

HISTORIC
LANDMARKS
OF ADVENTISM

*Psalm 22 and the
Crimson Worm*

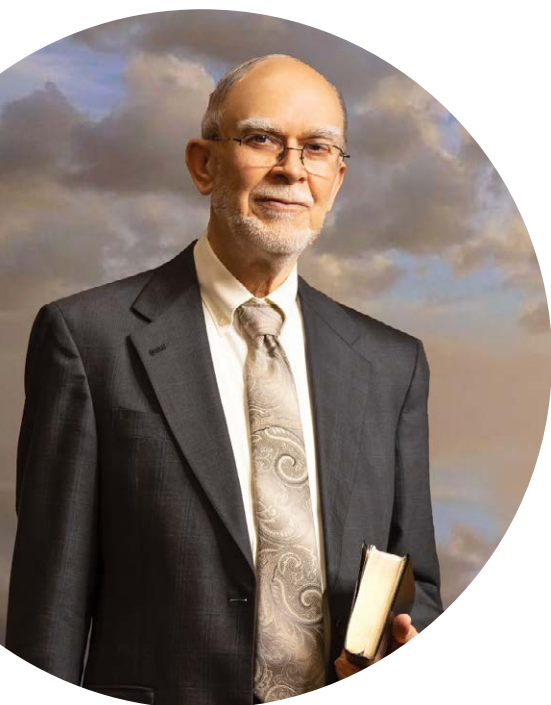
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From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

The Road to Persecution

Today, most of the people in the Western world believe that persecution is a thing of the past, something that uneducated and unenlightened people did back in the Dark Ages. Many have forgotten that those so-called dark ages were actually not that long ago; that many of the same atrocities committed during the Dark Ages have occurred and still occur in modern times. Have you studied the history of Ireland for the last 200 years? Or of Croatia for the last 100 years? Or of Inter-America and South America for the last 50 years?

The Bible predicts that at the end of time, the history of the past—the persecution of the minority living according to the word of God by the majority living according to the philosophy of the world—will be repeated. (See Revelation 13:11–17.) If you live according to the commandments of God (Revelation 14:12), the time is coming when human law will determine that you will be killed and when (Revelation 13:15).

At the present time, such a law cannot be passed as long as the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States remains unchanged.

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise there-

of; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

This Amendment expresses the philosophy of the founding fathers that church and state were to be completely separate. The state regulates man’s relationship with his fellow man, but is not to attempt to regulate his relationship with his God. The government is not to prefer any single religion above another nor can it interfere in the free exercise of a man’s religion.

The first step on the road to persecution would be to abolish the separation between church and state, allowing the passage of a law regarding religion. When this happens, oppression will follow for anyone whose religious convictions do not align with the majority. There are national movements right now which are attempting to bring in such a change which are endorsed by elected officials in the highest offices in this country. Such a development will usher in the fulfillment of Revelation 13 which will swiftly bring about the end of the world (Compare Revelation 13 and Revelation 14–20).

Are you ready for the end of the world? **LM**

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

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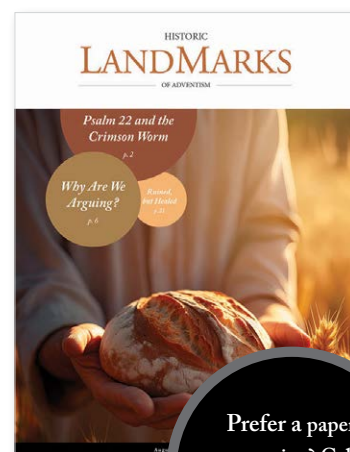
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All Bible texts, unless appearing in quoted references or otherwise identified, are from the New King James Version.

Psalm 22 and the Crimson Worm

John R. Pearson

I Am a Worm

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?
Why are You so far from helping Me,
And from the words of My groaning?
O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear;
And in the night season, and am not silent.
But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.
Our fathers trusted in You;
They trusted, and You delivered them.
They cried to You, and were delivered;
They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.
But I am a worm, and no man;
A reproach of men, and despised by the people.
All those who see Me ridicule Me;
They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,
‘He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him;
Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!’”

Psalm 22:1–8

The nature article in the July issue of *LandMarks* was a brief view of the life of the crimson worm and its spiritual symbolism. What follows expounds upon the incredible life and death of this remarkable worm and the spiritual symbolism attached to it.

It is traditionally held that Psalm 22 is a song that represents the thoughts of Jesus as He hung on the cross. Indeed, He quoted the opening line of the psalm as He paid the ultimate price for the sins of mankind—your sins and my sins.

In verse six, there is a word that bears a closer examination. It is the Hebrew word *tôlā'** [to-law] that occurs 43 times in the Old Testament. Thirty-four times it is translated as red or crimson and eight times as worm or worms.

Verse six is one of the eight places it is translated as worm. If you looked up this word in a Hebrew dictionary, you would find that it refers to a particular kind of worm—a crimson worm.

The common Hebrew word for worm is *rimmah**. That is the word used in Exodus 16, where God instructed the wandering children of Israel about gathering manna. He told them to gather what they needed for the day and no more. If anyone gathered more than they needed for that day, what happened?

"And Moses said, 'Let no one leave any of it till morning.' Notwithstanding they did not heed Moses. But some of them left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and stank." Exodus 16:19, 20

To me, and probably to most folks, the thought of any food infested with worms is not a pleasant thought. Worms, as we just read, grew in the manna that the people tried to save. Also, in describing the consequences of disobedience, God warned the children of Israel after they had settled in Canaan that if they disobeyed, worms would eat their produce:

"You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the



worms shall eat them." Deuteronomy 28:39

This is also the worm which was appointed by God to attack Jonah's shade plant which then withered:

"And the Lord God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So, Jonah was very grateful for the plant. But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it so damaged the plant that it withered." Jonah 4:6, 7

One of Job's counselors, Bildad, challenged Job's righteousness, equating this worm [*rimmah*] to a maggot:

"How then can man be righteous before God?
Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?
If even the moon does not shine,
And the stars are not pure in His sight,
How much less man, who is a maggot,
And a son of man, who is a worm?"
Job 25:4–6

Isaiah makes a similar comparison:

"Your pomp is brought down to Sheol,
And the sound of your stringed instruments;
The maggot is spread under you,
And worms cover you." Isaiah 14:11

Later in the book of Isaiah, he notes that this [*rimmah*] worm is the worm that eats the dead bodies of those who rebel against the Lord.

"And they shall go forth and look
Upon the corpses of the men
Who have transgressed against Me.
For their worm does not die,
And their fire is not quenched.
They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." Isaiah 66:24

Rimmah, however, is not the word used for 'worm' in Psalm 22:6; instead it is *tôlā'*, referring to a different kind of worm—not the maggot that infests rotting food or decaying flesh, but a crimson worm, a red worm, a worm the color of blood.

This tōlā' worm in Hebrew and crimson worm in English, is a red worm found primarily in the Middle East, which produces a brilliant red dye. This is the brilliant red color used in the yarn that the curtains of the tabernacle were woven from and that was used in the ephod of the high priest.

Because this brilliant red is derived from this worm is why tōlā' is most often translated as "scarlet" in the Bible instead of "worm." When God says "Use scarlet yarn," He is not merely saying "Use worm yarn," or "Use red yarn." He's saying to use tōlā' yarn; use the yarn died with the crimson red you get from the tōlā' worm.

What is so significant about this crimson worm and the color derived from it? Why is the specific crimson designated in the construction of the trappings of the tabernacle and the garment of the high priest? An examination of the life cycle of the crimson worm provides an answer.

When the time comes for the female tōlā', crimson worm, to bear her young, she goes through a remarkable process to give birth, protect her young, and sustain them. Here's how the process develops:

The female worm attaches herself to a tree so securely that she is physically unable to detach herself. While doing so, she makes a hard shell to protect the eggs that she is going to lay under her body. When the larvae hatch, they live protected under the mother's body that is fastened so inextricably to the tree. As they develop and grow, they feed themselves on her body. After several days, of course, the mother dies. A scarlet liquid then leaks out of the protective shell the mother has made, runs down the tree, and stains the baby larvae a bright crimson, the color of blood. This color is permanent and the larvae remain that way for the rest of their lives, hence the name "scarlet worm."

Once the mother is dead, her body begins to decay and over the course of three days,

the scarlet red liquid that has leaked out of the protective shell turns into a white waxy substance.

Understanding this process helps us to understand why Psalm 22 uses the word tōlā' rather than the more common word rimmah. It is hard not to see the symbolism here as we think about the sacrifice Jesus made to assure the possibility of our salvation.

Jesus, like the worm, was "attached" to a tree in order to die there for the sake of His offspring. This tree was the place where redemption would be purchased and where Jesus would become the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him.

Peter, in his first epistle, understood this symbolism:

Jesus "... bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed." 1 Peter 2:24

Jesus' heart-felt desire is to protect His offspring. Like the worm, Jesus creates a sort of spiritual "shell" of protection around those "born again" newborns and children who are His, and who are helpless without the protective covering that He, by faith, provides. Jesus is so constrained by His love for us, His offspring, that He hung on the tree for the sake of our salvation. This protection cost Him, in His humanity, everything. Like the mother crimson worm, He died so that His offspring might live.

The mother worm not only provides covering and protection from the assaults of the world, but she also provides sustenance through herself, as her offspring feed off of her very body. As she gives up her life, she becomes the source of life for her offspring. So, it is with Jesus. He stated, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread, he will live forever; and the Bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh." John 6:51

A Sealed Covenant

A covenant is sealed with blood, blood being the sign of a confirmed covenant. Thus, to be stained with blood is to be sealed by covenant.

“

*[Jesus] Himself bore
our sins in His own body
on the tree, that we, having
died to sins, might live for
righteousness.*

1 Peter 2:24



Jesus spent three days in the tomb, and it is His crimson blood that washes away our sin.

The covenant of salvation was sealed with blood by the first animal sacrifice when God made coverings of animal skin for Adam and Eve.

God sealed His covenant with Abram with blood in Genesis 15, His promise was to make of him a great nation, though at the time he was childless.



It takes three days for the crimson remnant of the worm's lifecycle to turn snowy white.

God confirmed this covenant with Moses:

"Then he [Moses] took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, 'All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient.' And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, 'This

is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words.'" Exodus 24:7, 8

The last supper was a symbol of the sealing of the New Covenant between God and His people—symbolically in the wine, and then fully completed by the blood of the cross. Those who enter into the covenant agreement and surrender to the will of Christ receive the purifying and sanctifying work of His blood, and are thus "stained" by it for the rest of their lives, just like the worm's offspring.

It takes three days for the crimson remnant of the worm's lifecycle to turn snowy white. Jesus spent three days in the tomb, and it is His crimson blood that washes away our sin and secures eternal redemption, making His people pure, sinless, and clothed in garments of white light. Isaiah writes, " 'Come now, and let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'" The Hebrew word that is translated "crimson" in this text

is the same Hebrew word that is translated "worm" in Psalm 22:6.

David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, used the word *tôlâ'* for worm in Psalm 22, rather than the common Hebrew word *rimmah* for a reason, and that reason explains the very basis of our salvation.

It is only when our sins are washed away by the crimson blood of Christ that we can stand before our Maker clothed in the spotless, snow-white robe of Christ's righteousness.

How awesome, indeed, is our God! Not only has He devised a plan for the redemption of our fallen race, He has symbolized that process in nature.

Who knows now what other wonders creation groans to reveal to us. Only eternity will tell.

*The Hebrew words *עלות* (*tôlâ'*) and *המר* (*rimmâh*) are written phonetically for ease of reading. **LM**

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Why Are We Arguing?

Judy Rebarchek

For the majority of my adult life, I believed and stridently argued that Jesus had to have a nature just like mine in order to be of use to me as a Saviour. If He was to be tempted just like me, then He had to have the inherent tendencies toward sin that I lived with and battled every moment. I used Jacob's ladder as my example for this.

"There he [Jacob] dreamed, and behold, a ladder was *set up on the earth*, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it." Genesis 28:12 [Emphasis supplied.]

"Wearied with his journey, the wanderer [Jacob] lay down upon the ground, with a stone for his pillow. And while he slept, the Lord gave him a vision. He beheld a ladder, bright and shining, whose base *rested upon earth* while the top reached to heaven. ...

“The ladder represents Jesus, the appointed medium of communication. ...

“In His conversation with Nathanael, Jesus referred to this mystic ladder on which Jacob gazed with pleased wonder. Said He, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.’” *The Signs of the Times*, July 31, 1884 [Emphasis supplied.]

I diligently studied the subject of the nature of Christ. I read the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy and all the other material I could find that supported my belief about His nature. Genesis 28 says the feet of the ladder rested upon earth while the top reached heaven. How could I not understand this to mean that if Christ wasn’t fully like me (resting upon earth), then how could He be my Saviour? How could He possibly be tempted like me if He wasn’t truly like me? It was settled for me: Christ had the fallen nature, just like me.

Then my husband died and I moved back to Kansas and began attending the Prairie Meadows Free Seventh-day Adventist Church and working at Steps to Life Ministry. My first Sabbath at church, Pastor Grosboll was already several sermons into a series on the nature of Christ. I listened to what he presented that first Sabbath with my eyebrow cocked the whole time. For those who don’t know me, the cocked eyebrow means I strongly question what I’m hearing. After the service, I confronted Pastor Grosboll.

I have known Pastor John Grosboll for nearly 40 years. I have the utmost respect for him and his brother Pastor Marshall, and I believe that they both have preached truth as they understood it. I crafted that sentence the way I did because there was a difference of belief between Pastor John and Pastor Marshall on this subject. However, while they agreed to disagree on Christ’s actual nature as a man, they absolutely



The ladder in Jacob's dream represents Jesus.

agreed on Christ’s purpose in coming as a man. Yes, He came to pay sin’s penalty so that man, should he choose it, would have the opportunity to be transformed and restored to the nature God gave him in Eden. Yes, because of His death on the cross, He offers forgiveness to every man, woman, and child who comes to Him on bended knee asking with contrition of heart. He promises that their sins would be washed away and their names would be written in the Lamb’s book of life. But perhaps most important, Christ was and is the perfect example, the Pattern Man, of the divine united with humanity. Jesus was the living example of what we are and what we can become if our will is surrendered to Him. In essence then, He had both the unfallen and fallen natures.

As I continued to listen to Pastor John’s series, I asked the Holy Spirit to help me keep an open mind and heart to what was being presented. I wanted very much to know the truth, even if it meant that I had been wrong for decades. Well, you’ve heard that you should be prepared when you ask God for something. He answered my prayer in two texts and a spiritual knock on the noggin. The answer came in the phrase “pleased God.”

A Little Clarification

Before I continue, let me say, this article is not meant to be a treatise on the nature of Christ. If you are interested in that, please go to the Steps to Life website and pull up the *LandMarks* Series articles titled *The Mystery of Godliness* from 2023 and 2024. I use the subject of the nature of Christ here as an example of my true intent for the article, because it has been an actual subject of controversy here in Kansas. Sides have been drawn, long-standing friendships have been harmed, some lost, and now there is division among God’s people.

So, as we continue, keep these two questions in the forefront of your mind: Why do we argue over the things that lack spiritual significance, and neglect those of far more significance? And how do we tell the difference?

We Must Please God – First Verse

We have learned in countless issues of *LandMarks* that the words *sinful*, *flesh(ly)*, and *carnal* mean the same thing and are used interchangeably in the Bible. So, let’s look at what the Bible says about those who have a carnal, fleshly, sinful nature.

“

Jesus came to pay sin's penalty so that man would have the opportunity to be transformed and restored to the nature God gave him in Eden.

“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” Romans 8:3–8

Those who are in the flesh (carnal, sinful), who have a selfish nature cannot please God. Remember, Paul is talking about nature in these particular verses of Romans 8, not the physical. By his very nature, man is sinful. Sin is so much a part of man's nature that it is something he just is; a consequence of Adam and Eve's sin passed down generation after generation, until his nature has almost completely beaten down his will to know and do what is right.

“Selfishness is the want [lack] of Christ-like humility, and its existence is the bane of human happiness, the cause of human guilt, and it leads those who cherish it to make shipwreck of faith.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, Vol. 1, 271, 272

Sin is the disease that will destroy the world and all who live in it. Man's selfish nature causes:

- pridefulness
- jealousy
- double standards
- ingratitude
- him to judge others
- him to be critical of others, but unwilling to see his own defects of character

- him to care about himself and his own needs, disregarding those around him, their feelings and well-being
- him to refuse to share
- him to cherish and spread evil thoughts and words against those around him, even his friends and family in Christ
- him to believe he is entitled to the things he desires over the needs and desires of others
- him to manipulate circumstances at the expense of others
- him to act without regard for the consequences to others
- him to grab the limelight, showing little to no interest in what others have to say
- him to take credit for the work of others
- him to make decisions that affect others without asking for their input and regardless of the effect on them
- him to rarely feel guilt or remorse for his actions, even when those actions hurt someone

“We must not hamper the soul and cripple its powers by the indulgence of selfishness. Selfishness is sin, and it grieves away the Spirit of Christ. When we cherish unkind thoughts, and harbor suspicions against our brethren, we are cutting ourselves off from the channel of God's light and love. Jealousy is as cruel as the grave, and should never be cherished in the heart, much less expressed in the actions. How cruel it is to cherish evil surmising against those who are members of Christ's body! Accusation, condemnation, and revenge are all of Satanic origin, and evil thoughts of others should be at once rejected from the mind, for these things repulse, and separate the hearts of brethren. Satan rejoices when he can create division in the church of God; for weakness follows, and the things that remain are ready to die.” *The Signs of the Times*, April 13, 1891

However, praise God, Jesus Christ is the cure for the disease of sin. He lived and died so that mankind could once again live in oneness with God.

“As a remedy for the terrible consequences into which selfishness led the human race,

God gave His only begotten Son to die for mankind. How could He have given more? In this gift He gave Himself. ‘I and My Father are one,’ said Christ. By the gift of His Son, God has made it possible for man to be redeemed and restored to oneness with Him. ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Love is the great principle that actuates unfallen beings. . . . The combined power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is pledged to uplift man from his fallen state. Every attribute, every power of divinity has been placed at the command of those who unite with the Saviour in winning men to God. O, that all would appreciate the truth as it is in Jesus. O, that all would love God in return for the love where-with He has loved them.” *The Workers’ Bulletin*, September 9, 1902

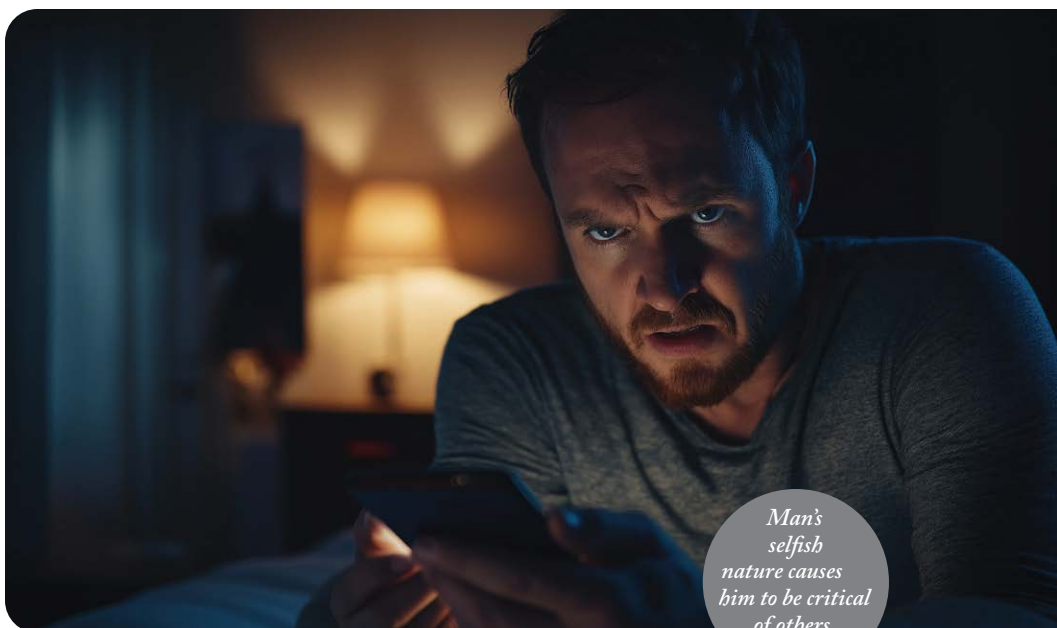
We Must Please God – Second Verse

The second verse, there are actually two, that convinced me of the sufficiency of Christ’s human nature is found in Matthew 3:17 and 2 Peter 1:17, 18.

“And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”

“For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”

If the Bible tells us that a man, because of his sinful, fleshly, carnal nature, cannot please God, then Christ who did please God, must have had a human nature free of sin to begin with. Christ’s outward nature was like ours in every respect, but His inward nature was what the nature of man—after his journey of sanctification, after his transformation, after he has taken on the character of Christ possessing both a divine and sanctified human nature—would become. It is in this nature that man will ultimately face,



Man's selfish nature causes him to be critical of others.

as did Christ, Satan’s greatest temptations, and yet never yield, because he has now overcome, by the power and grace of God, his own inward sinfulness.

First—Overcoming

I know two things for certain.

Revelation 2 and 3 tell us seven times we must overcome. That is what Christ’s life and death were all about. His death paid the price required by sin, but His life showed us how to be like Him.

“We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died to make a way of escape for us, that we might overcome every fault, resist every temptation, and sit down at last with Him in His throne.” *Our High Calling*, 353

“You can overcome evil—evil thoughts, evil desires—by the blood of the Lamb and the word of your testimony. We cannot afford to sin. It costs too much.” *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 2, 336

“No requirement is laid upon man that Christ has not obeyed. We can overcome as He overcame, if we will avail ourselves of the help of the three great powers of heaven, who are waiting to answer the demand made upon Them by God’s people for power to defeat satanic agencies.

“‘Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth.’ Christ’s teachings are truth. Those who surrender their wills to the divine guidance will be protected from Satan’s snares. Draw nigh to God in your helplessness, and He will draw nigh to you. He will lift up for you a standard against the enemy.” *Notebook Leaflets from the Elmhaven Library*, Vol. 1, 124

“Earnest, persevering effort will place you on the vantage-ground of victory; for he who strives to overcome in and through the grace of Christ, will have divine enlightenment, and will understand how great truths can be brought into little things, and religion can be carried into the little as well as into the large concerns of life.

“Let no one say, ‘I cannot overcome my defects of character’; for if this is your decision, then you cannot have eternal life. The impossibility is all in your will. If you will not, that constitutes the cannot.

“The real difficulty is the corruption of an unsanctified heart, and an unwillingness to submit to the will of God. When there is a determined purpose born in your heart to overcome, you will have a disposition to overcome, and will

“

Selfishness is sin, and it grieves away the Spirit of Christ.

cultivate those traits of character that are desirable, and will engage in the conflict with steady, persevering effort. You will exercise a ceaseless watchfulness over your defects of character, and will cultivate right practices in little things. The difficulty of overcoming will be lessened in proportion as the heart is sanctified by the grace of Christ.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 114, 115

“What a victory you will gain when you learn to follow the opening providences of God with a grateful heart and a determination to live with an eye single to His glory, in sickness or health, in abundance or want. Self is alive and quivering at every touch. Self must be crucified before you can overcome in the name of Jesus and receive the reward of the faithful.” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, 221

“Not all the power of earth or hell could force Him [Jesus] in the slightest degree to depart from the will of His Father.” *The Desire of Ages*, 125

Second—Christ’s Nature Was Sufficient

I am convinced that Christ’s human nature was sufficient to save me even if I don’t fully understand just how He was both divine and human, and that as a man, He did not possess the kind of sinfulness that is inherent in our nature.

Friend, arguing over whether Christ had the unfallen or fallen nature, and how it all worked out, is pointless—a distraction, a diversion by the devil to keep us occupied and away from what matters most. The Bible and Inspiration are clear that Christ was fully human and fully divine, and they are equally as clear that this unity of divinity and humanity in His nature is the same nature we can and must have as well.

The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are also clear that Jesus’ human nature is a mystery—not just a mystery, but the mystery of all mysteries—and will remain so for eternity.

While we will learn more during eternity, we will never fully understand it.

“And to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 3:9

“The incarnation of Christ is a mystery. The union of divinity with humanity is a mystery indeed, hidden with God, ‘even the mystery which hath been hid from ages.’ It was kept in eternal silence by Jehovah, and was first revealed in Eden, by the prophecy that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, and that he should bruise His heel.

“To present to the world this mystery that God kept in silence for eternal ages before the world was created, before man was created, was the part that Christ was to act in the work He entered upon when He came to this earth. And this wonderful mystery, the incarnation of Christ and the atonement that He made, must be declared to every son and daughter of Adam. . . . His sufferings perfectly fulfilled the claims of the law of God.

“The incarnation of Christ is the mystery of all mysteries.” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, 1082

“It is a mystery that One equal with the eternal Father should so abase Himself as to suffer the cruel death of the cross to ransom man; and it is a mystery that God so loved the world as to permit His Son to make this great sacrifice.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 24, 1906

So, why will Christ’s nature be a mystery to us for eternity? Because God says what He means and means what He says. He says Christ’s nature will be a mystery forever, so why are we expending so much time, energy, and hard feelings toward one another over an issue that we were never meant to fully understand from the start?

The real point of Jesus becoming a man was to show us how to live like Him and to develop a character like His. Christ was the living, breathing, walking, talking embodiment of the law of God, God’s own character. And what He did in His human nature here, He promises we can also do using the power and grace of God just as He did.

What did Jesus do? He kept the law in every detail. He sought always to do His Father's will. And He has opened the way for us to do the same.

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." John 6:38

"The life of Christ was distinguished from the generality of children. His strength of moral character and His firmness ever led Him to be true to His sense of duty and to adhere to the principles of right, from which no motive, however powerful, could move Him. Money or pleasure, applause or censure, could not purchase or flatter Him to consent to a wrong action. He was strong to resist temptation, wise to discover evil, and firm to abide faithful to His convictions.

"The wicked and unprincipled would flatter and portray the pleasures of sinful indulgences, but His strength of principle was strong to resist the suggestions of Satan. His penetration had been cultivated, that He could discern the voice of the tempter. He would not swerve from duty to obtain the favor of any. He would not sell His principles for human praise or to avoid reproach and the envy and hatred of those who were enemies of righteousness and true goodness.

"He took pleasure in discharging His obligations to His parents and to society, without yielding His principles or being contaminated with the impure influence surrounding Him at Nazareth.

"Never did Christ deviate from loyalty to the principles of God's law. Never did He do anything contrary to the will of His Father. ...

"His principles are the only steadfast things our world knows." *My Life Today*, 74

Salvation doesn't depend on how Christ had man's nature; it depended on how He lived in man's human nature so that He could show us how to do it, too.

It Is Satan's Purpose

Friend, I have said before that Satan hates mankind. Why? Because



God loves us. It is Satan's purpose to destroy us and, sadly, one of the ways he uses quite successfully is to have us at each other's throats over issues that themselves may not be necessary for salvation. The importance of the human nature of Christ lies in it leading us to understand that we must be overcomers, and that we can rely upon His promise to give to us everything that was available to Him as a man to achieve that goal in our own lives.

"Jesus does not, after giving us general directions, leave us to guess the way amid bypaths and dangerous passes. He leads us in a straight path, and while we follow Him our footsteps will not slide.

"Each soul must live in hourly communion with Christ; for He says, 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' His principles are to be our principles; for these principles are the everlasting truth, proclaimed in righteousness, goodness, mercy, and love." Ibid.

Satan is a master manipulator, the father and king of deception and lies, and he is completely devoid of sympathy, compassion, and love. He is a magician extraordinaire with the ability to make

us see, hear, and believe whatever he puts in our minds and hearts, and he doesn't even have to use smoke and mirrors because our innate, fallen nature responds willingly to his sophistry. Well, it responds to him unless we are willing to yield to the power of the One who long ago conquered him for us.

"You cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire, but you can control the will, and you can make an entire change in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, your life will be hid with Christ in God, and allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from God that will hold you fast to His strength; and a new light, even the light of living faith, will be possible to you. ... There will be in you a power, an earnestness, and a simplicity that will make you a polished instrument in the hands of God." *Sons and Daughters of God*, 115

"We can overcome only by believing in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God. We must know what is written in order that we may not be defeated by the sophistry and enchant-



Satan rejoices when he can create division in the church.

ments of Satan. ... If we have been ensnared by his enchanting power, let us in the name of Jesus rebuke his power, and break with Satan without delay. ...

“Our only safety is in receiving the whole Bible, not taking merely detached portions, but believing the whole truth. ... Let everyone study the Bible, knowing that the word of God is as enduring as the eternal throne. ... And if you cherish the precepts of truth, they will be to you as a wall of fire against the temptations, delusions, and enchantments of Satan. ...

“The word of God is able to save your souls, to make you wise unto salvation. The psalmist says, ‘Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not, sin against thee.’ Then let us hide the word of God in our hearts, that we may ‘be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.’ Ephesians 6:13.” *Our High Calling*, 210

“Those who put their trust in Christ are not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habit or tendency. Instead of being held in bondage to the lower nature, they are to rule every appetite and passion. God has not left us to battle with evil in our own finite strength. Whatever may be our inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong, we can overcome through the power that He is ready to impart. ...

“Through the right exercise of the will an entire change may be made in the life. By yielding up the will to Christ, we ally ourselves with divine power. We receive strength from above to hold us steadfast. A pure and noble life, a life of victory over appetite and

lust, is possible to everyone who will unite his weak, wavering human will to the omnipotent, unwavering will of God. ...

“For every soul struggling to rise from a life of sin to a life of purity, the great element of power abides in the only ‘name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.’ ‘If any man thirst,’ for restful hope, for deliverance from sinful propensities The only remedy for vice is the grace and power of Christ.” *Counsels on Health*, 440

In No Wise To The Injury Of Souls

“Contention in the church is always attended with a dearth of spirituality. The Lord cannot be glorified by a contentious church. ‘All ye are brethren.’ Cultivate the grace of God. Lift up your hearts in prayer to Him for His keeping power. Avoid all contention among yourselves. Use every means within your reach to restrain the unsanctified words that are ever upon the tongue—words that would cast a reflection upon others. Be true to one another. We are bought with a price; therefore, in word and act we should glorify God.

“When the members of God’s church see eye to eye, they will constantly guard the tongue, in order that they may not misuse the talent of speech. This talent is a precious gift. Let us study our words with care, and be a blessing to mankind by refusing to bring reproach upon one of our brethren by passing on to others some evil report that we may hear. If we speak evil of another, reproach will lie at our door. When we all love our neighbor as ourselves, idle, mischievous whisperings will cease. May the Lord by His converting power sanctify our talent of speech, that we may use it to His glory, and in no wise to the injury of souls.” *The Review and Herald*, January 6, 1903

“We are not to manifest a selfish or contentious spirit. Our work is to reveal to the world that God’s children love one another. ...

“To the church at Ephesus Paul wrote: ‘For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches



*Jealousy
is as cruel
as the grave.*

of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.’

“Here are brought to view the possibilities of the Christian life. How far short of reaching this standard falls the church of today! Strife, discord, selfish pride of opinion, self-exaltation—self, self, self—all this is manifest in those who claim to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. When shall we awake? When shall we meet the expectations of Christ?” *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1793–1795

It is a sad thought that people who claim to be Christians often find it so easy to malign, smear, and even vilify their brothers and sisters; and worse,

they do it in the name of the Lord. Our words and actions tell the world around us whether we are God’s children or not. What were the two great commandments given by Jesus to the rich, young, ruler? Love God supremely and your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:39). We should consider how we would feel if we heard the words we say about others used to describe ourselves.

“Let every word you speak bless and elevate.” *The Voice in Speech and Song*, 145

There Must Be Unity

God’s church must be united in doctrine, in faith, in brotherhood. If we cannot love, encourage, and strengthen each other, if pride and selfishness lead us to speak terrible things about our brethren, then the Holy Spirit is not dwelling in our hearts. Differences of opinion and in doctrine should not be allowed to divide God’s people, but to bring them together to study His word and to allow the Holy Spirit to guide them as one to discern truth, whatever it is, and no matter whose belief or opinion has to be changed. Remember, if what we believe does not agree with God, something has to change, and it isn’t God.

This is what the founding fathers of the Adventist church did in 1844. We might not have learned the truth regarding the investigative judgment if they had argued and fought until they couldn’t stand to be in each other’s presence any longer. Instead, they knelt together and asked the Holy Spirit to guide them to all truth (John 16:13).

“In these last days of the world’s history, when self-indulgence and pleasure seem to be the objects for which men live, the followers of Christ must strive to become like Him in character, that they may not be ashamed to meet their record in the books of heaven, when every man will be rewarded according to his deeds. ‘To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God.’

“There are a large number of professed Christians who would feel surprised and



*The
real
difficulty is the
corruption of an
unsanctified
heart.*



*How
cruel it is
to cherish evil
surmising against
those who are
members of Christ's
body!*

deeply injured if they were shown the light in which God regards them. They are spiritually dead, while professing to live. They are false lights—signs that point in the wrong direction. To these I would lift my voice in warning. Study your Bibles, analyze your motives and principles, before it is too late. When you repent and become converted, you will see and appreciate the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The half-hearted, pleasure-loving professor of religion is the very best agent Satan has to allure souls away from the straight gate and from the narrow path. Such have proved the ruin of souls they might have saved had they walked in the footprints of the Light of life.

“And yet these persons think that because they have a form of godliness, they are accepted of God. But God does not receive such as His sons and daughters. In that great day when He

shall render to every man according as his works have been, they will realize the truth of the words, ‘Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.’” *The Review and Herald*, October 27, 1896

“Let all God’s workers study the plan of salvation, and think what the working out of that plan cost. Calvary speaks with all its agony of suffering. There the Son of God died to secure eternal life for those who receive Him. No one but Christ can make man a partaker of the divine nature. Only His human hand pierced on Calvary’s cross, can lay hold of fallen man, and uplift him.” *Battle Creek Letters*, 18

Friend, there will be no Unfallen Street or Fallen Street in heaven. There will be no King James Bible Road or New King James Bible Road. There will be no Messiah Avenue or Just a Good Man Avenue. And there will be no Trinitarian Boulevard, Arian Boulevard, or Oneness of God Boulevard in heaven either. There are so many unnecessary arguments and they need to stop, because in heaven, God’s people will live together in complete unity and harmony to His law. His people will love Him supremely and their brothers and sisters as they would want to be loved themselves. Unity of spirit, thought, and doctrine must be accomplished here and now or we will not be going there. **LM**

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What is Home?

Home's not merely four square walls,
Though hung with pictures nicely gilded;
Home is where affection calls,
Filled with shrines the heart hath builded.

Home! go watch the faithful dove,
Sailing 'neath the heaven above us;
Home is where we've one to love,
Home is where there's one to love us.

Home's not merely roof and room;
Home needs something to endear it;
Home is where the heart can bloom—
Where there's some kind heart to cheer it.

What is home with none to meet,
None to welcome, none to greet us?
Home is sweet, and only sweet,
When there's one we love to meet us.

The Review and Herald, January 8, 1901

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My
word; and My Father will love him, and
We will come to him and make Our
home with him.”

John 14:23



The Third Angel

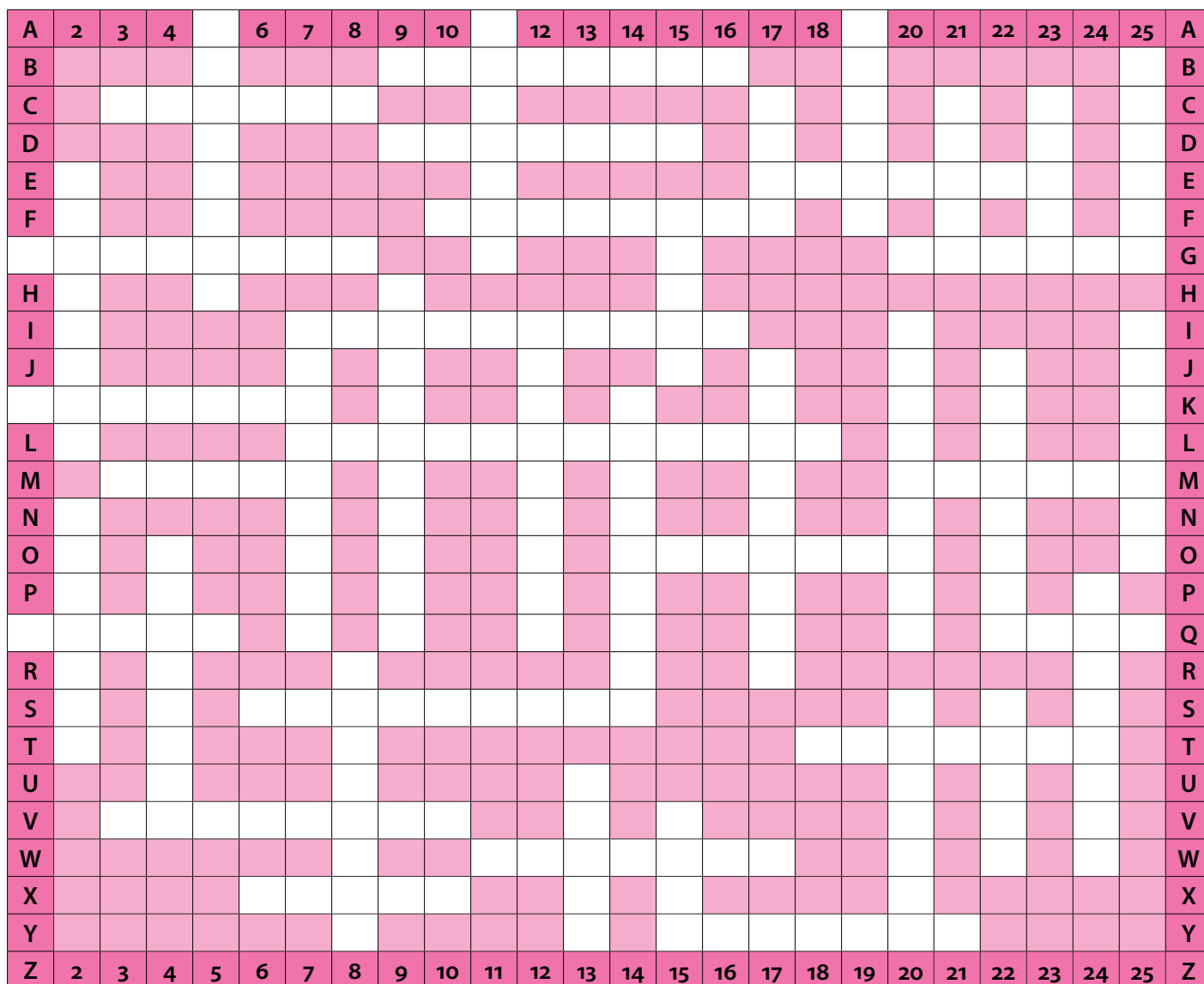
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Across

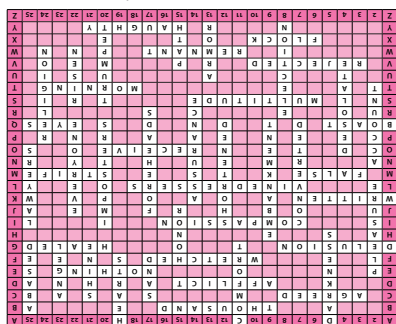
- B9 Seven _____ men have not bowed the knee to Baal. Romans 11:4
 C3 Can two walk together unless they are _____? Amos 3:3
 D9 I have chosen a day for a man to _____ his soul. Isaiah 58:5
 E17 There is _____ new under the sun. Ecclesiastes 1:9
 F10 You do not know that you are _____ and blind. Revelation 3:17
 G1 God will send strong _____ to those who ... believe the lie. 2 Thessalonians 2:11
 G20 Pray for one another that you may be _____. James 5:16
 I7 The Chaldeans had no _____ on young man or virgin. 2 Chronicles 36:17
 K1 I have _____ for him the great things of My law. Hosea 8:12
 L7 He will come and destroy those _____. Luke 20:16
 M3 For _____ christ and prophets will rise and show great signs. Matthew 24:24
 M20 Indeed you fast for _____ and debate. Isaiah 58:4
 O14 He came to His own, and His own did not _____ Him. John 1:11
 Q1 You who make your _____ in the law, dishonor God by breaking the law. Romans 2:23
 Q22 The _____ of Adam and Eve were opened ... they were naked. Genesis 3:7
 S6 A sinner turned from his way covers a _____ of sins. James 5:20
 T18 Then your light shall break forth like the _____. Isaiah 58:8
 V3 Because you have _____ knowledge, I also will reject you. Hosea 4:6
 W11 The _____ will return, to the mighty God. Isaiah 10:21
 X6 There will be one _____ and one shepherd. John 10:16
 Y15 Do not be _____, but fear. Romans 11:20

Down

- A5 For behold, the _____ shall cover the earth. Isaiah 60:2
 A11 Things were written before for our patience and _____. Romans 15:4
 A19 In their _____, they turned back to Egypt. Acts 7:39
 B25 I know how to be _____ and I know how to abound. Philippians 4:12
 C17 The children of Israel are as the _____ of the sea. Romans 9:27
 C21 Arise, _____; for your light has come! Isaiah 60:1
 C23 After these things I saw another _____ coming down from heaven. Revelation 18:1
 E2 It is your Father's good _____ to give you the kingdom. Luke 12:32
 F15 These people _____ Me with their lips. Isaiah 29:13
 H9 Your enemies will build an _____ around you. Luke 19:43
 I7 Repent therefore and be _____ that your sins may be blotted out. Acts 3:19
 I12 The Lord's hand is not _____ that it cannot save. Isaiah 59:1
 I20 Evil men and _____ will grow worse, deceiving and being deceived. 2 Timothy 3:13
 I25 Woe to you _____! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. Luke 11:52
 J17 Put a mark on the _____ of the men who sigh over the abominations. Ezekiel 9:4
 J22 Not _____ who says 'Lord, Lord' shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 7:21
 K14 Let us draw near with a true heart in full _____ of faith. Hebrews 10:22
 N2 God requires an _____ of what is past. Ecclesiastes 3:15
 O4 Your house is left to you _____. Matthew 23:38
 P24 Pure and undefiled _____ is to visit the orphans and widows in their trouble. James 1:27
 R8 There is a remnant according to the _____ of grace. Romans 11:5



Answer Key:

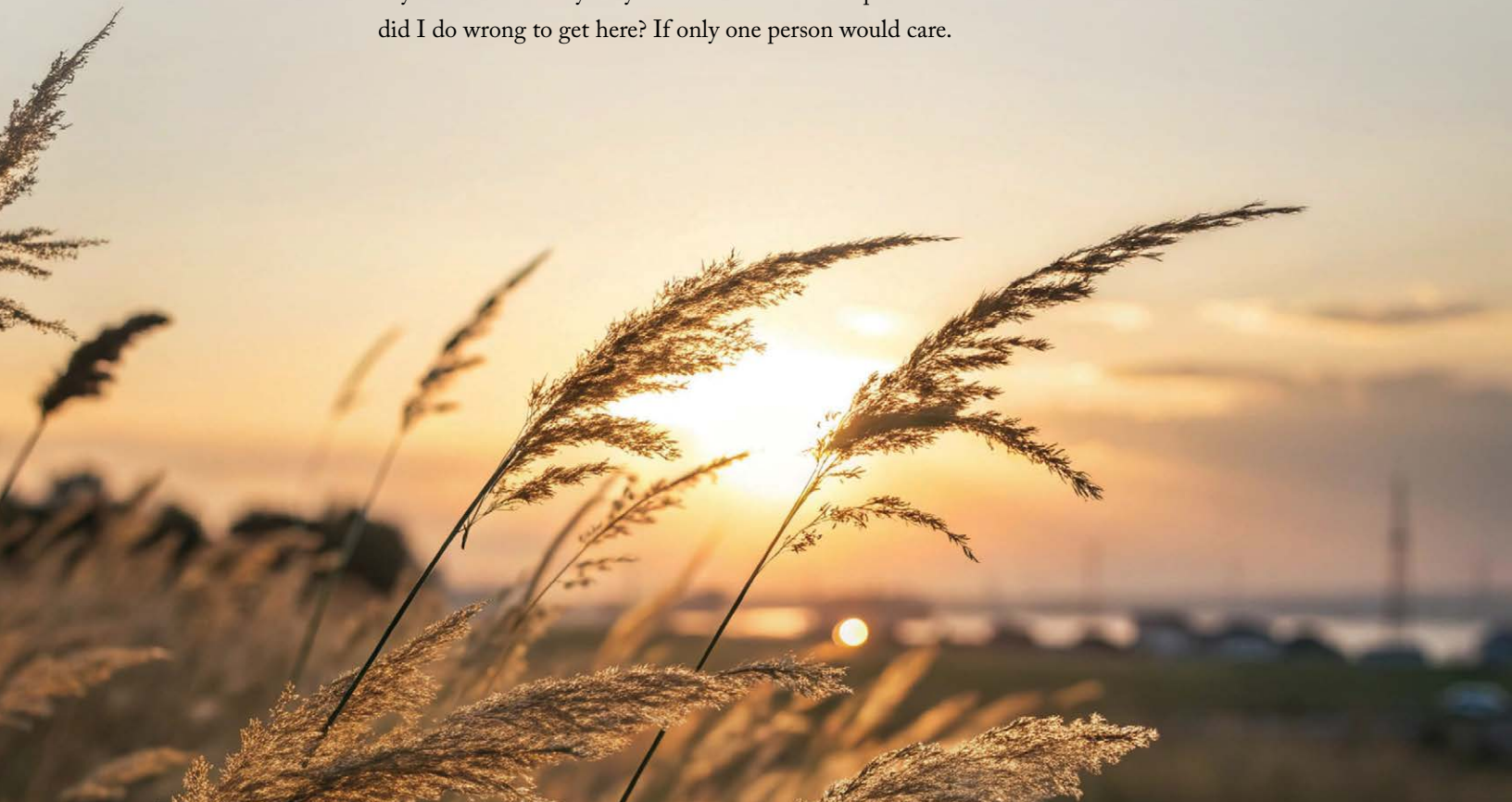


- S20 Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a _____.Isaiah 58:1
 S22 Rise and shine, the glory of the Lord is _____ upon you.Isaiah 60:1
 U13 Put on the whole _____ of God and stand against the devil.Ephesians 6:11
 V15 The _____ of the just is like the shining sun.Proverbs 4:18

The Power of Kindness

It was bitterly cold. The kind of cold that seeps into your bones. A drift of snow swirled down the alley on a wet, chilly wind. The dim light of a wintry sun faintly filtered its way into a corner between two buildings in the alley. A small pile of trash lay heaped in the corner.

Bill sat on the little heap of trash, his head in his hands. The big snowflakes drifted gently on top of his bare head. He shivered. Big tears seeped out between his fingers. They fell, down, down. Down they came and landed with a quiet splash on the little heap of trash. He shivered once again. Life is so hopeless. Are there any good people in this world anymore? Would anybody care about a homeless person like me? What did I do wrong to get here? If only one person would care.



Bill took his head out of his hands and wiped his eyes. He looked up. The snowflakes were still falling. He got up, put his hands in his pockets, and wandered into the alley. His gloomy face was tucked into his collar as he studied the clean, white snow on the dirty alley street.

In the gray light of day, Bill wandered down the alley to its end at a busy street. Cars whooshed by and an occasional passerby would hurry past, seeming to turn up their noses at the lone, homeless man. On down the street he wandered, his thoughts wandering too. If only one person would care ... but no one does. It's almost noon, and I still haven't eaten. I don't have any money. I guess I'm going hungry again today. If only one person would care.

Bill continued walking and came to the one church on that street. He stopped and looked around, then lowered himself onto a step. The church did not seem to provide much protection from the blustery wind that was still howling. A most delicious smell wafted up the street from a café. He thought again of his empty stomach.

He watched all the busy people rushing up and down the street. His feet began to get cold; he looked down to see that his poor, dilapidated shoes had come loose again. He just sat on the steps and looked at his shoes for a while. Then he slowly bent over and sluggishly began fumbling at the strings with his cold, numb fingers. But they shook, and were so cold and numb that he knew he could never tie his shoes tight enough to keep him nice and warm. If only somebody cared.

A cheerful voice intruded on his gloomy thoughts, "You sure look cold. Here, let me help with your shoes."

Bill looked up into the beaming face of a kind, young lady. She industriously bent over and pulled the strings tight, giving his poor, old shoes a pat with what felt like angelic hands. She was soon finished and turned to get up. Bill's eyes followed her every move.



She unwound her scarf from her neck, bent over, and ever so kindly wrapped it around Bill's neck. Then she walked off.

Amazing, Bill thought, somebody cares about me. He watched as the kind lady disappeared into the café. Suddenly, she came rushing back out and said, "Here, I'm sure you haven't had lunch yet." She placed a steaming bowl of soup into his hands. The warmth of the hot bowl felt comforting to Bill's frozen fingers. The lady then took a scrap of paper from her pocket and scribbled her address. "If you ever need a place to go or someone to talk to, reach out," she said, and handed him the paper. Bill nodded as she left, continuing her journey down the sidewalk.

Tears welled up in Bill's eyes. Somebody really does care! Someday I'll be a somebody too. Somebody who can make a difference in the world.

Ten years of ordinary life passed. Once again, it was a cold, winter day. The sun shone brightly, making everything look sparkly. A crystal layer of snow covered the ground. Lilian was sitting inside her warm, cozy house, sipping a cup of hot tea, when there was a knock on the door. Lilian rose and opened the door. In front of her stood a policeman in

full uniform. He held up a picture of a poor, homeless man. "Ma'am," he asked, "Have you seen this man?"

Lilian squinted at the photo for a while. That face looked so familiar. Wait, there was her scarf. "Yes," she said haltingly.

The policeman's weighty words that he spoke next revealed the power of a simple act of kindness.

"I am the man in that photo." "What you did for me that day gave me the courage to keep living and pursue a career. Your kindness changed my life."

Jesus once told a story about a very poor man named Lazarus. Lazarus did not have a home, just like Bill didn't. There was one thing that was different in the story that Jesus told. Lazarus lived at the door of the house of a rich man. This rich man could have done like Lilian and given Lazarus clothing and food. But even though that rich man ate big meals every day, he wouldn't give Lazarus even one crumb from his table. And that rich man, I am sad to tell you, had a very sad ending to his life. Kindness can make an amazing difference, in this life and the next.

The Heartbeat of the Remnant, Spring 2025, Justin Hochstetler, 16, 17 [LM](#)



How Shall We Keep the Sabbath?

God is merciful. His requirements are reasonable, in accordance with the goodness and benevolence of His character. The object of the Sabbath was that all mankind might be benefited. Man was not made to fit the Sabbath; for the Sabbath was made after the creation of man, to meet his necessities. After God had made the world in six days, He rested and sanctified and blessed the day upon which He rested from all His work which He had created and made. He set apart that special day for man to rest from his labor, that, as he should look upon the earth beneath and the heavens above, he might reflect that God made all these in six days and rested upon the seventh; and that, as he should behold the tangible proofs of God's infinite wisdom, his heart might be filled with love and reverence for his Maker.



In order to keep the Sabbath holy, it is not necessary that we enclose ourselves in walls, shut away from the beautiful scenes of nature and from the free, invigorating air of heaven. We should in no case allow burdens and business transactions to divert our minds upon the Sabbath of the Lord, which He has sanctified. We should not allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character even. But the mind cannot be refreshed, enlivened, and elevated by being confined nearly all the Sabbath hours within walls, listening to long sermons and tedious, formal prayers. The Sabbath of the Lord is put to a wrong use if thus celebrated. The object for which it was instituted is not attained. The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing to him by calling his mind from secular labor to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble to talk of Him, to interchange thoughts and ideas in regard to the truths contained in His word, and to devote a portion of time to appropriate prayer. But these seasons, even upon the Sabbath, should not be made tedious by their length and lack of interest.

During a portion of the day, all should have an opportunity to be out of doors. How can children receive a more correct knowledge of God, and their minds be better impressed, than in spending a portion of their time out of doors, not in play, but in company with their parents? Let their young minds be associated with God in the beautiful scenery of nature, let their attention be called to the tokens of His love to man in His created works, and they will be attracted and interested. They will not be in danger of associating the character of God with everything that is stern and severe; but as they view the beautiful things which He has created for the happiness of man, they will be led to regard Him as a tender, loving Father. They will see that His prohibitions and injunctions are not made merely to show His power and au-



*We
should have
an opportunity
to be out of doors
on the Sabbath.*

thority, but that He has the happiness of His children in view. As the character of God puts on the aspect of love, benevolence, beauty, and attraction, they are drawn to love Him. You can direct their minds to the lovely birds making the air musical with their happy songs, to the spires of grass, and the gloriously tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air. All these proclaim the love and skill of the heavenly Artist, and show forth the glory of God.

Parents, why not make use of the precious lessons which God has given us in the book of nature, to give our children a correct idea of His character? Those who sacrifice simplicity to fashion, and shut themselves away from the beauties of nature, cannot be spiritually minded. They cannot understand the skill and power of God as revealed in His created works; therefore, their hearts do not quicken and throb with new love and interest, and they are not filled with awe and reverence as they see God in nature.

All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable. They cannot do this by seeking their own pleasure in sinful,

forbidden amusements. Yet they can do much to exalt the Sabbath in their families and make it the most interesting day of the week. We should devote time to interesting our children. A change will have a happy influence upon them. We can walk out with them in the open air; we can sit with them in the groves and in the bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them upon the works of God, and can inspire them with love and reverence by calling their attention to the beautiful objects in nature.

The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy. In no better way can parents exalt and honor the Sabbath than by devising means to impart proper instruction to their families and interesting them in spiritual things, giving them correct views of the character of God and what He requires of us in order to perfect Christian characters and attain to eternal life. Parents, make the Sabbath a delight, that your children may look forward to it and have a welcome in their hearts for it. *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, 582–585 [LM](#)

Your Letters

“What a blessing! How graciously and truthfully every article [of the *LandMarks*] shines with the glory of God. I’m humbled by your devotion – each and every one of you.”

—SS, Pennsylvania

“Thank you for sending me a box of the *LandMarks* magazine. I often go to the public library to catch up on the news and read the newspaper. I had a few extra copies of *LandMarks* and decided to take them to the library. There is a special give-and-take periodical section. The day I went to the library, this section looked to have about 70 to 80 different periodicals neatly displayed along the wall of this special section. I added the three different issues of the *LandMarks* to the display and then sat down to see what would happen. About 15 minutes after leaving them and while looking through the Wall Street Journal, I noticed that an elderly woman approached the display and took all three of the *LandMarks*. I should never be surprised at the efficiency of the Holy Spirit. Thank you and all the contributors for publishing such an attractive periodical.”

—KP, Oregon

August Sermon of the Month

The Fifth Part of the Lord’s Prayer

John J. Grosboll

The first three verses of the Lord’s prayer speak to man’s relationship with God and how he is to be addressed as our Father. The last four speak to man’s relationship with his fellow man.

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

From the Desk of Pastor John J. Grosboll

August 2026

Dear Friend,

Jesus said, “I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day. The night is coming when no man can work.” John 9:4 What was Jesus talking about? When is the time when “no man can work”?

That time is the final harvest time. Jesus said, “When the grain ripens immediately he puts in the sickle because the harvest is come.” Mark 4:28

Harvest time is too late to plant the seed, too late to water, cultivate, and fertilize the plant. A dual harvest, described in Revelation 14:14–20, is soon coming to this world. When it arrives, it will be too late to invite, warn, or teach your children or parents, friends or relatives what they need to do to be saved. It will be too late to do any kind of work for the Lord, and everyone you love and cherish will be saved or lost; nothing can be done to change their destiny.

Jesus taught that this time would come upon us suddenly (Mark 13:32–36). This makes the words of the apostle Paul urgent.

“In an acceptable time, I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.’ Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” 2 Corinthians 6:2

Don’t wait until it is too late to give out literature, to pray with the person under conviction, or encourage everyone you know and meet to enter the narrow gate, to press onward along the upward narrow road that leads to eternal life.

You do not want the Lord to find you at His appearing having been so weighed down with the cares of this life (Luke 21:34) that you did not witness for Him at all, and instead, lost your own soul.

Your brother in the Lord’s closing work,



Pastor John J. Grosboll

Ruined, but Healed

On my way back to the office after taking Finn to doggie daycare, I saw a dog lying a short distance from the side of the road. I wanted to know if it was all right, so I turned around and went back, parked, and walked to where it lay. I couldn't tell if it was a male or female, so I called it him when I spoke to him. He was wet and cold, and shivering terribly—from cold or fear or pain, I didn't know. But what I did know was that he was nothing but fur and bones. There were a few treats Finn had left behind in the car (if you can believe that), so I got them and offered them to this poor soul, but he wouldn't eat them. I assumed he had been crossing the street and was hit by a car. And it seemed that luck had been, at least a little, on his side and he was able to make it to where he lay, safe from any other traffic.

He was dirty and laying in the mud. When I first approached him, he acted as though he might try to run away, but I honestly don't think he could. I moved slowly, and I spoke softly and

gently to him. He raised his head and looked at me through brown eyes filled with such longing, I couldn't help but bend down and stroke his head. Without a sound, he let me and then pressed his cheek into my hand and rested his head there.

I couldn't leave him there all alone. I found something in my car to cover him with in hopes it would keep him warm. I called 911 and they sent me to Wichita's Animal Control. I left a message, but sadly, when they returned my call, they told me that the poor creature had laid down just outside the Wichita city limits, so I would have to contact Sedgwick County Animal Control. Just then a truck with lights flashing pulled up next to my car. It was a state trooper.

Trooper Tyson made the arrangements with Sedgwick County Animal Control to come and pick him up. We both stayed with him for a bit longer, but I had to get to work and Trooper Tyson had a meeting to attend. As I walked to my car, I looked back and this precious life tried to get up and follow

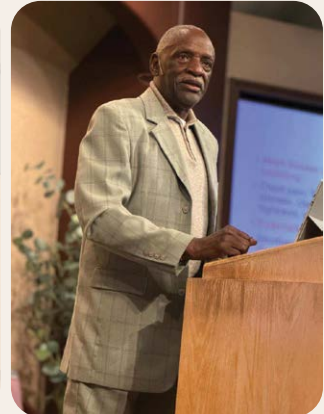
me, but couldn't. My heart broke for him. I should have wrapped him up and taken him myself. Trooper Tyson said that after his meeting he would check back and if Animal Control hadn't already picked the dog up, he would take him to the vet himself.

A few hours later, I couldn't stand the not knowing, so I took a quick drive to see if he was still there. I don't know if Trooper Tyson had come back and picked him up, or if Animal Control had him, or if some other caring person had stopped and decided not to leave him behind.

It made me think about myself—maybe you, too. Broken, beat up, hungry, thirsty, filthy, ruined—left behind by the cruelest one of all, who does not care if I die. But then, a soft voice, a gentle touch, and as I raise my longing eyes, I see the face of the gentle Saviour, the almighty Healer. He says to me that He has been searching for me and has finally found me. He promises to heal me and to hold me close to Him. He says that He came to give me life. **LM**



from the
Mission Fields



2026

Steps to Life

Camp Meeting

Judy Rebarchek

"E very camp meeting may be a love feast from the beginning to the end because God's presence is with His people." *Loma Linda Messages*, 537

And what a feast it was. Our speakers, Pastor John Grosboll, Pastor Domingo Nunez, and Pastor Ivan Plumber laid before us a blessed spread of spiritual food straight from the word of God and Spirit of Prophecy. Brother Mamon Wilson provided examples of his medical missionary work for those who have come to him seeking healing. We were also blessed again by the music of Laura Williams.

"The specific object of the camp meeting is to lead the people to discern what they must do to inherit eternal life." *Spiritual Advancement the Object of Camp-Meetings* (1897)



Save the Date May 27-29, 2027

Start planning now to attend the 2027 Steps to Life camp meeting May 26–29. Time grows shorter with each passing day. Every Christian should experience the blessings of attending camp meeting, fellowshiping with brothers and sisters of like belief, and preparing together for our Saviour's soon return.



Top left: *Cameras ready for livestreaming, a sermon is about to start.*

Top right: *Fabian is sharing his journey in progress towards the gospel.*

Bottom Left: *Concert by Laura Williams.*

Bottom Left: *Sandra Mulchin and Janet Headrick in the kitchen.*

Pastor John Grosboll – Director of Steps to Life Ministry and senior pastor of the Prairie Meadows Church of Free Seventh-day Adventists spoke regarding the cost of salvation, why the Protestant Reformation failed, and how we must come up to the mark in these last days to be ready for Jesus to come.

Pastor Domingo Nunez - Director of Outreach Ministry at Steps to Life Ministry spoke on the faith of the centurion and the difference between a wise and foolish Christian.

Pastor Ivan Plummer – Senior pastor of Emmanuel Seventh Day Church Ministries in Bronx, New York presented a moving three-part message on the doctrine of health reform given to, though unappreciated by, the Adventist church.

Mamon Wilson – Director of the Centurion Bible School of Health, spoke about how medical missionary work is meant to reach man by removing physical barriers to introduce the soul of man to Christ. He specifically presented how he treats heart disease and prostate cancer the natural way.

Laura Williams returned to share her musical talent and the beautiful voice God gave her. Each song she shared during camp meeting and the wonderful Sabbath afternoon concert took us just a little bit closer to heaven. They also

shared a beautiful testimony regarding the newest member of their team, Fabian. (Be sure to read the short interview with Laura about her and her husband Ernie's ministry and Fabian's miraculous story of redemption in the September/October newsletter.)

Camp meeting DVDs will be available for purchase later this summer. You can request individual meeting DVDs or the full set of DVDs for the entire camp meeting using the order form available in the September/October Newsletter along with an ad highlighting the music of Laura Williams.

"The feeding upon the divine word of God is the divine element which the soul needs in order to secure a healthy development of all its spiritual powers." *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 8, 296

May the words of the 2026 camp meeting theme song fill your heart will joy and expectation.

I've a longing in my heart for Jesus,
I've a longing in my heart to see His face.
I am weary, O so weary of trav'ling here below,
I've a longing in my heart for Him. **LM**

Let's Go Hunting

Now that summer is here, we can enjoy many hours out in nature. This will help us to follow some of the eight laws of health: exercise, sunlight, fresh air, even rest, but it is something the family can do together on Sabbath afternoon and will also bring us a sense of joy, wonder, and nearness to our Creator. So, let's have some scavenger hunt fun.

For older children (What did you find?):

Something that makes you smile	Something in your favorite color	Something that makes a pretty sound
Something you are thankful for	Something that is fun to play with	Something that smells good
Something fun to climb on	Something beautiful	Something soft or squishy to the touch

For the youngsters:

			
White flower	Robin	Tree leaf	Spider
			
Butterfly	Tree bark	Pine cone	Fallen log or branch
			
Ants	Animal tracks	Bee	Fly
			
Tree stump	Turtle	Evergreen tree	Pond



*Prickly pear from
the Nopal cactus*

Secrets of the Desert

No way around it, for a good digestion and proper bowel movement, there is a basic rule! Water and fiber! Yes, how much easier can it get? Nature is always ready to give us a hand by storing little packages of both, called mucilage, ready to aid us in that pursuit!

Mucilage is a type of soluble fiber found in a wide variety of plant species around the world, but primarily in tropical and subtropical regions. This gelatinous substance is responsible for storing water in plants, making them resistant to drought.

One in particular is the Nopal mucilage, also known as prickly pear sap from the Nopal cactus. Nopal cacti are plants that grow in arid desert environments, famously depicted in certain areas of Mexico and Texas. Their mucilage is stored and protected by strong cellulose fibers made primarily of polysaccharides designed to protect the mucilage in such rough environments. The fruit is delicious and contains about 94% water. The raw Nopal pads typically contain around 88% water. What an awesome hydration station.

Nopal Mucilage Has Many Benefits

- 1 It traps cholesterol to prevent it from entering the bloodstream, thanks to the gel-like structure it forms.
- 2 It regulates intestinal transit, helping with constipation.
- 3 It helps the body eliminate various waste products and toxins that accumulate.
- 4 It stabilizes blood sugar levels, making it highly recommended for people with diabetes. Plants with mucilage play a very important role in anti-diabetic treatment, as they have a beneficial effect on reducing excess weight and excessive pancreatic secretions.
- 5 It protects the stomach membranes and mucous membranes.
- 6 It acts against inflammation of the respiratory, oral, and throat mucous membranes.
- 7 It provides a feeling of fullness. When mucilage comes into contact with water, it increases in volume.
- 8 It reduces hunger, since the increased volume sends signals to the brain that decrease appetite. These last two benefits make mucilage ideal for inclusion in the diets of children with obesity or overweight.



As an extra note, Nopal cactus mucilage can be used in many applications. In the food industry, it is used as a thickener, emulsifier, and for coating fruit to extend shelf life. In construction, it is a natural additive in mortars and as a sealant. More importantly, it offers health benefits that include a prebiotic effect and protection of the gastric mucosa.

Properties and Effects in the Body

Nopal mucilage also has moisturizing and skin-protective properties, making it a good protective agent for wounds, burns, or cuts.

Foods rich in this type of fiber include chia seeds, flaxseeds, okra, mellocos, prickly pears. Foods with lesser amounts of mucilage yet still a good source are figs, lemons, legumes especially green beans, and nuts such as almonds.

Medicinal plants containing mucilage include mallow, agar-agar, borage, aloe vera, marshmallow, sandwort, pansy, psyllium seeds, plantain, arnica, nettle, evening primrose, sage, and parsley, among others. All of these can be consumed as infusions or as food preparations.

Maybe tomorrow's breakfast will be a bowl of fruit salad that includes a few slices of prickly pears.

Sources: Universidad Autónoma Chapingo, Unidad Regional Universitaria de Zona Áridas, Bermejillo, Durango, México; Procacci, S , Bojórquez-Quintal, E , Platamone, G , Maccioni, O , Vecchio, VL , Morreale, V, et al. Opuntia ficus-indica pruning waste recycling: recovery and characterization of mucilage from cladodes. Nat Resour. (2021) 12:91–107. doi: 10.4236/nr.2021.124008; Goiano Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology, Campus Rio Verde, Rodovia Sul Goiana, 75901-970, Rio Verde, Goiás, Brazil [LM](#)



The Church of God or the Synagogue of Satan

John J. Grosboll

The church of Ephesus had lost its first love. Paul told them they must remember from where they had fallen and repent. Ephesus did not regain their first love, but we, the final generation, are to regain it. Let's look at what exactly the church of Ephesus lost, and how God's final generation will regain it as the end of time draws ever nearer.

"Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth, there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times." *The Great Controversy*, 464

We see two things from this quotation: God's people have lost their first love, and this first love hasn't been seen since apostolic times.

Christ Reveals Himself to His People

“The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit’s grace. And under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love. Lost in wonder, the apostles exclaimed, ‘Herein is love.’ They grasped the imparted gift. And what followed? The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day.”

The Acts of the Apostles, 38

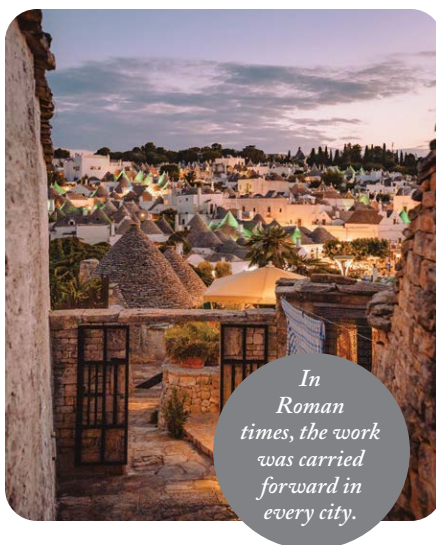
“... They burned with desire to carry the glad tidings of salvation to earth’s remotest bounds. And the world took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Sinful men, repentant, pardoned, cleansed, and sanctified, were brought into partnership with God through His Son.

“The members of the church were united in sentiment and action. Love for Christ was the golden chain that bound them together. They followed on to know the Lord more and still more perfectly, and in their lives were revealed the joy and peace of Christ.” Ibid., 579

The Joy and Peace of Christ

The Roman Empire was causing a lot of trouble during this time in history, but God’s people carried out their mission in the world, even under these less than ideal conditions.

“They visited the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and kept themselves unspotted from the world, realizing that a failure to do this would



be a contradiction of their profession and a denial of their Redeemer.

“In every city the work was carried forward. ... Warm, inspired personal appeals were made to the erring, to the outcast, and to those who, while professing to know the truth, were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.” Ibid., 579, 580

“Christ had bidden the first disciples love one another as He had loved them. Thus, they were to bear testimony to the world that Christ was formed within, the hope of glory. ‘A new commandment I give unto you,’ He had said, ‘That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.’ John 13:34.” Ibid., 548

At the time when these words were spoken [the night before the crucifixion], the disciples could not understand them; but after they had witnessed the sufferings of Christ, after His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, and after the Holy Spirit had rested on them at Pentecost, they had a clearer conception of the love of God and of the nature of the love which they must have for one another. Then John could say to his fellow disciples:

“‘Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.’

“After the descent of the Holy Spirit, when the disciples went forth to proclaim a living Saviour, their one desire was the salvation of souls. They rejoiced in the sweetness of communion with saints. They were tender, thoughtful, self-denying, willing to make any sacrifice for the truth’s sake. In their daily association with one another, they revealed the love that Christ had enjoined upon them. By unselfish words and deeds, they strove to kindle this love in other hearts.” Ibid., 547

This was what the church was always to cherish, but by the time the book of Revelation was written they had lost it.

What We See Can Be Deceiving

“The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world.” Ibid., 585

The church at Smyrna followed the church at Ephesus.

“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.” Revelation 2:9

The church of Smyrna called themselves Jews. Who is a Jew in the New Testament? A Christian, all those who follow Christ whether they are biologically Jews or Gentiles (Galatians 3:26–29; Romans 2:28, 29). However, regardless of what they call themselves, they neither obey God’s law, nor do they possess the character of Christ. They cannot be Christians, but instead are of the synagogue of Satan.

How did the apostolic church go from where it was in the first century to where we are today? The church is always composed of two groups: true and faithful believers and some who claim Christianity, but are not Christians. It is

because of this that I started using the terms “the professed church” and “the true church.” Mrs. White used these two phrases and a couple more multiple times in her writings:

- “professed people of God” over 150 times
- “His professed people” over 100 times
- “God’s professed people” over 100 times
- “the true church” nearly 45 times

Everyone who is a member of the true church makes a profession. In fact, you cannot be a member of the true church without making a profession. Jesus made that very clear (Matthew 10; Romans 12). However, those who make a profession, but fail to live the life of Christ are not part of the true church, but are of the synagogue of Satan, and to the human eye, the synagogue of Satan often appears to be more holy and more spiritual than the true church.

Historic Origins of the Synagogue of Satan in the Smyrna Church

Understanding the synagogue of Satan, its origin and destiny, is to understand how Christianity got from where it was in AD 80 or 90 to where it is today. How can we summarize what scholars have spent years trying to dig out and explain?

Hellenism is the culture, philosophy, religion of the Greeks that was dominant in the Near East after the conquest by Alexander the Great in the 4th century. The name comes from the Greek goddess Helen and the name Hellenist became a designation for the Greeks. Hellenistic philosophy was the product of the great pagan reformation in the 6th and 7th centuries BC, and spread throughout the Near East.

What does Hellenism have to do with Christianity? In the first century, Hellenistic philosophy was combined with Christianity, and this hybrid was called Gnostic Christianity. Gnosticism was a collection of teachings that essentially attributed Christian names to the basic principles of the pagan Hellenistic religion, thus giving these principles the appearance of Christianity. There were dozens of Gnostic sects, but the principal doctrines taught by the Gnostics are as follows:

Gnostic Principal Doctrines

- 1 They believed that man has a divine immortal soul. That belief was derived from Plato, a Greek philosopher.
- 2 They believed that this divine immortal soul originated in the heavens and is destined to return to the heavens after death.
- 3 Most Gnostic Christians passionately and totally rejected the Old Testament and Hebrew religion. They said the religion of the Old Testament is based on materialistic animal sacrifices, and is a false religion.
- 4 They considered the natural material world to be evil.
- 5 The Gnostics saw themselves as reformers, not of Judaism but of the New Testament church itself. They said that their teachings were a more advanced revelation of Christianity. Their focus was on the spiritual alone, not the material world. They relied especially on the writings of the apostle Paul because of his emphasis on inner spirituality.
For instance, they loved to read, “That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” Ephesians 3:16–19
- 6 They also believed in the theory of progressive revelation, saying that theirs was a more advanced revelation of the Christian faith. They taught that there was nothing intrinsically good or evil; it all depends on the situation. That leads to situation ethics.
This very same theory has been promoted in the Seventh-day Adventist church since the early 1980s. Almost all highly educated Adventists believe in situation ethics. They say they don’t believe in it, but put them in a tight spot and watch how they use situation ethics to reason it out.

Gnosticism developed several major strands going in different directions.

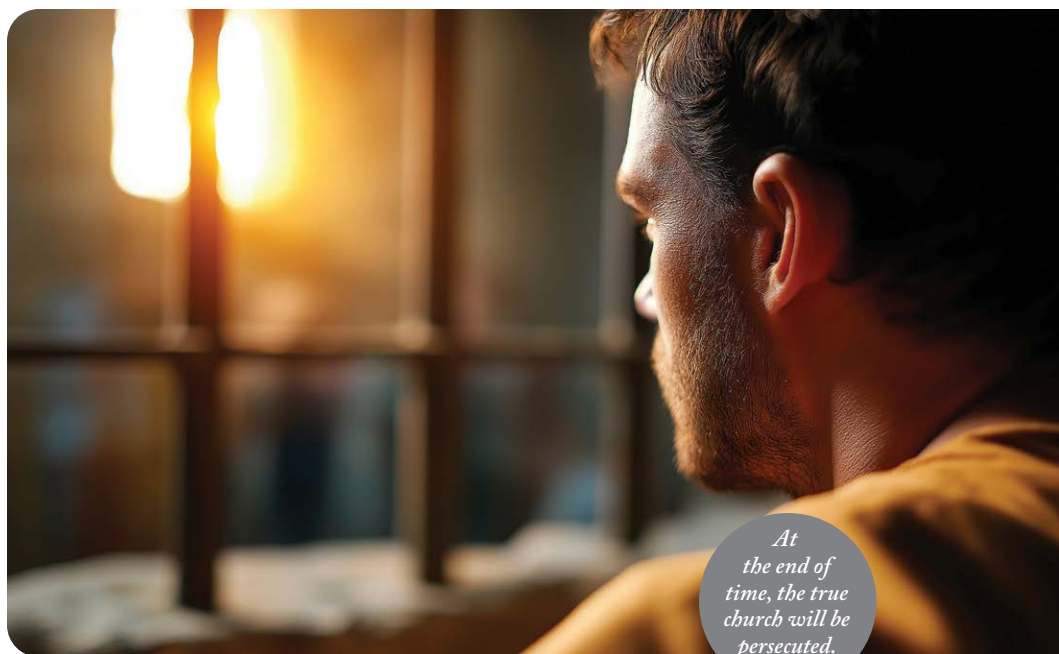
- They believed that morality was subjective.
- Some advanced the idea that it wasn't important to keep the law.
- Gnosticism infiltrated the Roman church in the 2nd and 3rd centuries.
- Gnostic Christianity pioneered the conversion from Sabbath to Sunday. Calling Sunday the eighth day, its worship symbolized for Gnostic Christians a rejection of the material world, its Creator God, and freedom from Old Testament bondage.

The Eighth Day

The Sabbath promotes both physical and spiritual rest, but the Hellenistic Gnostic rest was only spiritual, not material. Both Origen and Jerome believed that the epistle of Barnabas taught that Sundaykeeping was canonical. However, we know that Barnabas, Paul's companion, never wrote such a book.

Today, as in the early centuries after Christ, the distinction between the material and the spiritual was presented as a primary justification for discarding the Sabbath. The Sabbath, because of its attachment to Creation, was considered materialistic, inferior, and spiritually dangerous. Both Gnosticism and Hellenistic Christianity understood the eighth day to signify a breaking away from the Hebrew religion and the Old Testament. They said the material world was the first creation but the new covenant salvation is the second creation. They said, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17

They said that the first creation week was complete, but the second creation is an ongoing process, and has not yet ended. The seventh-day celebration is the end of the creation week of the material world, while the new creation



*At
the end of
time, the true
church will be
persecuted.*

is just beginning and honored best by celebrating Sunday, the day that Christ rose from the dead.

From the encyclical *Dies Domini* or the *Keeping the Lord's Day Holy* that was sent out to the world by Pope John Paul II in 1998, he states, "Sunday is not only the first day, it is also the 'eighth day' ... in a unique and transcendent position which evokes not only the beginning of time but also its end in 'the age to come.' ... Sunday symbolizes that truly singular day which will follow the present time, the day without end which will know neither evening nor morning. ... Sunday is the ceaseless foretelling of life without end which renews the hope of Christians." This Gnostic teaching was being promoted by the pope before AD 2000.

How Did They Know

In order to reveal who the Christians were and to get along with the Roman authorities, the Gnostics set up an altar in the center of town. On the altar, a fire continually burned, and next to the altar was a bowl of incense. All the population was required to throw just a pinch of incense into the fire and say, "Ceasar is Lord." A very quick and simple act

that, once done, ensured everything would be okay for you.

However, the primitive Christian could not say "Ceasar is Lord." Christ was and is the Christian's Lord, not Ceasar. This immediately identified them as Christian and they were removed from the town to be killed or imprisoned.

Herein Lies the Issue

Is it God's will that the Sabbath be used in Christian worship as it was by the apostolic church in the first century, or was it the divine will that it should be replaced with pagan Hellenistic symbolism and practices? For those who believe there is a God in heaven, the question is, What is the divine will? What does God say about this issue? The Gnostics had all kinds of arguments for substituting Sabbath for Sunday. They even accused Sabbathkeepers of idleness.

The Gnostic Christians in the church at Smyrna made their persecution much worse because they saw no problem with participating in the pagan religious customs of the day and in doing so they escaped much of the persecution by the Roman Empire.

“
*There will be among
 the people of the Lord
 such a revival of primitive
 godliness as has not been
 witnessed since apostolic
 times.*”

While the Gnostic suffered less because they compromised, primitive Christians, standing alone for right and refusing to participate in the pagan customs and worship of the day received worse persecution from the Roman Empire.

That brings us to a critical point directly related to who should control your conscience.

This has been a controversy in the Christian world for 2,000 years. The basic Roman Catholic position holds that the community of faith should control the conscience of the individual member; while the Protestant position holds that you should be in control of your own conscience and your thoughts and actions should be in accordance with your conscience. Should you be in control of your own conscience or should you allow your church to control your conscience?

This idea of the community of faith being in control of the individual conscience has been the cause of a great deal of persecution down through the years. Protestants in the Reform church in Europe banish Roman Catholics; the Roman Catholic countries banish Protestants. Why? Because the Gnostics promoted the idea of community control over individual conscience.

From the days of the church of Smyrna to near the end of the first century, the church was not the true church only, but simply the professed church. It doesn't matter if you are referring to the Roman Catholic church, the Protestant churches, or the various Adventist churches, all churches are a mixture of two groups—those who love God and keep His commandments to the best of their understanding, and those Jesus called the synagogue of Satan. The synagogue of Satan claims a more advanced Christianity, but they are not obedient. Only God's true believers are obedient.

If you are part of a church that engages in persecuting those who believe differently from you, there is no more sure sign and conclusive evidence that the spirit

of Satan prevails and you are part of the synagogue of Satan, regardless what you may call yourself.

“There can be no more conclusive evidence that we possess the spirit of Satan than the disposition to hurt and destroy those who do not appreciate our work, or act contrary to our ideas.” *The Desire of Ages*, 487

“The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed [the last church], which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.’ We can see from this scripture that it is not the true church of God who makes war with those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. It is the people who make void the law, who place themselves on the side of the dragon.” *The Signs of the Times*, April 22, 1889

Having these two groups in the church didn't create problems just for the church of Smyrna. In Revelation 3, the church of Philadelphia, which existed in the 18th and 19th centuries, is described as the faithful church. “Indeed, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews [claim to be part of the Philadelphia church but are actually of the synagogue of Satan] and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.” Verse 9

What Will Happen In The End?

A time is coming when all around the world, those who are church members but who are actually part of the synagogue of Satan will kneel down and worship before those who are true members of the church.

- Revelation 13 and the Spirit of Prophecy reveal that we will soon face the Sunday law crisis.
- The antichrist will come.
- The majority of professed Christians, including Adventists, will yield to the pressure of keeping Sunday. Rather than remaining faithful, they will try to “get along.”
- The professed Christians, those who give up worshipping on the Sabbath, will come



before God's people—now threatened with death—and will worship at their feet; but it will be too late for them to be saved.

The Bible tells us what will happen after these professed Christians decide to follow their professed Christ, actually the antichrist, when Jesus comes. "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, and they also who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him." Revelation 1:7

These professed Christians will mourn because they will now see that they are lost. They will know

- that they have been worshiping the antichrist, not the true Christ.
- that the ones they were determined to kill are the ones that God now has delivered.
- that they are facing eternal destruction.

"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matthew 24:30

At the end of time, the true church will be persecuted and those who do the persecuting will be those who profess to be a part of the true church, but who are actually members of the synagogue of Satan. Jesus says, I know their blasphemy and the time is coming when the people in My church who are actually part of the synagogue of Satan are going to come and worship before your feet, but it will be too late for them to be saved.

Prophecy Tells Us

The purpose of the prophecies in the Bible is to alert and prepare the people of God. God is telling us through these prophetic messages that for the world to come to an end, everyone in it will have the opportunity to see that God is fair and just; everyone will have to choose who they will obey. We know these things will happen:

- There will be an international Sunday law.
- The three angels' messages will be proclaimed throughout the world.
- The world will be deceived by the miracles performed by the antichrist.
- The entire world will be led to believe that the antichrist is the true Christ.

- There will be no neutral position. Everyone will be a member either of God's true church or of the synagogue of Satan (Revelation 13:8). Obedience or disobedience will be the only choices.

Friend, truth has been unpopular in this world for 6,000 years. God calls us to give the trumpet that certain sound—the sound that will awaken the spiritually-dead—offering them the opportunity of becoming a part of God's army in the last battle of the great controversy. Jesus says to each one of us, if you want to follow Me, then deny yourself, and, with humbleness of heart, take up your cross and follow Me. Now is the day of salvation.

The test is coming. We need to be ready. We have to develop faith and trust in the Lord. Look to those who prepared throughout their lives to meet this final question—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, Daniel, Joseph, David. The Lord did not forsake them. He will not forsake you. **LM**

Pastor John J. Grosboll is the Director of Steps to Life and pastors the Prairie Meadows Church in Wichita, Kansas. Contact: historic@stepstolife.org, phone: 316-788-5559.

August 30 – September 5, 2026

The Impending Conflict

Key Text

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17

Study Help: *The Great Controversy*, 582–592; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, 232–238

Introduction

“A refusal to obey the commandments of God, and a determination to cherish hatred against those who proclaim these commandments, leads to the most determined war on the part of the dragon, whose whole energies are brought to bear against the commandment-keeping people of God.” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, 117

Sunday

1 THE BASIC ISSUE IN THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

- 1.a. What has been Satan's purpose from the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven? How does God regard partial obedience to His law? James 2:10–12

Note: “From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator, and though he was cast out of heaven he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God's law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued. Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether, or by rejecting one of its precepts, the result will be ultimately the same. He that offends ‘in one point,’ manifests contempt for the whole law; his influence and example are on the side of transgression; he becomes ‘guilty of all.’ James 2:10.” *The Great Controversy*, 582

- 1.b. What will be the basic issue of the age-long controversy between good and evil? Revelation 12:17

Note: “The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition.” *The Great Controversy*, 582

Monday

2 THE POPULAR CHURCHES TODAY

- 2.a. How has Satan been able to win the professed Christian churches? Hosea 4:6; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4

Note: “Many ministers are teaching their people, and many professors and teachers are instructing their students, that the law of God has been changed or abrogated; and those who regard its requirements as still valid, to be literally obeyed, are thought to be deserving only of ridicule or contempt.

“In rejecting the truth, men reject its Author. In trampling upon the law of God, they deny the authority of the Law-giver. ...

“No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine, so rapidly gaining ground, that God's law is no longer binding upon men.” *The Great Controversy*, 583, 584

- 2.b. How does God regard the professed Christian churches of today—and why? Revelation 3:9

Note: “Satan has a large confederacy, his church. Christ calls them the synagogue of Satan because the members are the children of sin. The members of Satan’s church have been constantly working to cast off the divine law, and confuse the distinction between good and evil. Satan is working with great power in and through the children of disobedience to exalt treason and apostasy as truth and loyalty. And at this time the power of his satanic inspiration is moving the living agencies to carry out the great rebellion against God that commenced in heaven.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 16

Tuesday

3 A CAUSE-EFFECT RELATIONSHIP

- 3.a. What does history teach about the fearful consequence of rejecting God’s law? Jeremiah 6:19; Isaiah 59:2–8

Note: “Would we know the result of making void the law of God? The experiment has been tried. Terrible were the scenes enacted in France when atheism became the controlling power. It was then demonstrated to the world that to throw off the restraints which God has imposed is to accept the rule of the cruellest of tyrants. When the standard of righteousness is set aside, the way is open for the prince of evil to establish his power in the earth.

“Wherever the divine precepts are rejected, sin ceases to appear sinful or righteousness desirable. Those who refuse to submit to the government of God are wholly unfitted to govern themselves. Through their pernicious teachings the spirit of insubordination is implanted in the hearts of children and youth, who are naturally impatient of control; and a lawless, licentious state of society results.” *The Great Controversy*, 584

- 3.b. What cause-effect relationship can be seen in society where people are taught to disregard God’s law? Hosea 8:7; Isaiah 59: 11–15; Matthew 24:12
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Note: “Those who teach the people to regard lightly the commandments of God sow disobedience to reap disobedience. Let the restraint imposed by the divine law be wholly cast aside, and human laws would soon be disregarded. Because God forbids dishonest practices, coveting, lying, and defrauding, men are ready to trample upon His statutes as a hindrance to their worldly prosperity; but the results of banishing these precepts would be such as they do not anticipate. ... The civilized world would become a horde of robbers and assassins; and peace, rest, and happiness would be banished from the earth.” *The Great Controversy*, 585

Wednesday

4 THE PRESENT SITUATION

- 4.a. What is the main cause of the growing deterioration of society? Isaiah 24:4, 5
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Note: “Already the doctrine that men are released from obedience to God’s requirements has weakened the force of moral obligation and opened the floodgates of iniquity upon the world. Lawlessness, dissipation, and corruption are sweeping in upon us like an overwhelming tide. In the family, Satan is at work. His banner waves, even in professedly Christian households.” *The Great Controversy*, 585

4.b. How do professed Christian leaders misinterpret the real cause of the present world troubles? How do they imitate the Jewish leaders in the time of the apostles? Romans 2:17–24

Note: “The teachings of religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God’s holy law; and upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world.

“Yet this very class put forth the claim that the fast-spreading corruption is largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called ‘Christian Sabbath,’ and that the enforcement of Sunday observance would greatly improve the morals of society. This claim is especially urged in America, where the doctrine of the true Sabbath has been most widely preached.”
The Great Controversy, 587

Thursday

5 A TIME OF WOE

5.a. What prophesied woe is increasingly taking place in our world, and why? Revelation 12:12. What deception will Satan perpetuate as the cause of all this suffering?

Note: “In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. ...

“And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have pro-

voked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God’s commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity.”

The Great Controversy, 589, 590

5.b. What situation will those who honor God’s law have to face in the near future? Mark 13:9

Note: “Those who honor the Bible Sabbath will be denounced as enemies of law and order, as breaking down the moral restraints of society, causing anarchy and corruption, and calling down the judgments of God upon the earth. Their conscientious scruples will be pronounced obstinacy, stubbornness, and contempt of authority. They will be accused of disaffection toward the government. ...

“The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected.”
The Great Controversy, 592

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What important lesson does James 2:10–12 teach us?
2. What happens when professed believers reject God’s law?
3. Describe the state of society when God’s law is cast off.
4. How will religious leaders explain the world’s corruption?
5. What will trigger the enforcement of Sunday observance?

September 6 – 12, 2026

The Third Message Closed

Key Text

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”
Revelation 22:11

Study Help: *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, 98–105; *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, 183–199

Introduction

“The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above.”
The Great Controversy, 491

Sunday

1 CHARACTER CLEARLY REVEALED

1.a. In the final days of this world’s history, what is the attitude of those who are ready for the Lord’s coming? Luke 12:37, 42, 43

Note: “Because we know not the exact time of His coming, we are commanded to watch. ‘Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching.’ Luke 12:37. Those who watch for the Lord’s coming are not waiting in idle expectancy. The expectation of Christ’s coming is to make men fear the Lord, and fear His judgments upon transgression. It is to awaken them to the great sin of rejecting His offers of mercy. Those who are watching for the Lord are purifying their souls by obedience to the truth. With vigilant watching they combine earnest working. Because they know that the Lord is at the door, their zeal is quickened to cooperate with

the divine intelligences in working for the salvation of souls. These are the faithful and wise servants who give to the Lord’s household ‘their portion of meat in due season.’ Luke 12:42. They are declaring the truth that is now specially applicable.”
The Desire of Ages, 634

1.b. What is the attitude of those who profess to believe in Christ, but are not ready to meet Him? Matthew 24:48–51

Note: “The evil servant ... does not say that Christ will not come. He does not scoff at the idea of His second coming. But in his heart and by his actions and words he declares that the Lord’s coming is delayed. He banishes from the minds of others the conviction that the Lord is coming quickly. His influence leads men to presumptuous, careless delay.”
The Desire of Ages, 635

“That evil servant ... professed to be waiting for Christ. He was a ‘servant,’ outwardly devoted to the service of God while at heart he had yielded to Satan. He does not, like the scoffer, openly deny the truth, but reveals in his life the sentiment of the heart—that the Lord’s coming is delayed. Presumption renders him careless of eternal interests. He accepts the world’s maxims and conforms to its customs and practices. Selfishness, worldly pride, and ambitions predominate. Fearing that his brethren may stand higher than himself, he begins to disparage their efforts and impugn their motives. Thus, he smites his fellow servants. As he alienates himself from the people of God he unites more and more with the ungodly. He is found eating and drinking ‘with the drunken’—joining with worldlings and partaking of their spirit. Thus, he is lulled into a carnal security and overcome by forgetfulness, indifference, and sloth.” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, 101, 102

Monday

2 WHEN CHRIST CEASES HIS INTERCESSION

2.a. What does the Bible teach about the door of mercy not remaining open forever? Jeremiah 8:20

Note: “When the third angel’s message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received ‘the latter rain,’ ‘the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,’ and they are prepared for the trying hour before them.” *The Great Controversy*, 613

2.b. What announcement will be made in heaven when Jesus ceases His intercession? Revelation 22:11

Note: “An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received ‘the seal of the living God.’ Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, ‘It is done;’ and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.’ Revelation 22:11. Every case has been decided for life or death.” *The Great Controversy*, 613

Tuesday

3 WILL THERE BE A SECOND CHANCE?

3.a. What will then make the distinction between the two classes even more evident? Malachi 3:18

Note: “While the worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment—since this is the sign of His creative power and the witness to His claim upon man’s reverence and homage—the worshipers of the beast will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator’s memorial, to exalt the institution of Rome.” *The Great Controversy*, 446

3.b. What is taught by the parable of the tares and the parable of the net concerning these two classes of people? Matthew 13:30, 40–43, 47–50. Will the unconverted ones be given a second chance?

Note: “Both the parable of the tares and that of the net plainly teach that there is no time when all the wicked will turn to God. The wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest. The good and the bad fish are together drawn ashore for a final separation. “Again, these parables teach that there is to be no probation after the judgment. When the work of the gospel is completed, there immediately follows the separation between the good and the evil, and the destiny of each class is forever fixed.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 123

Wednesday

4 A GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT

4.a. Describe the disappointment of all half-hearted Christians who have neglected their preparation. Matthew 25:10–13; Luke 13:26, 27

Note: “Jesus has left us word: ‘Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.’ We are waiting and watching for the return of the Master, who is to bring the morning, lest coming suddenly He find us sleeping. What time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven to find a people asleep. No; but to His return from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, and when the mandate goes forth: ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.’” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, 190, 191

4.b. Why will all the excuses, and all the knocking and weeping, be in vain on that day? Matthew 22:11-14; Luke 13:28

Note: “When Jesus ceases to plead for man, the cases of all are forever decided. This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have neglected the preparation of purity and holiness, which fits them to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. Probation closes; Christ’s intercessions cease in heaven. This time finally comes suddenly upon all, and those who have neglected to purify their souls by obeying the truth are found sleeping. They became weary of waiting and watching; they became indifferent in regard to the coming of their Master. They longed not for His appearing, and thought there was no need of such continued, persevering watching. They had been disappointed in their expectations and might be again. They concluded that there was time enough yet to arouse. They would be sure not to lose the opportunity of securing an earthly treasure. It would be safe to get all of this world they could. And in securing this object, they lost all anxiety and interest in the appearing of the Master. They became indifferent and careless, as though His coming were yet in the distance. But while their interest was buried up in their worldly gains, the work closed in the heavenly sanctuary, and they were unprepared.” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, 191

Thursday

5 “COME, MY PEOPLE”

5.a. In spite of the fact that religious forms will still be practiced by a class of professed Christians—as if Christ were still mediating in the sanctuary—what will be evident to the faithful few? 1 Samuel 4:21, 22

Note: “When God’s presence was finally withdrawn from the Jewish nation, priests and people knew it not. Though under the control of Satan, and swayed by the most horrible and malignant passions, they still regarded themselves as the chosen of God. The ministration in the temple continued; sacrifices were offered upon its polluted altars, and daily the divine blessing was invoked upon a people guilty of the blood of God’s dear Son and seeking to slay His ministers and apostles. So, when the irrevocable decision of the sanctuary has been pronounced and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitants of the earth will know it not. The forms of religion will be continued by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn; and the satanic zeal with which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, will bear the semblance of zeal for God.” *The Great Controversy*, 615

5.b. What promises will be very precious to the faithful remnant at that time? Malachi 3:17; Psalm 27:5; Isaiah 26:20

Note: “The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity.” *The Great Controversy*, 634

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In light of Christ’s soon coming, what must our attitude reflect?
2. Give biblical evidence that probation will close.
3. What contrast will be seen between the two classes of worshipers?
4. Why will many who now profess Christ ultimately be unprepared?
5. What promises will be precious to the faithful in the last days?

September 13 – 19, 2026

The Time of Trouble

Key Text

“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.”
Jeremiah 30:7

Study Help: *Early Writings*, 279–285; *The Great Controversy*, 613–634

Introduction

“Those who have mocked at the idea of the saints’ going up will witness the care of God for His people and behold their glorious deliverance.” *Early Writings*, 284

Sunday

1 WHEN PROBATION CLOSES

1.a. When the door of probation closes and our great High Priest stands up, what will come upon the whole world? Zephaniah 1:14, 15; Daniel 12:1, *first part*

Note: “When He [Christ] leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God’s long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old.”
The Great Controversy, 614

1.b. Despite the abundance of churches and preachers that will still be available, what will many people start seeking—but in vain? Why? Amos 8:11, 12

Note: “Those who had not prized God’s word were hurrying to and fro, wandering from sea to sea, and from the north to the east, to seek the word of the Lord. Said the angel, ‘They shall not find it. There is a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the Lord. What would they not give for one word of approval from God! but no, they must hunger and thirst on. Day after day have they slighted salvation, prizing earthly riches and earthly pleasure higher than any heavenly treasure or inducement. They have rejected Jesus and despised His saints. The filthy must remain filthy forever.’” *Early Writings*, 281, 282

Monday

2 PRECIOUS PROMISES

2.a. What trials must God’s people yet endure before they are delivered? What promise is for that time? Jeremiah 30:7, 10; Daniel 12:1, *last part*

Note: “When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people. This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict with the powers of earth that are marshaled by the dragon host, make God their defense. The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death. May God help His people now, for what can they then do in such a fearful conflict without His assistance!” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, 213

2.b. While there will be famine in many places, how does the Lord promise to supply our temporal needs?
Isaiah 33:16

Note: “The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation and suffer for want of food they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head will care for them, and in time of famine they shall be satisfied. While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous and supply their wants.” *The Great Controversy*, 629

Tuesday

3 “HIS STRANGE WORK”

3.a. How will God show that the time has come for Him to stop the growing torrent of iniquity that will be sweeping over the earth? Isaiah 28:21

Note: “Through every century of this world’s history, evil workers have been treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath; and when the time fully comes that iniquity shall have reached the stated boundary of God’s mercy, His forbearance will cease. When the accumulated figures in heaven’s record books shall mark the sum of transgression complete, wrath will come, unmixed with mercy, and then it will be seen what a tremendous thing it is to have worn out the divine patience. This crisis will be reached when the nations shall unite in making void God’s law.

“The days will come when the righteous will be stirred to zeal for God because of the abounding iniquity. None but divine power can stay the arrogance of Satan united with evil men.” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, 524

3.b. When the Lord sends His punishment upon the world, what promise will strengthen the confidence of His people? Psalms 46:1-3, 7; 91:1-11

Note: “To human sight it will appear that the people of God must soon seal their testimony with their blood as did the martyrs before them. They themselves begin to fear that the Lord has left them to fall by the hand of their enemies. It is a time of fearful agony. Day and night, they cry unto God for deliverance. . . .

“Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ’s patience.” *The Great Controversy*, 630

Wednesday

4 THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES

4.a. How will God punish the inhabitants of the earth? Jeremiah 7 10:10; Revelation 15:1

Note: “The fearful threatenings of the third angel are to be realized, and all the wicked are to drink of the wrath of God.” *Early Writings*, 274

“When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (Revelation 14:9, 10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God’s people. Says the revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: ‘There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image.’ The sea ‘became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.’ And ‘the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood.’ Terrible as these inflictions are, God’s justice stands fully vindicated.” *The Great Controversy*, 627, 628

4.b. In what sense will the seven last plagues be the severest punishment ever suffered by mortals? Revelation 16:1 (compare Revelation 14:10).

Note: “These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy.” *The Great Controversy*, 628, 629

Thursday

5 GOD’S PEOPLE DELIVERED

5.a. Whom will the wicked blame for the plagues, and what measures will the clergy of the popular churches recommend “to stop the calamities”? Matthew 24:9, 10

Note: “The decree that will finally go forth against the remnant people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews. Today the enemies of the true church see in the little company keeping the Sabbath commandment, a Mor-decai at the gate. The reverence of God’s people for His law is a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling on His Sabbath.” *Prophets and Kings*, 605
 “[The] plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob’s trouble. Then all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the voice of God. The 144,000 triumphed.” *Early Writings*, 36, 37

5.b. When and how will God manifest His power to deliver His people? Isaiah 30:27–30; Hebrews 12:26; Revelation 16:17, 18

Note: “When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof.

“The people of God—some in prison cells, some hidden in solitary retreats in the forests and the mountains—still plead for divine protection, while in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen.” *The Great Controversy*, 635

“There was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, shaking the heavens and the earth.” *Early Writings*, 285

“The wicked looked upon the scene with amazement, while the saints beheld with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance.” *Ibid.*

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is the time of trouble called as such? What happens?
2. What comfort is offered to God’s people during this dreadful time?
3. Name some scriptural texts to be learned now for strength then.
4. What happens when God’s mercy is finally withdrawn from the earth?
5. Where will God’s people be and what assurance will be theirs in that fearful day?

September 20 – 26, 2026

Christ's Second Coming

Key Text

“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:3

Study Help: *The Desire of Ages*, 631–634; *The Great Controversy*, 640–652

Introduction

“The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers.” *The Great Controversy*, 302

Sunday

1 THE CONSUMMATION OF OUR HOPE

1.a. What event has been anticipated by faithful souls throughout all ages? Titus 2:13; Jude 14, 15

Note: “One of the most solemn and yet most glorious truths revealed in the Bible is that of Christ’s second coming to complete the great work of redemption. To God’s pilgrim people, so long left to sojourn in ‘the region and shadow of death,’ a precious, joy-inspiring hope is given in the promise of His appearing, who is ‘the resurrection and the life,’ to bring ‘home again His banished.’ The doctrine of the second advent is the very keynote of the sacred Scriptures. From the day when the first pair turned their sorrowing steps from Eden, the children of faith have waited the coming of the Promised One to break the destroyer’s power and bring them again to the lost Paradise. Holy men of old looked forward to the advent of the Messiah in glory, as the consummation of their hope.” *The Great Controversy*, 299

1.b. With what promise did Christ comfort the disciples shortly before His ascension? John 14:1–3; Mark 14:62. How did two angels confirm Christ’s promise? Acts 1:9–11

Note: “Christ had ascended to heaven in the form of humanity. The disciples had beheld the cloud receive Him. The same Jesus who had walked and talked and prayed with them; who had broken bread with them; who had been with them in their boats on the lake; and who had that very day toiled with them up the ascent of Olivet—the same Jesus had now gone to share His Father’s throne. And the angels had assured them that the very One whom they had seen go up into heaven, would come again even as He had ascended.” *The Desire of Ages*, 832

Monday

2 THE MANNER OF HIS COMING

2.a. How did Christ explain the literal manner of His coming—a manner that Satan will not be able to counterfeit? Matthew 24:27, 30, 23, 26

Note: “Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ’s advent. The Saviour has warned His people against deception upon this point, and has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming. ‘There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. . . . Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.’ Matthew 24:24–27, 31; 25:31; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This coming there is no possibility of counterfeiting. It will be universally known—witnessed by the whole world.” *The Great Controversy*, 625

2.b. Besides declaring that the second coming of Christ will be visible, literal, and personal, what else does the Bible teach? Mark 13:26; Revelation 1:7

Note: “Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels, the beautiful and triumphant sons of God, possessing surpassing loveliness and glory, will escort Him [Christ] on His way. Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. Then every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him. In the place of a crown of thorns, He will wear a crown of glory—a crown within a crown.” *The Desire of Ages*, 739

Tuesday

3 GOD THE FATHER SPEAKS

3.a. What special event takes place prior to the coming of Christ? Revelation 16:17, *last part*, 18; Daniel 12:2. Who are the risen ones at this special resurrection? Revelation 1:7; 14:12, 13

Note: “In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying: ‘It is done.’ Revelation 16:17.

“That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, ‘such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.’...

“Graves are opened, and ‘many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth ... awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.’ Daniel 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel’s message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God’s covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. ‘They also which pierced Him’ (Revelation 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ’s dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient.” *The Great Controversy*, 636, 637

3.b. What long-hidden secret will be revealed after this special resurrection? Matthew 24:36

Note: “Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus’ coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake.” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, 59

“The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus’ coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. ... Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man’s hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man.” *The Great Controversy*, 640

Wednesday

4 THE SON OF GOD SPEAKS

4.a. What prophetic words will be fulfilled at the voice of the Son of God? John 5:25; 6:40; Revelation 20:6

Note: “Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven, He cries: ‘Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!’ Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live. And the whole earth shall ring with the tread of the exceeding great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.” *The Great Controversy*, 644

4.b. Who among the dead will resurrect at the voice of Jesus? 1 Thessalonians 4:16



The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers.

Note: “The Life-giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour, when the last trump shall sound and the vast army shall come forth to eternal victory, every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 271

“All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam, who stands among the risen throng, is of lofty height and majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations; in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race. But all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth.” *The Great Controversy*, 644

Thursday

5 SAVED FOREVER

- 5.a. Where did John the Revelator see the “144,000 in number” as well as the “great multitude”? Revelation 7:4, 9. Why are they entitled to be there? Verses 14–17. What mystery will then become clear?

Note: “The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries. In the light that streams from Calvary the attributes of God which had filled us with fear and awe appear beautiful and attractive. Mercy, tenderness, and parental love are seen to blend with holiness, justice, and power. While we behold the majesty of His throne, high and lifted up, we see His character

in its gracious manifestations, and comprehend, as never before, the significance of that endearing title, ‘Our Father.’” *The Great Controversy*, 652

- 5.b. What will be the song of the redeemed for endless ages? Revelation 5:12, 13; 15:3, 4

Note: “As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in His countenance; as they behold His throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that His kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in rapturous song: ‘Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His own most precious blood!’” *The Great Controversy*, 651, 652

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Since when has Christ’s advent been the great hope of believers?
2. Depict the manner of Christ’s return.
3. Who will be risen at the voice of God?
4. Who will be risen at the voice of Jesus?
5. What will then become clear through the mystery of the cross.

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Spinach

Along with beetroot, Swiss chard, and quinoa, spinach belongs to the *Amaranthaceae* family. Foods in this family have been shown to be helpful in protecting the central nervous system, reducing inflammation and delaying the aging process by protecting cells against damage from free radicals.

Spinach originated in ancient Persia but spread to China as a gift from the king of Nepal in the 7th century. In the 11th century, spinach was introduced to Europe.

Dishes made with spinach are often called 'Florentine' dating back to 1533, when the queen of France, who was born in Florence, insisted that spinach be served with every meal. The Spanish eventually brought it to the Americas.

Having a Nutrivore Score of 4548, spinach is one of the most nutrient-dense foods available. It is packed with nutrients for bone health such as vitamin K, magnesium, calcium, and manganese, as well as heart-healthy nutrients such as folate, potassium, and vitamin B6. Not only does it protect the heart and bones, it also provides the body with iron, vitamins A, B2, C, E, fiber, protein, copper, and zinc, and is a great source of antioxidant and anti-inflammatory nutrients.

Spinach is a versatile green that is delicious steamed or sautéed, in salads, soups and stews, quiches, smoothies, dips, and as a creamed side dish.

Source: www.avogel.ca/en/food/ingredients/spinach/https://www.foodliteracycenter.org/broccoli-beet-year/spinach-green-wonder



Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



GARLICKY CREAMED SPINACH

Ingredients

1/2 cup raw cashews
1 cup water
1 tsp. white or chickpea miso paste
1/2 Tbs. nutritional yeast
1 Tbs. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. sea salt
2 Tbs. vegan butter or olive oil
5 cloves (3 Tbs.) garlic, peeled and minced
1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes, optional
16-20 oz. fresh baby spinach

Process

In a blender, blend together the cashews, water, miso paste, nutritional yeast, lemon juice, and salt until completely smooth. It will be liquidy. To a pan, add the vegan butter or olive oil, garlic, and red pepper flakes, if desired, and bring to low-medium heat. Sauté until garlic is fragrant, about 1-2 minutes. Add the spinach, a few handfuls at a time, stirring as it wilts, adding more until all spinach is used and wilted. Add the cashew cream sauce and bring to a simmer. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until the sauce has thickened and the spinach is very tender, about 5 minutes. Adjust lemon juice and salt to taste. Serve warm, garnished with crispy onions or shallots. Delicious served with mashed potatoes and a nut loaf. **LM**





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<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/benefits-of-spinach>

