

HISTORIC  
**LANDMARKS**  
OF ADVENTISM

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*Peace and Trust in  
Adversity*

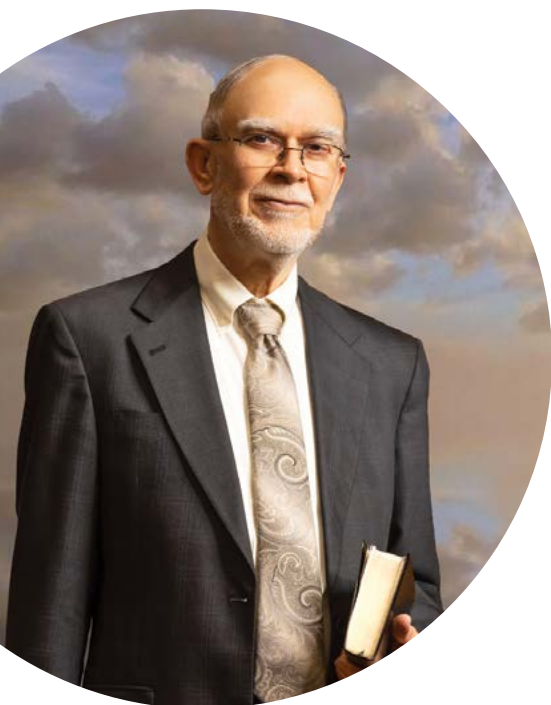
*p. 5*

*The Importance  
of Preparedness*

*p. 14*

*The Bride  
of Christ*

*p. 10*



## From the Editor

*John J. Grosboll*

# The Gateways We Must Watch

**T**he eyes, the ears, the sense of smell, the taste, and the sense of touch are the gateways to the mind and soul of man. The devil has temptations prepared for all five of these senses and uses most effectively the eyes and the ears. It is our responsibility to guard the things we allow ourselves to see and hear.

What are you looking at? On Saturday, May 19, 1764, John Wesley wrote the following in his journal: “We rode by a great house I had frequently heard of. The front is truly noble. In the house I saw nothing remarkable but what was remarkably bad: such pictures as an honest heathen would be ashamed to receive under his roof, unless he designed his wife and daughters to be common prostitutes. And this is the high fashion!” (See Psalm 101:3.)

The ear is a particular target to bring people into sin. I recommend several good books that describe how Satan uses sound, especially music, to capture a man’s soul: *What God Says about Music* by Eurydice V. Osterman; *The Crisis in Church Music* by Dr. Jack Wheaton; or *Drums, Rock and Worship: Modern Music in Today’s Church* by Karl Tsatalbasidis.

Even apparently good high class music is often objectionable because of certain unfortunate components found in it. And many godly musicians seem oblivious of these things and young people are turned off by the objectionable matter which is part of the high class music.

Interestingly, John Wesley noticed this, too, and he was outspoken enough and direct enough about it to give this subject a paragraph in his journal on Wednesday, February 19, 1764: “I heard *Judith* an oratorio performed at the Lock. Some parts of it were exceeding fine, but there are two things in all modern pieces of music which I could never reconcile to common sense. One is singing the same words ten times over; the other, singing different words by different persons at one and the same time. And this, in the most solemn addresses to God, whether by way of prayer or of thanksgiving. This can never be defended by all the musicians in Europe till reason is quite out of date.”

“My son, give attention to My words; incline your ear to My sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart.” Proverbs 4:20, 21 [LM](#)

HISTORIC

## LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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

# In this Issue



2

## [A Man of Sorrows](#)

Jesus suffered many sorrows because of His great love for man. Unrecognized by His own, still He made the ultimate sacrifice to save us.

By Michael C. Wells



5

## [Peace and Trust in Adversity](#)

Finding perfect peace is a gradual experience, an utter resignation to the will of God, and a simple trust in His will.

By W. D. Frazee



10

## [The Bride of Christ](#)

Some say Christ's bride is the church, while others say it is the New Jerusalem. How do the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy identify the bride?

By Sudhir Pandit



14

## [The Importance of Preparedness](#)

We must prepare here and now for what lies before us. "Now is the time to prepare for the coming King."

By Judy Rebarchek

## More in this Issue

### [16 Bible Puzzle](#)

Christian Character

### [18 Pen of Inspiration](#)

The Narrow Way

### [20 Story Time](#)

Honest George

### [21 Keys to the Storehouse](#)

A New Year

### [23 Songs We Love](#)

Be Still, My Soul

### [24 From the Mission Fields](#)

Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique

### [26 Nature](#)

The Bummer Lamb: Rejected & Adopted

### [27 Question & Answer](#)

Am I denying the Lord?

### [28 Health Nugget](#)

Cold Mitten Friction

### [30 The Mystery of Godliness](#)

The Divine Nature of Christ

### [36 Bible Study Guide](#)

Christian Character (1)

### [49 Recipe](#)

Lemons



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All Bible texts, unless appearing in quoted references or otherwise identified, are from the New King James Version.





# *A Man of Sorrows*

By Michael C. Wells

*“He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”*

Isaiah 53:3

**W**hat a picture of the relationship between our Saviour and His creation. Rejected by all, despised and mistreated, we did not even recognize the greatness of the One who stood before us. Isaiah pictures not only Jesus at His first coming and the way He was treated by the children of Israel, those on whom He had poured out His love, but also how mankind was to treat Him to this day.

He is a Man of great sorrow. He is also a Man of great love. The scriptures say that God *is* love, and the reason for His sorrow is because of His great love for us! “He who does not love does not

know God, for God is love.” 1 John 4:8. We may not have esteemed Him, but He esteemed us enough to endure the cross of Calvary. His grief came from the fact that He knew most of these dear people whom He loved would not love Him back. They would not recognize Him as the King of the universe, the Most Holy God, the Creator of all that exists. He was grieved by the knowledge that one day they would be burned up and destroyed forever, that even after His great sacrifice, most would not submit to His authority, choosing rather to die loving their sins. Oh, how this grieved our Saviour to the depths of His soul.

The Son of God—a term that we use, but do not understand, for we are but mere mortals with a limited understanding of the things of heaven. We will never fully understand God for He is so far above us that it will take an eternity to really know Him. Yet if we were to take the time to try to know our Lord, He would open the treasures of heaven to bestow on us knowledge for the saving of our souls. Jesus came “that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10, *last part*. That life of abundance was not only a life on this earth, but the life of the new earth that would be recreated for us so

that we would finally have a true abundant life. “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” 2 Peter 3:13. Our life of abundance is the richness of being combined with Jesus, or “yoked” with Him.

The Bible records two times that Jesus wept. Neither time was for Himself. The first time was for His dear friend Lazarus. He did not weep for him so much as for the sorrow of his sisters. He also wept because of the unbelief of those around Him. The death of Lazarus was designed to show all the power of God that dwelled within Him naturally. He knew the agony that Mary and Martha were feeling, and He could relate to them. As He looked around at His disciples, Jesus also saw their bewilderment at why He had tarried and not gone immediately to Lazarus’ side when He had heard of his sickness. He was a Man of sorrows because He was surrounded by unbelief.

The death of Lazarus was to show in a marked manner that Jesus was the Creator of all life. So, in John 11:35, it simply says, “Jesus wept.” All the sorrow that was felt by everyone around Him affected the Saviour. He was a Man of great sympathy. He went back with Mary and asked where they had laid Lazarus. No one, not Mary, nor Martha, nor His disciples, understood what Jesus was about to do when He ordered them to remove the stone that covered the tomb. He was about to relieve their sorrow. “Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come forth!’ ” Verse 43. Jesus understood their grief and their sorrow because He was a Man of sorrow and grief also. He can “sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15. He loved Lazarus as He loves all of us, but Jesus had a special relationship with Lazarus. He spent much time at his home when He needed solitude from the crowds. He was not worried about the death of Lazarus



because He knew He had the power to raise him up at that time and again at the end of the world at the resurrection of all His faithful disciples.

The second time Jesus wept was when He was about to enter Jerusalem. Here were a people that He had carved out of the world. He had rescued them from Egypt. He had fed them in the wilderness. He had witnessed their apostasy repeatedly. He had born long with them and loved them. They were His chosen people. He had given them much instruction and had given them in Moses a type of Christ or saviour. He endured their treachery when they killed His prophets, and in love He rebuked them. Now as Jesus stood looking down at Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit impressed upon Him that most of His beloved children would reject Him. Some would even seek to kill Him. Again, He did not weep for Himself. He knew that He was about to be betrayed, rejected, mocked, and scourged, and eventually crucified on the cross. His thoughts were not on this as He looked at the people. His sorrow was because so many would be lost.

Jesus came to save the lost. “For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.” Matthew 18:11. He is the Great Shepherd who came to save His lost sheep. But as He looked at the great city

of His people, He saw that they did not know His voice. They wanted a great king to deliver them from the yoke of the Roman Empire, but they were not willing to wear the yoke that joined them with Jesus. He lamented over Jerusalem for He knew He was about to lose most of them forever. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!” Matthew 23:37

Even as they gathered on the street to welcome Him in His triumphant entrance, their expectations were for a conquering king, not a meek and lowly Saviour. The hardest thing Jesus endured was not the cross, but the rejection by those who said they loved and followed Him. Today, He is still sorrowing over all who will not hear His voice. If we as mortal beings can mourn and weep over the loss of a loved one, how much more understandable is it for the Creator to mourn and weep over the loss of billions for whom He sacrificed His life to make eternal life possible for them. Yet, just as the children of Israel of old esteemed Him not, we as His new children do not esteem Him as we should. We call on His name in our agony, in

our sickness, in our distress, but then forget about Him in our joy and in our successes. Throughout this world's history, so many people have forgotten about Him in their peace and happiness, but call upon His name when tragedy strikes.

He is a Man of sorrows because His people are no more faithful today than they were in the days of ancient Israel. Even the most devout Christian might be holding something back from God deep inside themselves. The Pharisees were devout and studious.

They were the leaders of God's professed people. They had an outward showing of piety and holiness, but Jesus called them whitewashed tombs. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." Matthew 23:27. They had the appearance of godliness, but lacked the power of a changed life. Are we "whitewashed tombs," but inside have not given ourselves to Jesus? It is a question each of us must ask of ourselves. Are we causing Jesus to sorrow over us as He did over Jerusalem?

There is nothing exciting about Jesus to make a person want Him, except the words He speaks to our hearts. He has no beauty like a movie star; there is no glamour in His appearance. "He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." Isaiah 53:2, *last part*. His power is in His character. We are told that we should have His character, which is His glory. We can partake of

His glory if we esteem Him more than the things of this world. "When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." Colossians 3:4. He will not win our hearts through His good looks as man judges.

His character is His beauty, and if we do not possess the character of Jesus, then we will not have the right to His kingdom.

"To Moses, the character of God was revealed as His glory. In like manner, we behold the glory of Christ by beholding His character. Paul says: 'We all,

with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the

Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory [from character to character] even as by the Spirit of the Lord' (2 Corinthians 3:18)." *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 9, 296

"For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground." Isaiah 53:2, *first part*. Jesus was vulnerable. His heart was soft. He loved much. He grew up in Nazareth, a pretty rough town, yet He loved and cared for all the people. He was not always treated nicely, yet never was there a spark of anger or hatred to be found in Him. He was a "tender plant" that God continued to water with His Spirit, just like He will do for us if we submit to Him. Jesus was the Root. Without a strong root, a plant cannot grow and survive. Jesus is the strong Root to which we can be grafted. Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser." John 15:1. He is the strong vine root that goes deep into the ground. He does not get His strength from mankind because He was planted in dry ground. There was no support for Him in this world. The

ground around Him—the spirituality of the people on this earth—was as dry ground. His strength came from above just as our strength can come from Jesus, our example.

The good news is that Jesus did not let this deter Him. He did not let the world lead Him; He led the world by His example. He was smitten for our salvation. "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted." Isaiah 53:4. Jesus bore our grief, our sorrows to the cross. The Father in heaven sacrificed His precious Son to be beaten, cursed, spit upon. He allowed Him to be afflicted by whips and a thorny crown. God allowed Him to be humiliated and, ultimately, to die for our sake. All this was allowed by the Father for our salvation. Sometimes people wonder why loved ones die or get sick or are lost in senseless killings. The Father in heaven can see the end from the beginning. He knows all things and what is right in all cases. On the other hand, we cannot understand how He allows things to happen for our salvation; any more than we can understand how He allowed His own Son to suffer.

If Jesus had turned from His mission, all would have been lost and Satan, the great deceiver would have won the battle. But Christ overcame the world and the devil, and cast down all arguments that could be made against the Father of righteousness. The reason Jesus became the Man of sorrows was because of His great love for us, and for our benefit to enable us to reach out and grasp salvation in His name. He said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Luke 9:23. Jesus bore the cross for our salvation so that we can bear our spiritual cross to follow Him. Self is one of the hardest sins to overcome, but with Jesus, He has offered us unlimited power to be successful. **LM**

“  
*The Son of God—a  
term that we use, but do  
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limited understanding of  
heaven.*”

# *Peace and Trust in Adversity*

By W. D. Frazee

*"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You,  
because he trusts in You."*

Isaiah 26:3

**"W**e should then enjoy a rest of soul to which many have long been strangers." *Steps to Christ*, 86

This peaceful, trusting rest is a gradual experience, like much of the growth in the Christian life. While we may have certain times along the way when, with sudden moving of the Spirit of God, we seem to be borne upward all at once, as in an elevator, much of the Christian life is simply an experience of gradually climbing up. And oh, what a glorious vision as the spiritual elevation increases! I'm sure that many have experienced this. Yet, dear friends, I think there is a deeper experience in this matter of peace and rest and joy in the Lord than any of us have yet had.



“

*We know that all things  
work together for good to  
those who love God.*

*Romans 8:28*

We find this peace and rest in utter resignation to the will of God and a simple trust that God is getting His will done. In other words, it is accepting what God sends from hour to hour and from moment to moment, walking in the path of His providence. It is then that we can enjoy this rest for souls that we have not known before. As children of the King, it is our privilege to be supremely happy, for we have so much for which to be thankful.

Sadly, many, even in the Christian experience, go through weary years of struggle. It is necessary for us to struggle with sin, the world, the flesh, and the devil, but too many are struggling with God, a bit afraid of Him, anxious lest He should fail to remember something or perhaps afraid that He will do something. But the truth is, we can have full confidence in God, and as a consequence, all this struggling can cease.

“God cares for everything and sustains everything that He has created. He who upholds the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity, at the same time cares for the wants of the little brown sparrow that sings its humble song without fear.” Ibid. Just so, God cares for us. I heard a proverb once, “If the birds knew how poor they were, they wouldn’t sing.” But I would like to revise that: “If we knew how rich we are, we would sing like the birds.” God cares for them, and this is what they sing about. God cares for us, and we should sing in thanksgiving just as they do.

“When men go forth to their daily toil, as when they engage in prayer; when they lie down at night, and when they rise in the morning; when the rich man feasts in his palace, or when the poor man gathers his children about the scanty board, each is tenderly watched by the heavenly Father. No tears are shed that God does not notice. There is no smile that He does not mark.

“If we would but fully believe this, all undue anxieties would be dismissed. Our lives would not be so filled with disappoint-

ment as now; for everything, whether great or small, would be left in the hands of God, who is not perplexed by the multiplicity of cares, or overwhelmed by their weight. We should then enjoy a rest of soul to which many have long been strangers.” Ibid.

Jacob’s sons had come back from Egypt to tell their father that the lord of Pharaoh’s house had put Simeon in prison. The lord had said that unless they brought the younger man, Benjamin, back, they couldn’t have any more grain. Jacob said, “Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me.” Genesis 42:36

Jacob was a great struggler. Even though years before he had fought with the Lord at the brook Jabbok and his name was changed to Israel, *prince with God*, he still had some things to learn. You may be able to look back and see where you have wrestled with God and secured the victory over sin, but still have things to learn. Jacob finally learned that all those things were not against him. He learned, as did Paul, “We know that all things work together for good to those who love God.” Romans 8:28

God is caring for the birds and for the great worlds and stars, and He is working all things together for you. If we believe that He is watching and noticing and controlling everything, we will dismiss our anxieties and find rest in Him.

But we do not have to wait to have peace and rest. We do not have to wait on anybody or anything. Right now we can believe two things: that God is looking after us, and that He is able and willing to carry out His will.

If we are really selfish and not converted and yet pray, we are probably praying for selfish and even wicked things. Somewhere along the line, our selfishness gets to be more refined, more cultured, and a bit more religious. When we reach that point, then we pray about what we think God’s will is. We are not interested in asking God to show us His will, but are more interested in telling Him what we think His will should be, according to our way of thinking.

God wants us to commit to Him not only our sins, not only our selfish desire for our



own way, but He wants us to commit to Him our desires, purposes, plans, and hopes about His work here on this earth. And then He wants us to believe that He will accomplish it.

Someone may say, “Well, what is the purpose of prayer then?” The purpose of prayer is to develop and strengthen the belief that God is looking after us and that He is able and willing to carry out His will. The very fact that so few arrive at it proves that there is plenty of need for more praying. The purpose of prayer is not to get God to do your way, to apprise Him of something He is ignorant of, or to remind Him of something He forgot. Prayer is not meant to make God more interested in us or His work or to make Him more enthusiastic about getting it done.

We are to be settled, in our inmost hearts, on two things: that all we want is God’s will, and we are sure He is going to get it done. We tell Him so, and it makes us happy, and it makes Him happy. Then prayer has accomplished its purpose.

“Human nature is ever struggling for expression, ready for contest.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 15. We can express that trait of character just as much in arguing about the mark of the beast as we can about politics. We can express it in arguing about health or dress reform just as easily as we can other issues.

Peter was a fighter, but he wanted to fight for Jesus. He had a sword, and he used it. Did it make Peter happy? No. It made him very unhappy and frustrated and disappointed because Jesus didn’t seem to appreciate it. In fact, Jesus told him to put his sword away. For three and a half years, Jesus had been trying to tell Peter and the other disciples His purpose in coming to this world, but Peter didn’t understand. So Jesus said, “Do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?” Matthew 26:53, 54



God  
is caring  
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stars.

The Father had given Jesus a cup to drink from, one that included a mob and Jesus’ being arrested. The people didn’t have to do these things, but it had all been arranged and allowed by the Father. Peter didn’t understand that. He thought he had to stop all that by fighting, and when Jesus reproved him, he didn’t know what to do. He was miserable. Before long, he was cursing and swearing and denying that he knew the Lord. And the truth is, Peter didn’t know Jesus; not in the way he needed to. But we can be thankful that it wasn’t long before he realized who Jesus was and what He had done for all of mankind.

Peter never used a sword again. He never even raised his hand to strike anybody. He learned this lesson: “Human nature is ever struggling ... ready for contest; but he who learns of Christ is emptied of self, of pride, of love of supremacy, and there is silence in the soul. Self is yielded to the disposal of the Holy Spirit. Then we are not anxious to have the highest place. We have no ambition to crowd and elbow ourselves into notice; but we feel that our highest place is at the feet of our Saviour.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 15. The highest place is at the feet of Jesus, and we look to Him, for a hand to lead, a voice to guide.

Jesus stood meek and calm as he was bound by the mob. This action was not inspired by God, but it was part of God’s plan for Jesus. And that is why Jesus told Peter, “The cup which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?”

The mob was cruel and that was only the beginning. Jesus went through trial after trial, test after test. “The Lord God has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away. I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.” Isaiah 50:4–6

Inspired by the devil, they whipped Jesus’ back twice with a scourge made of leather with metal braided into the strips. With every stroke, the blood ran down His back. They pulled out the hair of His beard, they cursed at Him and spat in His face. They forced a crown of thorns upon His brow and then they killed Him. What was His attitude? Submission. He did not fight back, nor run away. He did not say, “I do not have to do this. I will return to My Father.”

“

*The purpose of prayer is to develop and strengthen the belief that God is looking after us.*

No, Jesus was working out God's plan according to His schedule. Like Isaac at Mount Moriah, Jesus placed Himself, according to God's schedule, upon the altar of God's plan. And that is what God wants us to do every day, every hour. Jesus and Isaac were able to submit without reservation to God's plan because they had learned in the school of little things, which then prepared them to submit to the weightier things.

We often imagine, as did Peter, that when we are brought before the courts or meet the howling mobs, we will be strong enough to stand firm. But instead, we might find that we are not ready to meet the mob at all, and surely not ready to lay it all on the altar of God's plan.

God, in His mercy lets us face daily tests, petty annoyances, and disappointments so that we can learn to relate ourselves to those things as He does, not by being frustrated or irritated or restless, but by looking up to God and saying, "Dear Lord, I know that through it all and in it all, You are working out Your will. Your kingdom come, Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

"If we lack faith where we are when difficulties present themselves, we would lack faith in any place.

"Our greatest need is faith in God. When we look on the dark side, we lose our hold on the Lord God of Israel. As the heart is opened to fears and conjectures, the path of progress is hedged up by unbelief. Let us never feel that God has forsaken His work.

"There must be less talking unbelief, less imagining that this one and that one is hedging up the way. Go forward in faith; trust the Lord to prepare the way for His work. Then you will find rest in Christ."

*Testimonies*, Vol. 7, 211, 212

It is possible to hedge up the way, as we work in God's service, by dwelling on the dark, doleful, and discouraging things in the world, and I know there are times when things must be dealt with, but Mrs. White is saying that we should not dwell on unbelief.

I will never forget when a dear friend and I spent the night in prayer over something we were deeply burdened about in the work of God. We felt that someone was hedging up God's work and we prayed that God would either change this person's heart or remove him. That night we prayed long enough to discover that a change was needed, but instead it needed to be made in my heart and my friend's heart.

Friends, there is nothing more sorrowful to see than hearts perplexed and burdened under their own criticisms and faultfindings. They are suspicious of this one or that one. "More love is needed, more frankness, less suspicion, less evil thinking. We need to be less ready to blame and accuse. It is this that is so offensive to God. The heart needs to be softened and subdued by love." *Ibid.*, 212

"The many problems that are now mysterious you may solve for yourselves by continued trust in God." *Ibid.*

Problems can be solved, if we will but commit them to God. However, when you do that, do not be surprised if God lets something happen that is not what you would choose. It may be that you will rise from an earnest season of prayer and tell God that you are willing to bear anything, but then someone spits in your face. Would you think God heard your prayer? Perhaps this was part of the test and trial that God has designed to build and solidify your character.

Remember Sister White's dream where she and her husband were walking to a place, both weak and worn, depressed and distressed, sick and worn out. They came to a stream, and Elder White plunged into the stream. There was a spring down in there. He came up with a glass filled with that water. He plunged down again and came up drinking it. Sister White said he looked radiant and buoyant and full of health and vitality, but she wondered why he gave none to her. He told her, "All who drink this must plunge for themselves." It might seem like a good idea for someone else to pour heavenly peace into your soul, but there are two things you must settle for yourself, in your own heart: God loves you enough to take



care of you, and it suits you to have Him do it.

That includes God allowing bad things, hard things, cruel things, disappointing things to happen to you. It's all part of God's plan for you, and while you won't like those hard or bad things, you will like for God to bring these trials to you because you know He loves you better than you love yourself, and you know that He does not allow one bit of it unless it is for your good. God is looking for those today who will reveal that settled peace, that sweet love.

Dear ones, you can never have this sweet peace if you hold back from fully surrendering all to God. When you settle in your heart to be willing to be anything or nothing, when you settle in your heart that God shall have His way in your life, then the sweet peace of Christ will take your heart. And even your prayers can breathe peace.

In the lions' den, Daniel did the sleeping. In the palace, Darius did the worrying. Daniel didn't ask God to keep Him out of the lions' den. He submitted himself to God's will. He slept because he was perfectly willing to be eaten by the lions if it was God's will and time for him to be eaten.

The three worthies were able to stand on the Plain of Dura, not asking that God would keep them out of the furnace, but rather to give them the strength to be burned alive if that was His will for their lives. They stood firm and were thrown into the fire, but they were not burned; not even the smell of smoke was on their clothing. But more importantly, God gave them a clear sign that it was not His plan for them to die there that day. He walked with them in the fire and preserved their lives, a living witness to all present and on into the future.

Oh friends, I want to learn the lessons of peace and trust in adversity. It is a sweet school. I don't want my way, not even in God's work. I want God to work out His way in my life and service to Him.



**"My stubborn will at last is yielded;  
I would be Thine, and Thine alone;  
And this the prayer my lips are bringing,  
'Lord, let in me Thy will be done.'**

**"Thy precious will, O conqu'ring Saviour,  
Doth now embrace and compass me;  
All discords hushed, my peace a river,  
My soul, a prisoned bird set free.**

**"Shut in with Thee, Oh Lord, forever,  
My wayward feet no more to roam;  
What pow'r from Thee my soul can sever?  
The center of God's will, my home.**

**"Sweet will of God, still fold me closer,  
Till I am wholly lost in Thee."**

*Mrs. C. H. (Lelia) Morris, 1900* **LM**



# The Bride of Christ

By Sudhir Pandit

**T**he subject of the bride or wife of Jesus poses somewhat of an enigma in the Bible. Is it the people, the living church, or is it the New Jerusalem, the Holy City? Is there a contradiction here? There are inspired statements to support each view. The following are the two positions from inspiration:

**1** In the first set of scriptures, the bride of Jesus is unquestionably His church. “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 11:2. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:25–27. The Spirit of Prophecy agrees with the word. “They must not put on their citizen’s dress, but the wedding garment. They have been married to Christ, and the robe of His righteousness is to clothe them. The church is the bride of Christ, and her members are to yoke up with their Leader. God warns us not to defile our garments.” *The Gospel Herald*, May 28, 1902

**2** However, in the second set of scriptures, we find something different. The wife of Jesus is the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, while the church represents the guests at the marriage supper. “Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” Revelation 21:9, *last part*, 10. Mrs. White concurs emphatically again, “Clearly, then, the bride represents the Holy City, and the virgins that go out to meet the bridegroom are a symbol of the church. In the Revelation, the people of God are said to be the guests at the marriage supper. Revelation 19:9. If *guests*, they cannot be represented also as the *bride*.” *The Great Controversy*, 427. [Author’s emphasis.] The last sentence appears to contradict the idea that the bride of Christ is the church. So, is there a way to harmonize the two somewhat disparate positions?

Starting from the premise that there are no real contradictions in the Scriptures because the authorship is the Holy Spirit throughout, it behooves us to make a determined attempt to make sense of the two positions. Thankfully we have the Spirit of Prophecy to point us in the right direction.



Just before commenting on the Holy City being the bride of Jesus, our prophet says the following: “In the summer and autumn of 1844 the proclamation, ‘Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,’ was given. The two classes represented by the wise and foolish virgins were then developed. ... The coming of the bridegroom, here brought to view, takes place before the marriage. The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom.” Ibid., 426

It mirrors the words of Daniel 7:14, *first part*, “And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him.”

The key to unlocking the puzzle of the bride of Jesus is contained in the proper understanding of the marriage. It is unlike any ordinary marriage since it occurs in the context of royalty. Both secular and sacred histories record instances when marriages were contracted as a means of sealing the political ties between rival kingdoms. Frequently, these marriages resulted in the restructuring of territorial boundaries as land was exchanged according to a mutual pact. Similarly, the marriage of Jesus has to do with His receiving a kingdom, as opposed to a wife in the normal sense. Several times in the gospels Jesus used the parable of a man going away to receive a kingdom as an analogy to His own situation. (e.g., Luke 19:12). In John 18:36, Jesus told Pilate: “My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not

from hence.” Therefore, the kingdom He receives is from His Father in heaven. It is a heavenly bestowal.

To understand the implications of this statement, we must look closely at the composition of a kingdom.

As with other forms of government, a kingdom is a method of governing intelligent beings. In a democracy or a republic, the people rule themselves through a representative form of government, as in the U.S.A.

A kingdom, on the other hand, is ruled by a king, the monarch—a

single individual who holds absolute power in his hands as in many ancient and modern nations. It is in essence a dictatorship, which on earth inevitably devolves into corruption and abuse according to the dictum “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” But not so in heaven. God being infinite in love, compassion, and wisdom is a *benevolent* dictator-king, looking out unselfishly for the supreme happiness of His subjects.

But no matter the form of government, they all have two inseparable components in common—the geographical area—the physical territory defining their jurisdiction, and the people—the subjects of the government. One without the other cannot represent a functioning state. When the Shah of Iran was deposed on February 11, 1979, he was granted asylum in the U.S.A. Here he set up a “government-in-exile,” hoping someday to be reinstated to his throne. With no territory to control, however, his government was nothing more than a shadow force with no real power. But even if they did have a geo-

graphical area to call their own, if they had no human subjects, the government would again be just a mirage.

And so will it be at the end because Satan has not ceased his illegal claim to the world. Notwithstanding the tolling of his death knell at the cross of Calvary, he will eventually make an all-out, do-or-die attempt to make good his claim in the last moments of time. But God will have His end-time Jobs to again deny him the victory and extinguish his hopes forever. Deserted by his disillusioned followers, Satan will finally sink into oblivion in total ignominy, totally alone.

Applying the two-fold aspects of a kingdom to the marriage of Jesus, we gain a crucial understanding. By receiving from the Father the title to the New Jerusalem, the capital of His kingdom, He obtains the authority, the right to rule the physical universe as King. Notice the following inspired words: “The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which is the capital and representative of the kingdom, is called ‘the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ Said the angel to John: ‘Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ He carried me away in the Spirit, ... and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” Revelation 21:9, *last part*, 10. “Clearly, then, the bride represents the Holy City, and the virgins that go out to meet the bridegroom are a symbol of the church.” *The Great Controversy*, 426, 427. Thus, even though the Holy City is a physical, inanimate structure, it qualifies as the bride of Jesus by granting Him legal right to the full territorial jurisdiction of the universe. But what about His living bride? They are present as well in the persons of the virgins (the church), the angels, plus the beings of other worlds. Thus, the two components of a functioning kingdom merge together in the marriage. And so it is that with reference to the territory, the bride is the Holy City, (the physical, geographical component of the king-

“  
*Power corrupts, and  
absolute power corrupts  
absolutely.*”



*Husbands,  
love your  
wives, even as  
Christ also loved  
the church.*

dom) while in the context of His subjects, the bride is the church (the living, intelligent part of the kingdom). And since the

true church on earth is one with the church in heaven,

(see *The Acts of the Apostles*, 11) every intelligent being in the universe forms part of the bride of Jesus.

It is of much interest and significance that the Holy City is described as a “bride adorned for her husband.” (Revelation

21:2). It is obviously

a structure of such surpassing magnificence and

glory as to eclipse anything else in the material universe of heaven. Clearly, God will have outdone Himself in creating this dazzling masterpiece of workmanship from the precious elements of the universe. It is as if it were a dowry for His Son. Since Jesus was the Father’s agent in creation (Colossians 1:16), and because He said in John 14:1–3 that He was going away to “prepare” a place for us, we know that He [Jesus] was involved in the planning and execution of the construction of the Holy City. Clearly, He did not just speak it into existence, but personally fashioned it with His own hands—just like He did Adam and Eve. It is a fit place for His living bride. Mrs. White describes it in sublime language: “There is the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of the glorified new earth, ‘a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.’ ‘Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.’” *The Great Controversy*, 676. We will never in eternity cease to be awed and thrilled by the marvelous intricacies of this breathtaking edifice, our eternal home.

As alluded to above, the parable of the ten virgins bears significantly on the question of the bride of Jesus. It is a prophecy with two separate fulfillments. The first fulfillment occurred in 1844 which Inspiration explains as follows: “The coming of the bridegroom, here brought to view, takes place before the marriage. The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom.” Ibid., 426

The midnight cry (consisting of the first two angels of Revelation 14) at this time announced the coming of Jesus before the Father for His nuptials. He comes to the marriage, which has been in process ever since. But soon, the ceremony will be over. “Having received the kingdom, He will come in His glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to ‘sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,’ at His table in His kingdom (Matthew 8:11; Luke 22:30) to partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb.” Ibid., 427

Now, at the second fulfillment, the Loud Cry (composed of all three angels of Revelation 14, plus the angel of Revelation 18) will go forth announcing the “consummation” of the marriage—the completion of the make-up of His subjects and the coming of Jesus from the marriage to take His living bride to Himself. It will be time for the antitype of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Holy City in heaven to celebrate the marriage.

The Spirit of Prophecy provides an insightful view of the closing events: “Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The subjects of the kingdom were made up. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.” *Early Writings*, 280. Here again we have the two elements of a kingdom blended into one—the physical “kingdom” and the living “heirs of salva-



tion” together constituting the glorious, unified bride of Jesus.

The apostle Paul portrays the church as “a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:27. This condition of the living bride of Jesus is achieved before He concludes His most holy place ministry. Today the professed people of God are a mixed multitude composed of both wheat and tares. But as Jesus explained in Matthew 13:38, “The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one.” Since only the “children of the kingdom” can occupy the Holy City, God must somehow remove Satan’s people from His church at some point. This He does at the very end. It is a very traumatic process depicted in *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 380:

“Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall.” Notice, Satan comes close to winning, only to fail again! “It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths.” The “church” that “remains” is “the precious wheat” identified here as the (144,000) guileless saints “without spot or stain of sin.” So it is true that the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest. But a shaking and sifting process begins the separation before the final painful split in the great crisis of the Sunday laws. The result is the purified true “church,” God’s end-time Jobs, who will deliver Satan the *coup de grâce*, calling curtains on his illicit kingdom forever.

This is when the great majority of the tares separate from the wheat while a few, quite surprisingly, still keep compa-



ny with the faithful until they fall away at last just before Jesus returns in the clouds of glory. Notice this amazing, seemingly unlikely scenario portrayed by Inspiration: “While praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell on me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world but could not find them—when a voice said to me, ‘Look again, and look a little higher.’ At this I raised my eyes and saw a straight and narrow path, [Matthew 7:14.] cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were travelling to the City, which was at the farther end of the path. ... But soon some grew weary, and they said the City was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. ... Others rashly denied the light [the midnight cry] behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled ... and fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below. ... They fell all the way along the path one after another, until we heard the voice of God like many waters, [Ezekiel 43:2. Joel

3:16. Revelation 16:17.] which gave us the day and hour of Jesus’ coming. [Ezekiel 12:25. Mark 13:32.]” *A Word to the Little Flock*, 14

Friend, the door is still open for us to participate in the marriage of Jesus. We can still choose to be part of the living bride of the Lamb. Let us resolve to make certain that we will never identify with the tares who lose their faith in the last moments of time. The glorious prospects God has in mind for us in the hereafter cannot be comprehended by the human mind, much less expressed by human tongues. “But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” 1 Corinthians 2:9

Living in the incredibly beautiful city of God, the physical bride of Jesus, with Jesus Himself the chief attraction in it, what will it be like?! Dwelling in the light from the throne of God, feasting from the tree of life, regaled by the sublime orchestral and choral music of the angels, enthralled by the mysteries of the universe and the science of salvation taught by Jesus Himself, each succeeding day more ecstatic than the last, who can begin to imagine it?! Oh, we cannot afford to miss out on the experience for anything in this decrepit old world! May God give us the grace to “Strive with all the power God has given [us] to gain the crown of everlasting life, that [we] may cast it at the feet of the Redeemer, and touching the golden harp, fill all heaven with rich music. God help [us] to gain eternal life, that [we] may see His face.” *Manuscript 31*, 1901. Amen and Amen!

*All Scripture from the King James Version*  
[Emphasis supplied.] [LM](#)

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# *The Importance of Preparedness*

By Judy Rebarchek

**M**ay 31, 1889, was just another day in Pennsylvania, but by the time the day was over, the worst flood of the 19th century had occurred and 2,209 people had perished, 1,600 homes had been destroyed, and the property damage price tag topped \$17 million (almost \$374 million today). Because of selfishness, greed, and negligence, necessary preparation was not made to prevent an event that they all knew could happen. They had been warned, but the warning was ignored.

Johnstown, Pennsylvania, is located about 60 miles east of Pittsburgh in a valley on a flood plain at the fork of the Little Conemaugh and Stonycreek

Rivers. As the city grew, it narrowed the river banks to gain building space. This combined with heavy annual rains had resulted in increased flooding in the area.

In 1889, Johnstown was a steel manufacturing town with a population of 30,000 people mostly of German and Welsh descent. The town had prospered since its founding in 1800 in part due to the Cambria Iron Works that had opened there in the 1850s.

The South Fork Dam was built on the Little Conemaugh River, 14 miles upstream from Johnstown. The dam was 931 feet by 72 feet and the largest man-made, earthen (dirt and rock) dam

in the U.S. It was originally built as part of the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal system, but by 1889 the reservoir behind the dam had been abandoned and the canal system had become obsolete with the introduction in the 1850s of the Pennsylvania Railroad as a means of transporting goods. As the canal system was no longer used, maintenance on the dam was neglected.

There was a fear for some time that the dam would break, but, storm after storm, it had held and soon it became something of a joke around Johnstown. People became complacent.

The dam and abandoned reservoir were sold to a group of Pittsburgh



speculators. They modified the dam to accommodate a road and to add a fish screen in the spillway. It was believed that these alterations increased the vulnerability of the dam. In addition, a system of relief pipes and valves, part of the original dam, had been sold for scrap and never replaced, preventing the lowering of the level of the lake in an emergency. Around Lake Conemaugh, 450 feet above Johnstown, these speculators had built the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, consisting of cabins and its clubhouse along the banks of the lake.

On May 28, a low-pressure area had formed over Nebraska and Kansas and by the time it had made its way to Pennsylvania on May 30, it was considered the heaviest rainfall event in recorded U.S. history. It was estimated that six to ten inches of rain had fallen over the area in a 24-hour period. During the night creeks had become torrents. Telegraph lines were downed and rail lines had been washed away. By daybreak, the Conemaugh River that ran through Johnstown would soon overwhelm its banks.

On the morning of May 31, the president of the Club realized that the water had nearly crested the dam and he quickly assembled a group of men who worked desperately to save the face of the dam. Others attempted digging a ditch along the side of the dam in an effort to prevent the water from overtopping the dam, but the effort failed.

A messenger was sent to the nearby town of South Fork to warn Johnstown of the now inevitable disaster. But the message was never given to the authorities of Johnstown. The dam had always held. This would be just another false alarm.

The situation in Johnstown had drastically worsened. Water from Lake Conemaugh had risen as much as ten feet into the streets. Many people were trapped in their homes.

About 2:50 in the afternoon, the water breached the South Fork dam and moments later the dam collapsed. The flood reached the town of South Fork first, but the town was built on higher ground and most of the people simply sought refuge in the surrounding hills. Property damage was minimal and four people died.

It stalled, momentarily, at the Conemaugh Viaduct, a 78-foot high railroad bridge. Seven minutes later the viaduct collapsed and the flood resumed its course, only now it had gained a renewed energy. It hit the small town of Mineral Point, one mile below the viaduct and wiped out the town down to the bedrock. Sixteen people died.

The village of East Conemaugh was hit by a mass of debris described as "a huge hill rolling over and over." Here trains were picked up by the surging waters and carried along. At least 50 people died.

When the water hit the town of Woodvale, it destroyed the Cambria Iron Works, sweeping up railroad cars and barbed wire. Of Woodvale's 1,100 residents, 314 died. Boilers exploded when the water hit the Gautier Wire Works. The resulting black smoke was seen by the people of Johnstown. Miles of barbed wire became entangled in the debris heading for Johnstown.

Fifty-seven minutes after the dam collapsed, the flood hit Johnstown. Twenty million tons of water (almost 4 billion gallons) had traveled through the narrowed valley and now hit the town at 40 miles per hour, with a wave reaching 60 feet high and a roar "like thunder" that could be heard for miles.

Caught unaware, people tried to run for high ground, but most were engulfed in the surging floodwater, crushed by the debris or helplessly entangled in barbed wire and drowned. Those who managed to make it into their attic or onto their roof, or were able to stay afloat on the debris, waited hours for help to come.

The debris began to build up downstream against the Stone Bridge, an old, but substantial, arched bridge, that carried the Pennsylvania Railroad across the Conemaugh River, ultimately covering 30 acres and reaching 70 feet high. Tragically, a fire broke out in this enormous pile of debris, and at least 80 people who had survived the initial wave, lost their lives in the inferno. The fire burned for three days; it took three months to remove all the debris mainly because of the amount of barbed wire entangled in the wreckage, but dynamite did the trick.

Many of those who died were never identified, hundreds were missing and never found; some bodies were found months later. The cleanup operation took five years before Johnstown had fully recovered.

Sources: [johnstownpa.com/History/hist9.html](http://johnstownpa.com/History/hist9.html); [history.com/this-day-in-history/the-Johnstown-flood](http://history.com/this-day-in-history/the-Johnstown-flood); [Wikipedia/Johnstown Flood](http://Wikipedia/Johnstown_Flood)

Terrible things are coming, and if we are not prepared, ready and waiting, then we will be overcome and lost.

"To us has been given the message of Christ's soon coming. ...

"Are we preparing for this great event? Are we preparing to meet the Saviour in peace, or are we absorbed in worldly business and pleasure? In the judgment, the question will not be, What profession did you make? but, What have you done for Me? What fruit have you borne to My glory? Now is the time to prepare for the coming King. ...

"At infinite cost a fountain has been prepared for our cleansing. If we now wash our robes of character at this fountain, God will give us a place in the mansions that are being prepared for those who love Him." *The Signs of the Times*, November 22, 1905

"We are living in an evil age. The perils of the last days thicken around us. ... Should it be necessary that the terrors of the day of God be held before us in order to compel us to right action?" *The Faith I Live By*, 350 LM



# Christian Character

## Clues – KJV

### Across

- B17 How long did Jesus promise to be with His disciples?..... Matthew 28:20  
 C7 Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit..... Acts 9:31  
 D15 How many living creatures did John see in the midst of God's throne?..... Revelation 5:6  
 D20 Portion of Herod's kingdom offered to Herodias' daughter..... Mark 6:23  
 E4 God was \_\_\_\_\_ in the flesh ..... 1 Timothy 3:16  
 G5 Isaiah says the \_\_\_\_\_ will become a fruitful field ..... Isaiah 32:15  
 I20 Satan walks about like a roaring \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 1 Peter 5:8  
 J7 Who lied to the Holy Spirit?..... Acts 5:3  
 L3 By this, Jesus obtained a more excellent name ..... Hebrews 1:4  
 M20 We are blessed in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord ..... Psalm 129:8  
 N8 The Son of God came to give us an \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 1 John 5:20  
 P4 What man should not do of himself..... Galatians 6:14  
 P10 Jesus did not \_\_\_\_\_ to destroy the law..... Matthew 5:17  
 P21 Grace be with you \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 2 Corinthians 13:14  
 S4 The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Romans 8:26  
 T14 The \_\_\_\_\_ man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God ..... 1 Corinthians 2:14  
 V8 Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ Himself to save man ..... Philippians 2:8  
 V20 A certain man in Lystra was crippled from his mother's \_\_\_\_\_..... Acts 14:8  
 W3 God will \_\_\_\_\_ your lampstand unless you repent ..... Revelation 2:5

### Down

- B4 Used for pain ..... Jeremiah 51:8  
 B12 John described Jesus as "Him who is \_\_\_\_\_" ..... 1 John 5:20  
 B18 The name the disciples called Jesus ..... Acts 1:6  
 B20 We should utterly \_\_\_\_\_ abominations ..... Deuteronomy 7:26  
 D23 With what are we to work out our own salvation? (3 words) ..... Philippians 2:12  
 E9 What type of life is offered to those who believe? ..... John 3:16  
 F3 When praying, we are not to be like the \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Matthew 6:5  
 G5 What type of honey did John the Baptist eat? ..... Matthew 3:4  
 G16 How far back in time do we find the Word?..... John 1:1  
 G18 This man was brought to Jesus for healing..... Matthew 9:2  
 I20 We are told to serve the \_\_\_\_\_ God ..... Hebrews 9:14  
 K6 Jesus made Himself of no \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Philippians 2:7  
 P10 Jesus said, "Do not \_\_\_\_\_ to Me"..... John 20:17  
 Q14 This offering is no longer required of the believer..... Psalm 40:6  
 Q16 The Spirit gives life to our \_\_\_\_\_ bodies..... Romans 8:11  
 Q20 Their works \_\_\_\_\_ those who die in Christ..... Revelation 14:13  
 R8 What helper did Jesus promise?..... John 14:16  
 T18 Those who worship the beast have no \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Revelation 14:11

A	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	A
B																							B
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X	2	3	4	5	6	7		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	X

Answer Key:

X	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	X
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## *The Narrow Way*

By Ellen G. White

*“Enter by the narrow gate because wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and there are many who go in by it because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it.”*

Matthew 7:13, 14

“While at Battle Creek in August 1868, I dreamed of being with a large body of people. A portion of this assembly started out prepared to journey. We had heavily loaded wagons. As we journeyed, the road seemed to ascend. On one side of this road was a deep precipice; on the other was a high, smooth, white wall, like the hard finish upon plastered rooms.

“As we journeyed on, the road grew narrower and steeper. In some places it seemed so very narrow that we con-

cluded that we could no longer travel with the loaded wagons. We then loosed them from the horses, took a portion of the luggage from the wagons and placed it upon the horses, and journeyed on horseback.

“As we progressed, the path still continued to grow narrow. We were obliged to press close to the wall, to save ourselves from falling off the narrow road down the steep precipice. As we did this, the luggage on the horses pressed against the wall and caused us to sway toward the precipice. We feared that we

should fall and be dashed in pieces on the rocks. We then cut the luggage from the horses, and it fell over the precipice. We continued on horseback, greatly fearing, as we came to the narrower places in the road, that we should lose our balance and fall. At such times a hand seemed to take the bridle and guide us over the perilous way.

“As the path grew more narrow, we decided that we could no longer go with safety on horseback, and we left the horses and went on foot, in single file, one following in the footsteps of



another. At this point small cords were let down from the top of the pure white wall; these we eagerly grasped, to aid us in keeping our balance upon the path. As we traveled, the cord moved along with us. The path finally became so narrow that we concluded that we could travel more safely without our shoes, so we slipped them from our feet and went on some distance without them. Soon it was decided that we could travel more safely without our stockings; these were removed, and we journeyed on with bare feet.

"We then thought of those who had not accustomed themselves to privations and hardships. Where were such now? They were not in the company. At every change some were left behind, and those only remained who had accustomed themselves to endure hardships. The privations of the way only made these more eager to press on to the end."

"Our danger of falling from the pathway increased. We pressed close to the white wall, yet could not place our feet fully upon the path, for it was too narrow. We then suspended nearly our whole weight upon the cords, exclaiming: 'We have hold from above! We have hold from above!' The same words were uttered by all the company in the narrow pathway. As we heard the sounds of mirth and revelry that seemed to come from the abyss below, we shuddered. We heard the profane oath, the vulgar jest, and low, vile songs. We heard the war song and the dance song. We heard instrumental music and loud laughter, mingled with cursing and cries of anguish and bitter wailing, and were more anxious than ever to keep upon the narrow, difficult pathway. Much of the time we were compelled to suspend our whole weight upon the cords, which increased in size as we progressed."

"I noticed that the beautiful white wall was stained with blood. It caused a feeling of regret to see the wall thus stained. This feeling, however, lasted but for a moment, as I soon thought that it

was all as it should be. Those who are following after will know that others have passed the narrow, difficult way before them, and will conclude that if others were able to pursue their onward course, they can do the same. And as the blood shall be pressed from their aching feet, they will not faint with discouragement; but, seeing the blood upon the wall, they will know that others have endured the same pain.

"At length we came to a large chasm, at which our path ended. There was nothing now to guide the feet, nothing upon which to rest them. Our whole reliance must be upon the cords, which had increased in size until they were as large as our bodies. Here we were for a time thrown into perplexity and distress. We inquired in fearful whispers: 'To what is the cord attached?' My husband was just before me. Large drops of sweat were falling from his brow, the veins in his neck and temples were increased to double their usual size, and suppressed, agonizing groans came from his lips. The sweat was dropping from my face, and I felt such anguish as I had never felt before. A fearful struggle was before us. Should we fail here, all the difficulties of our journey had been experienced for nought.

"Before us, on the other side of the chasm, was a beautiful field of green grass, about six inches high. I could not see the sun; but bright, soft beams of light, resembling fine gold and silver, were resting upon this field. Nothing I had seen upon earth could compare in beauty and glory with this field. But could we succeed in reaching it? was the anxious inquiry. Should the cord break,

we must perish. Again, in whispered anguish, the words were breathed: 'What holds the cord?' For a moment we hesitated to venture. Then we exclaimed: 'Our only hope is to trust wholly to the cord. It has been our dependence all the difficult way. It will not fail us now.' Still we were hesitating and distressed. The

words were then spoken: 'God holds the cord. We need not fear.' These words were then repeated by those behind us, accompanied with: 'He will not fail us now. He has brought us thus far in safety.'

"My husband then swung himself over the fearful abyss into the beautiful field beyond. I immediately followed. And, oh, what a sense of relief and gratitude to God we felt! I heard voices raised in triumphant praise to God. I was happy, perfectly happy.

"I awoke, and found that from the anxiety I had experienced in passing over the difficult route, every nerve in my body seemed to be in a tremor. This dream needs no comment. It made such an impression upon my mind that probably every item in it will be vivid before me while my memory shall continue."

*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, 596, 597 **LM**

“

*Our only hope is to trust wholly to the cord. It has been our dependence all the difficult way. It will not fail us now.*

*The illustration on the opposite page is an 18x24-inch poster, available for purchase. Visit:*

**stepstolife.org/shop**  
or call

**316-788-5559**



## Honest George

One day some years ago when people traveled mostly by trains, an energetic shoeshine boy stepped up to a man standing on a platform in Grand Central Station in New York City. “How about a shoeshine, Mister?” the boy asked.

“Well,” the man replied, “I could use a shoeshine. But do I have time? I need to catch the Hudson River train.”

“There’s no time to lose,” the boy admitted. “But I can do a good job for you before the train pulls out.”

“Are you sure?”

“I’m sure.”

“Ok,” the man agreed. And in two seconds, the boy was down on his knees putting on the polish.

“You won’t let the train leave without me, will you?” the man asked anxiously, looking at his watch and then at the train nearby.

“No, I won’t sir,” the boy assured him, and he quickly reached for his brushes and began buffing the man’s shoes to a high gloss.

“What’s your name?” asked the man.

“George Holmes.”

“Is your father living?”

“No, sir. He’s dead. There’s no one except Mother and me. There you are, sir, and the train is starting to move!” George stood up, his job completed.

The man reached quickly into his pocket and took out a dollar. He handed it to George who started to count out his change. But the man was afraid there wasn’t time to wait, and he turned and jumped aboard the mov-

ing train. George ran alongside with the man’s change, but before he could reach him the train picked up speed and pulled away.

George felt bad that he hadn’t been able to give the man his change.

Two years later, as George was walking along the street near Grand Central Station, he saw this man again.

He was sure it must be him, because George rarely forgot a face.

Approaching the man, George asked, “Sir, have you ever been here in New York City before?”

“Yes.”

“When?”

“About two years ago.”

“Didn’t I shine your shoes on the platform here at Grand Central Station?”

“I don’t know. There was a boy who shined my shoes. It could have been you.”

“And did the train pull out before that boy could give you your change?” George asked.

“Yes, it did,” the man replied with a surprised look.

“Well, sir, I’m the boy, and I owe you seventy-five cents. Here is your money. I was afraid I wouldn’t ever see you again.”


Now, since this is a true story, perhaps you would like to know what became of George. The man whose shoes he had polished was so pleased to find such an honest boy that he asked George where he lived. He took the time to learn about George’s situation, how he lived alone with his mother and how they worked hard to make ends meet. The man

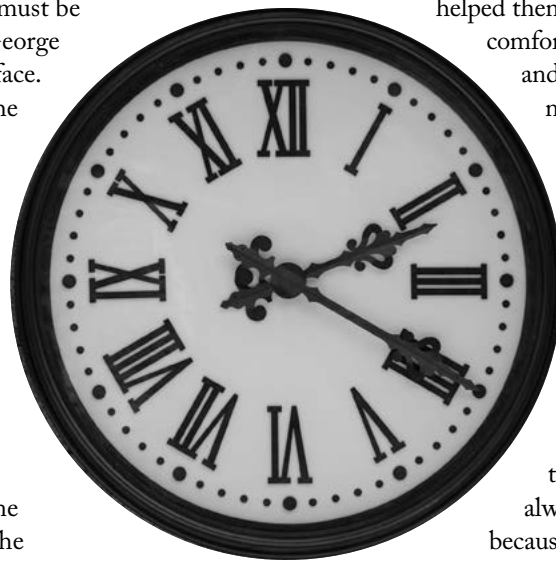
helped them find a more comfortable place to live and gave them the money to pay the rent. He set up a fund to make sure George would be able to get a good education. All because of an act of honesty.

Of course, what happened to George doesn’t always happen just because we are honest.

But even if no one notices, it still pays to be honest. And there are other ways of being honest besides in matters of money. You can be honest with your parents. You can be honest in school. You can be honest with your friends.

Be honest in everything, so that at last God may say to you, “I have been able to trust you in the little things of this life. Now I will make you ruler over great things.”

*Storytime*, Character-building Stories for Children, ©2008, 56, 57. 





## *A New Year*

**T**he new year is here! This is a time of resolutions, promises, and commitments—most of which are broken or abandoned before the month of January has passed into February. So, what are your plans?

With the second coming of Christ just on the horizon, we should look with longing eyes for His return and make sure that we have made the two commitments that are the most important in this life: committing our lives—heart, soul, mind, and spirit—to follow and obey Him every day, and to do our part in spreading the gospel to a world that has so great a need for it.

“The new year is just before us. Shall not the gifts be turned to a better account than heretofore? Shall not confession be made and shall we not avail ourselves of the blood of Christ, who is able and willing to cleanse from all sin? ...

“In the last great day we shall be judged in accordance with what we have done. Christ will say, ‘I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and

ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?’ (Matthew 25:42–44). Christ will then say, ‘Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me’ (verse 45). And Christ will say, ‘Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels’ (verse 41).

“Christ came and set the example in sacrificing, and if we are Christ’s, then we will do the works of Christ. Instead of pleasing ourselves, we will be seeking to do others good, and to impart benefits to suffering humanity. And unless this is done, we cannot expect to have a part with Christ.

“There are souls to be saved all around us, and each has a work to do to be reconciled to Christ. This is the work to take hold of in the new year. We are living for time and eternity, and we want the light to flash upon our pathway and in return we want to extend its blessings to others. ...

“Let each strive to have a better record for the coming year, and live so near to God that you may be surrounded with

the atmosphere of heaven, and thus be a representative of Christ.” *The Upward Look*, 374

“Let us review our own course during the past year, and compare our life and character with the Bible standard. Have we withheld from our gracious Benefactor that which He claims from us in return for all the blessings He has granted? Have we neglected to care for the poor, and comfort the sorrowing? Here, then, is work for us.” *The Review and Herald*, January 3, 1882

*Dear Lord, we thank You  
for this new year and each  
new day in it. Show us how  
we each can best serve You.  
Bring into our lives those  
who need to know You. And  
help us, that in all we do  
and say, to do the work that  
will hasten Your return. LM*



## Your Letters

"I so enjoy your magazine and the Bible studies on Sabbath. The articles are all excellent."

—ML, South Dakota

"I praise God for your wonderful magazine. I am Sabbath School superintendent and use them often in Sabbath School."

—NP, Louisiana

"Thank you so much for allowing Jesus to work so beautifully through your Steps to Life Ministry. What a blessing your thorough Bible studies are in the *LandMarks* magazine."

—PL, Michigan

"We thank you all so much for the DVDs and *LandMarks*. We look forward to reading it each month. We thank the Lord for your ministry."

—DF, Florida

### January Sermon of the Month

## Abraham's Faith Test

By John J. Grosboll

Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Only those with faith are members of the true church. There are fourteen important points regarding faith. Do you know them?

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 2023

Dear Friend,

The first priority of every Christian is to present the gospel to every creature. (See Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:18–20.) There is a way for every person to be involved in spreading the gospel. "Heavenly angels have long been waiting for human agents—the members of the church—to cooperate with them in the great work to be done. They are waiting for you. So vast is the field, so comprehensive the design, that every sanctified heart will be pressed into service as an instrument of divine power." *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, 46, 47

One way to spread the gospel is to acquire and share the skill of cooking.

"It is a religious duty for those who cook to learn how to prepare healthful food. Many souls are lost as the result of poor cookery. ...

"There are few really good cooks. Young women think that it is menial to cook and do other kinds of housework; and for this reason, many girls who marry and have the care of families have little idea of the duties devolving upon a wife and mother. ...

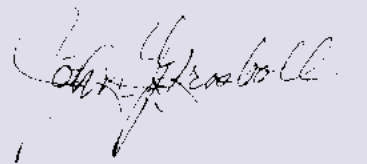
"Cooking is no mean science, and it is one of the most essential in practical life. It is a science that all women should learn ... To make food appetizing and at the same time simple and nourishing, requires skill; but it can be done. Cooks should know how to prepare food in a simple and healthful manner ... as well as more wholesome, because of its simplicity.

"Every woman who is at the head of a family, and yet does not understand the art of healthful cookery, should determine to learn that which is so essential to the well-being of her household." *Life and Health*, July 1, 1905

"If possible, teach both boys and girls how to cook and how to make themselves useful in every department of the home work." *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 19, 72

As we draw near the end of time, healthful cooking will be one of the principal skills needed in the finishing of the gospel commission.

Your brother in the gospel,



John J. Grosboll



## Be Still, My Soul

One of my very favorite songs is *Be Still, My Soul* set to the tune of *Finlandia*. The words to *Be Still, My Soul* were written by Katharina von Schlegel in 1752.

Not a lot is known about Katharina. She was born October 22, 1697. She was a Lutheran woman living in Germany a century after Martin Luther began the Reformation there. But movements begun with great passion often wane over time and this was true of the Lutheran church in Germany.

It is believed that Katharina was a “Stiftfräulein” in the Evangelical Lutheran Stift (similar to a convent) at Cöthen, but this cannot be confirmed.


While she wrote a number of hymns, *Be Still, My Soul* is the only one which has passed into English. She was inspired by God’s promise found in Psalm 46:10, *first part*, 11, “Be still, and know that I am God; The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

This hymn survived only because of the work of a British woman, Jane Borthwick, who translated Katharina’s words into English a century after it was written. Eventually, the words were paired with the tune *The Finlandia Hymn* by composer Jean Sibelius, which he composed from 1899-1900. *Finlandia* was written in protest of Russian oppression and to celebrate Finnish history. The piece is rousing and tempestuous until the final movement, where it calms and becomes *The Finlandia Hymn*.

During times of great suffering and distress, people look up to see the face of God. This remains true today just as it was in the 18th century.

Be still, my soul; the Lord is on your side;  
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;  
Leave to your God to order and provide;  
In ev’ry change He faithful will remain.  
Be still, my soul; your best, your heav’nly friend  
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.  
Be still, my soul; your God will undertake  
To guide the future as He has the past;  
Your hope, your confidence, let nothing shake;  
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.  
Be still, my soul; the waves and winds still know  
His voice who ruled them while He lived below.

Be still, my soul; when dearest friends depart  
And all is darkened in the vale of tears,  
Then you will better know His love, His heart,  
Who comes to soothe your sorrows and your fears.  
Be still, my soul; your Jesus can repay  
From His own fullness all He takes away.  
Be still, my soul; the hour is hast’ning on  
When we shall be forever with the Lord,  
When disappointment, grief and fear are gone,  
Sorrow forgot, love’s purest joys restored.  
Be still, my soul; when change and tears are past,  
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

Sources: <https://sermonwriter.com/hymn-stories/be-still-my-soul>; Katharina von Schlegel | [Hymnary.org](https://Hymnary.org) 

*from the*  
**Mission Fields**



# *Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique*

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By Henry K. Mwesa

*Director – Zambia Malawi Division of Free Seventh-day Adventists*





Dear Steps to Life Friends,

I want to begin by conveying my heartfelt gratitude to the Ministry and all who have over the years supported our work here in Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique. We have benefited much from the gracious contributions.

The work has been steadily growing by God's grace. However, this year has been the most outstanding in terms of what we have witnessed regarding what God is able to do for all those who faithfully engage in His service and surrender themselves to be coworkers with the angels of God. Time is flying and it is clear that God is looking for a people who will whole-heartedly dedicate themselves to His service. We are nearing the close of probation and are about to experience the latter rain in full measure.

Our camp meetings, which doubled as evangelistic seminars, started in Zambia. Under challenging circumstances, God saw us through and blessed our efforts. Pastor Kampini and I then proceeded to Luwembe Hills Mozambique where we gave presentations on the atonement, the sealing, and the close of probation. Our subjects were targeted at both non-Adventists as well as Adventists. After we concluded the Mozambique camp meeting, we conducted a baptism where we witnessed both Adventists from the Conference churches and candidates from Sunday-keeping churches step up and be baptized in the faith of historic Adventists.

Our Malawi camp meeting had of 220 people attending every day on average. It also ended with a baptism which had most candidates from Sunday-keeping churches, such as Jehovah's Witnesses and other charismatic denominations. Across these three countries, over a one-month period, we baptized a total number of 87 souls. Glory be to God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ!

As a result, three churches were born across the three countries—one congregation in Zambia with over 25 members, one in Malawi with approximately 25 as well, and a home church in Malawi with over 12 members. The existing churches also were strengthened.

The printing work that we have undertaken with your donations has had a positive effect on the progress in general. We have evangelistic efforts lined up and will report on those soon.

We also had the privilege of conducting a prophecy seminar at a Pentecostal church in Malawi where I presented subjects centering around the sanctuary message. We will conduct more seminars in the coming months. God bless you.

Yours in Jesus,

*Henry Kazembe Mwesa*

Director, Zambia Malawi Division of Free Seventh-day Adventists

# The Bummer Lamb: Rejected & Adopted

*"When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me."*

Psalm 27:10

The most painful rejection, perhaps, is that of a child by an earthly parent. How sweet it is to know that your Creator, Heavenly Father, and Good Shepherd cares for and loves you deeply. This we may learn from sheep.

The physical reasons a ewe mother rejects its lamb may include the inability to provide nourishment, low to no milk supply or udder mastitis (engorged). A ewe can sense sickness or a defect in its lamb; some are visual and others become more distinguishable with time. The psychological reasons a ewe mother rejects its lamb may include her first time lambing, separation from its lamb for a significant period of time, confusion, fear, no interest in bonding, or a difficult birth. A ewe also may have passed away during or after lambing, leaving its lamb an orphan.

A shepherd or farmer, in many of these instances, will assess the ewe's willingness to allow its lamb to come close and nurse. In displaying complete detachment (broken bond) and desired distance, a ewe will often run away, head butt or kick its lamb. If the lamb is unable to be paired with an adoptive ewe that is actively nursing its own lamb, a rejected lamb (a bummer) may be auctioned off as soon as possible. This often occurs when a shepherd or farmer has a large flock and is time constrained, as the lamb will need to be bottle-fed every 2-3 hours for the first two weeks and then every four hours for the following weeks until weaned.

Auctions, farmer's markets, feed stores, and agriculture extension schools may allow the opportunity for a farm to purchase livestock or an adoptive family to obtain the orphan as a pet. Whether a rejected lamb is raised by its shepherd, a farmer or is adopted, it will need immediate attention and loving care. It will be assessed and if needed, its temperature raised. It will be placed in a draftless, confined area in the home, swaddled in warm towels, placed on heated bedding, and clothed in a sweater throughout the day. When bottle-feeding, young lambs receive colostrum, which provides hormones. Mature lambs are given a milk replacer.

It will be weaned between 6-8 weeks or when it reaches 25-30 pounds. Even so, supplemental grain may be needed, as it may lack successful foraging skills in comparison to a natural-raised lamb. When weaned, it is placed with the flock for interaction as soon as possible to learn common sheep mannerisms: roles of dominance/submissiveness, response to safety instincts, grazing, and similar survival skills.

Those who adopt the lamb as a family pet may or may not have additional lambs, ewes, or rams to introduce the newling to mannerisms. Thus, it is imperative to consider that the lamb is not meant to be solitary for optimal holistic health.

Praise the Lord, the *rejected* and orphaned one is *adopted* into His fold. "He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand." Psalm 95:7. "He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom ..."

Isaiah 40:11

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the beloved." Ephesians 1:3-6 [LM](#)



Q:

*Am I denying  
the Lord?  
How do I  
know?*

A:

"There are many ways wherein we may acknowledge our Lord and many ways wherein we may deny Him. We may deny Him in our words, by speaking evil of others, by foolish talking, jesting and joking, by idle or unkind words, or by prevaricating [being vague], speaking contrary to truth. In our words we may confess that Christ is not in us. In our character we may deny Him by loving our ease, by shunning the duties and burdens of life which someone must bear if we do not, and by loving sinful pleasure. We may also deny Christ by pride of dress and conformity to the world, or by uncourteous behavior. We may deny Him by loving our own opinions and by seeking to maintain and justify self. We may also deny Him in allowing the mind to run in the channel of lovesick sentimentalism and to brood over our supposed hard lot and trials.

"No one can truly confess Christ before the world unless the mind and spirit of Christ live in him. It is impossible to communicate that which we have not. The conversation and the deportment should be a real and visible expression of grace and truth within. If the heart is sanctified, submissive, and humble, the fruits will be seen outwardly and will be a most effectual confession of Christ. ...

"You commit sin and deny your Saviour by dwelling on gloomy things, by gathering trials to yourself, and by borrowing troubles. You bring the troubles of tomorrow into today, and embitter your own heart, and bring burdens and a cloud upon those around you, by manufacturing trials. ... You suffer your imagination to run upon subjects that will bring you no relief or happiness." *Testimonies*, Vol. 3, 332

"He who would confess Christ must have Christ abiding in him. He cannot communicate that which he has not received. The disciples might speak fluently on doctrines, they might repeat the words of Christ Himself; but unless they possessed Christlike meekness and love, they were not confessing Him. A spirit contrary to the spirit of Christ would deny Him, whatever the profession. Men may deny Christ by evilspeaking, by foolish talking, by words that are untruthful or unkind. They may deny Him by shunning life's burdens, by the pursuit of sinful pleasure. They may deny Him by conforming to the world, by uncourteous behavior, by the love of their own opinions, by justifying self, by cherishing doubt, borrowing trouble, and dwelling in darkness. In all these ways they declare that Christ is not in them." *The Desire of Ages*, 357 [L14](#)







## *Cold Mitten Friction*

**A**s we have entered the winter season, it seemed beneficial to share a massage therapy that can be helpful in the prevention and treatment of a number of conditions.

The cold mitten friction is applied to the surface of the body by rubbing a cold wet cloth in a circular motion. It is undoubtedly one of the most effective uses of water in the treatment of disease (hydrotherapy) known for stimulating the circulation of the skin.

*Benefits of a cold mitten friction:*

- Produce general tonic for prevention or treatment of common cold and respiratory infections
- Increase circulation of red blood cells
- Aid body defenses in increased circulation of white blood cells
- Increase blood flow to hands and feet
- Assist heart
- Prove useful in fighting depression
- Increase elimination of bacterial toxins
- Boost the immune system
- Increase blood vessel tone
- Enhance energy and endurance
- Aid in drug addiction withdrawal
- Step up all body functions

Cold mitten friction is a tonic with no adverse side effects.

**Hydrotherapy Cold Mitten Friction***Articles needed:*

1. One or two small rough washcloths or cloth mitten/s (two wash cloths sewn together with opening for hand)
2. Warm towel for drying; warm towels for covering
3. Wash basin or sink

*Procedure:*

1. Have room warm with no drafts
  2. If feet are cold, use a hot foot bath
  3. Fill washbasin or sink with cold water
  4. Bare one part of the body at a time
  5. Dip rough washcloth or cloth mitten in water and wring almost dry
  6. Rub briskly left forearm, arm, and hand. Dry arm and hand with a warm towel and cover
  7. Briskly rub right forearm, arm, and hand; dry and cover
  8. Rub chest; dry; cover
  9. Add abdomen or trunk; rub briskly; dry; cover
  10. Rub left thigh, leg and foot; dry; cover
  11. Add right thigh, leg and foot; dry; cover
  12. Rub back using an assistant; dry; cover
- Keeping in mind an individual's skin type, administer friction with rapid to-and-fro movements for no more than 1 to 1-1/2 minutes
  - Work up to icy water
  - Leave more water on the friction mit with each successive treatment
  - Avoid rubbing skin lesions or painful areas
  - Rest if becoming tired



*Massage therapy can be helpful in the prevention and treatment of various conditions.*

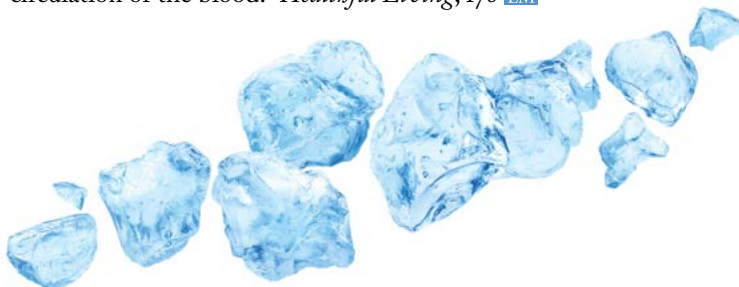
"The act of rubbing the skin with a cold mechanical pressure gives a physiological response of vigorous and prompt reaction of the blood vessels sufficient to cause this treatment to be dubbed a vascular gymnastic. There is a profound stimulation to the skin. ...

"There is scarcely any condition in which the cold mitten friction may not be employed, except that fractured limbs or malignant tumor should be omitted from the treatment." Agatha M. Thrash, M. D., *Preventive Medicine*

Those with heart disease, apply cold compresses to the head, neck, and heart before beginning treatment.

"The external application of water is one of the easiest and most satisfactory ways of regulating the circulation of the blood." *The Ministry of Healing*, 237

"The more active the circulation the more free from obstructions and impurities will be the blood. The blood nourishes the body. The health of the body depends upon the healthful circulation of the blood." *Healthful Living*, 178 [LM](#)



# *The Divine Nature of Christ*

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By John J. Grosboll

If you were to casually read through the New Testament, you might notice that it speaks over and over about certain mysteries. I have studied all of the texts that speak about these mysteries and have determined that there are seven mysteries found there.

I would like to study one of these mysteries with you, one I have studied for many years. This mystery has six parts and is one of the most fascinating studies in all of the Bible. In fact, we know that if we are saved in the kingdom of heaven, we will be studying this mystery throughout eternity.

All six parts of the mystery are listed in 1 Timothy 3:16, but we will just look at the first part of the verse. “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh.” I make no claim to fully understand this mystery, but we need to study and try to understand it as far as God has revealed.





I can remember that as a small child, we were told that the world had become so wicked that it could not last much longer and that Jesus would come before we could grow to adulthood. Most Adventist teachers and preachers believed that the world would end within five to ten years.

In the 1940s, the Adventist church had a clear, distinct vision in mind. The largest number of Adventists could be found in the United States and consequently, the Second Advent movement emerged more profoundly here than in any other country. The Adventist missionary program began sending missionaries from the United States to countries all around the world. The Adventist vision combined the preaching of the gospel and medical missionary work. Mrs. White had written that the three angels' messages would be more effectively and quickly spread to every single person in the world in this way, and once this was accomplished, the Lord would come, and we could then go home with Him.

My father had this same vision, and along with my mother, had a deep desire to help finish the work. So when I was four years old, our family went as missionaries to Burma. My father became the business manager of the Rangoon Mission Hospital.

Back then it was an iron-clad rule that children were to be seen, but not heard. And while you can stop a child from talking, you cannot stop him or her from listening and thinking. So I would listen to these missionaries talk. They would say things like: When Jesus came to this world, He was just like us. He came in flesh just like ours, but He didn't sin. He is the only Person in the world who has not sinned.

Even as a four-year-old, I knew that I was a sinner, and I knew that I needed a Saviour, but I wasn't afraid because I had been taught all my life that Jesus Christ came to this world to save sinners, and that He was going to save me if I gave my life to Him, but I was perplexed. I



*Even  
as a four-  
year-old, I knew  
that I was a sinner,  
and I knew that  
I needed a  
Saviour.*

thought, if Jesus Christ was just like me, a sinner, if He came in the flesh just like I have, well, if He was just like me, then He would need a Saviour, too.

Later, when I became a Seventh-day Adventist minister, prominent ministers of the church would say that Christ came in sinful flesh. Every time I heard this, I felt that it must be wrong, but I was just a young minister, recently graduated, and these were well-known Adventist ministers who were college educated, some with master's and doctor's degrees in theology and other academic areas. For 150 years, Adventists have written books about and have been preaching and teaching that Jesus came in the sinful flesh of man. I decided that if what sounded wrong to me was actually the truth, then I should be able to confirm it in the Spirit of Prophecy.

Back then we didn't have the Spirit of Prophecy available electronically like we have today. If you wanted to know something, you read a book; and I had been reading books for many years. I had stacks of books written by Ellen White, including *The Review and Herald* articles, *The Signs of the Times* articles, the *Testimonies*, and the *Conflict of the Ages* books. I started searching all of these books, searching for even one statement made

by Ellen White that would tell me that Christ came to this world in sinful flesh. For over 50 years I have been reading, and I have yet to find such a statement in the Spirit of Prophecy that confirmed it.

Regardless of what I personally believe, I have not preached on this subject at Steps to Life until now, and have avoided talking about it to all, except a few close friends, because it is such a controversial issue. But there are some things, if we want to be ready for Jesus to come, that we need to understand. We need to search for truth and light.

We will be studying the nature of Christ in this series of articles, beginning with the nature of His divinity. With all the Godhead controversies going on all over the world today, there are a lot of people who do not understand the nature of Christ's divinity, and we need to see and understand what the Bible says on the subject.

### **The Express Image of His Person**

"Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Hebrews 1:3

“

*Jesus is an exact personification or express image of the attributes of the Father.*

Reading this text in the Greek New Testament, we find the word *charaktēr* is translated *express image*, and is very similar to the English word *character*. It could also be translated as *an exact replica*; something that is exactly like the other. The word *hupostasis* is translated *of His person*. It also could be translated *of His essence* or *of His essential nature*. Jesus Christ is an exact

personification of the essential nature of God the Father. He is not a junior God, He is not a secondary God. He is an exact personification or express image of the attributes of the Father. Paul uses these specific words nowhere else in the New Testament.

What are the attributes of our heavenly Father?

Let's consider a few statements from the Spirit of Prophecy. "As speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible God. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, to make known in His life and character the attributes of the Father." *The Signs of the Times*, November 15, 1899. What did Jesus come into this world to make known? The life and attributes of His Father, the first Person of the Godhead. Only One who is equal with the Father could fully make manifest what the Father is like. That is why Jesus came.

"God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, to make known in His life and character the attributes of the Father that men might bear the image of the invisible God. He [Christ] was the *embodiment* of the law of God, which is the transcript of His character." Ibid.

A transcript is an exact copy of something. The law of God is a transcript of the character of God and Jesus Christ was the very *embodiment*, an exact copy, of the law of God. In the old covenant, the law was visible, written in stone. In the new covenant, the law of God is seen in the person of Jesus Christ. By studying Jesus' life, we are able to better understand the law of God.

"The world saw God imaged in the purity and benevolence of Christ; but because of its depravity and darkness, it did not recognize Him as the Son of God. 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.' He was 'the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.' In spite of overwhelming evidence, men manifested unbelief which only Satan could inspire." Ibid.

"To human eyes, Christ was only a man, yet He was a perfect man. In His humanity He was the *impersonation* of the divine character." In His humanity, not His divinity, "He was the *impersonation* of the divine character. God *embodied* His own attributes in His Son—His power, His wisdom, His goodness, His purity, His truthfulness, His spirituality, and His benevolence. In Him, though human, all perfection of character, all divine excellence, dwelt. And to the request of His disciple, 'Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us,' He could reply, 'Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?'" *The Youth's Instructor*, September 16, 1897

God is pure and holy, the law is a transcript of His character, and He embodied all of His own attributes in His Son. Do you understand that there are people who call themselves Christian ministers, but who hate the law of God? What is our attitude toward God's law? It was prophesied of the Messiah, "I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is written in my heart." Psalm 40:8. What does it mean to have the law written in your heart? You can see that clearly when you read the context. Paul says that under the new covenant, the law is not written on tables of stone—that was in the old covenant. Under the new covenant, as explained in 2 Corinthians 3, the law is to be written in the heart. If the law is written in our hearts, then we will want to obey it; in fact, we would rather die than break it.

Now we have laid the foundation for a more in-depth study of the nature of Christ.

Sometimes there are questions that don't appear to have answers and yet, those very answers are the most important for us to know. So let's return to the scripture we began with, the first part of 1 Timothy 3:16.

"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh." Paul says this is a great mystery, and if he says it is, then we should plan to be studying it for years and still not fully understand it.

1 John 4:1-3 tells us just how serious it is that God was manifest in the flesh. "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world." Friends, John is telling us that if we do not believe that Christ came in the flesh, then we have the spirit of antichrist.

Now let's look at Romans 8:7, 8. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God . . ." Verse 7, *first part*. Anywhere in the Bible where we find the word *carnal*, from the Greek word *Sarks*, it can be translated as *flesh* or *fleshly*. "So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God." Verse 8

Let's stop right here. The Bible says in 1 John 4:3 that Jesus came in the flesh, and if we do not believe that Jesus came in the flesh, we have the spirit of antichrist. But Romans 8 says that the carnal, or fleshly, mind is enmity against God. The fleshly mind is not subject to the law of God. Was Jesus, in the flesh, then not subject to the law of God? Did He have enmity against God? Paul says that the carnal mind does not keep the law of God, nor indeed can it. It is impossible for the person with a carnal or fleshly mind to keep God's law.



Those who are in the flesh—carnal—cannot please God. But Jesus came in the flesh, so was He subject to the law and did He keep it?

Jesus said "I have kept My Father's commandments" (John 15:10). Twice God said, concerning Jesus, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17; 17:5.) If those with a carnal mind do not keep the law of God, in fact, cannot keep it, and consequently cannot please God, then how can Jesus, in the flesh, say He had kept the law; and how could God say that He was pleased with Jesus, in the flesh?

"The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea." *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, 20

Many Adventist preachers and teachers have preached and taught that Christ came in sinful flesh. But too many of these individuals are confused about Christ's nature, having taken a certain word that is found many times in the Bible, believing that it means the

same thing every time, when, in fact, it may not.

As I have studied the word *flesh* in its different Biblical contexts, I have found that the word has more than one, or even two meanings. It has close to six different meanings. In some contexts, for example in Hebrews 2, the word *flesh* in the Bible simply refers to the fact that we are not only spiritual beings, but that we have a body of flesh and blood, and in that sense, Christ came in the flesh because He had a body of flesh and blood.

But in other places in the Bible, such as in Romans 8, the word *flesh* refers to the fact that we, as sinners, have sinful propensities, a natural bent to sin which, unaided, we cannot resist, and are, therefore, unable to keep the law of God. We are promised the ability to overcome with divine help, if we ask for it, but without it, Romans doesn't say we try and fail, it says it is impossible for us to do.

So, if it is impossible for man in sinful flesh to keep God's law, and if Christ had come in the same sinful flesh as we possess, with a natural bent to sin that cannot be resisted without divine aid, then how could He have kept God's law? How could He have pleased God?

Ellen White has written a great deal of counsel to Adventist ministers who were mixed up on this point. One such statement was given to Elder \_\_\_\_ Baker, an Adventist minister in 1895 (commonly referred to as the "Baker Letter").

"Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon Him; He was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of [Adam's] sin, his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took



upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, *but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity*. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden.” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 13, 18

For close to two hundred years, Adventist ministers have incorrectly presented the nature of Christ. Adam was “assailed with temptations in Eden” as a perfect man. He had not yet sinned, nor had his nature yet changed to the sinful, selfish nature possessed by man today. If Christ was beset with temptations as Adam was in Eden, then His nature would not have had the evil natural propensities inherent in man after Adam’s sin.

“Brother Baker, avoid every question in relation to the humanity of Christ which is liable to be misunderstood. Truth lies close to the track of presumption. In treating upon the humanity of Christ, you need to guard strenuously every assertion, lest your words be taken to mean more than they imply, and thus you lose or dim the clear perceptions of His humanity as combined with divinity. His birth was a miracle of God; for, said the angel, ‘Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing

that I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.’ That holy thing that shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God.”

Ibid., 18, 19

Then she says, “These words are not addressed to any human being, except to the Son of the infinite God. Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that *a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ*, or that He in

any way yielded to corruption. He was tempted in all points as man is tempted, yet He is called holy. It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are and yet be without sin. *The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain a mystery*. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be.” Ibid., 19

The incarnation of Christ *has ever been, and will ever remain a mystery*. Not even in heaven will we fully understand or be able to explain the incarnation of Christ.

I have been challenged by some, that if I suggest that Christ’s nature was different in any way from our nature, then I must not believe what the Bible says in Hebrews 4:15. “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was *in all points tempted as we are*, yet without

sin.” After all, every human being is born with the inherent propensities of disobedience, and if Christ was not born with these inherent propensities toward sin, though without sin or sinning, then how could He possibly be tempted in all points like us?

Let’s look closely again at what Mrs. White wrote in the letter to Elder Baker. Jesus could be tempted in all points like us and yet be without sin, and this is a mystery that human beings cannot explain. “It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are and yet be without sin.” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, 1128, 1129.

Remember that in the Bible, the word *flesh* has multiple meanings. Hundreds of millions of Christians are confused about the meaning of the word *flesh* in John 6, having been incorrectly taught and led astray. Many people, including some ministers, have tried to make the word *flesh* as found in John 6 to be literal, something that it is not.

John 6:53–58 says, “Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink of His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.’” When Jesus said this, the Jews, taking His words to have a literal meaning, accused Him of teaching cannibalism.

It is a serious thing to twist the words of Scripture, to give them a totally different meaning that fits a particular way of thinking, but is not what is truly presented in the Scriptures. And this is

“  
*God sent His Son into  
the world, His divinity  
clothed with humanity, to  
make known in His life and  
character the attributes of  
the Father.*”

too often done when people attempt to make the symbolic meaning of a scripture into a literal meaning. There are just over a billion people in the world who believe that a few words spoken over a wafer of bread can turn it into the literal body of Christ. And similar words spoken over a chalice of wine make it the actual blood of Christ. They believe that you literally can eat and drink God.

There is no excuse for this misunderstanding of Scripture because Jesus told them exactly what the flesh and blood represented. And then He said in verse 63, *first part*, “The flesh profits nothing.” It is not about literal flesh and blood, but what the flesh and blood represent. Then, what does it mean to eat His flesh and drink His blood?

Friend, what we consume at the breakfast or dinner table becomes a part of us. What we eat helps our bodies to function properly. As the body takes into itself the food we eat, so does our spiritual body when we consume the bread of His word (His flesh) and His life (His blood) into our hearts and minds. Our entire life is changed—thoughts, feelings, words, and actions—all are brought into perfect conformity with the law of God. “It is the Spirit who gives [quickens] life. The flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.” Verse 63. When you study the word of God and you assimilate it into your mind, it changes you.

Jesus Christ was the *embodiment* of the law of God. Eating His flesh and drinking His blood will change your life completely. Would you like to have that happen in your life? When it does, the recording angel will be able to mark in the book of life, on your page, that you love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. He will be able to mark on your page that your life is in complete conformity with the law of God. This will mean that you are ready to be sealed.

Friend, when you try to explain a mystery that a prophet says human



*In His  
humanity,  
Christ was the  
impersonation of the  
divine character.*

beings cannot explain, rest assured the probability is 100% that your explanation will be wrong. We are not sinful only because we sin. The act of sinning is the fruit of the sin that dwells within (Romans 7:17). We are sinful because we are born in sin just as Seth was (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, 60). As creatures who are sinful and fleshly-minded by nature, we are not able to please God (Romans 8:8). And we cannot change our sinful nature. “Our hearts are evil and we cannot change them.” *Steps to Christ*, 18. We might be able to modify our behavior somewhat, but outward correctness of behavior does not change the heart and cannot purify the springs of life.

Many well-meaning preachers have preached and taught that Jesus had sinful flesh like us. But if Christ had been born with our sinful flesh, He would have had a heart that was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). That sounds blasphemous, but that would be the logical conclusion of their teaching. The fleshly mind is not subject to the law of God and cannot be, and therefore, those in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8:7, 8). But Jesus kept His Father’s commandments (John 15:10) and was well pleasing to the Father (Matthew 3:17; 17:5).

Jesus came as a man, not to live my life, but to live the life that He has promised to give me the power to live. This is about

faith and transformation. How can God take a sinner like me and change me so fully and completely that I no longer desire to sin, and consequently, am able then to please Him? Christ, His human nature, and the life He lived is the vision of what we can and will become if we surrender to the working of the Holy Spirit (*The Desire of Ages*, 310). He endured the cross because of this vision, described in Hebrews 12:2 as the “joy that was set before Him.” This is not a mystery. But how Christ was made to be like us without sinning, how He was able to be the Lamb without spot or blemish sacrificed to pay the price that sin demands, how He was able to please God, and all the while fully be the Son of Man, that is a door that God has not opened to us.

God can change our very nature. He can give us the power to live without sin. And as we live in this constant connection with Him, seeking always to keep His commandments and do His will, then we will be and live as Christ.

God is preparing a people for Christ’s soon return. Do you want to be one of them?

[Emphasis supplied.] **LM**

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January 29 – February 4, 2023

## "The Word Was Made Flesh"

### Key Text

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:1-4, 14

**Study Help:** *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 252-256

### Introduction

"The apostle [Paul] exalted Christ before his brethren as the One by whom God had created all things and by whom He had wrought out their redemption. He declared that the hand that sustains the worlds in space, and holds in their orderly arrangements and tireless activity all things throughout the universe of God, is the hand that was nailed to the cross for them." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 471, 472

## Sunday

### 1 "THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS"

1.a. How does Paul summarize the incarnation? 1 Timothy 3:16

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**Note:** "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength?' Isaiah 63:1. With assurance comes the answer: 'Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.' 1 Timothy 3:16." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 262

1.b. How can we get a glimpse of this mystery? Matthew 16:24; Galatians 6:14

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**Note:** "The cross of Christ is all covered with reproach and stigma, yet it is the hope of life and exaltation to man. No one can comprehend the mystery of godliness so long as he is ashamed to bear the cross of Christ." *The Review and Herald*, April 15, 1875

## Monday

### 2 "THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS" (continued)

2.a. What other description does Paul make of the incarnation? Philippians 2:5-8

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**Note:** "Point after point Paul lingered over, in order that those who should read his epistle might fully comprehend the wonderful condescension of the Saviour in their behalf. Presenting Christ as He was when equal with God and with Him receiving the homage of the angels, the apostle traced His course until He had reached the lowest depths of humiliation. Paul was convinced that if they could be brought to comprehend the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, all selfishness would be banished from their lives. He showed how the Son of God had laid aside His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to the conditions of human nature, and then had humbled Himself as a servant, becoming obedient unto death, 'even the death of the cross' (Philippians 2:8), that He might lift fallen man from degradation to hope and joy and heaven." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 333

2.b. Why did Christ submit Himself to such humiliation? John 3:16

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**Note:** “When we study the divine character in the light of the cross we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice. We see in the midst of the throne One bearing in hands and feet and side the marks of the suffering endured to reconcile man to God. We see a Father, infinite, dwelling in light unapproachable, yet receiving us to Himself through the merits of His Son. The cloud of vengeance that threatened only misery and despair, in the light reflected from the cross reveals the writing of God: Live, sinner, live! ye penitent, believing souls, live! I have paid a ransom.

“In the contemplation of Christ we linger on the shore of a love that is measureless. We endeavor to tell of this love, and language fails us. We consider His life on earth, His sacrifice for us, His work in heaven as our advocate, and the mansions He is preparing for those who love Him, and we can only exclaim, O the height and depth of the love of Christ! ‘Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.’ ‘Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.’ 1 John 4:10; 3:1.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 333, 334

## Tuesday

### 3 “LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM”

3.a. How does God the Father address Christ? Hebrews 1:7–10

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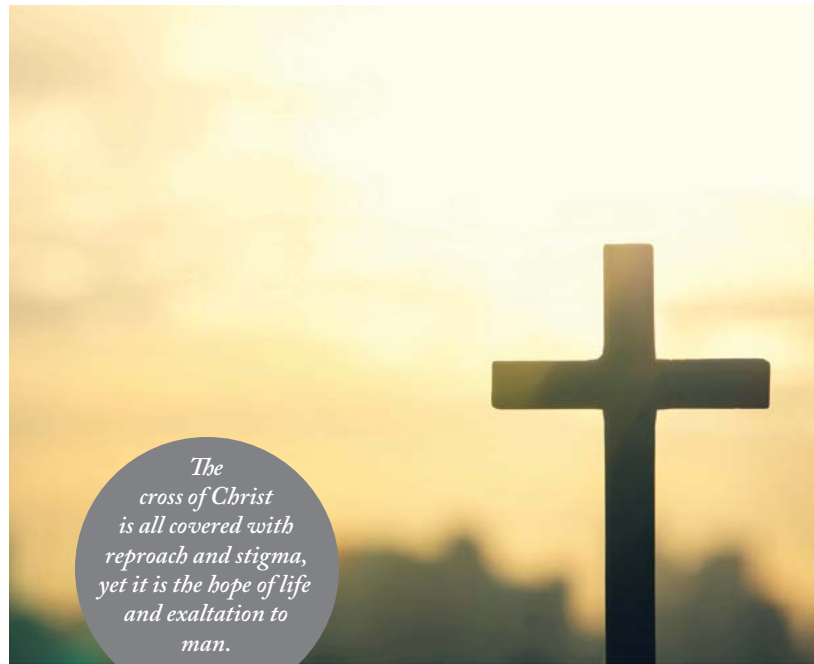
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**Note:** “The Angel of the covenant came in the name of God, as the invisible leader of Israel. The Son of God over His own house is higher than Moses, higher than the highest angel. He bears the name of Jehovah upon His miter, while on His breastplate is written the name of Israel. Christ took humanity that humanity might touch humanity. In the form of man He humbled Himself, and became a servant, but as the Son of God He was higher than the angels. By His life in humanity man may become a partaker of the divine nature. As the Majesty of heaven, He was exalted above the angels, and in His work of redemption He carries with Him all who have received Him and believed on His name.” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, 928



3.b. How clearly does John recognize the divinity of Christ? 1 John 5:20

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**Note:** “Everyone who is chosen of God should improve his intellectual powers. Jesus came to represent the character of the Father, and He sent His disciples into the world to represent the character of Christ. He has given us His word to point out the way of life, and He has not left us simply to carry that word, but has also promised to give it efficiency by the power of the Holy Spirit. Is there need, then, that any should walk in uncertainty, grieving that they do not know and experience the movings of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts? Are you hungering and thirsting for instruction in righteousness? Then you have the sure promise that you shall be filled. ‘And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.’

“The Lord would have us in possession of the spirit of heavenly wisdom. Are we all being impressed to pray to the Lord humbly and earnestly as our necessities require, importuning Him for the spirit of wisdom? Do we pray, saying, ‘Show me the secrets which I know not, teach Thou me?’ Oh, for humble, earnest prayer to go forth from unfeigned lips praying for the counsel that is of God! He says, Counsel is Mine, and sound wisdom.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 199, 200

## Wednesday

### 4 "A BODY HAST THOU PREPARED ME"

- 4.a. What was prophesied about Christ's incarnation?  
Psalm 40:6–8 (compare with Hebrews 10:5–7)

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**Note:** "Christ alone was able to represent the Deity. He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone sufficient to accomplish this work. No verbal description could reveal God to the world. Through a life of purity, a life of perfect trust and submission to the will of God, a life of humiliation such as even the highest seraph in heaven would have shrunk from, God Himself must be revealed to humanity. In order to do this, our Saviour clothed His divinity with humanity. He employed the human faculties, for only [by] adopting these could He be comprehended by humanity. Only humanity could reach humanity. He lived out the character of God through the human body which God had prepared for Him. He blessed the world by living out in human flesh the life of God, thus showing that He had the power to unite humanity to divinity." *The Review and Herald*, June 25, 1895

"Christ in the courts of heaven had known that the time would come when the power of Satan must be met and conquered if the human race was ever to be saved from his dominion. And when that time came, the Son of God laid off His kingly crown and royal robe, and clothing His divinity with humanity, came to the earth to meet the prince of evil, and to conquer him. In order to become the advocate of man before the Father, the Saviour would live His life on earth as every human being must, accepting its adversities and sorrows and temptations." *Ibid.*, January 28, 1909

- 4.b. How did Christ manifest His divinity even in His human nature? Matthew 2:2, 11

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**Note:** "When they [the wise men from the East] were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshiped Him.' Beneath the lowly guise of Jesus, they recognized the presence of Divinity. They gave their hearts to Him as their Saviour, and then poured out their gifts—'gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.'" *The Desire of Ages*, 63

## Thursday

### 5 FURTHER EVIDENCE OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY

- 5.a. What other evidence do we have about Christ's divinity in His human nature? Matthew 12:25; Luke 6:8

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**Note:** "In the multitude that listened to Christ's teaching there were many Pharisees. These noted contemptuously how few of His hearers acknowledged Him as the Messiah. And they questioned with themselves how this unpretending teacher could exalt Israel to universal dominion. Without riches, power, or honor, how was He to establish the new kingdom? Christ read their thoughts and answered them." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 76

- 5.b. How did Christ publicly reveal His divinity in Capernaum? Matthew 9:1–7

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**Note:** "Jesus had declared that the sins of the paralytic were forgiven. The Pharisees caught at these words as blasphemy, and conceived that they could present this as a sin worthy of death. They said in their hearts, 'He blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but One, even God?' Mark 2:7, R.V." *The Desire of Ages*, 269

"They saw that Christ possessed a power which they had ascribed to God alone; yet the gentle dignity of His manner was in marked contrast to their own haughty bearing. They were disconcerted and abashed, recognizing, but not confessing, the presence of a superior being. The stronger the evidence that Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins, the more firmly they entrenched themselves in unbelief." *Ibid.*, 270, 271

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the "mystery of godliness"?
- 2 What is the basis of our salvation?
- 3 Why did Christ accept adoration?
- 4 To whom were the words "A body hast Thou prepared Me" applied?
- 5 Who alone can forgive sin?

February 5 – 11, 2023

# The Holy Spirit

## Key Text

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:1, 2

**Study Help:** *The Desire of Ages*, 668–672

## Introduction

“So through the creation we are to become acquainted with the Creator. The book of nature is a great lesson book, which in connection with the Scriptures we are to use in teaching others of His character, and guiding lost sheep back to the fold of God. As the works of God are studied, the Holy Spirit flashes conviction into the mind.” *The Watchman*, November 3, 1908

## Sunday

### 1 THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1.a. What title does the apostle Peter apply to the Holy Spirit? Acts 5:3, 4

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**Note:** “God hates hypocrisy and falsehood. Ananias and Sapphira practiced fraud in their dealing with God; they lied to the Holy Spirit, and their sin was visited with swift and terrible judgment. When Ananias came with his offering, Peter said: ‘Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.’” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 72

“The Spirit, being God, knoweth the mind of God.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 3, 1892

1.b. What is the Holy Spirit called in Isaiah 6:8–10?  
(Compare with Acts 28:25–27)

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## Monday

### 2 DIVINE ATTRIBUTES—ETERNAL AND OMNIPOTENT

2. What divine attribute is applied to the Holy Spirit in Hebrews 9:14?

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**Note:** “The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy’s power. The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your helper.” *The Desire of Ages*, 490–493

“A portion of the joy which was set before Christ, was the joy of seeing His truth armed with the omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit, impressing His image upon the life and character of His followers. ...

“What has the rich blessing of God done for those who were humble and contrite in heart to receive it? Has the blessing been cherished? Have the receivers been showing forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light? There are some who are already questioning the work that was so good, and that should have been most highly appreciated. They are looking upon it as a certain species of fanaticism. It would be surprising if there were not some, who, not being well-balanced in mind, have spoken and acted indiscreetly; for whenever and wherever the Lord works in giving a genuine blessing, a counterfeit is also revealed, in order to make of none effect the true work of God. Therefore we need to be exceedingly careful, and walk humbly before God, that we may have spiritual eyesalve that we may distinguish the working of the Holy Spirit of God from the working of that spirit that would bring in wild license and fanaticism. ‘By their fruits



ye shall know them.' Those who are really beholding Christ will be changed into His image, even by the Spirit of the Lord, and will grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit of God will inspire men with love and purity; and refinement will be manifest in their characters." *The Review and Herald*, February 6, 1894

## Tuesday

### 3 DIVINE ATTRIBUTES—OMNISCIENT AND OMNIPRESENT

3.a. What characteristic does Paul mention with reference to the Holy Ghost? 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11

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**Note:** "Never can humanity, of itself, attain to a knowledge of the divine. 'It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?' Job 11:8. Only the spirit of adoption can reveal to us the deep things of God, which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man.' 'God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.' 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10." *The Desire of Ages*, 412

3.b. Mention another quality described in Psalm 139.

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**Note:** "Although our Lord ascended from earth to heaven, the Holy Spirit was appointed as His representative among men. 'If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless' [John 14:15–18].

"Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His father, and send the Holy

Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent. 'But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall (although unseen by you), [THIS PHRASE WAS ADDED BY ELLEN WHITE.] teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you' [John 14:26]. 'Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will come not unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you' [John 16:7]." *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 14, 23, 24

## Wednesday

### 4 THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

4. Mention some evidences concerning the personality of the Holy Spirit:

• The Holy Spirit speaks:	Acts 28:25
• He teaches:	John 14:26
• He strives with sinners:	Genesis 6:3
• He comforts:	Acts 9:31
• He helps in our infirmities:	Romans 8:26
• He is vexed:	Isaiah 63:10
• He is grieved:	Ephesians 4:30
• He can be resisted:	Acts 7:51
• He has a mind:	Romans 8:27

**Note:** "Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church." *The Desire of Ages*, 671

"We need to realize that the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds." *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 2, 137

"The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God." *Sons and Daughters of God*, 28

"The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. 'For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.'" *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 20, 69

“The prince of the power of evil can only be held in check by the power of God in the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.” *Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 10, 37

## Thursday

### 5 THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH

#### 5. Mention some of the actions of the Holy Spirit:

- He creates: Job 33:4
- He renews: Isaiah 32:15
- He convicts: John 16:8–11
- He regenerates: John 3:3, 5
- He indwells: Romans 8:11
- He anoints: 1 John 2:20, 27
- He baptizes: Acts 2:17, 18

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Against whom did Ananias and Sapphira lie?
- 2 What attribute of the Holy Spirit is mentioned in Hebrews 9:14?
- 3 Why is the Holy Spirit called “another Comforter”?
- 4 Mention some of the functions of the Holy Spirit.
- 5 What does the Holy Spirit do in the heart of the believer?



February 12 – 18, 2023

# The Heavenly Trio

## Key Text

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:2

**Study Help:** *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, Appendix A, 442

## Introduction

“There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, 63

## Sunday

### 1 JESUS' BAPTISM

1.a. How many persons of the Godhead were present at Jesus' baptism? Matthew 3:16, 17

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**Note:** “When Christ bowed on the banks of Jordan, after His baptism, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended in the form of a dove, like burnished gold, and encircled Him with its glory; and the voice of God from the highest heaven was heard, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ The prayer of Christ in man's behalf opened the gates of heaven, and the Father had responded, accepting the petition for the fallen race. Jesus prayed as our substitute and surety, and now the human family may find access to the Father through the merits of His well-beloved Son.” *The Review and Herald*, February 28, 1888

1.b. What assurance is given to those who believe in Christ as their personal Saviour? John 20:17

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## Monday

### 2 THE PROMISE OF THE COMFORTER

2.a. How many persons are mentioned in Christ's promise to send the Comforter? John 14:16

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**Note:** “The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, 63

2.b. During His earthly ministry, Christ had been the disciples' Comforter, but as He explained to them that He would soon be leaving them, because of their fear, He promised them “another Comforter,” the Holy Spirit. John 14:16, 17

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**Note:** “The promise of the Comforter presented a rich truth to the disciples. It assured them that they should not lose their faith under the most trying circumstances. The Holy Spirit, sent in the name of Christ, was to be their Guide, teaching them all things, and bringing all things to their remembrance. This Comforter was to be the representative of



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*The gift of His Holy Spirit... is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against.*

Christ their Advocate, who is constantly pleading in behalf of the fallen race.

“He who knows the end from the beginning has provided for the attack of satanic agencies; and He will fulfill His word to the faithful in every age. That word is sure and steadfast; not one jot or tittle of it can fail. The Holy Spirit is constantly at work, teaching, reminding, testifying, coming to the soul as a divine comforter, and convincing of sin as an appointed judge and guide. If men will keep under the protection of God, He will be to them as an impregnable fortress. He will give evidence that His Word can never fail. He will prove a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn; as the Sun of Righteousness He will arise with healing in His beams.” *The Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1897

## Tuesday

### 3 THE GOSPEL COMMISSION

3.a. Who was mentioned by Christ in His commission to His disciples? Matthew 28:19

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**Note:** “The disciples were to carry their work forward in Christ’s name. Their every word and act was to fasten attention on His name, as possessing that vital power by which sinners may be saved. Their faith was to center in Him who is the source of mercy and power. In His name they were to present their petitions to the Father, and they would receive answer.

They were to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christ’s name was to be their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing was to be recognized in His kingdom that did not bear His name and superscription.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 28

3.b. What assurance did Christ give to His followers?  
Matthew 28:20

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**Note:** “Christ gave His disciples their commission. He made full provision for the prosecution of the work, and took upon Himself the responsibility for its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail. Go to all nations, He bade them. Go to the farthest part of the habitable globe, but know that My presence will be there. Labor in faith and confidence, for the time will never come when I will forsake you.

“The Saviour’s commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of saving souls depends alone on the ordained minister. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the gospel. All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellowmen. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be coworkers with Christ.” *The Desire of Ages*, 822

## Wednesday

### 4 PETER'S SALUTATION

- 4.a. How does Peter salute the readers of his epistle?  
 1 Peter 1:2. What does Paul mention also? 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14

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**Note:** “‘God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation,’ the apostle Paul writes, ‘through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,’ 2 Thessalonians 2:13. In this text the two agencies in the work of salvation are revealed—the divine influence, and the strong, living faith of those who follow Christ. It is through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth that we become laborers together with God. Christ waits for the cooperation of His church. He does not design to add a new element of efficiency to His word; He has done His great work in giving His inspiration to the word. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the divine word, are ours. The object of all this provision of heaven is before us—the salvation of the souls for whom Christ died; and it depends upon us to lay hold on the promises God has given, and become laborers together with Him. Divine and human agencies must cooperate in the work.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 22

- 4.b. Who worked out the plan of redemption at the very beginning?

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**Note:** “The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love? God would make it impossible for man to say that He could have done more. With Christ He gave all the resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting in the plan for man’s uplifting. Here is love—the contemplation of which should fill the soul with inexpressible gratitude! Oh, what love, what matchless love! The contemplation of this love will cleanse the soul from all selfishness. It will lead the disciple to deny self, take up the cross, and follow the Redeemer.” *Counsels on Health*, 222, 223

## Thursday

### 5 THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

- 5.a. What promise does the apostolic benediction include? 2 Corinthians 13:14

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**Note:** “To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father’s love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, and that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against.” *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, 209

- 5.b. How can we avail ourselves of the help of the Holy Spirit? Luke 11:11–13

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**Note:** “Christ illustrates the willingness of God to bless by the willingness of a father to grant the request of his child. He says, ‘If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?’ Luke 11:11–13.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 242

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Which persons of the Godhead were present at Jesus’ baptism?
- 2 Why did Christ promise to send the Comforter to His disciples?
- 3 What does it mean to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
- 4 Which divine agencies are involved in the plan of redemption?
- 5 Who reveals Christ to the believers?

February 19 – 25, 2023

# Jacob's Experience

## Key Text

"Then Jacob said, 'Swear to me as of this day.' So he [Esau] swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob." Genesis 25:33

**Study Help:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 177–182

## Introduction

"Jacob had learned from his mother of the divine intimation that the birthright should fall to him, and he was filled with an unspeakable desire for the privileges which it would confer. It was not the possession of his father's wealth that he craved; the spiritual birthright was the object of his longing." *Conflict and Courage*, 60

## Sunday

### 1 JACOB AND ESAU

1.a. What was revealed to Rebekah about her two children? Genesis 25:21–23

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**Note:** "Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac, present a striking contrast, both in character and in life. This unlikeness was foretold by the angel of God before their birth. When in answer to Rebekah's troubled prayer he declared that two sons would be given her, he opened to her their future history, that each would become the head of a mighty nation, but that one would be greater than the other, and that the younger would have the preeminence." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 177

1.b. What contrasting lifestyle did the two brothers follow? Genesis 25:27

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**Note:** "Esau grew up loving self-gratification and centering all his interest in the present. Impatient of restraint, he delighted in the wild freedom of the chase, and early chose the life of a hunter. Yet he was the father's favorite. ... Jacob, thoughtful, diligent, and care-taking, ever thinking more of the future than the present, was content to dwell at home, occupied in the care of the flocks and the tillage of the soil." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 177

## Monday

### 2 BIRTHRIGHT—DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES

2.a. What duties and privileges did the firstborn son have?

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**Note:** "Jacob had learned from his mother of the divine intimation that the birthright should fall to him, and he was filled with an unspeakable desire for the privileges which it would confer. It was not the possession of his father's wealth that he craved; the spiritual birthright was the object of his longing. To commune with God as did righteous Abraham, to offer the sacrifice of atonement for his family, to be the progenitor of the chosen people and of the promised Messiah, and to inherit the immortal possessions embraced in the blessings of the covenant—here were the privileges and honors that kindled his most ardent desires. His mind was ever reaching forward to the future, and seeking to grasp its unseen blessings.

"With secret longing he listened to all that his father told concerning the spiritual birthright; he carefully treasured what he had learned from his mother. Day and night the subject occupied his thoughts, until it became the absorbing interest of his life." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 178

2.b. What did Jacob do to obtain the promised birthright, and why? Genesis 25:29–34

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**Note:** "But while he thus esteemed eternal above temporal blessings, Jacob had not an experimental knowledge of the God whom he revered. His heart had not been renewed by divine



grace. He believed that the promise concerning himself could not be fulfilled so long as Esau retained the rights of the first-born, and he constantly studied to devise some way whereby he might secure the blessing which his brother held so lightly, but which was so precious to himself.

“When Esau, coming home one day faint and weary from the chase, asked for the food that Jacob was preparing, the latter, with whom one thought was ever uppermost, seized upon his advantage, and offered to satisfy his brother’s hunger at the price of the birthright. ‘Behold, I am at the point to die,’ cried the reckless, self-indulgent hunter, ‘and what profit shall this birthright do to me?’ And for a dish of red pottage he parted with his birthright, and confirmed the transaction by an oath. A short time at most would have secured him food in his father’s tents, but to satisfy the desire of the moment he carelessly bartered the glorious heritage that God Himself had promised to his fathers.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 178, 179

## Tuesday

### 3 ESAU

3.a. What is written about Esau? Genesis 25:34, *last part*

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**Note:** “Esau had no love for devotion, no inclination to a religious life. The requirements that accompanied the spiritual birthright were an unwelcome and even hateful restraint to him. The law of God, which was the condition of the divine covenant with Abraham, was regarded by Esau as a yoke of bondage. Bent on self-indulgence, he desired nothing so much as liberty to do as he pleased. To him power and riches, feasting and reveling, were happiness. He gloried in the unrestrained freedom of his wild, roving life.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 178

3.b. What lessons are applicable to us today about Esau’s experience? Hebrews 12:16, 17

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**Note:** “There are very many who are like Esau. He represents a class who have a special, valuable blessing within their reach—the immortal inheritance, life that is as enduring as the life of God, the Creator of the universe, happiness immeasurable, and an eternal weight of glory—but who have so long indulged their appetites, passions, and inclinations, that their power to discern and appreciate the value of eternal things is weakened.

“Esau had a special, strong desire for a particular article of food, and he had so long gratified self that he did not feel the necessity of turning from the tempting, coveted dish. He thought upon it, making no special effort to restrain his appetite, until the power of appetite ... controlled him, and he imagined that he would suffer great inconvenience, and even death, if he could not have that particular dish. The more he thought upon it, the more his desire strengthened, until his birthright, which was sacred, lost its value and its sacredness.

“Esau passed the crisis of his life without knowing it. What he regarded as a matter worthy of scarcely a thought was the act which revealed the prevailing traits of his character. It showed his choice, showed his true estimate of that which was sacred and which should have been sacredly cherished. He sold his birthright for a small indulgence to meet his present wants, and this determined the after course of his life.” *Conflict and Courage*, 61

## Wednesday

### 4 DECEPTION

4.a. What mistake did Rebekah and Jacob make? Genesis 27:1–29

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**Note:** “No sooner had Esau departed on his errand than Rebekah set about the accomplishment of her purpose. She told Jacob what had taken place, urging the necessity of immediate action to prevent the bestowal of the blessing, finally and irrevocably, upon Esau. And she assured her son that if he would follow her directions, he might obtain it as God had promised. Jacob did not readily consent to the plan that she proposed. The thought of deceiving his father caused him great distress. He felt that such a sin would bring a curse rather than a blessing. But his scruples were overborne, and he proceeded to carry out his mother’s suggestions. It was not his intention to utter a direct falsehood, but once in the presence of his father he seemed to have gone too far to retreat, and he obtained by fraud the coveted blessing.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 180

4.b. What results immediately followed their wrong action? Genesis 27:41–45

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**Note:** “Jacob and Rebekah succeeded in their purpose, but they gained only trouble and sorrow by their deception. God had declared that Jacob should receive the birthright, and His word would have been fulfilled in His own time had they waited in faith for Him to work for them. But like many who now profess to be children of God, they were unwilling to leave the matter in His hands. Rebekah bitterly repented the wrong counsel she had given her son; it was the means of separating him from her, and she never saw his face again. From the hour when he received the birthright, Jacob was weighed down with self-condemnation. He had sinned against his father, his brother, his own soul, and against God. In one short hour he had made work for a lifelong repentance. This scene was vivid before him in afteryears, when the wicked course of his sons oppressed his soul.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 180

## Thursday

### 5 DECEPTION (continued)

5.a. What does God’s law say about deception? Exodus 20:16

**Note:** “False speaking in any matter, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included. An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor’s reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 309

5.b. What characteristic is mentioned about the 144,000? Revelation 14:5



**Note:** “I address the people of God who today are holding fast their confidence, who will not depart from the faith once delivered unto the saints, who stand amid the moral darkness of these days of corruption. The word of the Lord to you is: ‘I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people.’ Can we not here see the paternal love of God expressed to those who hold fast to the faith in righteousness? The closest relationship exists between God and His people. Not only are we objects of His sparing mercy, His pardoning love; we are more than this. The Lord rejoices over His people. He delights in them. He is their surety. He will beautify all who are serving Him with a whole heart with the spirit of holiness. He clothes them with righteousness.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 414, 415

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe the contrasted characters of Jacob and Esau.
- 2 Why did Jacob use deception to get the promised blessing?
- 3 Which class of people is represented by Esau?
- 4 What were the consequences of the deception practiced by Rebekah and Jacob?
- 5 Mention an essential characteristic of the 144,000.

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# Lemons

**T**he lemon is a species of small evergreen trees native to Asia, primarily northeast India, northern Myanmar and China, although production had spread to much of the world by the 14th century. We can thank Christopher Columbus for their introduction to the Americas in 1493. By the 19th century, lemons were increasingly planted in Florida and California. As of 2020, top producers were India, Mexico, China, Argentina, Brazil, and Turkey—collectively 65% of global production.

The yellow fruit is used primarily for its juice for both cooking and cleaning. Its sour taste is a result of the level of the citric acid it contains (5% to 6% with a pH of about 2.2).

The lemon is a rich source of vitamin C, 64% of the daily value, which is essential for health. It can:

- lower the risk of stroke
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- help prevent cancer
- boost the immune system
- increase iron absorption
- help prevent certain diseases such as scurvy
- support heart health
- prevent kidney stones
- help control weight
- improve digestive health

Sources: [Wikipedia.org/wiki/Lemon](https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lemon); [medicalnewstoday.com/articles/283476#nutrition](https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/283476#nutrition); [healthline.com/nutrition/6-lemon-health-benefits](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/6-lemon-health-benefits)

**Fruit**

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



## LEMON BROCCOLI PASTA SALAD

### Ingredients

1 lb. rotini pasta  
1 ½ lbs. broccoli, trimmed and cut in bite-sized pieces  
4 packed cups spinach  
3 Tbs. vegan butter  
Zest and juice of one large lemon  
2-3 cloves garlic  
1 cup vegan parmesan  
Salt to taste

### Process

1. Boil water, add in pasta, turn down heat just a bit, and cook for 5 minutes.
2. Add in the broccoli, stir, and cook for an additional 4-5 minutes or until the pasta is at your desired doneness.
3. Drain all of the water and return the pasta/broccoli to the pot. Add in the spinach and lemon zest, stir, and cover the pot. Let sit for 5 minutes or until the spinach has begun to wilt.
4. While you wait, heat the butter in a small skillet. Once just hot, add in the garlic and cook for about 2 minutes. Take off of heat.
5. Stir into the pasta the garlic butter mixture, lemon juice to combine.
6. Stir in the parmesan cheese until fully mixed in.
7. Serve and garnish with a bit of extra vegan parmesan, a drizzle of olive oil, lemon wedges, and salt if desired.





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