had been dead and laid in the tomb for four days. Why? Because many of the Jews then, like many Christians today, did not understand the state of the dead. They were confused by Greek philosophy and the devil's lie to Eve that a person can be disobedient and still not die—a lie he continues to promote.



After Adam and Eve sinned, the human race was destined to die as a consequence of sin. Only Enoch and Elijah were taken to heaven without experiencing death. Satan is a proven liar, but when he is proven wrong, he changes tactics—he invents a new theory. This new theory regarding death, spiritualism, said that when someone dies, there was still something left inside that does not die, but went to another place. The Egyptians believed in the afterlife and prepared elaborate boats that were buried in the tombs with their pharaohs so that they would have transportation for their journey there. The Greeks believed a person went to the underworld—Hades—but by using a spiritualist, their family and friends could contact and talk with them. We find an example of this in 1 Samuel 28, where it tells of Saul going to the witch of Endor to contact Samuel after he had died.

Ellen White says that since the time of Adam, the devil has been preparing for his final deception, his final battle against the church. One of his most effective ways to take over the world in the last days is regarding the state of the dead.

The Jews had mixed this pagan spiritualism into their own doctrine, and at the time of Lazarus' death, believed and taught that after a person died their spirit hovered around the body for three days. In those days, when someone died, they were not embalmed and, because of the climate in which they lived, they had to be buried right away. When Jesus raised the widow of Nain's son at his funeral (Luke 7:11–17), the Jews claimed that he wasn't really dead because it had not been three days since he had died. Consequently, Jesus deliberately waited until Lazarus had been dead for four days so that there could be no doubt that Lazarus was really dead. In fact, he was so dead that his body had already begun to decompose and smell. No one could argue that Lazarus was not dead.



*The Egyptians prepared boats to be used to transport the deceased into the afterlife.*

“Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil [from the alabaster box] and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.” John 11:1, 2 (see also Luke 7:37, 38).

Mary, the sister of Lazarus, is believed to be Mary Magdalene or Mary of Magdala, the woman caught in the sin of adultery and brought to Jesus by the Pharisees to be condemned. (See John 8:3–11 and *The Desire of Ages*, 460–462.) Jesus knew Mary because He had seven times cast out the demons that had held her in sin. Jesus did not condemn her; indeed, He forgave her and told her to “go and sin no more.” That was the beginning of a new life of purity for Mary. But He also knew Mary because He had spent many hours of solitude in the siblings' home in Bethany.

“There was one home that He loved to visit—the home of Lazarus, and Mary, and Martha; for in the atmosphere of faith and love His spirit had rest. ... He had been glad to escape to this peaceful household, away from the suspicion and jealousy of the angry Pharisees. He found a sincere welcome, a pure, holy

friendship. Here He could speak with simplicity and perfect freedom, knowing that His words would be understood and treasured.” *My Life Today*, 208

Simon the Pharisee, was the uncle of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. He was looked upon with great respect, but while we don't know all the details of what he did, Ellen White says that he was responsible for Mary becoming a prostitute. Most people, even today, think of Mary as being a terrible sinner, but Simon's guilt was much greater because of his actions.

Simon had once been a leper, but Jesus had healed him. To show his gratitude, Simon decided to prepare a feast for Jesus and His disciples. Lazarus, Martha, and Mary were there. When it was time to sit down for the feast, Simon was on one side of Jesus and Lazarus was on the other. Martha was serving.

Mary had heard Jesus speak of His approaching death. He had forgiven her, set her free from her old life of sin and Ellen White says that she loved Him and wanted to do something special for Him. So she had purchased an alabaster box filled with oil of nard with which to anoint His body after His death. Oil of nard is something like musk oil and

was very, very expensive, likely almost a year's worth of wages. It was a great personal sacrifice for Mary to purchase the oil.

People were traveling into Jerusalem from all over the world because the time to celebrate the Passover was near. The news that Jesus of Nazareth, this prophet from Galilee, had raised Lazarus from the dead four days after his death had spread everywhere. The people all over Jerusalem and the surrounding area were filled with excitement. Everyone wanted to meet Lazarus and Jesus. They wanted to hear more about how Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and Lazarus had a wonderful testimony to share. He declared that Jesus was the Son of God. To make this declaration was the reason he had been raised from the dead. However, the disciples were excited for a different reason: they believed that now was the time that Jesus would be crowned king.

During the feast at Simon's house, Mary decided that if Jesus was going to be crowned king, now would be the best time to express her love and thankfulness to Him. Unnoticed, she anointed Jesus' head and feet. With her long hair, she wiped the oil from His feet, and the Bible says that the fragrance filled the house.

Oil of nard, once applied to the skin, cannot easily be washed off. The perfume remains on one's skin for many days no matter how often one bathes. Mark 14:8, 9 says, "She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, *what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.*" [Emphasis supplied.] This anointing was so important that Jesus said whenever the gospel

is preached, it would be a memorial to Mary's love for Him. Her life had been broken, ruined, and Jesus had forgiven her, taken away her guilt, and made her whole again.

There is something special to consider about Mary. There were only two present when Jesus died on the cross who truly understood the significance of His death. Mary Magdalene was one of those two. There were only two people in all the earth who understood that Jesus' death would provide the way for mankind to be redeemed from the penalty of sin. And as horrible as Jesus' crucifixion was, He took not only the burden of sin to the cross, but also the reminder, the fragrance, of Mary's love on His head and feet. As He hung between earth and heaven, dying for the sins of the world, He knew there was one person who loved Him and understood what He was doing for her. My dear friend, do you appreciate what Jesus has done for you? Do you remember that Jesus would have died just for Mary, just for you?

After Mary had anointed Jesus and the fragrance of the oil had filled the house revealing what she had done, Judas was not happy. He knew right away that this oil could have been sold for a large amount, and put in the treasury. As the treasurer of the disciples' money, he said that the money spent on the oil would have been better spent in taking care of the poor. But John 12:3–6 tells us that Judas didn't care for the poor. He was a thief and was simply using the idea of helping the poor as a guise to cover up his own covetousness. *Christ's Object Lessons* says that self-justification originated with the devil and that it has been practiced by every son and daughter of Adam since Adam and Eve sinned.

Matthew makes it very clear that the spirit of Judas affected all the disciples; they all began to murmur about this. Simon also was affected by Judas' speech. He began to question in his mind whether Jesus was even a prophet, much less the Messiah or the Son of God. Simon had been healed of leprosy by Jesus, but he thought that if this Man was a prophet, He would know this



Oil of nard was very expensive, likely almost a year's worth of wages.

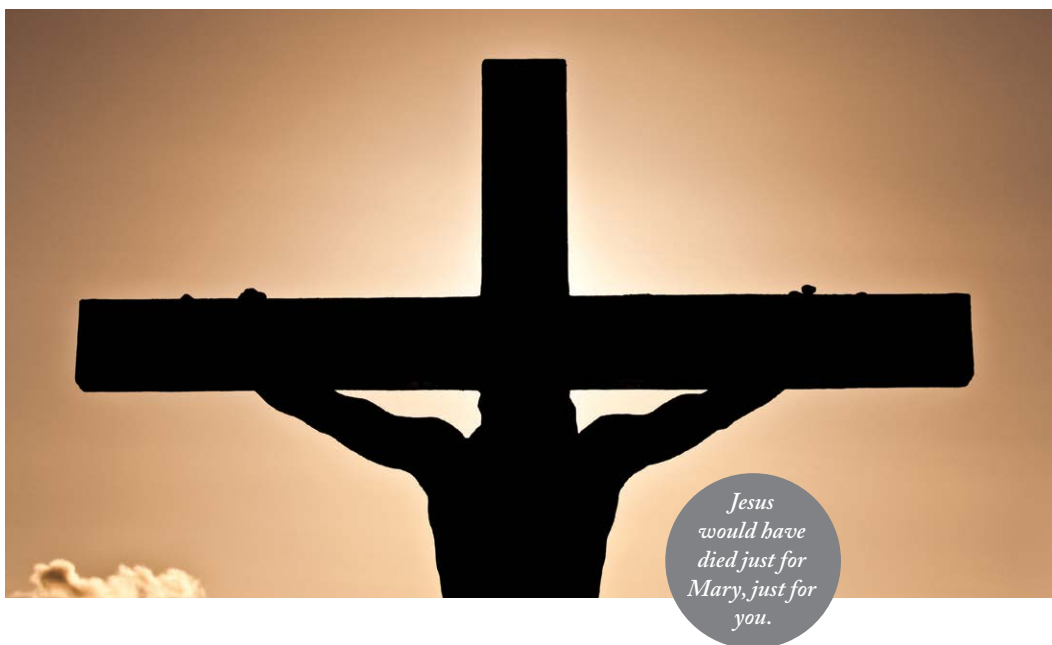


woman was a sinner and would not have allowed her to touch Him.

When we read this story in the Greek, we see that Jesus *saw* their thoughts. We find His response to Simon in Luke 7:40–48: “‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ So he said, ‘Teacher, say it.’ ‘There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?’ Simon answered and said, ‘I suppose the one whom he forgave more.’ And He said to him, ‘You have rightly judged.’ Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.’ Then He said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’”

Simon was filled with terror because he understood the point that Jesus was making in His parable. He immediately realized that Jesus knew what he had been thinking and had answered his unspoken thought. He realized that Mary was a sinner who was forgiven, and he was a sinner who was not. Mary appreciated what had been done for her. Simon had not appreciated what had been done for him.

“Simon’s coldness and neglect toward the Saviour showed how little he appreciated the mercy he had received. He had thought he honored Jesus by inviting Him to his house, but he now saw himself as he really was. While he thought himself reading his Guest, his Guest had been reading him. He saw how true Christ’s judgment of him was.



His religion had been a robe of Pharisaism. He had despised the compassion of Jesus. He had not recognized Him as the representative of God. While Mary was a sinner pardoned, he was a sinner unpardoned. The rigid rule of justice he had desired to enforce against her condemned him [because his guilt was far greater than hers].” *The Desire of Ages*, 567

Simon never forgot this act of compassion. The more he thought about it, he was awestruck by the fact that Jesus had explained his true situation without publicly rebuking him. Jesus had regarded his feelings and Simon was humbled by Jesus’ kindness and thoughtfulness. As a result, he repented and was converted and became a disciple of Christ. If you are in the kingdom of heaven, you will meet both Simon and Mary there.

“Christ values acts of heartfelt courtesy. When anyone did Him a favor, with heavenly politeness He blessed the actor. He did not refuse the simplest flower plucked by the hand of a child, and offered to Him in love. He accepted the offerings of children, and blessed the givers, inscribing their names in the book of life. In the Scriptures, Mary’s anointing of Jesus is mentioned as distinguishing her from the other Marys.

Acts of love and reverence for Jesus are an evidence of faith in Him as the Son of God. And the Holy Spirit mentions, as evidences of [this] woman’s loyalty to Christ: ‘If she have washed the saints’ feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.’ 1 Timothy 5:10

“Christ delighted in the earnest desire of Mary to do the will of her Lord. He accepted the wealth of pure affection which His disciples did not, would not, understand. ... That ointment was a symbol of the heart of the giver.” *Ibid.*, 564.

“They [the disciples after the resurrection] no longer cast blame upon Mary, but upon themselves. Oh, if they could have taken back their censuring, their presenting the poor as more worthy of the gift than was Christ! They felt the reproof keenly as they took from the cross the bruised body of their Lord.

“The same want is evident in our world today. But few appreciate all that Christ is to them. If they did, the great love of Mary would be expressed, the anointing would be freely bestowed.” *Ibid.*, 565

O friends, the alabaster box needs to be purchased and broken again. Do you and I appreciate what Jesus is to

“

*One of the most effective ways to take over the world in the last days is through the devil's lie about the state of the dead.*

us, or do we possess the hardness displayed by the disciples? Are we willing to sacrifice everything to show that we love Jesus and understand what He has made available to us by His sacrifice on the cross?

“Mary had been looked upon as a great sinner, but Christ knew the circumstances that had shaped her life. He might have extinguished every spark of hope in her soul, but He did not. It was He who had lifted her from despair and ruin. Seven times she had heard His rebuke of the demons that controlled her heart and mind. She had heard His strong cries to the Father in her behalf. She knew how offensive is sin to His unsullied purity, and in His strength she had overcome.

“When to human eyes her case appeared hopeless, Christ saw in Mary capabilities for good. He saw the better traits of her character. The plan of redemption has invested humanity with great possibilities, and in Mary these possibilities were to be realized. Through His grace she became a partaker of the divine nature. ... It was Mary who sat at His feet and learned of Him. It was Mary who poured upon His head the precious anointing oil, and bathed His feet with her tears. Mary stood beside the cross, and followed Him to the sepulcher. Mary was first at the tomb after His resurrection. It was Mary who first proclaimed a risen Saviour.” Ibid., 568

“Now when He [Christ] rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.” Mark 16:9. When Jesus rose from the grave after His sacrifice to save mankind, He appeared first to Mary, the one who had wept at His feet because she understood her own unworthiness and keenly felt Jesus’ love and forgiveness for her.

Jesus knows all about your case, just as He knew all about hers. He knows our past, what is inside our minds, our feelings, our emotions, our thoughts, and our characters. You may be saying to yourself, I am a terrible

sinner, and you may be. None of us can truthfully say that we are not terrible sinners. But here is the marvelous truth: the worse we are, the more we need Jesus, the more willing He is to help us.

The same Jesus that reached to the very bottom of the pit of sin to help Mary and Simon is still the same today. Luke 14:22, 23 says, “And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.’”

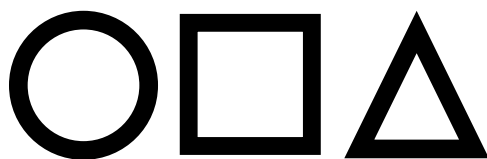
Now is the time to go out into the highways and hedges. God is pulling people up out of the pit of sin, people involved in every kind of sin imaginable—murder, homosexuality, prostitution, fornication, adultery, stealing, lying, swindling, drinking, all kinds of drugs—people willing to repent, who realize that they desperately need a change, a change that comes only from Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit continues to speak to the hearts of men and women, those who realize they are helpless, hopeless, and in bondage. And when a person hears the gospel, responds to the Holy Spirit, realizes that this is a sick way to live, and that they cannot escape it by themselves, then Jesus says, I will deliver you.

Jesus wants to save you. If you are tired of sin, and if you would like to have a completely different life, one in harmony with the law of God, if you would like to be clean and pure, holy and righteous, and if you would like to have joy in your heart and eternal life with Jesus, He will help you when you surrender your life to Him.

May we have a heart that responds to God’s love. We must appreciate His love enough that we will want to express it to Him. He will deliver us from our degradation and sin, and restore us to a life of purity, holiness, and righteousness. May the alabaster box be broken and spilled out once again. **LM**

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*The above symbol took the world by storm in late 2021.  
It is the logo of the Korean fictional show Squid Game.*

# *The State of Our World*

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By Martin Bernar

check out the world's news via the Internet several times a week.

Through that medium, it's easier than ever to keep up with the world's

latest developments. Much like the younger generation today, I don't

have any channels on my television. Instead, I "surf the net."

“

*When we consume violent content, our brain circuits don't distinguish whether it's fiction or real. The damage is the same.*

One morning I read in many media outlets that Netflix just reported its most successful series in history. It's a fiction series called *Squid Game*. Usually, I wouldn't pay much attention to it, but since it was such prominent news across the media, I looked it up. To say that I was in a state of shock would be an understatement. I do not live in a Christian bubble, so I consider myself quite aware of the evils and injustices of our world. This time, however, I was speechless.

The South Korean show *Squid Game* is fiction. It portrays 456 people who find themselves at the bottom of society and financially broke. They compete in various games for over 40 million dollars, paid for by wealthy individuals who enjoy watching the losers die. There will be only one winner at the end. The losers must die a cruel death. As the episodes progress, fewer and fewer people are left alive, the rest being executed in various graphic ways.

Why would such a show become a hit? I couldn't understand it, so I started reading the viewers' reviews. There I learned that the show excels at exceptional brutality, letting the viewer watch gruesome killings with unsurpassed realism and closeness. This is the very reason why the show became a hit. The creators of the show couldn't believe its success themselves and never dreamed that the very brutality and horrific images of death would attract millions.

Here are a few of the viewers' comments:

"I usually never leave reviews on shows/movies I watch either, so me leaving one for this show speaks volumes to just how much I enjoyed *Squid Game*... EVERYTHING was just absolutely amazing ... It has enough blood scenes for suspense/thrill lovers to enjoy. I really cannot explain enough just how much I love this show."

"I can't wait till season two and big credits have to go to the creators of this awesome show."

"Korean content continues to set the standards, this time with a riveting, deliciously dark thriller series on Netflix called *Squid Game*."

"I LOVE this show. I personally think that it is one of the most amazing shows I've ever watched. It is very intense and interesting it may be disturbing but it is one of those shows where u just CAN'T look away."

The above are just four reactions out of thousands of Google reviews, all giving kudos to the show. A civilized and sensible person, regardless of religious conviction, must ask How can people possibly be so thirsty for violence and blood, the more gruesome the better? Have people always been so violent? Or is it a phenomenon of our time? Where is any display of humanity, respect for life, reverence for the words of the American Declaration of Independence that state that everyone is entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, not to mention the scriptures that declare the sacredness of human life?

While we possess more knowledge and light than humanity has ever had, it is a paradox that human society has never been so morally corrupt. Not only that, we are talking about an intense desire to kill—or at the least, to witness killing.

I have asked these questions of several acquaintances who watched the show. They looked at me surprised. "It's fiction" was the most common answer. So your thirst for violence is fiction? Books have been written on the effects of such material on the human psyche. When we consume such content, our brain circuits don't distinguish whether it's fiction or real. The damage is the same.

If you have friends who watch dramatic presentations in any form, please consider advising them of the counsel we are given based on 1 Corinthians 3:18:

“Men put God out of their knowledge and worshiped the creatures of their own imagination; and as the result, they became more and more debased. The psalmist describes the effect produced upon the worshiper by the adoration of idols. He says, ‘They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.’ Psalm 115:8. *It is a law of the human mind that by beholding we become changed.* Man will rise no higher than his conceptions of truth, purity, and holiness. If the mind is never exalted above the level of humanity, if it is not uplifted by faith to contemplate infinite wisdom and love, the man will be constantly sinking lower and lower. The worshipers of false gods clothed their deities with human attributes and passions, and thus their standard of character was degraded to the likeness of sinful humanity. They were defiled in consequence. ‘God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ... The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence.’ God had given men His commandments as a rule of life, but His law was transgressed, and every conceivable sin was the result. The wickedness of men was open and daring, justice was trampled in the dust, and the cries of the oppressed reached unto heaven.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 91 [Emphasis supplied.]

I’m an optimist. Yet as I look toward the future, I worry about what is coming once the viewers’ dark cravings are unleashed. We find several places in the Bible, such as Luke 21:12, where persecution of God’s people are prophesied: “But before all these things [disasters], *they will lay their hands on you and persecute you.*” It seems the Bible writers didn’t even have words for the unprecedented brutality human beings are capable of. Never have past generations normalized violence and cruelty as has the present one, whether real or fiction.

Yet, even in the world’s most turbulent storms, the Scriptures assure us of God’s protective hand:

I lift up my eyes to the mountains—  
     where does my help come from?  
 My help comes from the Lord,  
     the Maker of heaven and earth.  
 He will not let your foot slip—  
     He who watches over you will not slumber;  
 indeed, He who watches over Israel  
     will neither slumber nor sleep.  
 The Lord watches over you—  
     The Lord is your shade at your right hand;  
 the sun will not harm you by day,  
     nor the moon by night.  
 The Lord will keep you from all harm—  
     He will watch over your life;  
 The Lord will watch over your coming and going  
     both now and forevermore.

Psalm 121 **LM**







# *Keys to Stress Control*

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By Elder W. D. Frazee

It is a simple and obvious fact that the matter of stress control is dependent not merely on the amount of stress, but on the amount of the power to *deal with it*. A little stress can be fatal if there is nothing with which to *deal with it*. While a large amount of stress can be met if there is sufficient strength to *deal with it*.

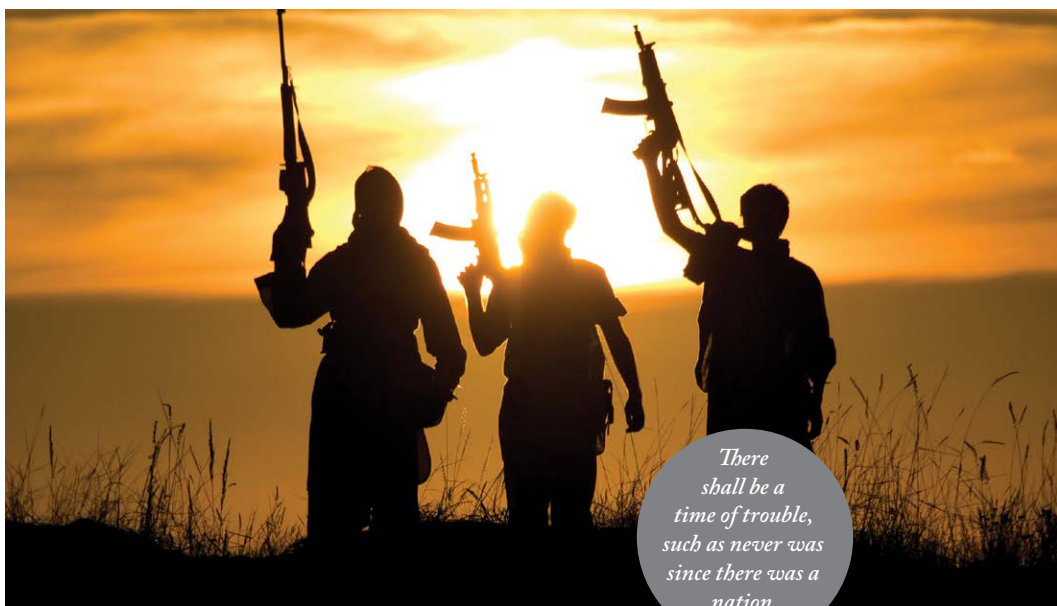
God is developing a group of people who will go through the greatest period of stress that the world has ever seen. Daniel 12:1, *last part*, foretells it: "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation ... and at that time Your people shall be delivered, everyone who is written in the book." The great purpose of the threefold message of Revelation 14 is to develop a people who can deal with unprecedented stress. Verse 12 describes these people: "Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." They are patient, they endure, they do not wilt, they do not faint, they do not fail. They have the faith of Jesus.

God has a program to get His people ready. Ephesians 4:8–14 outlines this program: “... ‘When He [Jesus] ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.’ ... He Himself gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the equipping [perfecting] of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying [building up] of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, and in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.”

God’s program is meant to get His people ready so they will not be carried about with every wind of doctrine, cunning, or deceitfulness. This program is designed to resist stress and to equip God’s people with the gifts He has for them. Ephesians 4:7 says, “But to each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift.” That is immeasurable.

God gives us a revelation of His will in the Bible, which if studied and accepted, believed and received, will keep us from all the stresses around us. But to be of any value to us, that book must be of unquestioned authority. It is all or nothing, genuine or counterfeit, true or false. This is the way with every message claiming to come from God. It can either be depended upon fully and completely, or it must be rejected as a base counterfeit.

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, he said that he had met God there. When Daniel wrote his book, he said he saw visions of God, the angels of God, the Son of God and what he wrote down was what he was told to write. When John wrote the book of Revelation, we find him telling again and again of his interviews with Jesus and Gabriel.



The men who wrote the Bible are either telling the truth or they are not. There can be no neutral ground. It is these gifts that God has put in His church to make us able to meet stresses. When we read the promises of God, whether we read them in Genesis or in the Psalms, in Daniel or Zechariah, Matthew, or scriptures written by Peter or Paul, if God is speaking, we are reading the word of the living God and that has power in it to meet any stress.

Think of promises like: “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10. But if that is only Isaiah’s view of God, it is an awful offer to make to a poor, sinking soul. If what Isaiah wrote is the true word of the living God, then it is hope and it is quick, powerful, living, and full of help for every struggling soul. The power to meet stress all hinges upon whether or not we find the Bible to be what it claims to be—the word of the living God. And the greater the crisis, the greater must be the power to deal with that stress. God has promised to give us all the power of the living word of God to help in

the ever increasing crisis into which we are now entering.

Let us look at the gifts God has given. He gave some to be apostles—Peter, James, John, Matthew; others to be prophets—Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, John. The apostle Peter tells us that all wrote by inspiration in 2 Peter 1:21: “For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” This statement is either true or false, friends. We may not be prophets, but we can all read the words of the prophets, and share the words of the prophets. When we share the words of the prophets, we are sharing the words written by the men who were moved to do so by the Holy Spirit. If we believe all of this is true, we can meet today’s stresses and those that are coming. If we do not believe, we will be confused and terror stricken as we view the conditions in the world today.

Jesus foretold our time saying, “... men’s hearts failing them for fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.” Luke 21:26. But God’s people need not be terror stricken. When these things

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*Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.*

*Revelation 14:12*

happen, Jesus says, “... look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.” Luke 21:28. The very things that are filling the hearts of men with fear are the tokens of our deliverance, omens of the coming King. Why? Because we believe the Bible. It is that simple.

All of us, in the various experiences of life—physicians and nurses in the medical profession, parents in the home, teachers at school, missionaries in the field—will deal with many stressful situations that affect our physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. But God intends that every one of His people will be able to meet these stresses because he or she is solid in the word of God, knows and believes His promises, and finds them to be true in his or her individual experience. God is developing a group of people who can meet unmoved the coming hurricane-force winds of strife, because they are anchored fast in the word of God.

Here is a very beautiful and practical point. The Bible, which was written by men filled with the Holy Spirit, tells us that in the last days God will have a church particularly designated as the remnant who will not only keep the commandments of God, but also will have this gift of prophecy.

Revelation 12:17 says, “And the dragon [Satan] was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Satan was and is enraged. Sometimes he roars and is like a wolf in sheep’s clothing, and he always is seeking to devour the flock, to destroy the church.

What is the testimony of Jesus Christ? Revelation 19:10, *last part*, tells us, “... For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” It is this Spirit that spoke through the prophets such as Isaiah, Daniel, and John. The whole Bible is the testimony of Jesus. In these last days, the testimony of Jesus will speak again because of the *remnant* of her

seed. Is there anything left after the remnant? No, the remnant is the end, the last of something. We find in Joel 2 and Acts 2 that God speaks of the restoration and manifestation of the prophetic gift in the last days. This gift is to keep the people of God from being tossed about and driven by every wind of doctrine. It keeps them because they believe it 100 percent.

The manifestation of the gift of prophecy in this movement is the testimony of Jesus, but how shall we know? Because Matthew 7:15 says, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.” The first word in this verse is *beware* which means to *look out, take care, watch*. Don’t swallow everything, don’t accept everything. Verse 16 adds, “You will know them by their fruits.” We know if a prophet is true or false by considering their fruit. The fruit is displayed in the lives of those who accept that prophet’s writings. Do people bear good fruit if they accept the Bible as the word of God and follow it? What about the people who accept the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy? Have you accepted them in your life? What kind of fruit do you bear? Does seeing the fruit borne out in the lives of those who wrote and accepted the Bible and the gift of prophecy build confidence in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy and loyalty to the law of God?

What about the great health program that God has given His people through His gift of prophecy? Is that good fruit or bad fruit? Has it done anything for us? Can we testify that we have found in the writings of Ellen White a healthful way of life that we know has done great things for us physically? But far more important than any physical health, far more important than any successful way of life, is what this gift has done to lead people to Jesus. It has given them a deep, sweet, settled peace.

One might say, “I know someone who reads the *Testimonies* all the time, but that has not made them happy.” There are many people like that. And some people read the Bible, and it does not make them happy. But should we toss away our Bibles and the *Testimonies* because not everyone finds happi-



ness in them? There are people who have gotten sick eating food, but does that make us quit eating food? When someone gets sick from eating food, it likely is because they need help in proper selection or for some other reason. The answer is not to quit eating food, rather it is to offer help in knowing how, what, and when to eat. It is the same with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

*Testimonies*, vol. 5, 675, 676 tells us: "Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room." If I want to doubt, will God let me? God left us free to choose belief or doubt. That freedom of the will relates not merely to our actions, but to our beliefs. God will not force our muscles, neither will He compel our minds. "God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence. God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith." Ibid.

Do you understand everything in the Bible? Do you believe it totally, or do you just believe the parts you can understand? O friend, believe the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation. We need it all. "... 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4. We should be thankful for the living word. As you keep studying it, it will become sweeter, better, richer to your soul. And we can look forward to continuing our studies with the writers of each book for the endless ages of eternity.



*If  
studied and  
accepted, believed  
and received, the Bible  
will keep us from all  
the stresses around  
us.*

Do you ever find any problems in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy? They are there. But, friends, the same problems that are in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy are in the Bible. Show me one problem, one question, one quibble about the writings of Ellen White and I will produce a similar one in the Bible. That does not mean that we question the validity of either one, rather it means that we believe both because we hear Jesus speaking. Somebody says, "Hasn't there been evidence that some things are copied?" Did you know that there are some things in the Bible that were copied? If you compare all four books of Kings and Chronicles you will find that one copied from the other. If you read Matthew, Mark, and Luke, you will find verse after verse in many of the chapters that are either exactly the same or almost the same. Does the Holy Spirit confine Himself? No. The Holy Spirit is perfectly willing for the prophet to use truth wherever found. The important thing is not that the prophet who wrote it down originated it, but whether it is truth that originated with Jesus.

W. C. White, speaking of his mother, wrote the following in 1933: "In her early experience, when she was sorely distressed over the difficulty of putting into human language the revelations of truth that had been imparted to her, she was reminded of the fact that all wisdom and knowledge comes from God. And she was assured that God would bestow grace and guidance. She was told that in the reading of religious books and journals she would find precious gems of truth expressed in acceptable language and that she would be given help from heaven to recognize these and to separate them from the rubbish of error with which they were sometimes associated." Praise the Lord for the gift of inspiration. Inspiration is not a matter of God dictating by the Holy Spirit the words as an executive dictates to a secretary. In the Bible we see the prophets being given visions and then left to themselves, aided by the Holy Spirit, to pick out the words they would use to describe the things they saw. God has used many different agencies, including the Holy Spirit and angels, to communicate His



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*God’s people need not  
 be terror stricken. When  
 these things happen, Jesus  
 says, ‘... look up, and lift up  
 your heads, because your  
 redemption draws  
 near.’*”

word. The important thing is that the final production *is* the testimony of Jesus.

Bringing all of this back to how it relates to stress, we see that it should make all the difference to us whether we are listening to the testimony of Jesus or whether we are merely reading the ideas of some human being. Test and prove for yourself that the Bible is the voice of Jesus to your soul, and therefore, you will find peace and help, comfort and assurance in the promises contained therein, as well as the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, for both are inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Someone may be thinking, isn’t the Bible enough? Yes, the Bible is enough. In fact, the Bible itself teaches that the ten commandments are enough. Ecclesiastes 12:13: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all.” Genesis to Revelation is an expansion of the law and in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy we have the divine magnifying glass upon the whole Bible. Thank God for all the help He has given us. He tells us that He will, by His mercy, bring us back onto the path if we will follow Him, and this should cause us to rejoice. What leads to the Bible

leads to Christ and obedience to the law. The fruit of it is a people made ready for the coming of the Lord.

Every promise in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy is a beautiful, personal promise from Jesus with your name on it. Will you take the promises of God found in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy and claim them and prove them as your own? Will you thank God for them? Jesus says, “And try Me now in this ... if I will open for you the windows of heaven and pour for you such a blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.” Malachi 3:10, *last part*. We must not ask only for what we need or want; we must ask for what He promises, believing that God will do all that He has promised to do and thank Him for His wonderful love.

When we need help in knowing that the Bible is God’s word, in knowing that the Spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus, or in knowing how to claim these promises for ourselves, God will help us. With His help we

will meet all the stresses of daily life, the increasing stresses of tomorrow, next week, next month, and we will be made ready to meet the great stresses of the closing conflict and to stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, triumphant over all that the enemy has brought against us.

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**Elder W. D. Frazee** studied the Medical Missionary Course at the College of Medical Evangelists in Loma Linda, California. He was called to Utah as a gospel medical evangelist. During the Great Depression, when the church could not afford to hire any assistants, Elder Frazee began inviting professionals to join him as volunteers. Thus began a faith ministry that would become the foundation for the establishment of the Wildwood Medical Missionary Institute in 1942. He believed that each person is unique, specially designed by the Lord, of infinite value, and has a special place and mission in this world which only he or she can fill. His life followed this principle and encouraged others to do the same. **LM**



# *Knocking, Waiting, O How Fair!*

**B**ehold, 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." The Saviour here represents Himself as waiting for admission to the inmost heart, seeking an entrance, that He may bring to us a divine blessing. How attentive we should be, that we may hear when God speaks to us! If discord, strife, or self-love are permitted to reign in the heart, we shall fail to recognize the "still small voice."

God speaks to us in various ways, but mostly through the written word. When we read the Scriptures with a receptive mind, some passage will often arrest the attention, causing us to pause, reread, and ponder. In this way the Holy Spirit teaches us a lesson of present duty, comfort, or blessing.

God speaks to us by His providential dealings. Through affliction and adversity, He would soften the hard heart, and humble the proud, leading us to look above and beyond these earthly scenes if we would secure true happiness. A prosperous life and unnum-

bered blessings should awaken in us a sense of deepest gratitude to the Author and Giver of all good.

God speaks to us also through the wonderful works of nature. Happy is he who has the seeing eye, and the hearing ear, to learn of the loving Father through His great creative power. There are constant lessons for us, if we will but observe them. He who gives purity to the lily springing from the blackest soil, can cleanse the heart from every stain of sin, making it a fit temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

How eagerly we should open every avenue of our being to the divine Guest, who pleads in all these ways. May God help us to hear His voice, and to open the door, that He may come in and sup with us, and we with Him!

B. E. Tefft

Davenport, IA

from *The Review and Herald*, May 21, 1901

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*God softens the heart  
through affliction and  
adversity.*



# Micah

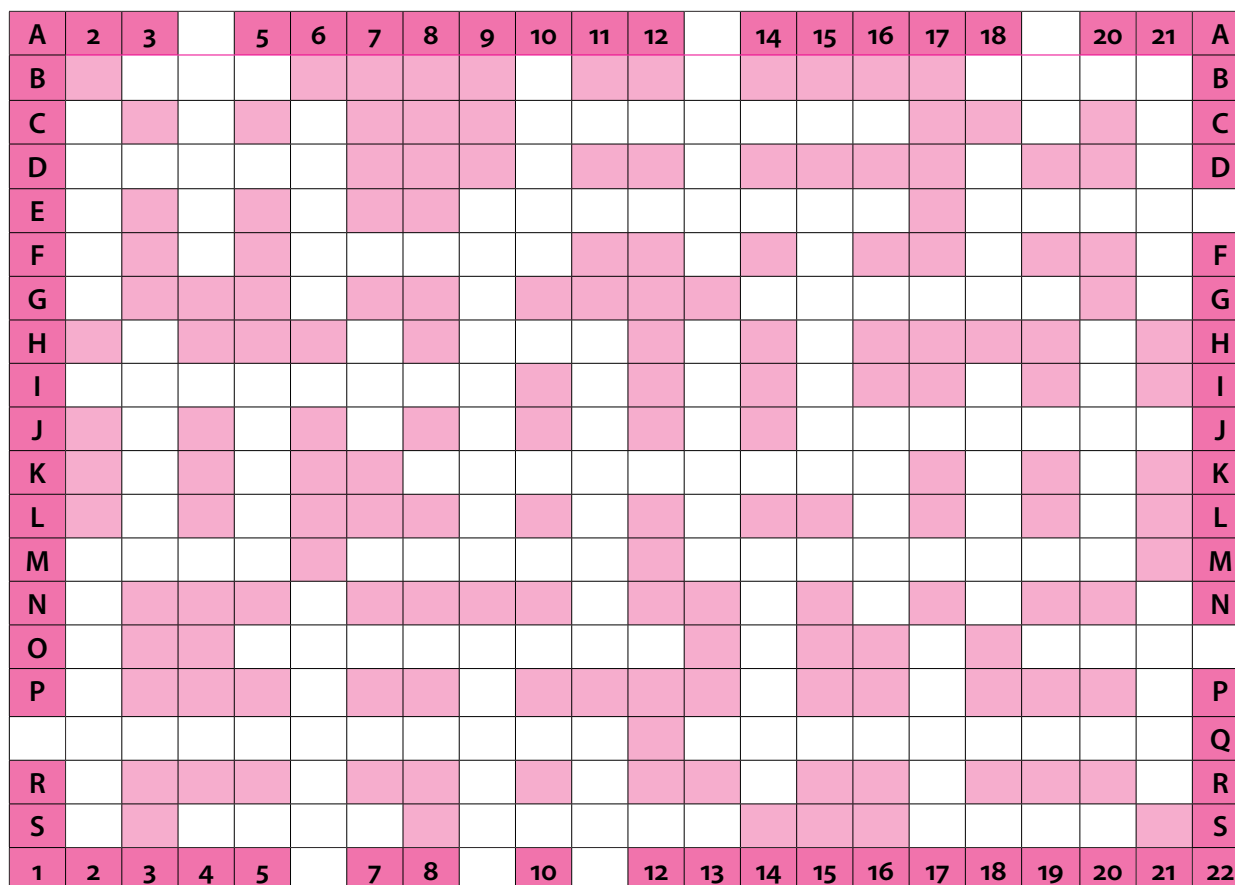
## Clues – KJV

### Across:

- B<sub>3</sub> God's judgment: they would not reap after they did this ..... 6:15  
 B<sub>18</sub> In God's kingdom, He will teach us His ..... 4:2  
 C<sub>10</sub> God promised to gather this for His kingdom ..... 2:12  
 D<sub>2</sub> God: become bald as this to mourn the coming punishment ..... 1:16  
 E<sub>9</sub> Wicked rich men are full of this ..... 6:12  
 E<sub>18</sub> The leaders in Israel ..... justice ..... 3:9  
 F<sub>6</sub> What the wicked do to fields that they take by violence ..... 2:2  
 G<sub>14</sub> God wants us to walk this way with Him ..... 6:8  
 H<sub>9</sub> When we can't trust our own household, ..... will hear us ..... 7:5-7  
 I<sub>2</sub> Where God comes from to punish the wicked on the earth (two words) ..... 1:3  
 J<sub>15</sub> In God's kingdom, there will be none of these ..... 5:9  
 K<sub>8</sub> There comes a point at which sinfulness is ..... 1:9  
 M<sub>2</sub> One day the wicked will ..... the Lord our God ..... 7:17  
 M<sub>7</sub> When God returns to the earth, the valleys will be ..... 1:4  
 M<sub>13</sub> When we are in ....., God will be our light ..... 7:8  
 O<sub>5</sub> God's kingdom will be established and exalted in the ..... (two words) ..... 4:1  
 O<sub>19</sub> In God's judgment on sinners, these will be laid desolate (singular) ..... 1:7  
 Q<sub>1</sub> The existence of Jesus, the promised Messiah, is from ..... 5:2  
 Q<sub>13</sub> Because of their sin, God has a controversy with ..... (two words) ..... 6:2  
 S<sub>4</sub> God's judgment: He would make the people ..... 6:13  
 S<sub>9</sub> The sins of the people have taken this away from God's children ..... 2:9  
 S<sub>17</sub> The day shall become ..... for the false prophets ..... 3:6

### Down:

- A<sub>4</sub> This is deceitful in rich sinners ..... 6:12  
 A<sub>13</sub> Micah admits he has ..... against God ..... 7:9  
 A<sub>19</sub> In God's kingdom, no one will learn ..... anymore ..... 4:3  
 B<sub>10</sub> The coming captivity is but the ..... of their actions ..... 7:13  
 B<sub>21</sub> In God's kingdom, the remnant will become ..... 4:7  
 C<sub>2</sub> Our amazing God delights in ..... 7:18  
 C<sub>6</sub> False prophets cry ..... when God's judgments are coming ..... 3:5  
 D<sub>18</sub> With confidence in God, we can say when we ..... we shall arise ..... 7:8  
 E<sub>9</sub> One day the heathen will receive ..... from God in fury ..... 5:15  
 E<sub>15</sub> The heathen and wicked do not understand God's ..... 4:12  
 H<sub>3</sub> What false prophets do for money ..... 3:11  
 H<sub>7</sub> When God returns to the earth, the mountains will be as ..... 1:4  
 H<sub>11</sub> God requires us to ..... by our fellow men (two words) ..... 6:8  
 H<sub>13</sub> Corrupt leaders judge for ..... 3:11  
 H<sub>20</sub> In God's kingdom, there will be no need for these weapons ..... 4:3  
 I<sub>5</sub> Micah received ..... from the Lord ..... 3:8  
 I<sub>18</sub> When God returns to the earth, all ..... will be beaten to pieces ..... 1:7  
 J<sub>16</sub> The coming judgment was one they could not remove their ..... from ..... 2:3  
 M<sub>2</sub> God will reign over His kingdom ..... (two words) ..... 4:7  
 M<sub>14</sub> In God's kingdom, nothing will ever make us ..... 4:4



Answer Key:

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



- N6 The wicked cheat with their weights and \_\_\_\_\_ (singular) ..... 6:11  
 N21 Some of these had been wrongly evicted from their homes ..... 2:9  
 O9 Sometimes God does not hear us because of our sinful ..... 3:4  
 O17 God's judgment: their capital city would become a heap in this ..... 1:6  
 Q11 Israel's leaders had degenerated to hating ..... 3:1, 2



## *Following Our Own Desires*

**L**ike many people, I am an animal lover. I have had many pets during my life—dogs, cats, birds, a turtle, even a baby raccoon for a short time. We had a cat several years ago, Lukie, who proved out the scripture James 1:14, 15. Let me tell you how she did it.



Lukie was a sealpoint Siamese. We brought her home when she was just a couple months old, lovable and feisty, and barely bigger than my hand. At the time, we also had a Terrier/Schnauzer mix dog named Dixie. These two grew up together and got along quite well. But when we added Chuck, our Labrador mix, to the family, Lukie became a bit grumpy and decided that she would be the alpha animal in the family pecking order, at least where Chuck was concerned—but that is another story.

As she grew, it became apparent that she also loved food very much. Some of that came as a result of having had her spayed, and she never passed up the opportunity to eat when it presented itself.

One night on the way home from vespers, we spotted a couple of black kittens in a tree. Someone had just dumped them at the side of the road and left them to fend for themselves. It was going to be a cold night, so we stopped and brought them home, and our family grew by two.

Booker and Little Britches (or LB as we called her) were affectionate and all kitten. This displeased Lukie a great deal until she discovered that their food could be a potential source of food for her. We had to watch very carefully because Lukie could be very sneaky in finding ways to get to their food. Interestingly, they showed no interest in hers, but Lukie wanted theirs and hers as well, even knowing that she would get in trouble if she ate their food. So this is where Lukie would put James 1:14 and 15 into practical application.

You could enter our kitchen from two sides. Booker and LB's food was on the floor on the side of the kitchen that led to the back door. Lukie knew we were always watching and she knew the consequences if she ate their food. Still, she would nonchalantly sit at the opposite entrance to the kitchen, casually looking everywhere but at the food. Literally after about ten minutes, she would move a short distance into the

kitchen, closer to the food, again, gazing around as if she had no particular purpose in mind, though occasionally snatching a quick glance at the food bowls. This went on for about half an hour. I'm serious. She took a half an hour looking at that food, sneaking, she believed, closer, and weighing the possibility of being able to snatch some of it without getting caught. She would sneak closer and closer until she was sitting directly in front of the food. She would sit there for some time, just looking at it, and then, you could see her make the decision: "I'm here, I might as well help myself."

By continually eyeing that food, continually moving closer and closer, Lukie tempted herself and was drawn by her desire for the food until she made the decision to do the very thing she knew was wrong in spite of the consequences. This was very evident when I stepped to the other side of the kitchen and said, "Hey Lukie, what ya doin'?" She responded in a splayed, four-legged attempt to get away on a linoleum floor as quickly as possible.

Another scripture that can be combined with these texts in James is Romans 13:14, which says, "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *make no provision for the flesh* [sin], to fulfill its lusts." [Emphasis supplied.] Lukie made provision for sin. Let's not be like her. When we are drawn to do things that we know are wrong, let's put on Christ, resist the pull of our human nature and the enticements of the devil, and do what is right instead.

"For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Galatians 6:8, 9 [LM](#)

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*When desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*





## *The Sabbath Issue*

**R**eligious powers, allied to heaven by profession, and claiming to have the characteristics of a lamb, will show by their acts that they have the heart of a dragon and that they are instigated and controlled by Satan. The time is coming when God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day. Satan has caused the change of the Sabbath in the hope of carrying out his purpose for the defeat of God's plans. He seeks to make the commands of God of less force in the world than human laws. The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observance of the first day of the week. But God's people are to stand firm for Him. And the Lord will work in their behalf, showing plainly that He is the God of gods.

The Lord has said: "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations." Exodus 31:13. None should disobey His command in order to escape persecution. But let all consider the words of Christ:

"When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another." Matthew 10:23. If it can be avoided, do not put yourselves into the power of men who are worked by the spirit of antichrist. Everything that we can do should be done that those who are willing to suffer for the truth's sake may be saved from oppression and cruelty.

Christ is our example. The determination of antichrist to carry out the rebellion he began in heaven will continue to work in the children of disobedience. Their envy and hatred against those who obey the fourth commandment will wax more and more bitter. But the people of God are not to hide their banner. They are not to ignore the commandments of God and, in order to have an easy time, go with the multitude to do evil.

The Lord encourages all who seek Him with the whole heart. He gives them His Holy Spirit, the manifestation of His presence and favor. But those who forsake God in order to save their lives will be forsaken by Him.

In seeking to save their lives by yielding the truth, they will lose eternal life.

The night of trial is nearly spent. Satan is bringing in his masterly power because he knoweth that his time is short. The chastisement of

God is upon the world to call all who

know the truth to hide in the cleft of the Rock and view the glory of God. The truth must not be muffled now. Plain statements must be made. Unvarnished truth must be spoken, in leaflets and pamphlets, and these must be scattered like the leaves of autumn. *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 229, 230 **LM**

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*Verily My Sabbaths  
ye shall keep: for it is  
a sign between Me and  
you throughout your  
generations.*

*Exodus 31:13*



## *Hold the Banner High*

**I**t was July 3, 1863. The Northern Army was stationed at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The cry went out that the enemy was advancing.

Pickett's division of the Southern Army—15,000 men—was marching toward the Northern lines. Shoulder to shoulder, rank upon rank, line upon line, they came. Silently, irresistibly down the ridge, across the creek and up the gentle slope to the rock wall protecting the Northern forces.

It was the South's last, supreme effort. The outcome of the war, the destiny of the nation, depended on the success or failure of this one charge.

Northern cannons fired on the advancing line of humanity, thousands fell, but the living kept coming. When they reached the corner of the wall, Webb's brigade stationed there fell back and Southern soldiers poured in. If enough made it across the wall, they could divide the Northern Army and win the war.

The North had enough men and weapons to stop them, but Webb's men were confused and afraid. What they needed was just one man of courage to inspire them with new confidence.

A sergeant seized the banner of the Northern Army and ran for the enemy's line. At first only one soldier followed, but when the sergeant fell, struck by a

bullet, and the standard he bore fell beside him, the effect was electric. Webb's men jumped to their feet and fought the enemy. Shouting, pushing, firing, punching until the enemy staggered to the wall and across it and beyond. And as suddenly as the battle had begun, it was over.

Taken from *Out-Numbered and Other Stories* by Lawrence Maxwell, Pacific Press Publishing, 1970.

What inspired these men to fight, to win? The courage of one man to carry the banner no matter the consequences or cost.

Each of us has a struggle, an individual war, to win, a banner to bear. We are instructed that we must “be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” Ephesians 6:10–12

Ellen White writes, “I would rejoice with all my heart to see all who have been connected with the work, take their places to hold high the banner of Jesus, that when their work shall be done, they may say as did Paul, ‘I have fought a good fight, ... I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness ...’” *The Review and Herald*, July 26, 1892

We must be men and women who will bear the banner of God and uphold His standards as found in *Education*, 57: “The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.”

Dear Lord, help us to have the courage of the sergeant to bear Your banner in a world deluded by sin. Give us strength to win our personal battle with sin and then to stand for the right before a world desperate to know You. **LM**





## Your Letters

"I wanted to receive the *LandMarks* magazine again and you all blessed me with a new subscription. [When] I received it, I read it that day and realized how inspired were the articles and topics, as leaves falling from the tree of life. ... Give glory to Jesus. This literature is golden."

—RC, North Carolina

"I look forward each month to your magazine and the CDs."

—RM, California

"Thank you for sending this wonderful book *The Great Controversy* to me. I had many questions and this book has given me the answers I have been seeking. How wonderful is our God! Thank you for your kindness and love and for your continued prayers on my behalf. It is good to know that there are still people on this earth who love and serve God. May God bless you all."

—NPM, Texas

### January Sermon of the Month

## The 1260-day Prophecy

By John J. Grosboll

The book of Revelation was written especially to the church in the last days and it is important that we understand it, in particular Revelation chapters 12–14.

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 2022

Dear Friend,

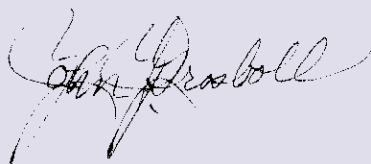
In dreams during the night, God could give everyone in the world the message of salvation in one night. Or He could write the gospel in the sky so everyone would see it in his own language. Or He could have it delivered by angels, who never make a mistake in judgment and would always do high-quality witnessing. So why has God not used any of these or a hundred other methods by which He could communicate the gospel to the whole world in days or weeks—a mere moment of time for Him? Why has He left the job to sinful, incompetent men and women like you and me?

The Godhead, who devised the plan of salvation (see *Counsels on Health*, 222) also devised the best method of communicating the unsearchable riches made available to the human family. "God cannot display the knowledge of His will and the wonders of His grace among the unbelieving world unless He has witnesses scattered all over the earth. It is His plan that those who are partakers of this great salvation through Jesus Christ should be His missionaries... . The people must be warned to prepare for the coming judgment." *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 631, 632

God has a special place for every consecrated individual in His great plan to save this world. No idlers are acknowledged as His servants. Your appointed work whereby you earn your daily bread may be in a mechanical shop, in a factory, a school or any honest commercial enterprise, but if you are a Christian, then it is well to always remember, "It is an eternal law of Jehovah that he who accepts the truth is to make it his first work to proclaim the truth." *The Review and Herald*, December 3, 1908

When we pray, if we ask Him, He will show us what He wants us to do in His service, but we must remember that our prayers are recorded in the books of heaven. We must be sure that we do not make commitments to the Lord that we do not keep. "You should solemnly consider that you are dealing with the great God, and should ever remember that He is not a child, to be trifled with. You cannot engage in His service at will and let it alone at pleasure." *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 221

Your brother in witnessing,



John J. Grosboll

## 13<sup>th</sup> Sabbath Offering



## Change is Coming

Starting in 2022, we will be presenting information and updates regarding the various mission field groups supported by Steps to Life just a little differently. The Ministry currently supports the work of groups in Colombia, Central and Eastern Nigeria, Zambia, Ghana and Kenya, as well as groups in South America, primarily in Bolivia and Mexico.

In the first issue of each quarter, one of the above groups will be highlighted, providing a recap of the work they have been doing in their respective areas of the world as well as their upcoming plans for the near future. We're just

getting started with this change so bear with us as we get everyone organized.

Each report will still include pictures from the different groups so that you can see the faces of the workers, their projects, and those who are being reached and making commitments for the Lord.

This quarter we are highlighting Zambia and Ghana. We don't have a full report from them just yet, but we will provide those in upcoming issues.

13<sup>th</sup> Sabbath donations for the first quarter of 2022 will be for Missions. If you wish to support a particular group or project, please mark your donation as *Missions*—[name of the group or project]. [LM](#)

*from the*  
**Mission Fields**



*Joseph Class-Peters, Director of Steps to Life—Ghana. A day at work at Steps to Life—Ghana.*

## *Lofty Goals in Ghana*

By Pastor Domingo Nunez

In the spring of 1994, Steps to Life published in *LandMarks* magazine the opportunity to attend a summer seminar of Bible study classes and a Bible workers training program. It was that summer that Joseph Class-Peters, who at the time was living in Colorado, came to Wichita, Kansas, to attend the summer program. At the end of the program, Brother Joseph was fully committed to serving the Lord in any capacity that he could. He told the Steps to Life administration that if there was any future assistance that he could provide, he would be willing to volunteer to help wherever needed in the outreach work of the gospel.

At the end of 1994, Steps to Life published in *LandMarks* the need for a volunteer to teach Bible studies by correspondence in Accra, the capital city of Ghana, with a population of 4.3 million people. The following year, Brother Joseph, being a dual citizen of the United States and Ghana, contacted Steps to Life and volunteered to go to Ghana to help establish a branch office of the ministry from which to conduct

a Bible correspondence school using the Steps to Life Bible studies.

The ministry accepted his offer and worked with him over a several-year period to establish an office in Accra. As the work performed in this little office has grown, it has become obvious that more space is needed. Not only is there an active Bible correspondence school, but the Steps to Life—Ghana office under Brother Joseph's direction has developed a continuing radio program. Brother Joseph and his helpers, some paid and some volunteers, use the office as their center from which to distribute literature, reach out to the Accra community, and assist local Bible workers. A library of Spirit of Prophecy books is also maintained that serves not only Bible workers, but others in the community who want to improve their ability to teach the three angels' messages.

In the two-and-a-half decades since the establishment of the office in Ghana, both the gospel work and the number of workers have been growing. It is now obvious that we need to relocate the office to a better location and to provide more

library space for the Bible workers so they can find the books they need for spiritual growth and to support their work in the field. We also want to establish a printing program to produce the Steps to Life Bible studies, *LandMarks* magazine, witnessing tracts, booklets and tabloids.

To accomplish this lofty goal, we will need your support and prayers. We know that when we are doing what God wants us to do, He will open the doors to help us succeed. We have no doubt that our efforts in Ghana will help to accomplish His objective of carrying the three angels' messages to every nation, kindred, tribe, and people. We also know that much work is involved in relocating and furnishing the office to accomplish all that we want to do. We will need to obtain the property, office equipment and furniture, internet equipment, printing equipment, telephone lines, and everything else to be able to operate professionally, effectively, and efficiently for the gospel, to have a people ready for the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To assist us in this endeavor, please mark your donations *Missions*. **LM**





*A church under construction in Mosambique.*



*Baptismal candidates in Zambia.*



## News from Zambia

If you have been reading our newsletters for a while, you have read much about the work of Henry Mwesa, our Bible worker in Zambia. Henry understands the gospel commission and works diligently not only in Zambia, but in neighboring countries as well. Following is his report from his recent evangelistic effort in Malawi and Mozambique.

Greetings,

A recent journey from Lusaka, Zambia, to Lilongwe, Malawi, began on a Thursday with myself and evangelist Derby Banda on a bus. By the following Friday afternoon, we had reached the border, but faced with huge challenges due to Covid-19 restrictions, including a demand for money, we were unable to cross the border into Malawi. We planned on returning home to Zambia after the Sabbath, however, we decided to engage the brethren in Lusaka to commit the problem to the Lord in prayer.

After the Sabbath, we received numerous encouraging messages from the brethren, urging us to proceed to the border and assuring us that we would cross over into Malawi as they had prayed and God had heard. When we again arrived at the border, something strange happened. The man who had the previous day demanded the \$300 US to allow us passage, was seen leaving his office. We went straight to the immigration office where we were asked if we knew that the border was closed. We explained to the immigration officer that what we were going to do was essential. She then phoned her superior who gave her permission to allow us into the country. We

arrived in Malawi late in the night and stayed on a mini bus. Early the next morning, we proceeded to Mozambique, arriving at the border in the mid-afternoon. From there, we had to use a motorcycle to get to the site of the camp meeting, as it was held on top of a mountain that no automobile could reach.

Upon arrival, the first thing we did was to inspect the progress on the church construction site, which was not without its own challenges. Suffice it to say, massive progress has been recorded as you will see from the pictures.

The camp meeting, held between the two countries of Malawi and Mozambique, was a blessing. At the close of the camp meeting, 39 souls were baptized. The highlight of the moment for me was when a woman who was in a polygamous marriage, opted out of that marriage. She instead chose Jesus and was among those who were baptized. We returned home safely and praised God for His mercies.

Your brother in Christ,

Henry Mwesa 



## Caribou

Caribou is a species of deer found in the forests, mountains, and arctic tundra of Greenland, Scandinavia, Russia, Alaska, and Canada. The life span of caribou in the wild ranges from about eight to 15 years, with the doe living the longest.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Reindeer and Caribou are the same creature.

The caribou have the widest and roundest hooves of any of the deer family. They are used as paddles when swimming and as snow shoes when the snow is deep.

During the short summer months, caribou eat the leaves of willows, grass-like plants, flowering tundra plants and mushrooms. Over the long winter months, they eat dried grass-like plants, small shrubs, and their favorite and largest part of their diet, lichens. Those wide hooves are very helpful in digging through the snow and ice to obtain the lichen. Lichen lives under the snow, sometimes under feet of snow in the

winter, and you have to wonder how the caribou find it.

Simple. Caribou have a great sense of smell and the ability to see both visible light and ultraviolet light. The lichen absorbs ultraviolet light and is seen in the snow as having wild colors or the color black.


Both the buck and doe grow antlers, though they are much larger and heavier on the buck. Bucks lose their antlers after the fall mating season, but the does retain their antlers through the winter. Having antlers during those long winter months, provides a way to keep the larger bucks from stealing lichens from the smaller, weaker, pregnant does, making it possible for the doe and her unborn calf to survive when food is scarce.

The ability to see ultraviolet light also makes it possible for caribou to see polar bears and other harmful predators. How? Hair absorbs ultraviolet light and makes these predators easy to see, if you're a caribou.

Caribou feed and travel in large groups, providing extra protection for the feeble and young of their herds. They are very fast runners and can reach speeds between 37-50 mph. A one-day-old caribou can outrun an Olympic sprinter. During their migration south, the pads of their hooves shrink, exposing more of the rim of the hoof providing a better grip on snow and ice.

Another protective measure is a clicking sound made by tendons found in their feet. The sound can be heard from as far away as 150 feet, nearly half the length of a football field. Some scientists believe that this clicking sound helps the caribou find each other in fog and blizzard conditions making it possible for them to stay together in a herd.

God has certainly equipped the caribou to help it survive in its harsh habitat.

Adapted from God's Living Treasures, Volume 2, "Amazing Animals of Alaska" 

Q:  
*Did anyone accept  
 Noah's message during  
 the 120 years he built  
 the ark?*



A:

**"M**ore than one hundred years before the flood the Lord sent an angel to faithful Noah to make known to him that He would no longer have mercy upon the corrupt race. But He would not have them ignorant of His design. Noah was to preach to the people, and also to prepare an ark as God should direct him for the saving of himself and family. He was not only to preach, but his example in building the ark was to convince all that he believed what he preached.

"Noah and his family were not alone in fearing and obeying God. But Noah was the most pious and holy of any upon the earth, and was the one whose life God preserved to carry out His will in building the ark and warning the world of its coming doom. Methuselah, the grandfather of Noah, lived until the very year of the flood; and there were others who believed the preaching of Noah,

and aided him in building the ark, who died before the flood of waters came upon the earth. ...

"A multitude at first apparently received the warning of Noah, yet did not fully turn to God with true repentance. There was some time given them before the flood was to come, in which they were to be placed upon probation—to be proved and tried. They failed to endure the trial. The prevailing degeneracy overcame them, and they finally joined others who were corrupt ... They would not leave off their sins, but continued ... in the indulgence of their corrupt passions.

"The period of their probation was drawing near its close. ...

"Notwithstanding the solemn exhibition they had witnessed of God's power ... yet they hardened their hearts, and continued to revel and sport over the signal manifestations of divine power." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 69–73

"There were many who at first received Noah's message, but the fear of men was greater than the fear of God, and they turned away from the truth of God to believe a lie. As time passed on, and reproach and ridicule were heaped upon them, their hearts failed them, and they did not bear the test. It is the testing time that will measure professed faith and assurance in God. Courage and integrity cannot be estimated rightly by men until the day of trial puts them to the test." *The Signs of the Times*, April 18, 1895

"The antediluvians were warned, but the record states that they knew not until the Flood came and took them all away. ... They saw Noah and his wife and their sons and their wives passing into the ark; and the door was closed upon them. Only eight persons entered that refuge from the storm." *Christ Triumphant*, 61 **LM**



## *The Importance of the Sense of Taste*

**A**s we all know, taste is a matter of, well taste ... But what exactly is taste? Taste is one of our five senses. The sense of taste is really just our ability to perceive a flavor of a given food or dish with our tongue in association with our senses of smell and touch. Our tongues have the ability to distinguish between five basic tastes—sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami (meaty or savory). A couple of additional tastes, probably more likely sensed in association with our sense of smell, are pungent and astringent. The rich diversity of taste sensations arise from the wide-ranging combinations of these five basic tastes, such as the sweet-and-sour taste we experience when we drink sweet lemonade or sweet-and-sour sauce with a favorite Chinese dish.



For a long time, scientists believed that it is the taste buds, located at different points on our tongue, that help us experience taste, but additional research has disproven this belief. While it is true that the edge of the tongue has more taste buds than the base and is thus more sensitive, the tongue is not divided into different types of taste. The one exception to this rule is the bitter taste, which is located chiefly at the rear of the tongue.

Approximately 10,000 taste buds, pear-shaped structures with millions of receptors (sensory cells), are the components in the tongue that register taste. They are located around small structures on the upper surface of the tongue, the roof of the mouth, and back of the throat known as the gustatory papillae. Adults have between 2,000–4,000 of these papillae on their tongue.

Thanks to a special nerve in the mouth and throat, we are able to experience “hot” which is really not a flavor, but is perceived through free nerve endings in this nerve. In this way we are able to tell if a dish seasoned with a hot spice such as pepper, chili or curry is unpleasant or even painful.

Sensory cells have a lifespan of just ten days, but are constantly being renewed. However, as we age, our sense of taste deteriorates because the renewal process slows so that the number of sensory cells declines over the course of time. But here’s a tip: make generous use of fresh herbs when seasoning your food. This enables us to continue to have a rewarding taste experience as we age thanks to our other senses, including our sense of smell.

Whenever we eat a salty soup or a sweet dessert, the sensory cells in the taste buds are activated and taste signals travel from the mouth by way of the cranial nerves to the medulla oblongata in the brainstem to the thalamus and on to the cortex, where you become aware of what you are tasting and can then respond appropriately. Appropriately would mean if it tastes good, you

swallow and enjoy it, but if it tastes bad or harmful, you spit it out. Whew! Those taste signals are really hard workers.

Taste, however, is actually a multisensory phenomenon. While the sense of taste gives basic information about sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and savory, most of the food experience, how a blueberry tastes different than a raspberry, for example, depends on the sense of smell.

When we chew food or sip an aromatic beverage, chemicals are converted to vapor in the air passages connecting the mouth with the back of the nose. This stimulates olfactory receptors and allows us to realize the subtleties of flavor. Other aspects of the taste experience, such as food texture and temperature, engage additional senses.

It is interesting that while humans have five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—the knowledge of sight and hearing has played a more important role in understanding how the brain interprets sensory impressions.

However, Dr. Preet Bano Singh, Post-doctoral Fellow on the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Oslo, finds it quite surprising that the senses of taste and smell receive so little attention because taste is actually essential to life.

“If the sense of taste is impaired, it may often negatively affect [a person’s] food intake, nutritional status and consequently health condition. Senses of

smell and taste are vital in identification of valuable nutrients in the environment, procurement of adequate

energy and central to survival. That is an important reason why research into taste and smell should receive just as much attention as the other senses,” says Dr. Singh.

Although we have been talking about the senses of taste and smell, the enjoyment of food involves more than just these two senses.

The different sounds that accompany food preparation, like boiling in a pot, running the blender, a knife slicing through an onion or the timer going off when the food is fully cooked, involves our sense of hearing. Our sense of sight allows us to appreciate the presentation of well-prepared food, including the play of various colors, on our plate. The sense of touch is also involved as the food touches our tongue and we experience the different textures and nuances of the food as we chew.

What a wonderful God we have! We must eat to survive and yet He made not only good, nutritious food, but He did so with such a variety of flavors, and made them in such a way so as to be a pleasant experience in the preparing as much as in the eating.

Yes indeed, what a wonderful God!

Sources: Alimenterium.com; The Dana Foundation; Medicaexpress.com *Senses of Taste and Smell More Important Than We Think* by Astrid Skiftesvik Bjørkeng, University of Oslo [LM](#)





## *Seek Ye First*

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By John J. Grosboll

Some people believe that their prayers have merit. If this is so, then it could easily be concluded that the longer the prayer, the greater the merit. But is it true that if a person prays long enough, their prayer will have enough merit to atone for sin, or are eloquent prayers just idle words?

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: “And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” Matthew 6:5, 6

In these two verses, the Lord is not telling us that we should not pray in public. Jesus Himself prayed in public many times. Rather, He is teaching that a private prayer should not be made public. In our private devotions, our prayers are to reach the ears of no one except a prayer-hearing God. No curious ear is to hear the burden of our private petitions.

Jesus said, when you pray, go into your room, have a place for secret prayer. He had select places for communion with God. In fact, it was because He so often went to Gethsemane in the evening to pray that Judas Iscariot knew where to lead the soldiers when he betrayed Him.

We also need to have a private place, however humble, where we can be alone with God. Jesus said, “Pray to

your Father who sees in secret.” In the name of Jesus, we may come into God’s presence with the same confidence that a small child comes to a parent. We do not need a man, a priest, or pastor as a mediator. Through Jesus, we may open our hearts to God as One who knows, loves, and hears us.

In the secret place of prayer, where no one but God sees or hears, we are free to pour out to Him the most secret and hidden desires of the heart, and the Father has promised that He will hear. Remember, He is a Father of infinite love and pity and He never fails to answer the cry of human need. He will speak to us when we take time to talk to Him. In James 5:11, *last part*, it says, “[T]he Lord is very compassionate and merciful.” He waits with unwearied love and pity to

hear the confessions of the wayward and to accept their penitence.

In the same way as a mother watches for a smile of recognition from her beloved child, He wants us to understand how earnestly and tenderly His heart yearns over us. He wants us to bring to Him our trials, our sorrows, our troubles, our wounds, our weaknesses, and our emptiness, and He will supply all of our needs (*Steps to Christ*, 100). The Bible teaches that no one who comes to Him will be disappointed.

Psalms 34:5–10 tells us how the Lord answers the prayers of even the humblest of His children: “They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. [T]hose who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.”

When we come to the Lord in secret and tell Him our needs, and plead with Him for help, we will not plead in vain, because Jesus said, “... your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” If we make Jesus our daily companion and friend, we will realize, that although we cannot see it, the powers of the unseen world are all around us. By looking to Jesus, we will become assimilated to His image and the result will be an increase in piety, purity, and fervor.

In Matthew 6:7, Jesus said, “And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do.” The heathen, then and now, look upon their prayers as having merit in and of themselves to atone for sin. If they could become holy by their own efforts, they would have something in themselves for which to rejoice, some ground for the boasting. This idea of prayer is the outworking of the principle of self-expiation, which actually lies at the foundation of false religion.



*We are not to use vain repetitions in our prayers. It is a heathen practice.*

The Pharisees adopted this pagan idea of prayer, and it is by no means extinct, even in our time, even among some who profess to be Christians.

When we pray using set, customary phrases, and the heart feels no need of God, we are just offering up words of the same character as the vain repetitions of the heathen. Nobody wants to talk to a friend who is just mumbling set words and phrases in their mind, but their heart is not in it, and this type of prayer is not acceptable to the Lord either.

Prayer does not atone for sin. It has no virtue or merit of itself. All the eloquent words that we might command are not equivalent to even one holy desire. So the most eloquent prayers can be worthless, idle words if they do not express the true sentiments of the heart. Praying from an earnest heart, expressing the real wants of our soul, the same way that we would ask an earthly friend for a favor and expect that it would be received, we have then prayed a prayer of faith, and we trust that prayer will be answered.

God does not need our ceremonial compliments. But the unspoken cry of a heart that is broken and subdued with a sense of sin and utter weakness and helplessness, will find its way to the Father of all mercy.

As He continued to talk about the Christian life, Jesus said, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 6:24

Notice, He did not say you should not serve God and mammon. He says, you *cannot* serve God *and* mammon. *Mammon* is a Greek word that simply means real estate, money, property, wealth, material possessions. Jesus is saying you *cannot* serve God and material things. In other words, no one can occupy a neutral position. There is no middle class who neither loves God nor serves the enemy of righteousness. If we do not give ourselves completely to God, the facts of the matter are, we are completely under the control of another power, listening in our minds to another voice whose suggestions are of an entirely different character.

If we attempt to give God only half service, we are actually placing ourselves on the side of the enemy as a successful ally of the hosts of darkness. When men claim to be Christians, soldiers of Christ, but then engage with the confederacy of Satan, they actually prove themselves to be enemies of Christ instead of His friends as they profess to be.

We are talking about a battle for the mind and heart, not just about outward words or behavior. The strongest bulwark of vice in our world is not the terrible life of some abandoned sinner or degraded outcast, but the life which appears virtuous, honorable, and noble, fostering one sin, indulging one vice. When there is someone struggling with a terrible temptation, the example of such a person is one of the most powerful enticements to sin. Thus, a person who claims to be a Christian but indulges one sin, is used by Satan to be a stumbling block to others so that they not only stumble in this life, but may even forfeit eternal life.

The apostle John talks about this problem in 1 John 2:15, 16, saying, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.”

Jesus says that we should not allow ourselves to be caught up in the sum and substance of our lives—making a living, making sure we have food to eat and water to drink, a home and clothing to wear—but instead we must be careful to seek first the kingdom of God. This is a better, higher way to live, so that we are not pressed down all the time, just trying to survive. Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:31–33, “[D]o not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

Jesus was opening to them the treasures of heaven, but the people who were listening to these words were still anxiously waiting for Him to announce that He would set up an earthly kingdom. Uppermost in their minds was how a connection with Him would best advance their prospects in this new kingdom. Interestingly, that is the same question many people ask today. What church can I go to that will best advance my worldly interests, my professional or business interests?

Jesus is trying to show us that in making the things of this world our supreme anxiety, we will become like the worldly people around us, living as if there were no God whose tender care is over all His creatures. Jesus said, the nations seek after these things, but your heavenly Father knows what we need (Luke 12:30) and He tells us instead to “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

In other words, Jesus is telling us that He has come to open to us a kingdom of love, righteousness, and peace. We must open our hearts to receive this kingdom and make its service our highest interest. Even though it is a spiritual kingdom that He offers us, we are not to fear that the needs of this life will be uncared for. If we give ourselves to God’s service, the One who has all power in heaven and earth will provide for our needs.

This does not, however, release us from the necessity of effort. Jesus does not say we have nothing to do, that God just hands us whatever we need. He said, “Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them.” Matthew 6:26. How does the heavenly Father feed the birds? Does He put the food in their mouth? Absolutely not. He provides the food, but they have to go and find it.

In the same way, God provides for the needs of all of His children in this world, but that does not release us from the necessity of effort. When Adam and Eve sinned, God said to Adam that he would eat bread, the product of his personal effort from that day forward. As Christians, Jesus teaches us that we are to make Him first, and last, and best in everything. We are not to engage in



*No  
curious ear  
is to bear the  
burden of  
our private  
petitions.*



any business, or follow any pursuit, or seek any pleasure that would hinder the outworking of His righteous character in our lives. Everything we do is to be done with this as our uppermost and first interest.

Friend, God's everlasting arm encircles every soul who turns to Him for aid, however feeble that soul may be. Poverty or wealth, sickness or health, whether educated or uneducated, simple or wise, all are provided for in the treasures and promises of His grace.

The Bible tell us that the precious things of this world are going to pass away, but the soul that lives for God will abide with Him. The apostle John says, "The world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." 1 John 2:17. If we learn to lean on God for wisdom, seeking Him for direction, if we commit our lives to Him, He will not only be our comfort and hope in this world, even amid loss and affliction, but in the world to come He will welcome us to an everlasting home. "For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed." says the Lord, who has mercy on you." Isaiah 54:10

For this reason, because God cares for everyone who turns to Him for help and shields them and protects them, we do not need to live a life of worry. One of the biggest health problems in the western nations today is depression brought on by continual anxiety and worry. When on this earth, Jesus lived a dignified life in all its details by keeping before men the glory of God and subordinating everything else to the will of His Father. If we follow His example, He gives us the assurance that all things needful for this life will be added.

He does not promise that we will have the luxuries of life, but He does promise that what we will have in the future world will far exceed anything we could have here. For now, what is promised



*God provides for the needs of all of His children, but that does not release us from the necessity of effort.*

is what you need, not necessarily what you want. Since we are assured of this promise, if we commit our lives to Him, we will have no need to worry. Jesus says, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." Matthew 6:34

If you have given yourself to God to do His work, you do not need to worry or be anxious about what is going to happen tomorrow, because the One whose servant you are knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10). The events of tomorrow, which are hidden from our view today, are open to the eyes of Him who is omnipotent. If we decide we want to manage our own life without His aid, to take matters into our own hands, if we want to depend on our own wisdom for success, then we are taking upon ourselves a responsibility that belongs to God, and thus are really putting ourselves in His place. As a consequence, we may well experience anxiety and apprehend danger and loss.

But, if we really believe that God loves us and means to do us good, we will be able to cease worrying about the future because we will have placed our trust in God as a small child trusts a loving parent. Our troubles and torments will then disappear, for our will is swallowed up in His will.

While Jesus is promising us this kind of help for today, He does not promise us that He would bear the worry, or anxiety, or burdens of tomorrow. Instead He said to Paul, and to us, in 2 Corinthians 12:9, "My grace is sufficient for you ... ." Like the manna that He gave the children of Israel in the wilderness, His grace is bestowed each day for that day's need. One day alone is ours and during this day we are to live for God.

Just this one day, we must put our hand in the hand of Christ, and trust Him with everything in our life—our purposes, our plans—casting all our care upon Him. He says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11. "In returning and rest shall you be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Isaiah 30:15

Dear friend, if you seek the Lord and are converted every day, if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God, you will find peace and joy in His service, and an eternal home with Him. **LM**

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# *Meet Me There*

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By Marlia Wheeler  
(age 15)

**G**ive encouragement to the followers of the belief for Christ's sake.  
Regard the hopeless and make them thy brother in Spirit.  
Clothe them with your best garment and give up your evil ways.  
For who knoweth the plans of the Father who made all.  
Don't hesitate to give, for all your earthly treasures will be burned to dust.  
Show kindness to the needy and give up what you must for their sakes and Christ's sake.  
"For if ye hath done it to the least of My brethren ye hath done it unto Me."  
Don't set your gaze to worldly objects, for you will not have one thought of them after you hear,  
    "Well done, My good and faithful servant. Welcome to Paradise."  
Ponder the words of life, day in and day out.  
Clear your mind of filthy thoughts, replace them with praise.  
For He has given you the option of redemption and true freedom.  
    Not the "freedom" the world offers; it always has a "catch."  
God gave us freedom in the very beginning and look where that has brought us.  
But, after this life we will have freedom again and there will be  
no more sorrow,  
no more crying,  
no more abortions,  
no more starvation,  
no more war,  
no more pain,  
no more depression,  
no more doubt,  
no more sadness,  
no more hate.  
We will live with the King of the world eternally.  
What in God's green earth is holding you back.  
It's sad to think that the One who did so much for us  
    is watching us do nothing for Him.  
Watching us doubt, and despair, listening to us take His beautiful name in vain,  
    tasting the bitterness of our uncertainty,  
    smelling the sick fragrance of drugs,  
        murderous food,  
        alcohol,  
        and the blood of His dear children being shed for no cause.  
Our Saviour is calling,  
    He is knocking,  
        He is waiting at the door of our heart.





He is pleading, "Come, follow Me."  
He is weeping at our unbelief.  
He is offering eternal life in paradise to you and me.  
Has He not done enough?  
And yet He continues to do more.  
He brings you home every night.  
If you're reading this, it is by the grace of God.  
If you just took another breath, it is by the grace of God.  
Why are you doubting?  
    "O ye of little faith. Why are ye so afraid?" Jesus says  
    as He rebukes the wind and the sea.  
Don't look at your earthly stresses and problems.  
    No matter how big.  
Don't lose your relationship with Him  
    because you don't want to give "that up or this up."  
He gave Heaven, literal Heaven for you;  
    the least you can do is give Him His only wish  
    which is to share eternity with you.  
What do you have to lose?  
What is earth worth?  
    Nothing.  
Don't look down,  
    but look up to Him.  
Talk to Him as you talk to your best friend.  
Give your life to Him.  
Don't serve Him out of the fear of your heart,  
    but out of love and thankfulness.  
Don't be scared;  
    He will never leave you.  
You are not alone...you are not alone.  
"I will never leave you, nor forsake you."  
    Know that I am with you.  
        You will never be alone."  
Please, let me meet you someday in heaven.  
I pray these things in Jesus' name, Amen. [LM](#)

January 30 – February 5, 2022

## The Seven Churches

### Key Verse

“What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.” Revelation 1:11

**Study Help:** *The Acts of the Apostles*, 585–592; *God’s Amazing Grace*, 95

### Introduction

“The Revelation was written to the seven churches in Asia, which represented the people of God throughout the world.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 28, 1903

### Sunday

#### 1 THE STARS OF THE CHURCHES

1.a. What do the stars that John saw in the hands of Jesus represent? Revelation 1:16, 20. Who are to preach the messages to the seven churches?

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**Note:** “God’s ministers are symbolized by the seven stars, which He who is the First and the Last has under His special care and protection. The sweet influences that are to be abundant in the church are bound up with these ministers of God, who are to represent the love of Christ. ... They are but instruments in His hands, and all the good they accomplish is done through His power.” *Gospel Workers*, 13, 14

1.b. What counsel is given to ministers so that they may faithfully fulfill their duties? 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 6:3–7. What are the results of unfaithful ministry?

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**Note:** “The people will seldom rise higher than their minister. A world-loving spirit in him has a tremendous influence upon others. The people make his deficiencies an excuse to cover their world-loving spirit.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 645, 646

### Monday

#### 2 THE SEVEN CANDLESTICKS

2.a. What is the significance of Jesus walking among the candlesticks as found in Revelation 1:20?

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**Note:** “These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, I know thy works.” This figure illustrates the eternal vigilance of our Saviour. Christ is in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, walking from church to church, from congregation to congregation, from heart to heart. He who keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. If the candlesticks were left to the care of human beings, how often they would flicker and go out. But God has not given His church into the hands of men. Christ, One who gave His life for the life of the world, is the Watchman of the house. He is the Warder, faithful and true, of the temple courts of the Lord.” *The Signs of the Times*, February 12, 1902

“Christ knew just where to find John; and there, on the lonely island, He gave him a view of the closing scenes of this earth’s history. ... John was shown the slain Lamb of God, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Conqueror, standing in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, which are the seven churches.” *The Review and Herald*, May 16, 1899

2.b. In the sermon given by Jesus on the mountain, what did He say about the light of the world? Matthew 5:14–16

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**Note:** “Although there are evils existing in the church, and will be until the end of the world, the church in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin.” *The Review and Herald*, September 5, 1893



“No candlestick, no church, shines of itself. From Christ emanates all its light” *The Faith I Live By*, 280

“As we walk in the commandments of God, we follow on in the way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. The faithful of all ages have walked in this path, and they have shone as lights in the world. In this age the light transmitted from them has been shining with increased brightness upon the path of those who are walking in darkness.” *The Review and Herald*, April 25, 1893

## Tuesday

### 3 THE HOLY WATCHER

3.a. What assurance does the Lord give that He always cares for His church? Psalm 121:3, 4

**Note:** “‘Who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.’ Revelation 2:1. This scripture shows Christ’s relation to the churches. He walks in the midst of His churches throughout the length and breadth of the earth. He watches them with intense interest to see whether they are in such a condition spiritually that they can advance His kingdom. Christ is present in every assembly of the church. He is acquainted with everyone connected with His service. He knows those whose hearts He can fill with the holy oil, that they may impart it to others. Those who faithfully carry forward the work of Christ in our world, representing in word and works the character of God, fulfilling the Lord’s purpose for them, are in His sight very precious.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 418, 419

3.b. To what is the true church of God compared, and how was it made up throughout the ages? 1 Timothy 3:15

**Note:** “The church is God’s fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son. From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord



has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 11

“The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to ‘the principalities and powers in heavenly places,’ the final and full display of the love of God. ... The church is God’s fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. ... It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 13

## Wednesday

### 4 ONE CHURCH THROUGHOUT THE AGES

4.a. What do we understand from the fact that the churches of the seven cities in Asia Minor were selected by Christ to represent the Christian church? Revelation 1:11

**Note:** “It was Christ who bade the apostle record that which was to be opened before him. ‘What thou seest, write in a book,’ He commanded, ‘and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto

Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.' 'I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. ... Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks.' Revelation 1:11, 18-20.

"The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world. Christ is spoken of as walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Thus is symbolized His relation to the churches." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 585, 586

"The Lord Jesus sent a mighty angel to make plain to John, by the use of symbols, the things that were to come to pass until the coming of Christ. He was bidden to write the instruction in a book for the benefit of the seven churches. This writing we now have preserved in the book of Revelation, but this book is understood by only a very few. It contains the message for the last days, and we are to dwell much upon these prophecies." *The Review and Herald*, February 14, 1907

#### 4.b. To whom is the book of Revelation addressed? Revelation 1:9-11; 22:16

**Note:** "The Christ of Patmos had in His right hand seven stars. This assures us that no church faithful to their trust need fear of coming to naught; for not a star that has the protection of Omnipotence can be plucked from the hand of Christ. If a star separates itself from God, and falls from its setting, another will take its place. There will never be less than seven, this number being God's symbol of completeness." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 3, 359

## Thursday

### 5 THE OBJECT OF SUPREME REGARD

#### 5.a. How does the Lord consider His people which are His church? Deuteronomy 32:9, 10; Zechariah 2:8

**Note:** "Through centuries of persecution, conflict, and darkness, God has sustained His church. Not one cloud has fallen upon it that He has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork His work, that He has not foreseen." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 11, 12

"To God, the dearest object on earth is His church. 'The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye.'" *The Signs of the Times*, July 13, 1904

#### 5.b. What will be the ultimate condition of God's remnant church? Ephesians 5:25-27

**Note:** "I saw that Christ will have a church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing to present to His Father, and as He leads us through the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, or the golden city, Jesus will look upon His redeemed children and see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, 225

"What does God's word mean when it declares that Christ will present to Himself a church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing? It means that God's people can and must reach the standard of Christian perfection." *Ibid.*, vol. 14, 351

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What qualities will the faithful steward possess?
- 2 What role does the church play in the closing work?
- 3 How has God's church been protected?
- 4 Which cities were chosen to represent the church?
- 5 What is the final condition of the remnant church?

February 6 – 12, 2022

# Ephesus

Desirable (A.D. 27–100)

## Key Text

“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write.”  
Revelation 2:1

**Study Help:** *The Acts of the Apostles*, 281–290; *Maranatha*, 15

## Introduction

“The True Witness bears testimony in commendation of the diligence of the church at Ephesus, declaring, ‘*I know thy works*,’ and all His commendations and reproofs are to be strictly regarded, for it is One who knows that speaks.” *The Review and Herald*, May 31, 1887 [Author’s italics.]

## Sunday

### 1 THE CITY OF EPHEBUS

1.a. What form of worship made Ephesus a religious center? Acts 19:24–37

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**Note:** “In the days of the apostles, the city of Ephesus was famed for the worship of the goddess Diana and the practice of magic. The temple of Diana was considered, for its size and splendor, one of the wonders of the world. Its surpassing magnificence made it the pride of both the city and the nation.” *The Signs of the Times*, May 18, 1882

1.b. Who were the first converts at Ephesus, and how strongly were they defending the truth? Acts 19:1–3; Revelation 2:2, *first part*, 3

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**Note:** “On his arrival at Ephesus, Paul found twelve brethren, who, like Apollos, had been disciples of John the Baptist, and like him had gained some knowledge of the mission of Christ. They had not the ability of Apollos, but with the same sincerity and faith they were seeking to spread abroad the knowledge they had received.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 282

## Monday

### 2 EVIL MEN AND FALSE APOSTLES

2.a. Although the condition of the church at Ephesus was desirable, what kind of men did they have to face? Revelation 2:2, *last part*; 1 Corinthians 15:32; 2 Corinthians 11:13

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**Note:** “The arrest [of Paul] was affected by the efforts of Alexander the coppersmith, who had so unsuccessfully opposed the apostle’s work at Ephesus, and who now seized the opportunity to be revenged on one whom he could not defeat. Paul in his second epistle to Timothy afterward referred to the machinations of this enemy of the faith: ‘Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil. The Lord reward him according to his works.’ In his first epistle he spoke in a similar manner of Hymeneus and Alexander as among those who ‘concerning faith have made shipwreck;’ ‘whom,’ he says, ‘I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.’ These men had departed from the faith of the gospel, and furthermore had done despite to the Spirit of grace by attributing to the power of Satan the wonderful revelations made to Paul.” *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, 305

2.b. Among the apostles there were some whom they found to be liars. Who were some of these liars? Acts 5:1–10

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**Note:** “Not only to the early church, but to all future generations, this example of God’s hatred of fraud and hypocrisy was designed to be a danger-signal. The brief but terrible history of Ananias and Sapphira has been traced for the benefit of all

who profess to be followers of Christ. The punishment that overtook them should be a warning to all to guard against covetousness. It was covetousness that Ananias and Sapphira first cherished. The desire to retain for themselves a part of that which they had promised to the Lord led to fraud and hypocrisy." *The Review and Herald*, February 2, 1911

"What is lying against the truth? It is claiming to believe the truth while the spirit, the words, the deportment, represent not Christ but Satan. To surmise evil, to be impatient and unforgiving, is lying against the truth; but love, patience, and long forbearance are in accordance with the principles of truth. Truth is ever pure, ever kind, breathing a heavenly fragrance unmingled with selfishness." "Ellen G. White Comments," *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 936

## Tuesday

### 3 A COMPLAINT AND A REPROOF

3.a. After the commendation of Jesus for the good work done by the church at Ephesus, what did Jesus remark? Revelation 2:4

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**Note:** "The words of the True Witness should be carefully studied by all: 'I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love'—grown cold, unsympathetic; hardness of heart has taken the place of brotherly, Christlike love." *The Review and Herald*, February 9, 1892

"[Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou has left thy first love.' Revelation 2:4.] Those mentioned in this scripture as losing their first love were not ranked with open sinners. They had the truth; they were established in the doctrine; they were firm to condemn and resist evil. Yet God declared, 'Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee.' They were losing their realization of the greatness of the love that God has shown for fallen humanity by making an infinite sacrifice to redeem them." *Ibid.*, February 25, 1904

3.b. What was the cause of the early Christians losing their first love? John 13:34, 35; 2 Timothy 4:1-4; 1 Corinthians 11:31

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**Note:** "But the early Christians began to look for defects in one another. Dwelling upon mistakes, giving place to unkind criticism, they lost sight of the Saviour and of the great love He had revealed for sinners. They became more strict in regard to outward ceremonies, more particular about the theory of the faith, more severe in their criticisms. In their zeal to condemn others they forgot their own errors. They forgot the lesson of brotherly love that Christ had taught. And, saddest of all, they were unconscious of their loss. They did not realize that happiness and joy were going out of their lives, and that soon they would walk in darkness, having shut the love of God out of their hearts." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 241

"But after a time the zeal of the believers began to wane, and their love for God and for one another grew less. Coldness crept into the church. Some forgot the wonderful manner in which they had received the truth. One by one the old standard-bearers fell at their post. . . . In their desire for something novel and startling [some of the younger workers] attempted to introduce new phases of doctrine, more pleasing to many minds, but not in harmony with the fundamental principles of the gospel." *The Act of the Apostles*, 580

## Wednesday

### 4 WARNING BEFORE REJECTION

4.a. What warning and counsel was given to the church at Ephesus which is also extended to our time? Revelation 2:5

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**Note:** "The message to the church at Ephesus is a close, decided personal testimony to them for leaving their first love, and an earnest call to repentance, lest their candlestick be moved out of its place. We need to heed these words of warning, and repent of our sins." *The Home Missionary*, November 1, 1897

"The call to repentance is one that cannot be disregarded without peril. A belief in the theory of the truth is not enough. To present this theory to unbelievers does not constitute you a witness for Christ. The light that gladdened your heart when you first understood the message for this time, is an essential element in your experience and labors, and this has been lost out of your heart and life. Christ beholds your lack of zeal, and declares that you have fallen, and are in a perilous position." *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 370, 371



- 4.b. Under what condition is there hope for a church or an individual that is in danger of losing the first love? 2 Chronicles 7:14; Jeremiah 18:8; Ezekiel 18:31

**Note:** “The only hope for churches today is to repent and do their first work. The name of Jesus does not kindle the heart with love. A mechanical, formal orthodoxy has taken the place of deep, fervent charity and tenderness to one another. Will any give heed to the solemn admonition, ‘Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?’ Fall upon the Rock, and be broken; then let the Lord Jesus prepare you, to mold and fashion you, as a vessel unto honor. Well may the people fear and tremble under these words: ‘Except thou repent, I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.’ What then? ‘If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!’

“The Spirit will not always strive with the heart that is filled with perversity. The infinite, forbearing One, who paid the price of His own blood to save His people, is addressing them. Who will hearken to His warning?” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, 102, 103

## Thursday

### 5 WONDERFUL PROMISES

- 5.a. What other commendation is given to the church at Ephesus, and why? Revelation 2:6

**Note:** “The death of God’s beloved Son on the cross shows the immutability of the law of God. His death magnifies the law and makes it honorable, and gives evidence to man of its changeless character. ...

“But the doctrine is now largely taught that the Gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by ‘believing’ we are released from the necessity of being doers of the word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned.” *The Signs of the Times*, February 25, 1897



- 5.b. What promise is given to the overcomer in this period? Revelation 2:7

**Note:** “The fruit of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death. Its leaves were for the sustaining of life and immortality. But through man’s disobedience death entered the world. Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the fruit of which he had been forbidden to touch. This was his test. He failed, and his transgression opened the floodgates of woe upon our world.” *Medical Ministry*, 233

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why does the word “Ephesus” represent the early church?
- 2 Who hindered the work of the early church?
- 3 What caused the downfall of this church period?
- 4 What hope was given to the early church?
- 5 What was promised to the overcomers at Ephesus?

February 13 – 19, 2022

# Smyrna

Sweet Perfume (A.D. 100–323)

## Key Verse

“And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the First and the Last, which was dead, and is alive.” Revelation 2:8

**Study Help:** *The Acts of the Apostles*, 529–538; *The Great Controversy*, 39–48

## Introduction

“The forgiveness of sins is promised to him who repents, justification to him who believes, and the crown of life to him who is faithful unto death.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 916

## Sunday

### 1 JESUS CHRIST IS ALIVE

1.a. Knowing the terrible persecution and martyrdom that would befall the Christians of the Smyrna period, what assurance did Jesus give them? Revelation 1:18; 2:8

**Note:** “Jesus read the future of His disciples. He saw one brought to the scaffold, one to the cross, one to exile among the lonely rocks of the sea, others to persecution and death. He encouraged them with the promise that in every trial He would be with them.” *The Desire of Ages*, 669

1.b. At the resurrection of Lazarus, what did Jesus say to Martha about Himself? John 11:23–26

**Note:** “Still seeking to give a true direction to her faith, Jesus declared, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life.’ In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. ‘He that hath the Son hath life.’ 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life. ‘He that believeth in Me,’ said Jesus, ‘though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?’ Christ here looks forward to the time of His second coming. Then the righteous dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the living righteous shall be translated to heaven without seeing death.” *The Desire of Ages*, 530

## Monday

### 2 POVERTY AND RICHES

2.a. What was always the material condition of God’s people throughout the ages? Revelation 2:9, *first part*; Zephaniah 3:12

**Note:** “The Lord’s people are mainly made up of the poor of this world, the common people. Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called. God ‘hath chosen the poor of this world. The poor have the gospel preached to them.’ The wealthy are called, in one sense; they are invited, but they do not accept the invitation.” *Evangelism*, 565

“The early Christians were indeed a peculiar people. Their blameless deportment and unswerving faith were a continual reproof that disturbed the sinner’s peace. Though few in numbers, without wealth, position, or honorary titles, they were a terror to evildoers wherever their character and doctrines were known. Therefore they were hated by the wicked, even as Abel was hated by the ungodly Cain. For the same reason that Cain slew Abel, did those who sought to throw off the restraint of the Holy Spirit, put to death God’s people.” *The Great Controversy*, 46

2.b. What kind of wealth is recommended to us? 1 Timothy 6:17–19. What example did Jesus Himself give? 2 Corinthians 8:9

**Note:** “The humblest and poorest of the true disciples of Christ who are rich in good works, are more blessed and more precious in the sight of God than the men who boast of their great riches. They are more honorable in the courts of Heaven than the most exalted kings and nobles who are not rich toward God. The admonition which the apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to give the rich is applicable to very many who profess to believe the truth for these last days.” *The Review and Herald*, January 15, 1880

“Those who impart to others of the riches of the grace of heaven, will be themselves enriched. The ministering angels are waiting, longing, for channels through which they can communicate the treasures of heaven. Men and women can reach the highest stage of mental and moral development only by cooperating with Jesus in unselfish effort for the good of others. We are never so truly enriched as when we are trying to enrich others. We cannot diminish our treasure by sharing it. The more we enlighten others, the brighter our light will shine.” *Ibid.*, April 4, 1907

## Tuesday

### 3 THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN

3.a. What does it mean to be a “Jew”? John 8:39; Romans 2:28, 29

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**Note:** “The Pharisees had declared themselves the children of Abraham. Jesus told them that this claim could be established only by doing the works of Abraham. The true children of Abraham would live, as He did, a life of obedience to God. They would not try to kill One who was speaking the truth that was given Him from God. In plotting against Christ, the rabbis were not doing the works of Abraham. A mere lineal descent from Abraham was of no value.” *The Desire of Ages*, 466, 467

3.b. What is the “synagogue of Satan”? Revelation 2:9, *last part*

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**Note:** “Christ speaks of the church over which Satan presides as the synagogue of Satan. Its members are the children of disobedience. They are those who choose to sin, who labor to make void the holy law of God. It is Satan’s work to mingle evil with good, and to remove the distinction between good and evil. Christ would have a church that labors to separate the evil from the good.” *The Review and Herald*, December 4, 1900

3.c. What does the Bible say the synagogue of Satan will acknowledge, and when will this happen? Revelation 3:9

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**Note:** “Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus’ coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses’ did when he came down from Mount Sinai. ...

“At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us who could wash one another’s feet and salute the brethren with a holy kiss, and they worshiped at our feet.” *Early Writings*, 15

## Wednesday

### 4 FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

4.a. Under what condition would the promise be fulfilled to those who endured the ten prophetic days of tribulation? Revelation 2:10

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**Note:** “What an example have the martyrs for Jesus left us in their lives of self-denial and sacrifice. They were faithful and true to principle. Although prisons, tortures, inquisitions, gibbets, and the stake threatened them, they counted not their lives dear unto themselves. Their love for the truth was here manifested. They chose to obey the truth at the expense of great suffering. The world was not worthy of these heroes of faith. They died for their faith. The pure gold was refined from all dross through trial and suffering. As these shall enter the portals of glory they will shout in triumph: We overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony. We were faithful unto death, and now receive a crown of life.” *The Review and Herald*, December 2, 1875

**4.b. To whom else is given the promise of receiving a crown of life, and when will it be given? 2 Timothy 4:7, 8**

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**Note:** “It was through one who declared himself to be a ‘brother, and companion in tribulation’ (Revelation 1:9), that Christ revealed to His church the things that they must suffer for His sake. Looking down through long centuries of darkness and superstition, the aged exile saw multitudes suffering martyrdom because of their love for the truth. But he saw also that He who sustained His early witnesses would not forsake His faithful followers during the centuries of persecution that they must pass through before the close of time.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 588

“The cross of Calvary is a pledge to us of everlasting life. Faith in Christ means everything to the sincere believer. The merits of Jesus blot out transgressions, and clothe us with the robe of righteousness woven in the loom of heaven. The crown of life is presented before us as the honor to be given at the end of the conflict.” *Evangelism*, 186, 187

“But we are to run the race, at the end of which is a crown of immortality and everlasting life. Yes, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory will be awarded to us as the prize when the race is run. ‘We,’ says the apostle, ‘an incorruptible.’” *Counsels on Health*, 47

## Thursday

### 5 ETERNAL DEATH

**5.a. What wonderful promise is given to the overcomer in the period of Smyrna? Revelation 2:11**

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**Note:** “‘The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ Romans 6:23. While life is the inheritance of the righteous, death is the portion of the wicked. Moses declared to Israel: ‘I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.’ Deuteronomy 30:15. The death referred to in these scriptures is not that pronounced upon Adam, for all mankind suffer the penalty of his transgression. It is ‘the second death’ that is placed in contrast with everlasting life.” *The Great Controversy*, 544

“We shall receive either eternal life or eternal death. There is no middle ground, no second probation. We are called upon to overcome in this life as Christ overcame.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1112

**5.b. What wonderful invitation is extended to everyone to escape from the second death? Ezekiel 18:23, 31; Isaiah 55:7**

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**Note:** “The word of God plainly tells us that few will be saved, and that the greater number of those, even, who are called will prove themselves unworthy of everlasting life. They will have no part in heaven, but will have their portion with Satan, and experience the second death.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 293, 294

“Repentance is one of the firstfruits of saving grace. Repentance includes sorrow for sin, and a turning away from it.” *The Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1905

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What did the future hold for Christ’s church?
- 2 What is the true wealth of the Christian?
- 3 Who composes the synagogue of Satan?
- 4 To whom is the crown of life promised?
- 5 Who will suffer the second, eternal death?



February 20 – 26, 2022

# Pergamos

Elevation, Exaltation (A.D. 323–538)

## Key Text

“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.” 2 Thessalonians 2:7, *first part*

**Study Help:** *The Great Controversy*, 49–60; *Maranatha*, 161

## Introduction

“What was the origin of the great apostasy? How did the church first depart from the simplicity of the gospel?” *The Great Controversy*, 384

## Sunday

### 1 THE TWO-EDGED SWORD

1.a. How did Jesus introduce Himself to the church at Pergamos? Revelation 2:12

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1.b. What should the Christian use, and what is it able to accomplish? Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12

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**Note:** “Let the truth do the cutting; the word of God is as a sharp, two-edged sword and will cut its way to the heart. Those who know that they have the truth should not, by the use of harsh and severe expressions, give Satan one chance to misinterpret their spirit.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 239

1.c. What was the condition of the church during the period of Pergamos? Revelation 2:13–15

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**Note:** “Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased in strength and gained control of the minds of men, ‘the mystery of iniquity’ carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism.” *The Great Controversy*, 49

## Monday

### 2 SATAN'S SEAT

2.a. What desire was developed by Lucifer? Isaiah 14:13, 14. What would be the ultimate result of such a desire? Proverbs 16:18; Isaiah 14:15

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**Note:** “Lucifer had said, ‘I will be like the Most High.’ Isaiah 14:12, 14; and the desire for self-exaltation had brought strife into the heavenly courts, and had banished a multitude of the hosts of God. Had Lucifer really desired to be like the Most High, he would never have deserted his appointed place in heaven; for the spirit of the Most High is manifested in unselfish ministry. Lucifer desired God’s power, but not His character. He sought for himself the highest place, and every being who is actuated by his spirit will do the same. Thus alienation, discord, and strife will be inevitable. Dominion becomes the prize of the strongest. The kingdom of Satan is a kingdom of force; every individual regards every other as an obstacle in the way of his own advancement, or a steppingstone on which he himself may climb to a higher place.” *The Desire of Ages*, 435, 436

2.b. When tempting Jesus, what position did Satan claim as legitimately belonging to him? Luke 4:5, 6; John 12:31

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**Note:** “Satan, in his pride and arrogance, had declared himself to be the rightful and permanent ruler of the world, the possessor of all its riches and glory, claiming homage of all who lived in it, as though he had created the world and all things that were therein. ... He endeavored to make a special contract with Christ, to make over to Him at once the whole of his claim, if He would worship him. ...

“Satan had flattered himself in his first temptation that he had so well concealed his true character and purposes that Christ did not recognize him as the fallen rebel chief whom He had conquered and expelled from heaven. ... Satan knew that if Jesus should die to redeem man, his power must end after a season, and he would be destroyed. Therefore, it was his studied plan to prevent, if possible, the completion of the great work which had been commenced by the Son of God. If the plan of man’s redemption should fail, he would retain the kingdom which he then claimed. And if he should succeed, he flattered himself that he would reign in opposition to the God of heaven.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 286, 287

## Tuesday

### 3 GOD’S FAITHFUL SERVANTS

3.a. How zealous were the early Christians in proclaiming the gospel? What was the fate of God’s faithful servant Antipas? Revelation 2:13

**Note:** “I was carried forward to the time when heathen idolaters cruelly persecuted and killed the Christians. Blood flowed in torrents. The noble, the learned, and the common people were alike slain without mercy. Wealthy families were reduced to poverty, because they would not yield their religion. Notwithstanding the persecution and sufferings which these Christians endured, they would not lower the standard. They kept their religion pure. I saw that Satan exulted and triumphed over their sufferings. But God looked upon His faithful martyrs with great approbation.” *Early Writings*, 210

“Looking upward by faith, they [the early Christians] saw Christ and angels leaning over the battlements of heaven, gazing upon them with the deepest interest and regarding their steadfastness with approval. ...

“In vain were Satan’s efforts to destroy the church of Christ by violence. The great controversy in which the disciples of Jesus yielded up their lives did not cease when these faithful standard-bearers fell at their post. By defeat they conquered. God’s workmen were slain, but His work went steadily forward.

The gospel continued to spread and the number of its adherents to increase.” *The Great Controversy*, 41

3.b. What was foretold by the apostle Paul about those who will serve the Lord with a godly life? 2 Timothy 3:12. Why is persecution against Christians not so strong today?

**Note:** “There is another and more important question that should engage the attention of the churches of today. The apostle Paul declares that ‘all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.’ 2 Timothy 3:12. Why is it, then, that persecution seems in a great degree to slumber? The only reason is that the church has conformed to the world’s standard and therefore awakens no opposition. The religion which is current in our day is not of the pure and holy character that marked the Christian faith in the days of Christ and His apostles. It is only because of the spirit of compromise with sin, because the great truths of the word of God are so indifferently regarded, because there is so little vital godliness in the church, that Christianity is apparently so popular with the world.” *The Great Controversy*, 48

## Wednesday

### 4 THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM

4.a. What was Balaam’s suggestion to Balak, King of Moab, about the children of Israel? Numbers 25:1–3; 31:16

**Note:** “At first there was little intercourse between the Israelites and their heathen neighbors, but after a time Midianitish women began to steal into the camp. Their appearance excited no alarm, and so quietly were their plans conducted that the attention of Moses was not called to the matter. It was the object of these women, in their association with the Hebrews, to seduce them into transgression of the law of God, to draw their attention to heathen rites and customs, and lead them into idolatry. These motives were studiously concealed under the garb of friendship, so that they were not suspected, even by the guardians of the people.

“At Balaam’s suggestion, a grand festival in honor of their gods was appointed by the king of Moab, and it was secretly arranged that Balaam should induce the Israelites to attend. He was regarded by them as a prophet of God, and hence had little difficulty in accomplishing his purpose. Great numbers of the people joined him in witnessing the festivities. They ventured upon the forbidden ground, and were entangled in the snare of Satan. Beguiled with music and dancing, and allured by the beauty of heathen vestals, they cast off their fealty to Jehovah.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 454

**4.b. What sins were present in the Christian church during the period of Pergamos? Revelation 2:14, 15; 2 Corinthians 6:14–16, *first part*; Ephesians 5:3**

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**Note:** “Most of the Christians at last consented to lower their standard, and a union was formed between Christianity and paganism. Although the worshipers of idols professed to be converted, and united with the church, they still clung to their idolatry, only changing the objects of their worship to images of Jesus, and even of Mary and the saints. The foul leaven of idolatry, thus brought into the church, continued its baleful work. Unsound doctrines, superstitious rites, and idolatrous ceremonies were incorporated into her faith and worship.” *The Great Controversy*, 43

## Thursday

### 5 PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER

**5.a. What will be the inevitable result if we do not heed the warning of Jesus and repent? Revelation 2:16**

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**Note:** “The truth is the truth. It is not to be wrapped up in beautiful adornings, that the outside appearance may be admired. The teacher is to make the truth clear and forcible to the understanding and to the conscience. The word is a two-edged sword, that cuts both ways. It does not tread as with soft, slippered feet.” *The Review and Herald*, April 20, 1897

**5.b. What wonderful promises were given the church at Pergamos and also to us if we overcome? Revelation 2:17; Isaiah 56:4, 5**

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**Note:** “Upon what ground may we claim the full and rich promises of God? We can claim them only when we have fulfilled the conditions prescribed in His word. The Lord is constantly giving. He pours down the rain and the sunshine. He promises to give to His people the privilege of eating of the tree of life, and the hidden manna. He holds forth the crown of life, the white stone with the new name written therein.” *The Review and Herald*, December 17, 1889

“Immortal glory and eternal life is the reward that our Redeemer offers to those who will be obedient to Him. He has made it possible for them to perfect Christian character through His name and to overcome on their own account as He overcame in their behalf. He has given them an example in His own life, showing them how they may overcome.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 365

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What position should the word of God have in our lives?
- 2 What does Satan claim as his own?
- 3 What will happen to those who oppose Satan’s claim?
- 4 What did compromise bring to the church?
- 5 What is the promise to those who overcome worldly compromise?

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Laura Williams  
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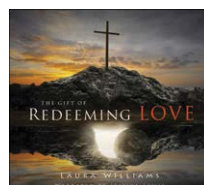
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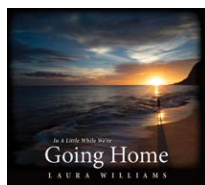
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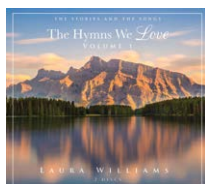
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# Potatoes

**W**hat do you think of when you hear the word potato? Some people immediately think “best food ever!” For me, it brings back memories of the root cellar where my grandma stored potatoes and other vegetables.

What fun it was to go into the root cellar with my grandma. Embracing the coolness as we opened the creaky old door. The earthy smell of dirt as we entered. Always watching out for that sneaky snake hanging out in there. The potatoes and vegetables were placed in the cellar after harvest and kept very

well for long periods of time. The potatoes used in Bible times were probably stored in a similar way.

Potatoes come in all shapes and colors. There are many different types including Russet, also known as Idaho, Yukon Gold, White Katahdins, Red Bliss, and sweet potatoes ... just to name a few.

Potatoes are vegetables which are high in fiber and a great source of vitamin C, vitamin B6, folate, potassium, magnesium and calcium.

There are many healthy, creative ways to cook potatoes including baked, steamed, boiled, air baked, grilled, twice

baked, roasted, stir fried, and baked French fries. They are also good in soups, stews, and casseroles.

But be careful what you put on top of your potatoes. Many toppings are high in fat and calories. Fresh salsa and cashew cheese are healthy alternatives.

Potatoes can be used as a natural remedy for burns and rashes. Simply cut a raw potato and apply it to the irritated area. Welders use sliced potatoes to soothe their eyes from welding burns.

Remember the old saying, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” The same could be said of the potato! [LM](#)

Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



## VEGAN POTATO SOUP

### Ingredients

6 medium potatoes, peeled and diced	<i>Blend the following in a blender:</i>
3 carrots, peeled and diced	½ small zucchini squash
½ tsp. each: thyme, marjoram, rosemary	½ small yellow summer squash
3 cups of water	1 small onion
Vegetable boullion cube	4 cloves of garlic
<i>Place the above ingredients in a large pan.</i>	1 cup of water
	1 Tbsp. of olive oil

### Process

Add blended mixture to pan of potatoes and cook until potatoes and carrots are tender. Reduce temperature and add a 13.5 ounce can of coconut milk or cream. Add salt to taste.





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