

DAYBREAK SERIES



April-June 1981

# Adult Sabbath School Lessons

## The Church— Home at Last



# Who's Who in VBS



About 100 children attended this Vacation Bible School in New Zealand.

The objective of the Vacation Bible School is to bring the gospel to boys and girls in a way that is both attractive and instructional. Furthermore, it is to awaken an interest in the parents toward the plan of salvation. "Parents who can be reached in no other way are frequently reached through their children."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 114.

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- Manuals
- VBS handbooks
- Crafts
- Posters
- Banners, balloons, etc.

"The soul of a little child that believes in Christ is as precious to His sight as are the angels about His throne."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 591.





# THE *Seventh-day Adventist Church*

Headquarters

800 Thomson Road  
Singapore

Dear Sabbath School Members Around The World:

A wonderful bond of fellowship and strength comes by being members of the Sabbath School. Through this heaven-ordained institution, a weekly view of the world church membership, busily engaged in sharing the good news of salvation in Christ, is acquired. Sabbath School provides a grand opportunity to support the world church program through personal gifts of love.

Your Thirteenth Sabbath Special Projects Offering designated for the Far Eastern Division this quarter, will strengthen three specific areas of tremendous need.

Mt. Klabat Girls' Dormitory - Mt. Klabat College is located in a magnificent tropical setting in the eastern part of Indonesia, near the city of Manado. Students there receive a thorough Adventist education, which includes work experience. Many key church leaders, both lay and ministerial, have been trained at this school. However, dormitory space is at a premium. A new girls' dormitory is desperately needed to replace the present, very inadequate, temporary housing facility.

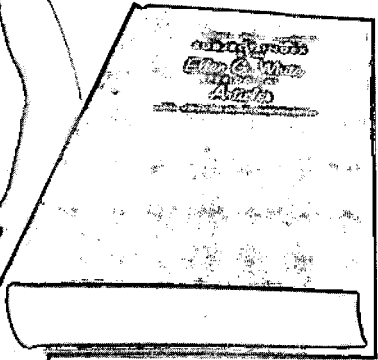
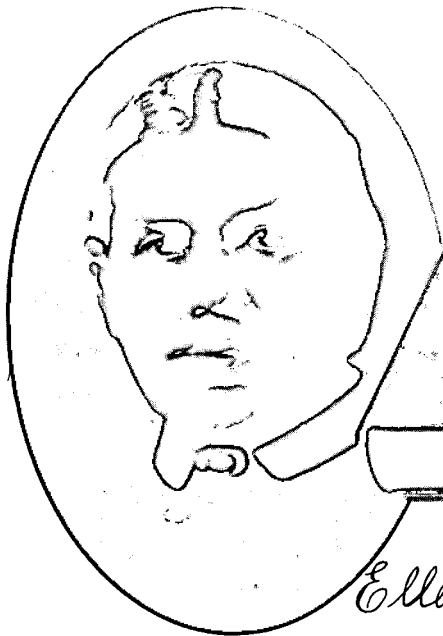
Central Philippine Union College - With two colleges in the Philippines filled to overflowing, a third college is urgently needed. A beautiful location has already been selected and land has been purchased. It is planned that this school will be in full operation soon after the special projects offering is received. Students have been refused entrance into the colleges because of lack of space. This new school provides an answer.

Philippine Barrio Chapels - In a country where the church membership is growing very rapidly, there is an immediate need for additional churches and chapels. A new national highway has been built from the northern part of the Philippines to the south. It is planned that along this highway a new Seventh-day Adventist Church will be erected in most of the small towns and village barrios. The members are anxious to assist with the buildings but they need the help of our church members around the world to provide these church homes.

Thank you for asking the Lord to bless this building program. Could you personally visit the projects you have supported in the past from your generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offerings, I know you would rejoice to see the results. Please join with me, June 27, in taking advantage of another great opportunity to give for the glorious advancement of God's ever-expanding church.

Sincerely,

Don F. Gilbert  
Treasurer  
FAR EASTERN DIVISION



*Ellen G. White*

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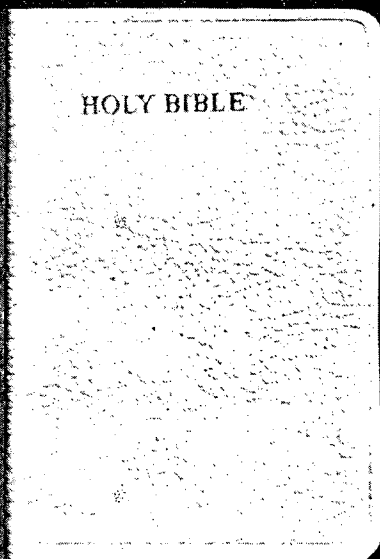
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# **BEFORE**

**all  
else  
fails,  
read  
the**



# **instructions**

So often we fail because we try to solve our problems in our own way.

When we trust in God and study His Word daily, we can be confident of victory over the perplexities of this world and have a home in the life to come.

# THE CHURCH—HOME AT LAST

## Introduction

The establishment and triumph of the church—when she will be “home at last”—is linked directly with the coming of Christ in history and is foretold in prophecy.

In history Christ established the church to be His mouthpiece to the world both in Old and New Testament times. Originally Christ would visit Eden to communicate with the human family. Sin put an end to this face-to-face communication between God and man. In the intervening years, the law and the prophets became God’s medium of expression.

Nearly 4000 years passed as the world inched closer to the first coming of Jesus. Angels would make the glad announcement. God in Christ would once more commune with man face-to-face. This would neither abolish the law nor negate the prophets. They would continue as instruments of instruction, but would yield to the glory of the law’s Author and the prophets’ Mentor. Men would for 33 brief years be brought face-to-face with the substance of the messages of the law and prophets. The latter were and are in a sense substitute teachers. They are but a pale reflection of the real. Jesus Christ is the key to both history and prophecy. Compared to Him, the law and the prophets were but satellites about the sun.

When Christ ascended on high, the Holy Spirit assumed the primary teaching function for the church and the world (John 16:13). The church is His medium of personal communication. The church may involve herself in many things, but she can best serve her Master when she is preaching the gospel.

It is the carrying out of this divine commission that brings the church under fire. Satan hates the gospel, by whose knowledge men are saved. The church is the one institution that stands between Satan and his complete takeover of this planet. His plan therefore calls for its destruction.

The pages of history are red with the blood of Christian martyrs. Christians were used as flaming torches at the fun games of the Circus Maximus. But the “blood of martyrs is the seed of the church.” The sword did not succeed.

But Satan would subvert what he could not *execute*. He entered church councils, perverted church doctrines, and in many instances produced a love of ease and lack of fervor.

Demons love nothing better than to mute the voice of Christian witness. If God can’t be heard, He can more easily be misrepresented. Men must be told of the love of God. They must be taught the Bible way of life. Christians must understand why God must destroy sinners. The church must carry to a hopeless world a message of hope. The gospel is essential to the enrichment of life *here* and *hereafter*. Men must know this *now*, for the end is *near*. The devil knew 1900 years ago that he had but a “short time.” He is working day and night to abort the church’s mission by confusing her priorities and watering down her message. But in all of this he is doomed to failure. The power of God *will anoint the church*. She will arise as a giant, stirring from slumber; and she will finish her God-given task. The world will be made aware of the love of God. The prophecies will be fulfilled. The gates of hell will not prevail!

**Part 1  
MEETING  
MAN'S NEED**

**How does God early reveal His deep interest in man's welfare, an interest supremely manifested in the incarnation?**

**"The Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18).**

"God made from the man a woman, to be a companion and helpmeet for him, to be one with him, to cheer, encourage, and bless him, he in his turn to be her strong helper. All who enter into matrimonial relations with a holy purpose—the husband to obtain the pure affections of a woman's heart, the wife to soften and improve her husband's character and give it completeness—fulfill God's purpose for them."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 99.

**In anticipation of man's greater need, what agreement to send Jesus was made before the Creation? Note the implication in Revelation 13:8.**

"God and Christ knew from the beginning, of the apostasy of Satan and of the fall of Adam through the deceptive power of the apostate."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 250.

"Before the foundations of the world were laid, Christ, the Only Begotten of God, pledged Himself to become the Redeemer of the human race, should Adam sin. Adam fell, and He who was partaker of the Father's glory before the world was, laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and stepped down from His high authority to become a Babe in Bethlehem, that by passing over the ground where Adam stumbled and fell, He might redeem fallen human beings."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 226.

**When he was created, did man have any inherent or built-in liabilities? Gen. 1:31; Ps. 8:4, 5.**

"This sinless pair wore no artificial garments. They were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. While they lived in obedience to God, this circle of light enshrouded them. Although everything God had made was in the perfection of beauty, and there seemed nothing wanting upon the earth which God had created to make Adam and Eve happy, yet he manifested his great love to them by planting a garden especially for them."—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 34.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Can God's precious provisions for man's needs, before and after his sin, lead me to trust Him for my special needs?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 545; vol. 4, p. 264; *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 97; *Education*, p. 28.



**Part 2  
FREEDOM  
OF CHOICE**

**With what power was man invested that especially reveals the wisdom and love of God?**

**"If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . ; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).**

**In what way did the rich young ruler illustrate later the tragic misuse of this great gift of God to man? Luke 18:18-24.**

"Christ's words were verily to the ruler the invitation, 'Choose you this day whom ye will serve.' Joshua 24:15. The choice was left with him. Jesus was yearning for his conversion."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 520.

**How did man abuse this God-given power? Gen. 3:6.**

"Adam regretted that Eve had left his side, but now the deed was done. He must be separated from her whose society he had loved so well. How could he have it thus. His love for Eve was strong. And in utter discouragement he resolved to share her fate. He seized the fruit and quickly ate it, and like Eve felt not immediately its ill effects. Adam disobeyed and fell."—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 42.

There was no reason for mankind to sin against God. There is none today. Sin was and is contrary to reason. It is a deviation, an abnormality. To explain it is to justify it. This much is sure: by a free exercise of his will, Adam elected to disregard the will of God and thus plunged the human family into misery and woe. There was nothing in Adam's nature or the Edenic environment to induce man to sin.

The first misuse of the power of choice was entered upon gradually, little step by little step. "Eve's curiosity was aroused. Instead of fleeing from the spot, she listened to hear a serpent talk. It did not occur to her mind that it might be that fallen foe, using the serpent as a medium. It was Satan that spoke, not the serpent. Eve was beguiled, flattered, infatuated. Had she met a commanding personage, possessing a form like the angels and resembling them, she would have been upon her guard. . . . But she entered into a controversy with the serpent."—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 33.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**In how many experiences of life do I, like Eve, attempt to argue with my conscience rather than to accept that the Holy Spirit may be trying to impress me with God's will?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, "Not Judging, But Doing," p. 142; *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 498; *My Life Today*, p. 110.

**Part 3  
THE BURDEN  
OF DISOBEDIENCE**

**What were the basic, crucial consequences of man's first disobedience to God?**

**"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12).**

"Through man's disobedience, death entered the world. Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the fruit of which he had been forbidden to touch. His transgression opened the floodgates of woe upon our race."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 988.

**What is the way of escape from the fate that awaits all who sin? Rom. 6:23. (Compare Rom. 8:1; 10:1-6.)**

"By this law, which governs angels, which demands purity in the most secret thoughts, desires, and dispositions, and which shall 'stand fast for ever' (Ps. 111:8), all the world is to be judged in the rapidly approaching day of God. Transgressors may flatter themselves that the Most High does not know, that the Almighty does not consider; He will not always bear with them. Soon they will receive the reward of their doings, the death that is the wages of sin; while the righteous nation, that have kept the law, will be ushered through the pearly gates of the celestial city, and will be crowned with immortal life and joy in the presence of God and the Lamb."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 220.

The human heart recoils at the thought of judgment, condemnation, punishment. Some would strip the gospel of this aspect of God's character. They cannot understand how a loving God could destroy sinners in a lake of fire. They cannot understand the nature of sin. Sin is by its very nature divisive. It separates man from God. If it continued to exist, might it not ultimately unseat divine authority. Jehovah will allow neither. Sin must be blotted from this planet. Anything that separates God from man is a violation of His love. This He cannot allow. "Christ must be Lord of all if He is to be Lord at all." Hellfire is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). It will involve people only as they choose to be sinners.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Have I come to the place in my Christian experience where I would rather die than sin? (See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 53; *Messages to Young People*, p. 74.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 61; *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 365; vol. 4, p. 293; *The Sanctified Life*, p. 67; *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 234.

**Part 4  
SAVIOUR  
FROM SIN**

**For what supreme purpose was Jesus born into our world?**

**"She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).**

"Christ gave Himself, an atoning sacrifice, for the saving of a lost world. He was treated as we deserve, in order that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. 'With His stripes we are healed.' Isaiah 53:5."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 208, 209.

**What would His life and death accomplish? Heb. 10:12. (Compare Rom. 5:9, 10.)**

"This was He whom seers had long foretold. He was the Desire of all nations, the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star. The name of that helpless little babe, inscribed in the roll of Israel, declaring Him our brother, was the hope of fallen humanity."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 52.

The coming of Christ to this world was to accomplish many purposes. Can you add to the following?

1. He was to reveal the true character of God, distorted by Satan's warpings of truth.
2. He was to live without yielding to temptation, though tempted as we are.
3. He was to suffer the "second death," as though an unredeemed sinner.
4. He was to rise from the dead, victorious over sin, death, and the devil.
5. He earned the right to become our mediating High Priest.

Man needs to know his possibilities and limitations. Christ came to demonstrate in the flesh that Adam need never have sinned. In Him there was no sinful propensity, yet He "was in all points tempted like as we are" (Heb. 4:15). Christ succeeded where Adam failed, and He did it for Adam and for us!

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Have I accepted fully and personally Christ's atonement for my sins?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Counsels on Health*, p. 222; *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 121; vol. 8, p. 202; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 52; *Christ's Object Lessons*, "The Pearl," p. 116.

Part 5  
BRUISING THE  
SERPENT'S  
HEAD

**How was Satan affected by the death of Christ on the cross?**

“I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15).

“Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:31, 32).

**What evidence does Paul record that Christ rose from the dead? 1 Cor. 15:5-8.**

“Why, Paul reasoned, should it seem incredible that Christ should rise from the dead? Once it had thus seemed to him, but how could he disbelieve that which he himself had seen and heard? At the gate of Damascus he had verily looked upon the crucified and risen Christ, the same who had walked the streets of Jerusalem, died on Calvary, broken the bands of death, and ascended to heaven. As verily as had Cephas, James, John, or any others of the disciples, he had seen and talked with Him. The Voice had bidden him proclaim the gospel of a risen Saviour, and how could he disobey?”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 436, 437.

It is interesting to note how the resurrection affected Christ's enemies and His friends. Satan's last hope of containing Christ was that He remain sealed in the tomb. The resurrection filled demons with dread. By it Satan knew that his doom was sealed. The priests lived in constant dread of meeting Christ on the street. “Nevermore would peaceful sleep come to their pillows.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 785. But for His disciples the resurrection was their own rebirth. They had seen Him crucified. They had fled for their own lives. When finally they believed the news of His resurrection when it reached them, and Jesus and the Holy Spirit ministered to them, evangelistic fires were rekindled and the disciples were never the same again. Serving the Living God makes all of the difference in the world.

Without the resurrection of Jesus the “good news” would be incomplete and ineffective. We might be making pilgrimages to the tomb of Christ, but we could have no hope of eternal life; for the devil would have held our Lord in his prison house of death. We would have no heavenly Intercessor and no hope of a returning Lord to complete the eradication of sin from the universe.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Is the true meaning of Christ's resurrection from the dead and all that it implies as real to me as it was to the twelve disciples?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, p. 208; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 818; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 320, 436.

Part 6  
THE  
ASCENDING  
LORD

**How long and for what purpose did Christ linger here on earth after His resurrection?**

**“To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”**

**“When he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight” (Acts 1:3, 9).**

After He rose from the grave, Christ ascended on high and received His Father's blessing. He then returned to the earth and was seen of men for 40 days in spite of man's treatment of Him. It would seem that man's malice and disloyalty would have checked any desire on His part to associate with man. But love is different. Christ was not turned off by rejection. For 40 days He lingered near the familiar haunts, almost as if He were reluctant to depart. But the important work for man awaiting Him in the heavenly temple called for Him to leave.

**By what process of the mind could you measure the impact of Christ's promised return on the disciples—before and after the cross? What is the impact on us? John 14:1-3.**

Psalm 115:16 says, “The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” In the New Jerusalem is the throne of God. The earth was created as man's habitation. When Christ left the earth, He said, “I go to prepare a place for you.” The true meaning of this promise is this: “I go to establish your right to be where I am.” This world is scheduled for destruction by fire. The saints will need to leave this world for a place of safety. The New Jerusalem is that place of safety. The mediatorial work of Christ secures access for the saints to the Holy City.

Having completed this vital work of grace, Christ will return to the earth, as He says, “and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:3). Lovers cannot long remain apart. Christ will come for His beloved. When He leaves the most holy place of the sanctuary in heaven, urgent preparations will be made for His return. The time for these events is near at hand. Now is the hour of preparation for the saints. Now is the day of salvation.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Am I ready, right now, if my name is presently being considered in heaven's investigative judgment? (See 2 Cor. 6:2 and *The Great Controversy*, pp. 421, 422.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 535; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 790, 829.



## 2. Then Jesus Came

**“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Gen. 49:10).**

Jehovah was under no obligation, legal or otherwise, to save guilty humans. Had He chosen to blot out the first guilty pair, justice would have been content. But to do this would have violated something basic in God's character. His nature, His character is love, and this alone spared man. To have cleared the guilty without providing a substitute would have undercut the validity of law. From our viewpoint, we can now say, To save humans, God, the Creator, must become a human, accept all human guilt, and demonstrate that the will of God may be perfectly done in human flesh under conditions most extreme. For his part, the man must accept by faith the sacrifice of Christ for his sins and freely submit to the disciplines of the divine law of love as evidence of his salvation.

In a special sense, mankind was made in the image of God. He is unique in his creation among all other created beings. God would not take lightly the loss of an entire class of created beings. That He would sacrifice Himself for one sinner provides an estimate of His love.

In this act of God's love He was threatened with a loss that could have been eternal. The risk was real.

This was no passion play. This was the *real thing*. Christ—God with us—put His throne on the line. He could have lost it. He could have failed. To our limited understanding, He could at least have been barred from the throne room of God forever!

This fact alone makes His first advent meaningful to man. It gives evidence of His love. So for 33 years God would tabernacle with man as a man. He would fight temptation with the same weapons that are available to us. He would demonstrate in His life that God's law can be obeyed by born-again man. And by His death He would certify that His law cannot be changed. He would meet the enemy in the wilderness and three times turn him back. He would challenge Satan at Gergesa and put him to flight in a herd of swine. He would die as a criminal but rise as a King, and some 2000 years after His ascension men would exclaim in ecstasy, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Luke 13:35).

### DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Promised One**  
(Isa. 9:6)
2. **No Room**  
(Luke 2:7)
3. **Peace to Men**  
(Luke 2:9, 13, 14)
4. **Saved to Save**  
(Matt. 2:16)
5. **His Blood Awaits**  
(Gal. 2:20)
6. **Newness of Life**  
(Rom. 6:3, 4)

**Part 1**  
**THE**  
**PROMISED**  
**ONE**

**What are some of the Old Testament predictions of the first advent besides the following?**

**"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). (See also Gen. 49:10; Isa. 53:3-5.)**

"To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.' God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the 'Son of man' who shares the throne of the universe. It is the 'Son of man' whose name shall be called, 'Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.' Isa. 9:6."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

**In bringing the Promised One into the human family, what puzzling message did the Lord send with an angel to Mary? Luke 1:35.**

"Christ brought men and women power to overcome. He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature. In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 226, 227.

**When Joseph decided to be kind to Mary in her embarrassing condition, how did Heaven step in to help? Matt. 1:19, 20.**

Joseph was puzzled by Mary's pregnancy. He decided that his planned marriage was all a mistake. Out of consideration for Mary he would put her away privately.

He did not then understand the high honor that was his. He had been chosen to oversee the birth and early training of the Son of God. The angel warned him not to put her away. To his everlasting credit, he obeyed the Lord.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Am I like Joseph, always immediately obedient to the will of the Lord as revealed to me through the promptings of the Holy Spirit, even when I cannot understand all the reasons for it? (See Heb. 4:7, last part.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 114, 115, 1113, 1126, 1127.



**Part 2**  
**NO ROOM****What reception did Joseph and Mary get at the inn?****"There was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7).**

"With amazement the heavenly messengers beheld the indifference of that people whom God had called to communicate to the world the light of sacred truth. . . . The priests and teachers of the nation knew not that the greatest event of the ages was about to take place. They rehearsed their meaningless prayers, and performed the rites of worship to be seen by men, but in their strife for riches and worldly honor they were not prepared for the revelation of the Messiah."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 44.

All hotels at Bethlehem were crowded when Joseph and Mary sought lodging. They were turned away. Had the innkeepers known the true identity of the Babe that Mary carried, would they not have made room? All Israel looked forward to the birth of the Messiah. The honor of having housed the Deliverer in one's hotel at His birth would be significant as a fact of history and an aid to business.

Perhaps there was a divine hand in it all. Being born in a manger, Christ consented to the lowest of earthly environments. No man can now claim that the Master does not understand poverty and humble circumstances. He is not out of touch with any level of human need. He has experienced it all and is therefore able to understand and anticipate every need.

**Under what circumstances was Jesus born? Luke 2:7, first part.**

"Born amidst surroundings the rudest, sharing a peasant's home, a peasant's fare, a craftsman's occupation, living a life of obscurity, identifying Himself with the world's unknown toilers,—amidst these conditions and surroundings,—Jesus followed the divine plan of education. The schools of His times, with their magnifying of things small and their belittling of things great, He did not seek. His education was gained directly from the Heaven-appointed sources; from useful work, from the study of the Scriptures and of nature, and from the experiences of life—God's lesson books, full of instruction to all who bring to them the willing hand, the seeing eye, and the understanding heart."—*Education*, p. 77.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Is it possible that I today, like the innkeepers approached by Joseph, can be blinded by a lack of spiritual discernment as to the true identity of the One who is knocking at the door of my heart?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Desire of Ages*, p. 63; *Education*, p. 77; *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 223.

**Part 3  
PEACE  
TO MEN**

**While shepherds tended their flocks, what startling scene broke upon their visions?**

**"Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. . . . And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:9, 13, 14).**

"At these words, visions of glory fill the minds of the listening shepherds. The Deliverer has come to Israel! Power, exaltation, triumph, are associated with His coming. But the angel must prepare them to recognize their Saviour in poverty and humiliation. . . .

"The heavenly messenger had quieted their fears. He had told them how to find Jesus. With tender regard for their human weakness, he had given them time to become accustomed to the divine radiance. Then the joy and glory could no longer be hidden."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 47, 48.

**Under what circumstances were the wise men of the East alerted? Matt. 2:2.**

"The wise men had seen a mysterious light in the heavens upon that night when the glory of God flooded the hills of Bethlehem. . . . That star was a distant company of shining angels, but of this the wise men were ignorant. Yet they were impressed that the star was of special import to them. . . . The prophecy of Balaam had declared, 'There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel.' Num. 24:17. Could this strange star have been sent as a harbinger of the Promised One? The magi had welcomed the light of heaven-sent truth; now it was shed upon them in brighter rays. Through dreams they were instructed to go in search of the newborn Prince."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 60.

The importance which Heaven attached to this grand event is evidenced by the angel band that was its forerunner. The Word was being made flesh to dwell among us. God identified Himself with mankind by becoming mankind's kin. And throughout endless ages, Christ will carry His human body as a badge of His victory. The scars of His crucifixion will be visible eternally. A great and effectual door is thus opened to us.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Christ's first advent found ancient Israel unprepared for His coming. Will His second advent find us, Laodicean Israel, equally unprepared for His return?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 48, 49; *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 226, 227; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 313, 314.

**Part 4  
SAVED  
TO SAVE**

**Whom do you hold accountable for Herod's cruel reaction?**

**"Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men" (Matt. 2:16).**

"This calamity the Jews had brought upon themselves. If they had been walking in faithfulness and humility before God, He would in a signal manner have made the wrath of the king harmless to them."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 65.

**How does the first advent affect our salvation? Heb. 10:10-12; Rom. 5:15.**

"This glorious Being loved the poor sinner and took upon Himself the form of a servant, that He might suffer and die in man's behalf. Jesus might have remained at His Father's right hand, wearing His kingly crown and royal robes. But He chose to exchange all the riches, honor, and glory of heaven for the poverty of humanity, and His station of high command for the horrors of Gethsemane and the humiliation and agony of Calvary. He became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that by His baptism of suffering and blood He might purify and redeem a guilty world. 'Lo, I come,' was the joyful assent, 'to do Thy will, O My God.' "—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 121.

**Why did Christ's own disciples misunderstand His mission? Matt. 20:21-23.**

Groaning under the yoke of Rome, the disciples shared with all Jews the hope of a temporal kingdom and a Messiah who would come and depose the Roman master. Israel would then come into her own. James and John wished to be partners in this glory.

Christ sought to open their eyes to the true nature of His kingdom. "Are ye able to drink the cup?" He asked. "We are able," they answered (Matt. 20:22). Had He answered their mother's petition and their own, there at the crucifixion James would have hung on one cross and John on the other instead of the two thieves. But their request was not wholly unanswered. James was beheaded and John suffered longest of all the disciples for the name of the Lord. It was difficult for them—until after the resurrection—to understand that Christ's coming would deliver the world from satanic bondage.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**To what extent does Hebrews 2:3 actuate my day-to-day living?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 31-38.

**Part 5**      **What did the life of Christ demonstrate as to our potential?**  
**HIS BLOOD**  
**AVAILS**

**"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).**

"Christ came in human form to show the inhabitants of the unfallen worlds and of the fallen world that ample provision has been made to enable human beings to live in loyalty to their Creator."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 227.

Christ did not take advantage of His divine nature in resisting evil. He fought temptation with the same spiritual weapons that are available to us. He thus demonstrated that sin may be overcome. With this example we are moved to believe, attempt, and persevere! The Holy Spirit, who wrought in Him the purposes of God, will grant us strength for weakness, hope for despair, shelter in the time of storm, ever pointing us to the unfailing adequacy of the merits of Jesus Christ.

**What did His death provide? 1 John 1:9.**

The believers who lived before the cross were given the sacrificial system to remind them that Messiah would come. Those who lived after the cross partake of the Lord's Supper as a reminder that Messiah has come. For those who lived before the cross and after, the remedy was the same—namely, faith. Both the ordinances and the sacrificial system were given to educate and strengthen our faith. For it is still true as ever that "the just shall live by faith."

In this Christ demonstrated to us that in Him we experience a perfection otherwise alien to our nature and state. When we by faith embrace Christ as Lord and Saviour, He confers on us the absolute perfection that is His. And this while we are yet imperfect. Our new "wholeness" is the fruitage of faith in Christ. There occurs in further consequence a healing of the attitude which produces disciplined behavior.

"Every dying victim was a type of Christ, which lesson was impressed on mind and heart in the most solemn, sacred ceremony, and explained definitely by the priests. Sacrifices were explicitly planned by God Himself to teach this great and momentous truth, that through the blood of Christ alone there is forgiveness of sins."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 107.

**THINK IT THROUGH**      **How can I demonstrate that I have been "crucified with Christ"?**

**FURTHER STUDY**      *Medical Ministry*, p. 203; *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 317; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 390, 391.

**Part 6  
NEWNESS  
OF LIFE**

**What measure of strength and victory is available to us through Christ's death?**

**"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3, 4).**

**Dare we, in this life, be assured of life in the hereafter? 1 Cor. 15:19; Heb. 11:13, 16.**

"So those who had been raised [in conjunction with Christ's resurrection] were to be presented to the universe as a pledge of the resurrection of all who believe in Christ as their personal Saviour. The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Christ, as His bride, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the heavenly courts, the world above. The victory of the sleeping saints will be glorious on the morning of the resurrection. Satan's triumph will end, while Christ will triumph in glory and honor. The Life-giver will crown with immortality all who come forth from the grave."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 305, 306.

Christians die differently from other people, for their view of death is brightened with hope of life in the hereafter. For this same reason they live differently.

Death is not the end of life for saint or sinner. Each must face his own hereafter. And that hereafter has some influence on his behavior here.

For the Christian, this life is a practice "run" as men and women prepare to live with angels. This expectation is a source of joy here and an enrichment of the present experience. We sacrifice nothing vital to life here as we long for a better world than this. Life can be rather hectic here, and the burden is made lighter by the hope of a better world to come.

**How limited was the Old Testament era in its understanding of the hope of the "blood of the lamb"? 2 Cor. 3:13-15.**

"As Moses saw the day of Christ, and the new and living way of salvation that was to be opened through His blood, he was captivated and entranced."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1110.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How does my life impress others as to where my treasure really is? (See Matt. 6:21).**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 194; vol. 4, pp. 40, 41.



# 3. Coming Again

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; . . . he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, . . . to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” (Isa. 61:1, 2).

God’s ancient people looked anxiously for the coming of the Messiah. When under the heel of enemy domination, Israel lived in hope of the Deliverer. Mothers whispered the promise of His first coming to their children, thus this hope was kept alive by succeeding generations. The thought energized them for each day’s task. Imposters took advantage of this national expectation and often led insurrections and abortive coups. This led to growing frustration as the years passed. This procession of false messiahs undoubtedly led to some of the skepticism that met Christ at His incarnation.

The Jews had come to anticipate the coming of an earthly monarch with all of the trappings of earthly glory. They confused the kingdom of glory promises with those pertaining to the kingdom of grace. They would be supreme among the people of earth. Pomp and privilege would be theirs. Gone forever from Israel’s borders would be the heel of the conqueror. The law would issue from an earthly Jerusalem, and her soldiers would marshal the nations. This basically was the Hebrew concept of the coming Messiah when Jesus came.

In reading the prophets, the Jews saw only the many predictions of glory. Isaiah had said, “He shall

grow . . . as a root out of a dry ground” (Isa. 53:2), He would not be handsome. Perhaps it was true then that “the eye sees what the heart wishes.” Jewish resentment of oppression and their ambition to govern colored their judgment and confused their principles of interpretation, leading to a case of mistaken identity.

Had the innkeeper at Bethlehem known who the Babe was, he would have made room at the inn. How true is this Negro spiritual:

“Their eyes were blind, they couldn’t see. . . .  
Didn’t know who You was.”

Doubt cherished leads to cynicism. Thus by the time the real evidence was in that Christ was indeed the Messiah, pride of heart led to tragedy of behavior, so that priests and people committed acts of blasphemy which forfeited the good hand of their God upon them and brought suffering on their children and their childrens’ children. To the true believer today, the promise of Christ’s *second* coming brings hope! This will be our study for this week’s lesson.

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. “The Lord Cometh”  
(Isa. 26:21)
2. “Shall So Come”  
(Acts 1:11)
3. “A Place for You”  
(John 14:1-3)
4. “Every Eye Shall See Him”  
(Rev. 1:7; Matt. 24:30)
5. “Wars and Rumors”  
(Matt. 24:6, 7)
6. “Buy of Me”  
(Rev. 3:18)

**Part 1**  
**"THE LORD**  
**COMETH"**

**How did the Old Testament prophets describe the second coming of the Lord?**

**"Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isa. 26:21). (See also Ps. 50:3-5.)**

The Lord's "place" is the heaven of heavens. (See Ps. 115:16.) He ascended there some 1900 years ago. One might say that Christ had come "out of his place" to provide for man a way of escape from the prison house of sin. For 33 years He lived in what was for Him a foreign atmosphere. Sin was and is repulsive to His nature. Because of His deep love for man He endured it all, even the death on the cross, that we through His sacrifice might be saved.

Words cannot capture the degree of pain, the depth of humiliation, or the agony of a broken heart; but all this He endured just for us.

Having completed His sacrifice for us, He was caught up to God. Isaiah says that He will once again come "out of his place." This time to execute judgment on the wicked and reward the righteous. Mankind's rebellion against his Maker cannot go unpunished. It is but a part of a larger conspiracy against the government of God led by Satan himself.

**Why was the second coming predicted so far ahead of its fulfillment? See Rom. 15:4.**

Mankind cannot live without hope. He may exist, but not truly live. Hope brings light to the eye, spring to the step, and a song to the heart. Said one, "The birds sing sweetly in the bosom of him who hopes." The physician's balm works best on patients whose desire to live is strongest. Hope feeds that desire.

The promise of the coming of Christ inspires hope. The human experiment with sin has long ago turned sour. Our problems become more acute with every passing hour. The things that plague this sinful planet multiply. The coming of the Lord is the one light at the end of the tunnel of human probation. The promise of His coming appears early in Scripture so that people of bygone centuries might have hope. They must know that "Shiloh" will come again and that unto Him will the gathering of the people be.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Does the "blessed hope" mean more to me each day as I draw nearer to the end?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Desire of Ages*, p. 628; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 238, 339; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 445; *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 394.



**Part 2**  
**"SHALL SO**  
**COME"**

**With what words did angels announce to the apostles the specific promise of Christ's return?**

**"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).**

"Upon reaching the Mount of Olives, Jesus led the way across the summit, to the vicinity of Bethany. Here He paused, and the disciples gathered about Him. . . . With hands outstretched in blessing, and as if in assurance of His protecting care, He slowly ascended from among them, drawn heavenward by a power stronger than any earthly attraction. As He passed upward, the awestricken disciples looked with straining eyes for the last glimpse of their ascending Lord. A cloud of glory hid Him from their sight; and the words came back to them as the cloudy chariot of angels received Him, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' At the same time there floated down to them the sweetest and most joyous music from the angel choir."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 830, 831.

Angels announced the first coming of Christ as a Babe in Bethlehem. Music accompanied the ascension. It is appropriate that angels will announce the second coming of the Lord amid the "sweetest and most joyous music." Our Lord's return will be for the saints a cause of great rejoicing, for it will come at a time of dire peril and persecution. His followers will then desire His coming with a desperation that defies description. The tame "longing" of this Laodicean era will be replaced with a passion that aches. Then only will the Lord return.

**What predicted actions of the Lord clearly indicate angel participation in the second coming? Matt. 25:31.**

"When the divine Presence was manifested upon Sinai, the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire in the sight of all Israel. But when Christ shall come in glory with His holy angels the whole earth shall be ablaze with the terrible light of His presence. . . . 'The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel.' 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 339, 340.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Is it more important to me that I will be living when Christ comes or that I will be ready when He comes?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Desire of Ages*, p. 832; *The Great Controversy*, p. 301.

**Part 3**  
**"A PLACE**  
**FOR YOU"****How tightly did Christ tie the assurance of His return to the reality of His departure?**

**"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And 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 14:1-3).**

"In that day, as in the time of Jerusalem's destruction, God's people will be delivered, everyone that shall be found written among the living. Isaiah 4:3. Christ has declared that He will come the second time to gather His faithful ones to Himself: 'Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' Matthew 24:30, 31."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 37.

**Through the revelation of John, what element of urgency does Christ add to the promise of His return? Rev. 22:7, 12, 20.**

"Behold, I come quickly," the Master said. He has not chosen to reveal the day or the hour, but it is near at hand. Of course, we realize that Christians of every generation were taught to expect the Lord's return in their own time.

But there are special evidences that this is the last generation. Has not nuclear capacity increased to the point that man may now destroy himself? Has the pollution of nature passed the point of no return? Is human society corrupting itself to a point of self-destruction? Is not this the end of "the age of man"?

"You must be wrestlers for the crown of life. Strive, for the grasp of Satan is upon you; and if you do not wrench yourselves from him, you will be palsied and ruined. The foe is on the right hand, and on the left, before you, and behind you; and you must trample him under your feet. Strive, for there is a crown to be won. Strive, for if you win not the crown, you lose everything in this life and in the future life. Strive, but let it be in the strength of your risen Saviour."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 137.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**If I am making spiritual preparation for Christ's return during "the time of the end," does it automatically follow that I will be prepared at the end of time?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 34; *Gospel Workers*, p. 259; *Christ's Object Lessons*, "Shall Not God Avenge His Own?" p. 179.

Part 4  
 "EVERY EYE  
 SHALL  
 SEE HIM"

**Will Christ come so that everyone will know it, or will it be a secret rapture as many claim?**

**"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Rev. 1:7).**

**"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30).**

"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. . . . Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a 'Man of Sorrows,' to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. . . . With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 640.

The inhabitants of the earth turn pale at the awesome sight. The saints will, for the first time, see Him face-to-face. The sheer force of the cataclysmic presence of thousands of angels will be earthshaking in itself. But the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, awakening the righteous dead. This is not secret rapture. This is a center-stage event. The inhabitants of the whole earth are aware of it. The wicked "mourn." The saved rejoice. By an act of visible, overwhelming power, Christ comes to take away His church.

**What signs in the heavens indicate the nearness of Christ's coming and also occur in connection with the advent itself? Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:12, 13.**

"December 16, 1848, the Lord gave me a view of the shaking of the powers of the heavens. I saw that when the Lord said 'heaven,' in giving the signs recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, He meant heaven, and when He said 'earth' He meant earth. The powers of heaven are the sun, moon, and stars. They rule in the heavens. The powers of earth are those that rule on the earth. The powers of heaven will be shaken at the voice of God. Then the sun, moon, and stars will be moved out of their places. They will not pass away, but be shaken by the voice of God."—*Early Writings*, p. 41.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Read Revelation 3:11; 22:7, 12.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 630, 631; *Gospel Workers*, p. 41; *The Great Controversy*, p. 641.

**Part 5**  
**"WARS AND**  
**RUMORS"****What will be the human condition as the coming of Jesus nears?****"Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places" (Matt. 24:6, 7).****"Probationary Time Running Out.**—Already kingdom is rising against kingdom. There is not now a determined engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshall their forces for the last great battle. How carefully we should improve the little remaining period of our probation!"—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 968.**How close does the Bible come to describing today's society? Could this be coincidence only? 2 Tim. 3:1-5.****Religious formalism denies the power of God. How does John symbolize this noncommitment? Rev. 3:15, 17.**

"The true Christian will love to wait and watch for the teachings of God and the leadings of His Spirit. But with many, religion is merely a form. Vital godliness is lacking. Many dare to say, I will do this, or that, or I will not do this; and the fear of offending God is scarcely thought of. Those thus described, I saw, could not enter heaven as they are. They may flatter themselves that they will be saved, but God has no pleasure in them. Their lives do not please Him. Their prayers are an offense to Him.

"Christ now calls them: 'Be zealous and repent.' He kindly and faithfully admonishes them to buy gold, white raiment, and eyesalve. They can choose either to be zealous, and partake largely of salvation, or be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord as disgusting, and be thrust from Him. God will not bear always. He is of tender pity, yet His Spirit will be grieved away for the last time. Mercy's sweet voice will be no more heard. Its last precious notes will have died away, and those described will be left to their own ways, to be filled with their own doings."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 152, 153.

**THINK IT THROUGH****Is my desire not to grieve the Holy Spirit based alone on my desire to be saved or on my desire not to "crucify . . . the Son of God afresh"?****FURTHER STUDY***The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 502; *The Great Controversy*, p. 444; *Child Guidance*, p. 152.

**Part 6**  
**"BUY OF ME"**

**How may the lukewarmness of soul of the Laodiceans be overcome?**

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

Nothing short of personal response to God's pleadings can shake the Laodicean lethargy that now grips the saints. "Buy of me gold." This speaks of a priceless personal experience with Christ that improves with testing. "White raiment" is the character of Christ with which we are to be clothed. "Eyesalve" is the wisdom of the Holy Spirit which deepens spiritual insight.

"Buy of me" and "anoint thine eyes" are action phrases. Inspired by the Spirit, we must take those initiatives that will invoke the power of God in our behalf. Christ-motivated action is one of man's most effective forms of prayer.

**What wise counsel from Amos can challenge those living in the last days? Amos 4:12.**

"In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, such a work as that of John [the Baptist] is to be done. God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. . . . Our message must be as direct as was the message of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding that his life was imperiled, he did not hesitate to declare God's word. And our work in this age must be done as faithfully."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 332.

**What timely advice concerning last-day needs of the church does Jesus give? Luke 21:34, 36.**

"The word of God has been neglected. In that are the warnings to God's people which point out their dangers. But they have had so many cares and perplexities that they hardly allow themselves time to pray. There has been a mere empty form without the power. Jesus prayed, and, oh, how earnest were His prayers! And yet He was the beloved Son of God!

"If Jesus manifested so much earnestness, so much energy and agony, how much more need for those whom He has called to be heirs of salvation."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 151.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Is there a difference between living in and being a part of the Laodicean era and being a Laodicean?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Gospel Workers*, p. 419; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 188; *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 36; vol. 4, p. 37.



# 4. Why Coming Again?

**"I go to prepare a place for you. And 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 14:2, 3).**

The love of God ensures the return of Christ to this earth. The Bridegroom will not leave His church bride waiting at the altar. The Creator cannot be forever separated from his crowning creation. The present state of earth's inhabitants must yield to a new world order. The original state of man and nature will be restored. The promise of His coming embraces all of this. With John we might well pray, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

Sin cannot be permitted either, as

an eternal beachhead in the universe. Ultimately, creation can only know security when the sin question is settled. For God to remain God anywhere, He must be God everywhere. There can be no peaceful coexistence with evil. Detente between Christ and Satan is impossible. There is no peaceful solution.

Unlike human statesmen and generals, God has an infinite love for those who regard Him as their enemy. He also sees how every fact and incident is related to every other one, in the past, present, or future. He is patiently working out the sin problem in a manner that will be seen to be wholly in harmony with His character.

Christ is now dealing with the sin problem in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. This work will soon be finished. He will then confront sin on its home grounds. Heaven will release its unmixed fury on the heads of the unsaved. The rebellion will be stamped out. Sin must be eradicated. Christ must come!

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. "And Receive You"  
(John 14:3; 2 Peter 3:10)
2. "Distress of Nations"  
(Luke 21:25, 26)
3. The Defiled Earth  
(Isa. 24:5, 6)
4. "God Is Judge"  
(Ps. 50:3-6)
5. "That Wicked" Destroyed  
(2 Thess. 2:8)
6. Song of Moses and the Lamb  
(Rev. 15:3)

Part 1  
"AND  
RECEIVE  
YDU"

Why must Jesus come again?

"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).

"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).

When Jesus shall come, the visible church will be in extreme peril. The prophecies of Revelation 13 indicate that the saints will someday face deliberate extermination. Only Christ's "thief in the night" return will prevent this. When the future of the faithful seems hopeless, Christ will pierce the skies. When hopelessness like midnight darkens the horizon, Christ will deliver His people. He will allow them to drink the cup of bitterness till thoroughly purged. His image or character being perfectly reflected in His people, He will honor their faith by receiving them unto Himself.

**How will the coming again of the Lord affect the destiny of all nations? Compare the nations represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream with those on earth today. Dan. 2:44.**

**"A Dual Representation.**—The image revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, while representing the deterioration of the kingdoms of the earth in power and glory, also fitly represents the deterioration of religion and morality among the people of these kingdoms. As nations forget God, in like proportion they become weak morally.

"Babylon passed away because in her prosperity she forgot God, and ascribed the glory of her prosperity to human achievement.

"The Medo-Persian kingdom was visited by the wrath of heaven because in this kingdom God's law was trampled under foot. The fear of the Lord found no place in the hearts of the people. The prevailing influences in Medo-Persia were wickedness, blasphemy, and corruption.

"The kingdoms that followed were even more base and corrupt. They deteriorated because they cast off their allegiance to God. As they forgot Him, they sank lower and still lower in the scale of moral value."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1168.

THINK IT THROUGH

**Does the realization of Christ's soon coming actuate the way I live from day to day? Is it uppermost in my living and thinking? (See Luke 12:40.)**

FURTHER STUDY

*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 34, 35.



**Part 2**  
**"DISTRESS**  
**OF NATIONS"**

**What solution to sin's harvest is there, other than the return of Christ to establish His kingdom here?**

**"There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Luke 21:25, 26).**

"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 co-operate 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. As Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses each declared the truth for his time, so will Christ's servants now give the special warning for their generation."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 634.

**Is the secular world really aware that Christ will return? Luke 21:35.**

"The day is at hand when the destiny of every soul will be fixed forever. This day of the Lord hastens on apace. The false watchmen are raising the cry, 'All is well'; but the day of God is rapidly approaching. Its footsteps are so muffled that it does not arouse the world from the deathlike slumber into which it has fallen. While the watchmen cry, 'Peace and safety,' 'sudden destruction cometh upon them,' 'and they shall not escape'; 'for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.' It overtakes the pleasure-lover and the sinful man as a thief in the night. When all is apparently secure, and men retire to contented rest, then the prowling, stealthy, midnight thief steals upon his prey. When it is too late to prevent the evil, it is discovered that some door or window was not secured. 'Beye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.'"—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 335, 336.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What have I done today to witness to others of my faith that Christ will soon return? (See *Christian Service*, p. 168.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 260; *Early Writings*, p. 71; *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 25.

**Part 3  
THE DEFILED  
EARTH**

**What description of the effects of sin upon the earth does Isaiah give that has further application to our own time?**

**“The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left” (Isa. 24:5, 6).**

**“The earth also is defiled.** God is holy. He gave His law to keep men pure and the world undefiled. By rejecting that law, men defile both themselves and the world in which they live. The contagion of sin has infected the very ground beneath our feet, the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe (see Gen. 3:17; Num. 35:33; Ps. 107:34). With every passing year the earth becomes more and more corrupt. If God were not to intervene, the time would come when the defilement of sin would so debase the human race as to make life itself utterly impossible (see Gen. 6:5, 11, 12; DA 36, 37).”—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 197.

**Is Heaven restless for the final act in the drama? Rev. 7:1-3.**

“With almost impatient eagerness the angels wait for our co-operation; for man must be the channel to communicate with man. And when we give ourselves to Christ in wholehearted devotion, angels rejoice that they may speak through our voices to reveal God’s love.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 297.

**What do we see in the world about us to indicate that the experiment with sin is well-nigh over?**

“We see calamities of every kind and in every degree coming upon the earth, and why? The Lord’s restraining power is not exercised. The world has disregarded the word of God. They live as though there were no God. Like the inhabitants of the Noachic world, they refuse to have any thought of God. Wickedness prevails to an alarming extent, and the earth is ripe for the harvest.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 389.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Read Jeremiah 8:20. Will I be so spiritually prepared that I will have no need to utter this in the final day? God grant that I will.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, pp. 36, 44; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 627, 628.

Part 4  
"GOD IS  
JUDGE"

What last-day application of Psalm 50 provides another reason why Christ must return?

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself" (Ps. 50:3-6).

"**Shall come.** That is, to judgment, in a primary sense to expostulate with the inhabitants of earth, as the body of the psalm indicates. In a unique sense the words are also a prediction of the judgment at the end of the world (see Matt. 25:31; Acts 17:31; 2 Tim. 4:1 . . .).

"**Shall not keep silence.** God will make a pronouncement on man's conduct.

"**A fire.** The imagery may be drawn from God's manifestation on Mt. Sinai (see Ex. 19:16, 18).

"**Gather.** At the second coming of Christ the angels will be charged with the task of gathering the redeemed (see Matt. 24:31).

"**My saints.** Heb. *chasidim*. . . 'Amid the tempest of divine judgment, the children of God will have no cause for fear' (PP 341).

"**Sacrifice.** Heb. *zebach*, an offering of a slaughtered animal (Gen. 31:54; 46:1; Lev. 3:1; etc.). The ancient Sinaitic covenant was ratified by the sacrifice of oxen and the sprinkling of blood (Ex. 24:5-8; cf. Gen. 15:9-18). The new covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ (Heb. 9:18-23; PP 371). At the coming of Christ the saints who will be gathered are those who have accepted the covenant sealed by the sacrifice of Christ. . . .

"**His righteousness.** This text will receive an ultimate, unique fulfillment at the time of Christ's second coming, when 'there appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone folded together. . . . That holy law, God's righteousness, . . . is now revealed to men as the rule of judgment' (GC 639)." — S.D.A. *Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, pp. 752, 753.

What will Christ do to rescue His people? Revelation 16.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is my relationship with Christ so close that in the time of trouble I can be hidden, as it were, from the onslaughts of Satan? (See Ps. 27:5)

FURTHER STUDY

*The Great Controversy*, pp. 443, 635; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 355.

Part 5  
"THAT  
WICKED"  
DESTROYED

How will Christ finally deal with His enemies?

"Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Thess. 2:8).

"**That Wicked.** Gr. *ho anomos*, literally, 'the [one] destitute of law,' hence, 'the violator of the law,' 'the lawless one,' or 'the wicked one.' The reference is to the 'man of sin' (v. 3), or the 'mystery of iniquity' (v. 7). According to one view 'the lawless one' is the papacy. . . . According to a second view, he is not only the papacy, but more importantly, Satan himself, the supreme Antichrist, as he impersonates Christ just before the last day. . . .

"**Revealed.** Gr. *apokaluptō*. . . . Applied to the papacy this would refer to its assumption of power following the decline of the Roman Empire. The reference could also be to the time yet future when the papal power will be revived . . . , and to the time when following this brief period of revival the true nature of the system will be unveiled, or exposed."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 273.

Commandment keepers have long smarted over the apparent prosperity of the wicked. David deals with this question in Psalm 37. In the Revelation the souls under the altar cry out, "How long, O Lord?" Rev. 6:10. Followers of God in all ages have lived for the day when right will triumph and wrong will be forever dethroned. The second coming of Christ will provide this satisfaction. God has revealed this to us in advance so that we faint not in the hour of extreme peril.

**How will the wicked react to the final judgments of God?**  
Rev. 6:16, 17; 16:21.

"With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 635, 636.

THINK IT THROUGH

**What will be the difference in the way the wicked will react and the way the righteous will react upon Christ's return?**

FURTHER STUDY

*The Great Controversy*, pp. 37, 637-640.

Part 6  
SONG OF  
MOSES AND  
THE LAMB

After her final deliverance, what praise will the church confer upon her Saviour?

**"They sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints" (Rev. 15:3).**

"There is a day just about to burst upon us when God's mysteries will be seen, and all His ways vindicated; when justice, mercy, and love will be the attributes of His throne. When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of grace and redemption. This song will be louder, loftier, and in sublimer strains, echoing and re-echoing through the heavenly courts. Thus the song of God's providence is sung, connecting the varying dispensations; for all is now seen without a veil between the legal, the prophetic, and the gospel. The church history upon the earth and the church redeemed in heaven all center around the cross of Calvary. This is the theme, this is the song,—Christ all and in all,—in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and of the Lamb. It is a new song, for it was never before sung in heaven."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 433.

**May we be sure that after God's judgments are visited, the sin experience will not be repeated? Nahum 1:9.**

"The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. . . . The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 504.

THINK IT THROUGH

**We have heard much of D day near the end of World War II. We look forward now to the greatest D day—"Deliverance Day"—at Christ's second coming! (See *Prophets and Kings*, p. 538; *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 216.)**

FURTHER STUDY

*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 601; *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1132.



# 5. Enemies of the Church

“. . . Then out of the sea I saw a beast rising. It had ten horns and seven heads. On its horns were ten diadems, and on each head a blasphemous name” (Rev. 13:1 NEB).

Christ spoke of “the gates of hell” as an enemy that would not prevail against the church. This phrase encompasses the sum total of the enemies who would war against the people of God. The people of God have literally had to bleed their way through 6000 years of human history. But they have survived. The blood of martyrs is indeed the seed of the church, and Christ is now known wherever people walk the earth. Suffering is the price the Christian must pay for the sin experience. It tempers the character for the glories of the world to come. With God on her side, the church will triumph.

Christianity is a spiritual system requiring the first allegiance and best service of its adherents. It suffers least in lands where the human form of government is least authoritarian. Christians living under authoritarian forms of government in any age have been forced to make tragic choices.

To the three Hebrew worthies confronted by Nebuchadnezzar’s commands, decision did not come easily. They risked death by fire rather than yield God’s claims on their consciences. The gates of hell did not prevail.

Daniel, confronted by the signed

decree of an absolute monarch, had a decision to make. Would he yield to the 30-day injunction of the Persian king or stand firm for principle and face a den of hungry, angry lions? He took his chances on the side of the kingdom of God and prevailed.

Even in the best and most democratic countries, forces often conspire to make it hard for the Christian. One’s freedom to observe the Sabbath may be threatened by the demands of one’s employer. Often hard choices must be made. One’s marriage partner often becomes the medium of pressures against his faith. Again cruel choices may be necessitated.

Evil forces will harass the church as long as it is on the earth, but they need not prevail over the Christian individually or the church collectively. Christ, the King of heaven, will soon assert His authority in the earth. Until then we are safe only in the center of His will.

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Leopardlike Beast**  
(Rev. 13:1, 2)
2. **Changing Times and Laws**  
(Dan. 7:25)
3. **Years, Months, and Days**  
(Dan. 7:25)
4. **Like a Lamb—As a Dragon**  
(Rev. 13:11-14)
5. **Miracle-working Spirits of Devils**  
(Rev. 16:14)
6. **Help in Trouble**  
(Ps. 46:1, 2)

**Part 1**  
**THE**  
**LEOPARD-**  
**LIKE BEAST**

**What indication might the early Christian church have had in John's revelation that trouble for the church lurked just ahead?**

**"I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority" (Rev. 13:1, 2, NIV).**

In the series of worldly powers represented in Revelation 13, the total span of the Christian era is covered by the dragon (verse 2), the leopardlike beast (verse 1), and the lamblike beast (verse 11). It is worthy of note that the leopardlike beast receives his power from the dragon as its power rises, and from the lamblike power as its power wanes. The beast's restoration, aided by the lamblike power is such that all the world wonders after the beast and is urged to bow to his authority on pain of hunger and death itself (verses 15-18).

If the early church had no clear picture of what was coming in these persecuting powers, it knew that the dragon power had nothing but hostility toward those who, through the grace of Christ, were obedient to the commandments of God. (See Rev. 13:17.) They were already acquainted with the power of the dragon.

**What further identifying marks of the beast power are provided, with ominous foreboding for the true church? Rev. 13:5, 6.**

"The apostle Paul warned the church not to look for the coming of Christ in his day. 'That day shall not come,' he says, 'except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed.' 2 Thessalonians 2:3. . . . Paul covers with his caution the whole of the Christian dispensation down to the year 1798. It is this side of that time that the message of Christ's second coming is to be proclaimed."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 356.

In the last days a false revival will sweep the land. At the same time the people of God will experience latter-rain power. However, the two may be readily distinguished. The false revival will emphasize natural immortality and Sunday sacredness. The true revival will teach the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. None need be deluded now or ever. The Scriptures prayerfully searched and humbly obeyed are now and ever will be a safeguard against error.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Read and ponder 2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, pp. 439-449.



**Part 2  
CHANGING  
TIMES  
AND LAWS**

**How did the papacy (the beast of Revelation 13 and the little horn of Daniel 7) seek to pervert doctrine?**

**"He shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time" (Dan. 7:25).**

"The man of sin has instituted a false sabbath, and the professed Christian world has adopted this child of the papacy, refusing to obey God. Thus Satan leads men and women in a direction opposite to the city of refuge; and by the multitudes who follow him, it is demonstrated that Adam and Eve are not the only ones who have accepted the words of the wily foe.

"The enemy of all good has turned the signpost round, so that it points to the path of disobedience as the path of happiness. He has insulted Jehovah by refusing to obey a 'Thus saith the Lord.' He has thought to change times and laws."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1172.

**In its use of state power, how fully was the beast able to intimidate the true church? Rev. 13:11-17 (also 12:11).**

Today believers are advised: "Those who would overcome must put to the tax every power of their being. They must agonize on their knees before God for divine power. . . . Christ, by His own example, made it evident that man may stand in integrity. Men may have a power to resist evil—a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a power that will place them where they may overcome as Christ overcame. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1082.

The Christian church may have had much clearer understanding of the passing of prophetic milestones than we might expect. There is some evidence, for example, that the church prayed for the continuation in power of the pagan dragon of Rome, preferring its reality to the feared power of the beast (also the little horn, man of sin, antichrist) of papal Rome yet to come. (See L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1950], vol. 1, p. 19.)

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What will be the difference, if any, between the persecution of the early church and the persecution that is yet to come during the time of trouble?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Evangelism*, pp. 225, 355; *Early Writings*, pp. 33, 114.

**Part 3  
YEARS,  
MONTHS,  
AND DAYS**

**How long did the papacy continue as a persecuting power?**

**“They shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time [3½ times]” (Dan. 7:25).**

Nebuchadnezzar was banished from his throne for seven years. The Bible calls this seven times (Dan. 4:32). The Septuagint (Greek version of the Old Testament) offers a prophetic time key of one “time” to equal one year. Our text specifies three and one half times as the period of papal persecutions. This is three and one half prophetic years.

This same prophetic period, covering or matching parallel events, is variously described as three and one half times, 42 months, or 1260 days. Although a prophetic year happens to be an approximation of the Jewish calendar month and year, we have a more specific internal key to the prophetic time clock that gives 30 days to the month, 12 months to the year or “time.” Forty-two months, 1260 days, three and one half times (or years) in these time prophecies regarding the enemies of the church are one and the same period. On the prophetic principle of a day standing for a year, and with the clusters of historical events marking the rise and seeming end of the papacy, the period of 1260 years from A.D. 538 to 1798 is recognized by historicist interpreters as the period of papal supremacy.

**What new force will arise to do in the New World what the papacy did in the old? How will this force support the papacy throughout the world? Rev. 13:11.**

“What nation of the New World was in 1798 rising into power, giving promise of strength and greatness, and attracting the attention of the world? The application of the symbol admits of no question. . . . A European journal in 1850 spoke of the United States as a wonderful empire, which was ‘emerging,’ and ‘amid the silence of the earth daily adding to its power and pride.’—*The Dublin Nation*. Edward Everett, in an oration on the Pilgrim founders of this nation, said: ‘Did they look for a retired spot, inoffensive for its obscurity, and safe in its remoteness, where the little church of Leyden might enjoy the freedom of conscience? Behold the *mighty regions* over which, in *peaceful conquest*, . . . they have borne the banners of the cross!’—Speech delivered at Plymouth, Massachusetts, Dec. 22, 1824, page 11.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 440, 441.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**In what three ways can I be spiritually prepared for whatever is in store for me—even persecution—before Christ’s return? (See 1 Thess. 5:17; John 5:39 and 2 Tim. 2:15; Mark 5:19.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 380; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 450, 451.

Part 4  
LIKE A  
LAMB—AS A  
DRAGON

**With what diligence will the image of the beast pursue papal policy?**

**"I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders . . . , and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth . . . ; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast" (Rev. 13:11-14).**

Who can contemplate the triumphal visit of Pope John Paul II to the United States and other countries in 1979 without thinking again of the words of John and of the modern inspired commentary on those words?

"When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy. . . .

"The beast with two horns 'causeth [commands] all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads.' . . . The third angel's warning is: 'If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.' 'The beast' mentioned . . . is . . . the papacy. The 'image to the beast' represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 445.

**Can these persecuting powers prevail against the saints?  
Rev. 14:1, 4.**

"In the issue of the contest, all Christendom will be divided into two great classes—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. . . . The prophet of Patmos beholds 'them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God' and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Revelation 15:2, 3."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 450.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Why is the beast power, which is also a persecuting power, allowed to afflict God's people?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 117, 206; *The Story of Redemption*, pp. 381, 382.

**Part 5  
MIRACLE-  
WORKING  
SPIRITS  
OF DEVILS**

There are those who feel that the time for the arising of the persecuting powers described by Daniel, Paul, and John, and identified more specifically by Ellen White, has passed. It is said that they might have come (or were widely expected) in her early days—but no more. Such things could not happen in today's world.

Let all contemplate the present-day prominence of the papacy, the tense national and world conditions, calling for extreme measures "to save the world." Look at the Jesus movements, the rise of the evangelicals, the charismatic movement, the ecumenical efforts, and the popularity of the occult.

**When spiritualism adds its deceptive force to the Protestant apostasy, will this complete the trinity of deception?**

**"They are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14).**

"The miracle-working power manifested through spiritualism will exert its influence against those who choose to obey God rather than men. Communications from the spirits will declare that God has sent them to convince the rejecters of Sunday of their error, affirming that the laws of the land should be obeyed as the law of God. *They will lament the great wickedness in the world* and second the testimony of religious teachers that *the degraded state of morals* is caused by the desecration of Sunday. Great will be the indignation excited against all who refuse to accept their testimony."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 590, 591. (Emphasis supplied.)

**How effective will these combined powers be? Rev. 13:16; 14:18-20; 16:14-16.**

*Satanism, Protestantism, and Catholicism* will be strangely united in the very end time. By sheer physical force they will seek to compel the conscience. Many will yield to their blandishments. They have not made Christ their dependency and truth their anchor. The true Trinity—God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit—are more than a match for the dragon, the beast, and false prophet.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How is spiritualism making not only insidious but even overt overtures to cause the remnant to be ensnared?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, p. 604; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 189; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 575.

Part 6  
HELP IN  
TROUBLE

How can the saints withstand these world-controlling powers of evil?

**"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (Ps. 46:1, 2).**

"Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. *None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.*"—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 593, 594. (Emphasis supplied.)

**What will be the end of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet? Rev. 20:10.**

Only Two Ways

There are two guides for trav'lers, only two guides:  
One's the Good Shepherd e'en thro' the death tides;  
The other,—the serpent, beguiling with sin  
Whose beauty external hides poison within,  
Hides poison within, death poison within.

There are two homes for trav'lers, only two homes:  
One's that fair city where evil ne'er comes;  
The other,—sins' wages, eternal and dread,  
The fate of the lost ones, the doom of the dead,  
The doom of the dead, the sorrowful dead.

—F. E. Belden, *Christ in Song*, no. 11.

THINK IT THROUGH

**Read prayerfully and meditate upon the promise of divine protection contained in Psalms 46 and 91.**

FURTHER STUDY

*Evangelism*, p. 306; *Early Writings*, p. 105; *Gospel Workers*, pp. 254, 255.



# 6. Hope of the Race

**"I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).**

Physicians find it difficult to treat effectively patients who have no will to live. World leaders view the complex nature of international problems with perplexity. Hope wanes that man will ever find solutions to his many problems. But the Christian can look beyond the disturbing present to a hopeful hereafter. He marches to the beat of a different drummer. He discerns in the flow of human affairs a movement toward climax. He is motivated with Job by the knowledge that his "redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25). Like the sun shining at noonday, this fact illuminates all else.

During the long night of American slavery, a story made the rounds of the slave quarters that one Moses had visited Egypt and brought freedom to the Hebrew slaves. Hope stirred faintly in the bosoms of the benighted that perhaps some modern Moses would do the same for them. Their songs reflect that they pinned their hope on the coming of Christ. Let us consider a few examples: "Keep inching along, keep inching along, Master Jesus is coming by and by." "I looked over Jordan and what did I see? A band of angels coming after me, coming for

to carry me home." To the enslaved, Jesus was a "wheel-in-a-wheel, way in the middle of the air." This hope of ultimate deliverance fired their faith and enabled them to endure the rigors of servitude.

We have placed our faith in many things as solutions to mankind's ills. Science, politics, philosophy, and various forms of humanism have had their day. None have offered us hope in the moment of test. Only the Creator can redeem. Only the Maker can be our Saviour. Without the divine Christ of Peter's inspired testimonial, the gates of hell will surely prevail against the church and the world.

Since the sin of Adam, humanity has been trapped in the prison house of time. Christ alone can set us free to enter once again the eternity that was ever His. Mankind has been in steady retrogression since the sin of Adam. Christ is the one last ray of hope of man before the final plunge to destruction.

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Lamb on Zion**  
(Rev. 14:1)
2. **Gospel of the Kingdom**  
(Matt. 24:14)
3. **The Woman and Her Seed**  
(Rev. 12:14, 17)
4. **War With Saints**  
(Rev. 12:16)
5. **"My Jewels"**  
(Mal. 3:17)
6. **"This Is Our God"**  
(Isa. 25:9)

**Part 1**  
**THE LAMB**  
**ON ZION**

**What promise have we that the church will triumph at last?**

**"I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads" (Rev. 14:1). (See also Rev. 7:1-17; 14:13-16; 22:3, 4, 18-20.)**

The exact identity of the 144,000 is unknown. God has not chosen to reveal all concerning them. There is, however, enough said about them to inspire confidence. And if we are saved, we shall know beyond doubt just who they are.

"While John was shown the last great struggles of the church with earthly powers, he was also permitted to behold the final victory and deliverance of the faithful. He saw the church brought into deadly conflict with the beast and his image, and the worship of that beast enforced on pain of death. But looking beyond the smoke and din of the battle, he beheld a company upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having, instead of the mark of the beast, the 'Father's name written in their foreheads.' And again he saw 'them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God' and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 752, 753.

**For what selfless purpose was the church put on the earth?**  
**Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:19, 20.**

"A moment of respite has been graciously given us of God. Every power lent us of heaven is to be used in doing the work assigned us by the Lord for those who are perishing in ignorance. . . .

"God's people should make mighty intercession to Him for help now. And they must put their whole energies into the effort to proclaim the truth during the respite that has been granted. . . .

"Every day we have been associating with men and women who are judgment bound. Each day may have been the dividing line for some soul. Each day someone may have made the decision which will determine his future destiny."—*Evangelism*, p. 704.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Does it diminish my desire to be among the 144,000, even though the exact composition of this group is not yet clearly revealed?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 11, 12; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 820, 821.



**Part 2  
GOSPEL OF  
THE KINGDOM**

**When the gospel's task is finished, what long-awaited event will happen?**

**"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).**

"Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 111.

Who can escape the chastisement of the following words?

"Men and women are in the last hours of probation, and yet are careless and stupid, and ministers have no power to arouse them; they are asleep themselves. Sleeping preachers preaching to a sleeping people!"—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 337.

How indeed may we profess with our lips to love the Lord Jesus—and live only for ourselves. With literature to be distributed, Bible studies to be given, and with healing, publishing and teaching ministries to be fulfilled, there is a work for every pair of hands to do. Inertia cannot be explained in times like these. Thousands of the saints are sleepwalking in the very shadow of the eternal world. As individuals we cannot now wait to be told what must be done. It is our privilege to "work the works" while it is day.

**What other human endeavor can rival the spreading of the gospel in determining the destiny of the race? Mark 16:16.**

The work of the church is to complete the work begun by the Lord. "Just as we trace the pathway of a stream of water by the line of living green it produces, so Christ could be seen in the deeds of mercy that marked His pathway at every step. Wherever He went, health sprang up and happiness followed wherever He passed. The blind and deaf rejoiced in His presence. His words to the ignorant opened to them a fountain of life. He dispensed His blessings abundantly and continuously. They were the garnered treasures of eternity, given in Christ, the Lord's rich gift to man."—*Counsels on Health*, p. 499.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Does the hope of Christ's soon coming burn as fervently in my heart as when I first embraced the third angel's message?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 111; *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 17; *Counsels to Teachers*, p. 324.

Part 3  
THE WOMAN  
AND HER  
SEED

**Who is the principle enemy of the church, and how did he work both in the Dark Ages and on through to our own time?**

**“To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.”**

**“The dragon was wrath 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” (Rev. 12:14, 17).**

“The great controversy between good and evil will increase in intensity to the very close of time. In all ages the wrath of Satan has been manifested against the church of Christ; . . . as the church approaches her final deliverance, Satan is to work with greater power. He comes down ‘having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.’ Revelation 12:12. . . . All the depths of satanic skill and subtlety acquired, all the cruelty developed, during these struggles of the ages, will be brought to bear against God’s people in the final conflict.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. ix, x.

**What method will the dragon use to frustrate the efforts of the believers? Rev. 12:13.**

Demons are real! They are fallen angels who have nothing to do but to afflict and torment men. They were ejected from heaven with Satan himself. They are confined to this earth. They will perish here. They are doing their best to get every human being possible to share their miserable fate.

“Satan has great advantages. He possessed the wonderful intellectual power of an angel, of which few form any just idea. Satan was conscious of his power, or he would not have engaged in a conflict with the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Satan closely watches events, and when he finds one who has a specially strong spirit of opposition to the truth of God he will even reveal to him unfulfilled events, that he may more firmly secure himself a seat in his heart. He who did not hesitate to brave a conflict with Him who holds creation as in His hand, has malignity to persecute and deceive. He holds mortals in his snare at the present time. During his experience of nearly six thousand years he has lost none of his skill and shrewdness. All this time he has been a close observer of all that concerns our race.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 171, 172.

THINK IT THROUGH

**“We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower turns to the sun.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 99, 100.**

FURTHER STUDY

*The Great Controversy*, pp. 54, 55, 306; *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 96.

**Part 4  
WAR WITH  
SAINTS**

**How did God move to protect His people through the Dark Ages?**

**"The earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth" (Rev. 12:16).**

"Persecution [as the long period of papal oppression began] opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battlefield. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: 'The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.' Revelation 12:6."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 54, 55.

**How does John describe the return of persecution to the remnant church? Rev. 13:7; 12:17.**

"God's word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. . . . All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 581.

**How severe will this persecution of the remnant be? Rev. 14:13.**

"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*, p. 592.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Will I be as satisfied to be laid to rest before the time of trouble as I would be to be alive to witness Christ's return?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 712; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 472, 473, 605, 606.

**Part 5**  
**"MY**  
**JEWELS"**

**How strong is the Lord's assurance that He will again deliver His sealed people?**

**"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. 3:17).**

"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. 'They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.' Malachi 3:17. If the blood of Christ's faithful witnesses were shed at this time, [after probation's close] it would not, like the blood of the martyrs, be as seed sown to yield a harvest for God."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 634.

At this point the future of the saints seems hopeless. The darkness that engulfed our Saviour in Gethsemane surrounds them. Evil men and demons seek to overthrow their faith. The outlook is dim, lighted only by the promises of the Scriptures. At the midnight hour of their torturous experience, the Saviour will reveal His power. During the time of trouble the blessed hope alone will light their days. The bankruptcy of all things earthly will now be clearly seen by all who desire the Lord's return.

**By what dramatic act will God intervene for His people? Rev. 16:15; 22:12.**

"In the time of trial before us God's pledge of security will be placed upon those who have kept the word of His patience. Christ will say to His faithful ones: 'Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.' Isaiah 26:20. The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejectors of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of cloud which speaks wrath and terror to the transgressor of God's law is light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 404.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The gathering of the faithful of all ages! Does this thought overwhelm you with a longing desire to be in that number?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 598; *Early Writings*, p. 70; *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 488.

Part 6  
"THIS IS  
OUR GOD"

**How will the church be rewarded for clinging by faith to the Lord when His face was not revealed to them?**

**"It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isa. 25:9).**

"From garrets, from hovels, from dungeons, from scaffolds, from mountains and deserts, from the caves of the earth and the caverns of the sea, Christ will gather His children to Himself. On earth they have been destitute, afflicted, and tormented. Millions have gone down to the grave loaded with infamy because they refused to yield to the deceptive claims of Satan. By human tribunals the children of God have been adjudged the vilest of criminals. But the day is near when 'God is judge Himself.' (Ps. 50:6). Then the decisions of earth shall be reversed. 'The rebuke of His people shall He take away.' Isa. 25:8. White robes will be given to every one of them. (Rev. 6:11.) And 'they shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.' Isa. 62:12."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 179, 180.

**We have waited for him.**—The saints do not succumb to the impatience of the scoffers. Their service and allegiance are based on something deeper than "time of arrival." Their union with Christ is based on faith, love, and respect. The quality of that faith, the depth of love, and the height of their respect will determine their ability to endure. And you may be sure that the saints described in the preceding quotation built up these virtues sufficiently to power them through the end. Prayer, Bible study, and Christian service strengthen the soul fiber—rendering the Christian shock resistant. We can and must now hasten the buildup of these inner resources so that when the storm breaks we will be safe.

**How complete will be the triumph of the saints? Rev. 21:4.**

"There [the eternal city] the redeemed greet those who led them to the Saviour, and all unite in praising Him who died that human beings might have the life that measures with the life of God. The conflict is over. Tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven as the ransomed ones take up the joyful strain, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 602.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Am I now worthy to sing with the redeemed, "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb"?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, pp. 300, 644, 650.



# 7. Life for Death

**“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Cor. 15:26).**

On the cross Jesus cried, “It is finished.” Before Him was the tomb, the resurrection, the ascension, His priestly ministry, the second coming, the millennium, the executive judgment, and the new creation. It is obvious therefore that the sacrificial atonement for the sin of the race was “finished.” There would thereafter remain no more sacrifice for sin. (See Heb. 10:26.) But in A.D. 31 the world had not seen the last of Him. “I will come again,” He said. But what will His coming mean to His followers, His enemies, and to this planet itself? The author found this study fascinating. He thinks you will too.

For, you see, changes are in store for the human family that stagger the imagination. The immediate future offers little to hope for in terms of human betterment. The prophet’s pen has faithfully traced a painful picture. “Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people” (Isa. 60:2). “Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse” (2 Tim. 3:13). “Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven” (Luke 21:10, 11).

These gloomy pictures of the results of our transgression could occupy this entire lesson, but there is better news beyond! One persistent ray of hope pierces the gloom—the

second coming of Christ. It is a vital part of the good news of the gospel. All that we lost through the sin of Adam will be restored by our coming Lord. His coming will signal the end of all human administration. The erosion of the environment will be arrested and reversed. Now we are prisoners of time, but we will learn by experience what we now accept by faith, namely, the joy of living eternally. His coming will signal the end of all shortages of those things essential to life and the restoration of bounties beyond imagination. There will occur a restoration of the sinless environment, replacing the sin-spoiled atmosphere of the *here* and *now*. Worship of the Creator will be the continual and joyous function of the creature. In immortal, sin-free bodies the redeemed will live their lives in harmony with Heaven’s laws. The sons of Adam will have a second chance because the second Adam has atoned for us all. He will return to complete for His church the saving work that He began at Bethlehem.

The last great enemy—death—and all his cohorts will be destroyed!

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Last Enemy**  
(1 Cor. 15:54, 55)
2. **No Fear in the Valley**  
(Ps. 23:4)
3. **Endless Kingdom**  
(Dan. 2:44)
4. **Like Him**  
(1 John 3:2)
5. **Pure As He Is Pure**  
(1 John 3:3)
6. **Right to the Tree of Life**  
(Rev. 22:14)

**Part 1  
THE LAST  
ENEMY**

**Death is an enemy to the righteous. How will the second coming handle it?**

**“When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Cor. 15:54, 55). (See also John 5:28, 29; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.)**

“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. By the power of the Saviour that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1143.

**When will the wicked dead arise “unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:29)? Rev. 20:5.**

“At the close of the one thousand years, Jesus, with the angels and all the saints, leaves the Holy City, and while He is descending to the earth with them, the wicked dead are raised, and then the very men that ‘pierced Him,’ being raised, will see Him afar off in all His glory, the angels and saints with Him, and will wail because of Him. They will see the prints of the nails in His hands and in His feet, and where they thrust the spear into His side. The prints of the nails and the spear will then be His glory. It is at the close of the one thousand years that Jesus stands upon the Mount of Olives, and the mount parts asunder and becomes a mighty plain. Those who flee at that time are the wicked, who have just been raised. Then the Holy City comes down and settles on the plain. Satan then imbues the wicked with his spirit. He flatters them that the army in the city is small, and that his army is large, and that they can overcome the saints and take the city.”—*Early Writings*, p. 53.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Ponder the everlasting difference in being on the inside of the Holy City looking out, rather than being on the outside of the city looking in!**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, p. 239; *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 271-273.



**Part 2  
NO FEAR IN  
THE VALLEY**
**What attitude toward death characterizes the Christian?**

**"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4).**

"Every redeemed one will understand the ministry of angels in his own life. The angel who was his guardian from his earliest moment; the angel who watched his steps, and covered his head in the day of peril; the angel who was *with him in the valley of the shadow of death*, who marked his resting place, who was the first to greet him in the resurrection morning—what will it be to hold converse with him, and to learn the history of divine interposition in the individual life, of heavenly co-operation in every work of humanity!"—*Education*, p. 305 (Emphasis supplied.)

Some Christians view death as the gate to endless life. This view was borrowed from the Egyptians by Plato. Christians adopted from his writings the doctrine of natural immortality. According to the Bible no part of a human can live on after death. Death is an interruption of life, not a continuation thereof.

For the redeemed, therefore, the second coming of Christ assumes fresh significance. (See John 5:28, 29.)

**How do the wicked regard the prospect of death? Matt. 8:12.**

The answer to this question depends on the view of God, life, and death that each individual has adopted. Death is really an enemy to both saint and sinner. But hope of life in the hereafter is there to cushion the impact on the Christian. No such blessing truly sustains the sinner. In death he faces only the darkness of the abyss. One needs only to read the dying words of Voltaire and Lord Byron to measure the pain of a Christless death. Having lived by the elixir of surface satisfactions, the sinner must content himself with a sunless death.

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Await alike, th' inevitable hour:—  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."  
—Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a  
Country Churchyard."

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Ponder 1 Corinthians 15:26, 51-55. Death will be a thing of the past!**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 274; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 336.

Part 3  
ENDLESS  
KINGDOM

**How will the coming of Christ affect the human administration of the nations represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream?**

**"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44).**

When God created the world, He made mankind its steward, His vicegerent, subject only to His own direction. When we sinned, a new system of government evolved, with human administration of national affairs. Even ancient Israel chose to go this way. And so history provides the record of the human experiment in self-government. We have the names of tyrants and benevolent rulers who have brought sorrow and joy to the lives of millions. Historically however, sorrows far outweigh the joys. But the coming of Christ will change all of this. "The kingdom shall not be left to other people." Christ will resume His rightful place as Ruler of the planet.

**When will this dramatic change be implemented? Eze. 21:27.**

The administration of justice and the overall leadership of men and nations have suffered since the fall of Adam. While ruling over the basic flow of events, God has permitted men and demons to hold sway subject only to His control. But no more. Christ's return to the earth will change all this. He will once again rule this planet, this time unchallenged. "Affliction shall not rise up the second time" (Nahum 1:9).

"From the rise and fall of nations as made plain in the pages of Holy Writ, they need to learn how worthless is mere outward and worldly glory. Babylon, with all its power and its magnificence, the like of which our world has never since beheld,—power and magnificence which to the people of that day seemed so stable and enduring,—how completely has it passed away! As 'the flower of the grass' it has perished. So perishes all that has not God for its foundation. Only that which is bound up with His purpose and expresses His character can endure. His principles are the only steadfast things our world knows."—*Education*, p. 183.

## THINK IT THROUGH

**Will my faith endure the test while my salvation is being worked out with fear and trembling?**

## FURTHER STUDY

*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 910; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 208, 524; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 536.

**Part 4**      **What change will be made in our mortal nature at the second coming?**  
**LIKE HIM**

**“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2). (See also 1 Cor. 15:51-55.)**

“The earth mightily shook as the voice of the Son of God called forth the sleeping saints. They responded to the call and came forth clothed with glorious immortality, crying, ‘Victory, victory, over death and the grave! O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?’ Then the living saints and the risen ones raised their voices in a long, transporting shout of victory. Those bodies that had gone down into the grave bearing the marks of disease and death came up in immortal health and vigor. The living saints are changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and caught up with the risen ones, and together they meet their Lord in the air. Oh, what a glorious meeting! Friends whom death had separated were united, never more to part.”—*Early Writings*, p. 287.

**What dramatic reversal of experience will the saints ultimately know? Mal. 4:3.**

Perhaps the supreme tragedy in this reversal is that those who once knew the Lord were enticed away by the evil one. “This class threw themselves into a current of temptation and kept where the enemy led them successfully, and he has so easily controlled their minds and corrupted their entire experience that in all probability they will be unable to recover themselves out of his snare and obtain a healthful experience.

“The fires of the day of God will consume the stubble and chaff, and there will be nothing left of any who continue in the ungodly course which they have so long loved. This class have a disrelish for the society of those whom God is truly with.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 554.

**THINK IT THROUGH**      **What undesirable traits in my character do I need to discard in order to “lay aside every weight”? Or is it a matter of opening the heart door to the heavenly Merchantman? (See Rev. 3:20, 21.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**      *Early Writings*, p. 110; *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 33; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 36.

Part 5  
PURE AS  
HE IS PURE

**How does the "blessed hope" inspire the believer toward purity of life?**

**"Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3).**

Not that the believer ever expects to feel pure enough to be worthy of the kingdom, apart from the merits of Jesus, but hope of life in the hereafter improves the quality of life here. By beholding we become like that which claims our attention. To feed on the ashes of earth's depressing scene is to wither and die when living really counts. Spirituality is fed from above. Through prayer and the study of the Word we breathe the sweet atmosphere of heaven. To pursue the hereafter is to enrich our sojourn here!

While the Prince of Wales was on a visit to the Midlands, he went into a certain workingman's home. Next day the working man told his mate sadly, "We never expected him. The house was untidy, and I hadn't washed. We shall never forgive ourselves. If we had known that he was coming, we should have been ready for him." Unfortunately, this sad lament will fall from the lips of countless thousands who face One greater than the Prince of Wales—the coming of the King of kings!

**Eternal fellowship with Christ is the Christian's goal. Will he ever achieve it? Rev. 14:4; 7:4, 9.**

**Who is the present strength of the believer? Isa. 40:31.**

"Christ is saying to you today: 'I am with you, co-operating with your faithful, trusting efforts, and giving you precious victories. I will strengthen you as you sanctify yourselves to My service. I will give you success in your efforts to arouse souls dead in trespasses and sins.'

"Unswerving faith and unselfish love will overcome the difficulties that arise in the path of duty to hinder aggressive warfare. As those inspired by this faith go forward in the work of saving souls, they will run and not be weary, will walk and not faint."—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 243.

Many obese persons spend their lives worrying about their weight. The bad news that the scales bring daily keeps them in a state of depression. Their time could be better spent on a weight-reduction program. Concentrating less on the scales and more on consistent weight-reducing measures would accomplish more. To those who have eyes that see and ears that hear, this illustration speaks volumes.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Do I desire eternal life because I fear eternal death, or because I love Christ so dearly that I want to live in His presence eternally?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Steps to Christ*, "Faith and Acceptance," p. 53.

Part 6  
 RIGHT TO  
 THE TREE  
 OF LIFE

**What conditions must be met by those expecting to enter the city?**

**“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14).**

Sometimes, in this text, the blessing is spoken to those “who wash their robes,” (NEB, RSV). Either way, it points to the heart of salvation. He who remembers that His robe is clean only because it has been washed in the precious blood of the Lamb is going to hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Jesus. He pleads that in his own life might be seen wholehearted obedience to the commandments of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. The harmony of grace and righteousness that has always existed in the heart of God will be reflected in the heart of the redeemed believers.

**Will the church someday enjoy the Holy City? Heb. 11:16.**

“Only a few days more to be as pilgrims and strangers in this world, seeking for a better country, even an heavenly. Our home is in heaven. Then stay your soul in confidence upon God. Roll all your burdens upon Him.

“Oh, how many times has your heart been touched with the beauty of the Saviour’s countenance, charmed with the loveliness of His character, and subdued with the thought of His suffering. Now He wants you to lean your whole weight upon Him. I will give a chapter to comfort you at all times. ‘And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation’ (Isa. 12:1-3).”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 232.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Do I keep the commandments from a sense of fear or because I love the Commandment-giver, who also is my Redeemer? (See John 14:15.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 625; *Child Guidance*, p. 354; *Counsels to Teachers*, p. 280.



# 8. One Thousand Years - Of What?

**"I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:1, 2).**

The millennium is 1000 years—an interval between the second coming of Christ and the ultimate destruction of the wicked. The sin experiment has run its course. Demons and selfish men have rendered the earth unfit for human habitation. The second coming of Christ will mercifully cut short this work of death, or no flesh could be saved. This fascinating study of the millennium describes (1) the occupation of the saints, (2) the fate of the wicked, and (3) the activities of Lucifer and his angels during this period.

The millennium is one of the most misunderstood of all Bible doctrines. It is one on which the Adventist view is almost unique, not only because of our understanding of the nature of man, but also because of our view of the limited role of natural Israel in the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Some teach that it is a period of time when the gospel will go to and convert the Jewish nation. It is associated with the reign of antichrist. Yet others picture it as the culmination of man's political evolution, 1000 years of peace as the reward for man's upward strivings. For yet others, the millennium has no clear meaning in their system of interpretation. Biblically speaking, none of the above is true.

This lesson pictures the millen-

nium as a time of holy action, essential to the eternal joy of the saints, and as a time of embarrassment and desperation for Lucifer and his hosts. Those who reach the Holy City must know why many of their loved ones are not there. Thus "the saints shall judge the world" (1 Cor. 6:2). One thousand years in the atmosphere of heaven is a fitting counterpart to the 6000 years of the sin experience.

For the devil the millennium is a special source of embarrassment. Imprisoned here with his evil confederates, he is at least free to ponder his loss. His human victims are all dead. The righteous during the millennium are in heaven. The fallen angels with their leader are alone to quarrel and fight among themselves for 1000 years. Satan stands exposed for what he really is, a deceiver and a treasonable usurper. Satan may once have aspired to improve on God's creative power, but in one thousand years he cannot improve on the desolation of the earth. (See *Early Writings*, p. 145; *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 36.)

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Everlasting Destruction**  
(2 Thess. 1:6-10, NIV)
2. **Kings and Priests**  
(Rev. 20:4, 6)
3. **Jealous "Creator"**  
(Isa. 14:12-14)
4. **The Bride Adorned**  
(Rev. 21:2)
5. **"Camp of the Saints"**  
(Rev. 20:5, 9, 10)
6. **"Neither Root nor Branch"**  
(Mal. 4:1)

**Part 1**  
**EVERLASTING**  
**DESTRUCTION**

**At the second coming of Christ what will happen to the wicked?**

**“God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you” (2 Thess. 1:6-10, NIV).**

“At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth—consumed with the spirit of His mouth and destroyed by the brightness of His glory. Christ takes His people to the City of God, and the earth is emptied of its inhabitants.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 657.

The wicked have slighted 6000 years of grace dispensed at infinite cost. They have caused the persecution of preachers, prophets, and messengers of God. And finally the greatest price of all was paid in the death of the only-begotten Son of God. So that in a real sense they deserve their fate. God has, beyond all this, surrounded us with those support systems that sustain life. And, though scarred by 6000 years of abuse, this planet has retained much in nature that would gladden the eye and rejoice the heart. The sinner literally has to blind himself to the mercies of God in order to put himself in the path of God’s wrath. He has to hurdle obstacle after obstacle, each a reminder of the Master’s love, to reach the fiery judgments of Jehovah.

**How is the ultimate triumph of the redeemed over death portrayed by the apostle Paul? 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.**

The glory of the translation of the saints succeeds the midnight of persecution and sorrow. All affection for this world will be ironed out of us by God’s permitted affliction. Indeed, that is the purpose of it. The fires of affliction will burn fiercest just before the dawn of the second coming. We will be brought to long for Him as “the hart panteth after the water brooks” (Ps. 42:1).

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**In the parable, the wheat and the tares were to grow together until the harvest. Is there anything still in or about my life that will cause me to be among the tares rather than the wheat at Christ’s appearing? (See Matt. 13:30, 40.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Christ’s Object Lessons*, “To Meet the Bridegroom,” p. 421; *Early Writings*, p. 179.



**Part 2  
KINGS AND  
PRIESTS**

**What will the righteous do in heaven?**

**"I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them."**

**"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4, 6). (Compare with 1 Cor. 6:2, 3.)**

"After the saints are changed to immortality and caught up together with Jesus, after they receive their harps, their robes, and their crowns, and enter the city, Jesus and the saints sit in judgment. The books are opened—the book of life and the book of death. The book of life contains the good deeds of the saints; and the book of death contains the evil deeds of the wicked. These books are compared with the statute book, the Bible, and according to that men are judged. The saints, in unison with Jesus, pass their judgment upon the wicked dead. . . . This, I saw, was the work of the saints with Jesus through the one thousand years in the Holy City before it descends to the earth."—*Early Writings*, pp. 52, 53.

**How long will they remain there? Rev. 20:2, 6.**

"The saints will rest in the Holy City and reign as kings and priests one thousand years; then Jesus will descend with the saints upon the Mount of Olives, and the mount will part asunder and become a mighty plain for the Paradise of God to rest upon. The rest of the earth will not be cleansed until the end of the one thousand years, when the wicked dead are raised, and gather up around the city."—*Early Writings*, pp. 51, 52.

**At this same time, what will be the condition of the earth? Jer. 4:23-26.**

For 1000 years the earth will lie desolate. This time period is bound by the second coming of Christ at the beginning and the descent of the New Jerusalem at the end. During this time the saints are in heaven, and the wicked are dead on the earth. Contrary to popular thought, there will be no preaching to or conversion of the Jewish nation at this time. All conversions will take place before the millennium. For when the millennium begins, destinies will have been fixed.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What have I done today to ensure that my destiny will be fixed for eternal life and not for everlasting destruction, when the books in heaven are closed? (See 1 Tim. 5:24.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, pp. 52, 53; *Education*, pp. 180, 181; *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 14, 15.

**Part 3  
JEALOUS  
“CREATOR”**

**Under the symbol of the king of Babylon, what ambition is attributed to Lucifer, son of the morning?**

**“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! . . . For thou hast said in thine heart, . . . I will be like the most High” (Isa. 14:12-14).**

If Lucifer aspired to be like the Most High, he would undoubtedly covet creative power. The creation of this world and of man could have coincided in some measure with Lucifer’s rebellion in heaven.

“Especially was His [God’s] Son to work in union with Himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out His will and His purposes but would do nothing of Himself alone. The Father’s will would be fulfilled in Him.

“Lucifer and jealous of Jesus Christ.”—*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 13, 14.

**With 1000 years to prove his credentials as a creator, how does Lucifer (Satan) perform?**

The original sin was related to the desire of Lucifer to be consulted in the creation of mankind and the earth. Instead, however, Christ was invited into council with the Father in the planning of this creative act. Lucifer’s heart was filled with jealous but carefully controlled rage, and he went about insinuating against the government of God with such effectiveness that many of the angels in heaven accepted his story.

Now Lucifer was the highest of all created beings, but the fact that he was created indicated that he did not have creative power. (See Eze. 28:15.) He rebelled against his limitations and was cast out into the earth.

During the millennium he could have 1000 years to demonstrate any creative power. But, alas, at the end of the 1000 years he will not, in all of this time, have created a single living flower. His credibility, in this and all respects, will have been destroyed. He must divert the attention of his angel followers away from himself. The arrival of the City of God at the end of the 1000 years provides him with this opportunity. He inspires a senseless attack against the saints in the City. Fire comes down from God out of heaven and destroys all the wicked—angels and people.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Whatever is left of the world’s coveted oil will add to the fires for destroying the wicked and cleansing the earth. (See *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 87 and *The Great Controversy*, p. 672.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 264; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 697; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 516.

**Part 4**  
**THE BRIDE**  
**ADORNED**

**What unparalleled event will signal the close of the millennium?**

**"I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2). (See also Rev. 20:9; 21:10.)**

"After the judgment of the wicked dead had been finished, at the end of the one thousand years, Jesus left the city, and the saints and a train of the angelic host followed Him. Jesus descended upon a great mountain, which as soon as His feet touched it, parted asunder and became a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the great and beautiful city, with twelve foundations, and twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We cried out, 'The city! the great city! it is coming down from God out of heaven!' And it came down in all its splendor and dazzling glory and settled in the mighty plain which Jesus had prepared for it."—*Early Writings*, p. 291.

**What possible clue does the Bible present as to where the Holy City will rest? Zech. 14:4, 9.**

Whereas the prophecy of Zechariah 14 might have had an earlier fulfillment at Christ's first advent, had Israel been faithful to God, it now remains for the New Jerusalem to occupy the plain yet to be formed in the midst of the Mount of Olives.

"Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the city. There I saw most glorious houses, that had the appearance of silver, supported by four pillars set with pearls most glorious to behold. These were to be inhabited by the saints. In each was a golden shelf. I saw many of the saints go into the houses, take off their glittering crowns and lay them on the shelf, then go out into the field by the houses to do something with the earth; not as we have to do with the earth here; no, no. A glorious light shone all about their heads, and they were continually shouting and offering praises to God."—*Early Writings*, p. 18.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Read Revelation 21 and 22. If this does not inspire the heart to desire eternal life, what will? "Oh, what a beautiful city!"**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Christ's Object Lessons*, "To Meet the Bridegroom," p. 414; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 426, 427; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 591, 592; *Early Writings*, p. 41.

**Part 5  
"CAMP  
OF THE  
SAINTS"**

**At the close of the millennium, what events turn the Holy City into the "camp of the saints" for a time?**

**"The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."**

**"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:5, 9, 10).**

"At the first resurrection all come forth in immortal bloom, but at the second, the marks of the curse are visible upon all. All come up as they went down into their graves. Those who lived before the Flood, come forth with their giantlike stature, more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and well proportioned. The generations after the Flood were less in stature. . . .

" . . . Although the whole earth, with the exception of that portion where the city rests, will be wrapped in a sea of liquid fire, yet the city is preserved as was the ark, by a miracle of Almighty power. It stands unharmed amid the devouring elements."—Ellen G. White *Comments, S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 986.

**Describe the final judgment. Rev. 20:13.**

A merciful God will not destroy until the nature of sin is fully revealed. Men and angels, fallen and unfallen, will get a final lesson before the great white throne. From that time, iniquity will no longer be a mystery. Sin will stand revealed for what it really is—rebellion against the Creator. Opposition without reason, rebellion without cause, high treason against the government of God—this is sin. The reasonableness of hell will at that time be nondebatable. Saint and sinner, human and celestial, will understand the necessity of the final solution.

"As soon as the books of record are opened, and the eye of Jesus looks upon the wicked, they are conscious of every sin which they have ever committed. They see just where their feet diverged from the path of purity and holiness, just how far pride and rebellion have carried them in the violation of the law of God."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 666.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What is consequent upon having or not having our names entered in the Lamb's book of life? (See Rev. 20:15.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 628; *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 235.

**Part 6  
"NEITHER  
ROOT NOR  
BRANCH"**

**What is the fate of wicked men who failed to accept Christ's salvation?**

**"Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1).**

Here in detail is the consequence of not believing the gospel, as Christ explained the matter to Nicodemus (John 3:16-18).

"Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. Now God's creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations. 'The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break forth into singing.' Isaiah 14:7. . . .

"While the earth was wrapped in the fire of destruction, the righteous abode safely in the Holy City. Upon those that had part in the first resurrection, the second death has no power. While God is to the wicked a consuming fire, He is to His people both a sun and a shield. Revelation 20:6; Psalm 84:11."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 673.

**What produces the "utter end" of devils, death, and hell? Rev. 20:10, 14, 15.**

" 'I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.' Revelation 21:1. The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin.

"One reminder alone remains: Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought. Says the prophet, beholding Christ in His glory: 'He had bright beams coming out of His side: and there was the hiding of His power.' Habakkuk 3:4, margin. That pierced side whence flowed the crimson stream that reconciled man to God—there is the Saviour's glory, there 'the hiding of His power.' "—*The Great Controversy*, p. 674.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How shall I stand in that great day?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 55; *Education*, p. 301-309.



# 9. Divine Justice- With Love

**"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).**

During the Middle Ages theologians invented the doctrine of "everburning embers" as the ultimate fate of the wicked. This twisted version of divine justice has made more skeptics, atheists, and infidels than any other Bible-related teaching. It is to Satan's advantage thus to misrepresent the character of God. Only divine love could have tolerated sin in an orderly universe. We must therefore view the eradication of evil as essential to the good of all creation. In love, the God of heaven will put an end to it all.

Messengers of mercy brought repeated appeals to their own generation that man should worship and obey the true God. But most of them were rather roughly treated. Noah was ridiculed; Jeremiah was consigned to a pit; James, John the Baptist, and Paul were all beheaded; Peter was crucified; and the apostle John was exiled. God even sent His Son Jesus with His appeal of love and mercy. Alas, He was crucified.

Would you not agree that God has done all that divine love could conceive to save man? Jesus was God's only-begotten Son! God the Father risked losing Him to save mankind. This is love, deep and mysterious. If He loses His Son, we too are lost. So in a real sense Jehovah risked all!

The justice of God must never be studied without the truth of 2 Peter 3:9, which assures us that God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

An offended God will be vindicated. His violated law must be satisfied. Without enforcement power, God would forfeit the respect of the universe. Hence, the "fire and brimstone" of Revelation 20. It is the natural consequence of unrequited love. God is not a stern-visaged despot sitting in the heavens, anxious to punish; rather, He is a loving Father who has striven 6000 years to deliver us. But when spurned, He is still a "consuming fire."

For those who cannot sacrifice their idols for the sake of living in the presence of Jesus, heaven would be a place of perpetual torture. It would have to deprive them of freedom. It is in mercy, therefore, that justice exacts the toll of every unforgiven sin. Heaven must be truly heaven to every permanent resident.

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Where Mercy Meets Justice**  
(John 3:16)
2. **The Long-suffering God**  
(2 Peter 3:9)
3. **Give Account of Yourself**  
(Rom. 14:12)
4. **Your Adversary the Devil**  
(1 Peter 5:8)
5. **Destroyed "in Hell"**  
(Matt. 10:28)
6. **"Prisoners of Hope"**  
(Zech. 9:12)

**Part 1  
WHERE  
MERCY  
MEETS  
JUSTICE****What principle of mercy forever undergirds the judgments of Jehovah?****“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). (Compare Matt. 23:37-39; Hosea 11:7, 8.)**

“Divine pity marked the countenance of the Son of God as He cast one lingering look upon the temple and then upon His hearers. In a voice choked by deep anguish of heart and bitter tears He exclaimed, ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!’ [Matt. 23:37 quoted] . . . This is the separation struggle. In the lamentation of Christ the very heart of God is pouring itself forth.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 620.

“O that we might comprehend more fully the infinite price that has been paid for our redemption! Paul declares, ‘Ye are bought with a price’ (1 Cor. 6:20); and it is true; for the price paid is nothing less than the life of the only-begotten Son of God. Let us all consider this. We may refuse the invitations that Christ sends to us; we may neglect His offer of pardon and peace; but still it remains a fact that every one of us has been bought with a price, even with the precious blood of the Son of God. Therefore, ‘Consider him’ (Heb. 12:3).”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 100.

**Despite the vivid language of some Bible passages, how does God feel about the punishment of the wicked? Eze. 18:32.**

“Satan is ready to steal away the blessed assurances of God. He desires to take every glimmer of hope and every ray of light from the soul; but you must not permit him to do this. Do not give ear to the tempter, but say, ‘Jesus has died that I might live. He loves me, and wills not that I should perish. I have a compassionate heavenly Father; and although I have abused His love, though the blessings He has given me have been squandered, I will arise, and go to my Father, and say, ‘I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son: make me as one of Thy hired servants.’” The parable tells you how the wanderer will be received: ‘When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.’ Luke 15:18-21.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 53, 54.

**THINK IT THROUGH****In the light of the precious promise of 1 John 1:9, why will so many souls for whom Christ died be lost?****FURTHER STUDY***Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 631-634.



**Part 2**  
**THE LONG-**  
**SUFFERING**  
**GOD**

**How does the apostle Peter characterize the divine attitude toward sinners?**

**"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).**

"I hope and pray that you may walk in all lowliness of mind, that you may be a blessing to one another. 'Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.' The bridal lamps must be kept trimmed and burning. Our Lord delays because of His long-suffering to usward, 'not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' But when we, with all the redeemed, shall stand upon the sea of glass, with harps of gold and crowns of glory, and before us the immensity of eternity, then we shall see how short was the waiting period of probation. 'Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching.'"—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 485.

**What is in the nature of sin that decrees its own destruction?**  
**James 1:15; Rom. 6:23.**

By nature, sin is anti-God. It is contrary to the nature of God. It is a cancer in the universe that must be cut out. If left alone, it would both contaminate and destroy. Left to natural results, sin would have destroyed itself and its victims long ago. But God intervened in mercy in order to rescue all who would accept His gift of salvation. However, God's mercy has limits. Justice still demands the eradication of sin. The cost to heaven and earth is high. God will put an end to sin, sinners, and sin's wages. And when He does, the on-looking universe will declare Him just.

"By this law, which governs angels, which demands purity in the most secret thoughts, desires, and dispositions, and which shall 'stand fast for ever' (Ps. 111:8), all the world is to be judged in the rapidly approaching day of God. Transgressors may flatter themselves that the Most High does not know, that the Almighty does not consider; He will not always bear with them. Soon they will receive the reward of their doings, the death that is the wages of sin; while the righteous nations, that have kept the law, will be ushered through the pearly gates of the celestial city, and will be crowned with immortal life and joy in the presence of God and the Lamb."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 220.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**If sin and Satan were allowed to exist forever, what effect would this have on unfallen worlds?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 394.

**Part 3  
GIVE  
ACCOUNT OF  
YOURSELF**

**Since we live in a moral universe, what does this require of us in terms of justice?**

**“Every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12). (Compare Eccl. 12:13, 14.)**

“In matters of conscience the soul must be left untrammelled. No one is to control another’s mind, to judge for another, or to prescribe his duty. God gives to every soul freedom to think, and to follow his own convictions. ‘Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.’ No one has a right to merge his own individuality in that of another. In all matters where principle is involved, ‘let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.’ Rom. 14:12, 5. In Christ’s kingdom there is no lordly oppression, no compulsion of manner. The angels of heaven do not come to the earth to rule, and to exact homage, but as messengers of mercy, to co-operate with men in uplifting humanity.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 550, 551.

**What ultimately is at stake in this controversy between Christ and Satan? Isa. 44:6, 7; Eze. 28:6, 7.**

The claims to Deity are brought close to us in the claims of the God-Man, Jesus Christ. His contemporaries recognized the weight of His claims in a measure when they accused Him of blasphemy. His claims were confirmed in His rising from the dead.

“Over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, Christ had proclaimed in triumph, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life.’ These words could be spoken only by the Deity. All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life. Only He who is one with God could say, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 785.

The allegiance of mankind and angels was at stake in the challenge to the character and law of God. If the law and its claims were left unsatisfied, the issue of sin would forever remain unsettled. And the longer this was undecided, the longer the spreading rebellion was multiplied. In taking our place before God, Christ bore in His own body the curse of the law for us. This places us on vantage ground. Such love draws us to God. Angels touch their harps in rapture at the divine impulse. Who wouldn’t serve a God like this?

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Ponder the awful outcome for the human beings on this planet had not Christ died for them. Then for reassurance read or recite John 3:16.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 117, 523.

**Part 4  
YOUR  
ADVERSARY  
THE DEVIL**

**What is Satan's immediate objective in pressing the rebellion against the government of God?**

**"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). (Compare Rev. 12:12.)**

Like the proverbial dog in a manger, Lucifer does not really want heaven; but he does not want us to have it either. He seeks to wound Christ by wounding the church.

"Satan . . . [after Christ's ascension] counseled with his angels, and with bitter hatred against God's government told them that while he retained his power and authority upon earth their efforts must be tenfold stronger against the followers of Jesus. . . . He related to his angels that Jesus had given His disciples power to rebuke them and cast them out, and to heal those whom they should afflict. Then Satan's angels went forth like roaring lions, seeking to destroy the followers of Jesus."—*Early Writings*, pp. 191, 192.

**What is God's final answer, in His overall plan, to the rebels against His government? Isa. 66:15, 16.**

It must be remembered that man chooses his own destiny. He may despise the salvation so freely offered and literally cast himself into hell. The restraints of heaven have been deliberately cast aside, and the transgressor has chosen his own hard way. There is no joy in heaven over the death of the wicked. Christ is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

"The feet of the wicked will never desecrate the earth made new. Fire will come down from God out of heaven and devour them—burn them up root and branch. Satan is the root, and his children are the branches. The same fire that will devour the wicked will purify the earth."—*Early Writings*, pp. 51, 52.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Why will so many be lost in spite of the fact that Christ died to save sinners? How can I know I have been covered and cleansed by the blood of Jesus? (Study John 15:1-14 and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 674-677.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 40, 41; *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 172, 173; Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 986, 987.

**Part 5**  
**DESTROYED**  
**"IN HELL"**

As indicated in the introduction to this week's lesson, no other teaching within the Christian church has made more enemies for God than the teaching of an eternally burning hell. No other teaching has made it harder to accept that divine justice is with love. In spite of some Bible texts that would seem to support a continuing punishing of the impenitent, there are clear statements of the total destruction of the wicked. The gift of God to the wicked is not eternal life—neither "in hell" nor anywhere else!

**What is one of the clearest statements of the concept given above?**

**"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). (Compare also Rev. 20:13-15; Mal. 4:1.)**

"Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. Malachi 4:1; 2 Peter 3:10. The earth's surface seems one molten mass—a vast, seething lake of fire. It is the time of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men—the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.' Isaiah 34:8."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 672, 673.

To complete the picture of events at the close of the millennium, we note the preservation of the "camp of the saints" and the cleansing of the earth:

"While the earth was wrapped in the fire of destruction, the righteous abode safely in the Holy City. Upon those that had part in the first resurrection, the second death has no power. While God is to the wicked a consuming fire, He is to His people both a sun and a shield. Revelation 20:6; Psalm 84:11."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 673.

**According to Peter, what kind of power will God release in "the day of the Lord"? 2 Peter 3:10, 11.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Read Proverbs 1:26 and Psalm 2:4. How should we harmonize these two texts with the thought in Ezekiel 33:11?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, p. 151; *The Great Controversy*, p. 504; *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 138.

**Part 6**  
**"PRISONERS**  
**OF HOPE"**

There are a number of reasons why God has not closed the account of the human race already, why time lingers. One of the chief of these is His great yearning for the souls of men—as when Christ wept over His rejection by Jerusalem.

**What earnest appeal from the heart of love is conveyed through Zechariah?**

**"Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee" (Zech. 9:12).**

"We are to reveal to the universe, to the world fallen and to the worlds unfallen, that there is forgiveness with God, that through the love of God we may be reconciled to God. Man repents, becomes contrite in heart, believes in Christ as His atoning sacrifice, and realizes that God is reconciled to him.

"We should cherish gratitude of heart all the days of our life because the Lord has put on record these words: 'For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.' The reconciliation of God to man, and man to God, is sure when certain conditions are met."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 370.

**Under the personification of "wisdom," how does the wise man point out the reasons for the eternal loss of many in spite of God's loving appeals? Prov. 1:23-27.**

"If the sinner still refuses to heed the voice of mercy which calls after him with tender, pitying love, his soul will be left in darkness. If he neglects the opportunity presented him, and goes on in his evil course, the wrath of God will, in an unexpected moment, break forth upon him. 'He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.' . . . The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It lies at the foundation of a proper education. Those who, having a favorable opportunity, have failed to learn this first great lesson, are not only disqualified for service in the cause of God, but are a positive injury to the community in which they live."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 208.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Since it is unnecessary that anyone be lost, why put off any longer being assured that we are Christ's?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, p. 378; *Messages to Young People*, p. 334.



# 10. The New Creation

**“Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind” (Isa. 65:17).**

Paradise lost will yet be Paradise regained. All that was lost through Adam’s fall will be reclaimed through Christ’s triumph. The horrors of the sin experiment are tinted by one silver lining. Mankind, triumphant at last, will now achieve a relationship with God heretofore impossible. Through Jesus Christ and His incarnation, we may in a real sense claim kinship with the Godhead as would have been possible in no other way. This thought alone should weaken the power of sin in our lives and fire us to press on to reach the mark of the high calling as it is in Jesus.

Mankind, born in sin, has been so conditioned by familiarity with the earth’s environment that it appears normal to him. There are still on this earth garden spots of variety and beauty that charm the senses. Having known none other than this earthly clime, we have little realization of what this world once was or once again will be. A few prophets have in vision seen other realms, still unfallen, and relayed scenes that strain earthly language. The apostle Paul was caught up to the “third heaven.” The apostle John was given

a view of the New Jerusalem that is marvelous in its vivid portrayal. Ellen White was given a view of other worlds and was pained by the thought that she must longer inhabit this one.

At the end of the millennium a new day dawns for this planet. Gone forever are the familiar signs of erosion, the deep crevices and jagged hilltops. Extremes of hot and cold we know no more. Vast desert stretches know again the verdant bloom of grass and flower. The animals are tame, and sinless men and women walk paradise again without fear. Gone forever are rental housing, funeral trains, asphalt jungles, and food shortages. Mankind lays “down his sword and shield, down by the riverside—to study war no more.” This is a vision of the future that should inspire the present. Because of the hereafter, we may live better lives here.

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Everlasting Destruction**  
(2 Thess. 1:8, 9; 2 Peter 3:10)
2. **Order and Harmony**  
(Isa. 65:25)
3. **Everything’s Right!**  
(Isa. 65:23)
4. **Pools on Parched Ground**  
(Isa. 35:7, 8)
5. **Study War No More**  
(Isa. 2:4)
6. **Kings and Queens**  
(Rev. 22:5)

**Part 1**  
**EVERLASTING**  
**DESTRUCTION**

In preparation for the new creation, what steps does the Lord take to cleanse the earth of every trace of sin (and sinners)?

**"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. 1:8, 9).**

**"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).**

"The wicked receive their recompense in the earth. Proverbs 11:31. They 'shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts.' Malachi 4:1. Some are destroyed as in a moment, while others suffer many days. All are punished 'according to their deeds.' The sins of the righteous having been transferred to Satan, he is made to suffer not only for his own rebellion, but for all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit. . . . After all have perished who fell by his deceptions, he is still to live and suffer on. In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch—Satan the root, his followers the branches. The full penalty of the law has been visited; the demands of justice have been met; and heaven and earth, beholding, declare the righteousness of Jehovah."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 673.

**What act of creation will Christ then perform? Isa. 65:17.**

"All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God's redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar—worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God's handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation—suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator's name is written, and in all are the riches of His power displayed."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 677, 678.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Can we ever comprehend in its fullness what it will mean to "mount up with wings as eagles"? (Isa. 40:31).**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 278, 725, 726.



**Part 2**  
**ORDER AND**  
**HARMONY**

**How will the animal world relate to mankind in the new earth?**

**“The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord” (Isa. 65:25).**

Early in her experience, Ellen White saw in vision what had been foreseen by Isaiah the prophet: “Then we entered a field full of all kinds of beasts—the lion, the lamb, the leopard, and the wolf, all together in perfect union. We passed through the midst of them, and they followed on peaceably after.”—*Early Writings*, p. 18.

**Will there be rental housing units in the new earth? Isa. 65:21, 22.**

“In the earth made new the redeemed will engage in the occupations and pleasures that brought happiness to Adam and Eve in the beginning. The Eden life will be lived, the life in garden and field.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 549.

Thousands live in substandard housing. Falling plaster, creaking staircases, rat holes, faulty plumbing, and filth on filth is the daily lot of the urban poor. Absentee landlords who flout city housing codes are the rule, not the exception. In fact, seven to ten occupants in a single room is not unusual in some ghetto areas. Thousands grow up whose values are alien to the national consensus. In some great cities of the earth millions are born, live, and die upon the streets. No place is home. The high crime rate in the cities is no mystery to the social worker. Behind the facade of prosperity in some sections there are the areas of internal rot that make life for millions a matter of day-to-day survival.

To all these the promise of a new world where all will partake of the horn of plenty must have a strong appeal. Hope is fed by the promise of better days ahead. But even this, the glory of the world to come, is pale when compared with the prospect of eternal fellowship with our Maker and Redeemer.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**There will be, we are told, no lazy or idle among the redeemed in the new earth, according to Isaiah 65:21-23. Since earth is the preparation place as it were, how can I possibly entertain idleness in my daily life here and now?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Education*, pp. 303, 304; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 731.

**Part 3  
EVERY-  
THING'S  
RIGHT!**

**How does the prophet Isaiah indicate the end of all our troubles once heaven becomes our home?**

**"They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them" (Isa. 65:23).**

"The Bible does not acknowledge a believer who is idle, however high his profession may be. There will be employment in heaven. The redeemed state is not one of idle repose. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God, but it is a rest found in loving service."—Ellen G. White *Comments, S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1164.

**What is the apostle John's parallel assessment of the new creation? Rev. 21:4.**

"There are homes for the pilgrims of earth. There are robes for the righteous, with crowns of glory and palms of victory. All that has perplexed us in the providences of God will in the world to come be made plain. The things hard to be understood will then find explanation. The mysteries of grace will unfold before us. Where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken promises, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 286.

**What promise for the handicapped that found only a measure of fulfillment at Christ's first advent is assured to us at the second? Isa. 35:5, 6.**

"The earth promised to the meek will not be like this, darkened with the shadow of death and the curse. 'We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' 2 Peter 3:13. . . .

"There is no disappointment, no sorrow, no sin, no one who shall say, I am sick; there are no burial trains, no mourning, no death, no partings, no broken hearts; but Jesus is there, peace is there."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 17.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What a joy it will be to see loved ones and friends, some of whom have suffered severe affliction and endured many handicaps in this life, able to walk, run, and even fly, with no pain or encumbrance of any kind, "changed in a moment."**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, pp. 288, 289; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 477; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 313, 314.

**Part 4**  
**POOLS ON**  
**PARCHED**  
**GROUND**

**Large areas of this earth are desert. How will it be in the new earth, in Eden restored?**

**"The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein" (Isa. 35:7, 8).**

In the simpler language of her earliest testimonies, Ellen White painted a similar picture of the earth made new:

"I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried out: 'They will never fade.' Next I saw a field of tall grass, most glorious to behold; it was living green, and had a reflection of silver and gold, as it waved proudly to the glory of King Jesus."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 68.

The Lord intends for His children to be interested in and eager for the beauties and glories of the better world, else He would not have given us as much colorful language in describing its realities. Yet we must ever recognize that human language cannot do justice to the realities of heaven and the new earth. We borrow words from Paul, who wrote primarily of the glories of God's saving grace when he declared: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

Not only is the present world marred by the corroding, corrupting forces of sin, but our capacity to appreciate the glory that remains is limited by our close contact with sin. So no matter who dreams of that better land, reality will infinitely exceed his dreams.

**What basic change will occur in the human attitude? Isa. 35:10.**

"Our Saviour claims all there is of us; He asks our first and holiest thoughts, our purest and most intense affection. If we are indeed partakers of the divine nature, His praise will be continually in our hearts and upon our lips. Our only safety is to surrender our all to Him and to be constantly growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth."—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 95.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**No sacrifice is too great to make; no sin is too sweet to cherish; no time is any better than now to prepare to meet our God.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 730-733.

**Part 5**  
**STUDY WAR**  
**NO MORE**

**War has plagued the human family since the advent of sin. In Isaiah's prophecies of an Israel open to her Messiah, and promises of perpetual peace remain to be fulfilled by "the church" of all ages in the Promised Land?**

**"He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:4).**

Heaven will provide a homecoming that is beyond imagination. So many surprises of God's providence will then be made known. Souls redeemed will greet those who, perhaps all-unknown now, were the instruments of God for their salvation. Tumult and strife are gone forever. Eternal peace reigns. Men and angels will, in genuine ecstasy, unite voices and instruments in harmonies of praise to the Redeemer. "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain"!

**Who will be the permanent Ruler of the new order? Dan. 2:44; Rev. 11:15.**

"About His coming cluster the glories of that 'restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.' Acts 3:21. Then the long-continued rule of evil shall be broken; 'the kingdoms of this world' will become 'the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.' Revelation 11:15. 'The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.' 'The Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.' He shall be 'for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people.' Isaiah 40:5; 61:11; 28:5.

"It is then that the peaceful and long-desired kingdom of the Messiah shall be established under the whole heaven. 'The Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord.' 'The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.' 'Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called My Delight, and thy land Beulah.' 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.' Isaiah 51:3; 35:2; 62:4, 5, margin."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 301, 302.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Of all the glories of heaven, none will be so glorious to behold as my Saviour's face!**

**FURTHER STUDY**

Isa. 65:17-25 in various modern translations.

**Part 6  
KINGS AND  
QUEENS**

**“There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 22:5). (Compare 20:6.)**

In the words of the Scriptures and of Ellen White, the royal status of the redeemed is persistently affirmed. Who can begin to comprehend the privileges of sharing the throne and government of heaven?

“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.’ Revelation 14:4. The vision of the prophet pictures them as standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service, clothed in white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth, not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 591.

**How does Ellen White picture the triumphant church?**

“Now the decisions of earth are reversed. ‘The rebuke of His people shall he take away.’ Isaiah 25:8. ‘They shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord.’ He hath appointed ‘to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.’ Isaiah 62:12; 61:3. They are no longer feeble, afflicted, scattered, and oppressed. Henceforth they are to be ever with the Lord. They stand before the throne clad in richer robes than the most honored of the earth have ever worn. They are crowned with diadems more glorious than were ever placed upon the brow of earthly monarchs. The days of pain and weeping are forever ended. The King of glory has wiped the tears from all faces; every cause of grief has been removed. Amid the waving of palm branches they pour forth a song of praise, clear, sweet, and harmonious; every voice takes up the strain, until the anthem swells through the vaults of heaven: ‘Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.’ And all the inhabitants of heaven respond in the ascription: ‘Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever.’ Revelation 7:10, 12.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 650, 651.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What have I done today to deepen my assurance that when God’s true church triumphs, I will triumph with it?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Story of Redemption*, p. 432; *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 591.



# 11. Eternal Life for the Church

**“This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:11, 12).**

The supreme passion of man is to live forever. Pagan philosophies have imputed to human beings an immortal nature, an immortal soul. The writers of the Scriptures take a dim view of this doctrine. They are consistent in their view that man by sin forfeited his initial prospect of living forever. Now he has a state of mortality in this life while he awaits the gift of God—immortality—in the first resurrection or in translation. Death is an enemy, a foreign element in the government of God. Our hearts must never be satisfied until it is banished forever from the universe.

The idea that humans should live forever is not new. It is a divine principle that pervaded Eden until the sin of Adam and Eve. Death is foreign to the nature of God. “In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4). It was, therefore, not in God’s plan for us to die. But sin changed all this. We, by sin, voluntarily separated ourselves from God. We must now experience the full separation of death. Death is the natural end of sin, for it is the ultimate degree of separation. Sin is by nature schismatic. It is impossible to rebel against God and also be in harmony

with Him. Thus, when Adam and Eve sinned, the taint of decay appeared on all of nature.

The desire to live forever has nevertheless persisted. Pagan philosophies invented the concept of an immortal soul to ease the pain of dying. In some cultures, when a king died, his servants were slain, ostensibly to meet his needs in the other world. Some second-century Christians borrowed this concept from Plato, and since then it has fastened itself like a leech on the faith of millions.

The Bible teaches that the quality and assurance of eternal life may be enjoyed here by the church—the body of Jesus Christ. But the immortal state must await the resurrection or translation at the second advent. Death is the price of sin. Human philosophy cannot reason this away. By accepting Christ, we may receive by faith now the life that is eternal. After the resurrection it will be ours by nature.

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **A Tree of Life**  
(Gen. 2:9)
2. **Life Compromised**  
(Gen. 3:13, 17)
3. **Deception and Death**  
(Ps. 146:4; Eccl. 9:5, 6)
4. **Death and Victory**  
(1 Cor. 15:51-54)
5. **Immortality Bestowed**  
(1 Tim. 6:15, 16)
6. **Eternal Life, Eternal Joy**  
(John 16:33; 15:11, 12)

**Part 1  
A TREE  
OF LIFE**

**What provision did God make in the garden for the perpetuation of life?**

**“Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:9).**

“The tree of life is a representation of the preserving care of Christ for His children. As Adam and Eve ate of this tree, they acknowledged their dependence upon God. The tree of life possessed the power to perpetuate life, and as long as they ate of it, they could not die. The lives of the antediluvians were protracted because of the life-giving power of this tree, which was transmitted to them from Adam and Eve.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 988.

**On what condition would the race forfeit immortality? Gen. 2:17.**

“Christ never planted the seeds of death in the system. Satan planted these seeds when he tempted Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge which meant disobedience to God.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1082.

Death is the sure result of sin. God made us, under conditions, to live forever. He built into nature all of the support systems. This was true of human beings. Had we remained true to God, we could have received immortality. But the intruder entered and succeeded all too well in alienating us from our Maker.

New words entered the human vocabulary. Death, graveyard, sickness, and pain became household words. But more seriously they mirror the human experience, trapped in the sin experiment.

The residual effects of our parents' eating the fruit of the tree of life are obviously running thin. Six thousand years of attrition have literally “done us in.” By prayer, the study of the Bible, and Christian service we may replenish our spiritual resources; but our bodies are locked into a descending scale until the resurrection morning, when “this corruptible” puts on incorruption and “this mortal” puts on immortality.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Through the first Adam, sin came into the world. Through the second Adam, sin is eradicated from the universe. (See 1 Cor. 15:45, 47.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 988; *The Story of Redemption*, pp. 21, 24.



**Part 2  
LIFE  
COMPROMISED**

**By what related acts did the first pair stray from the divine plan for their lives?**

**"The Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." "Unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life" (Gen. 3:13, 17).**

Satan convinced Eve that God had withheld something good. If the fruit of the tree was good for food, why should she not have some? Eve was led to distrust God. This is fatal to anyone. Intellectual distrust led to emotional imbalance. Eve had lost her protection against deception. The act that would plunge the world into misery was thus assured.

Adam, however, made a clear choice between life and death. He chose death, and it has been passed on to all of his descendants.

"She [Eve] then plucked for herself of the fruit and ate, and imagined she felt the quickening power of a new and elevated existence as the result of the exhilarating influence of the forbidden fruit. She was in a strange and unnatural excitement as she sought her husband with her hands filled with the forbidden fruit. She related to him the wise discourse of the serpent and wished to conduct him at once to the tree of knowledge. She told him she had eaten of the fruit, and instead of her feeling any sense of death, she realized a pleasing, exhilarating influence. As soon as Eve had disobeyed she became a powerful medium through which to occasion the fall of her husband."—*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 35, 36.

**What precautions did God take to prevent the race from becoming immortal sinners? Gen. 3:22-24.**

"Angels were commissioned to immediately guard the way of the tree of life. It was Satan's studied plan that Adam and Eve should disobey God, receive His frown, and then partake of the tree of life, that they might perpetuate a life of sin. But holy angels were sent to debar their way to the tree of life. Around these angels flashed beams of light on every side, which had the appearance of glittering swords."—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 41.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**In the light of the first sin, do I find it easy to forget or hard to believe, that God always knows what is best for me, however severe the trial or the test?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 366; *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 357.

**Part 3  
DECEPTION  
AND DEATH**

**Because of sin, death has become a part of our experience. What happens to us in death?**

**"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Ps. 146:4).**

**"The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun" (Eccl. 9:5, 6).**

In the final conflict of the remnant church with the forces of darkness, the entire issue of the nature of the human family will be for some as traumatic as the issue of the Sabbath day. "Upon the fundamental error of natural immortality rests the doctrine of consciousness in death—a doctrine, like eternal torment, opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures, to the dictates of reason, and to our feelings of humanity. According to the popular belief, the redeemed in heaven are acquainted with all that takes place on the earth and especially with the lives of the friends whom they have left behind. But how could it be a source of happiness to the dead to know the troubles of the living, to witness the sins committed by their own loved ones, and to see them enduring all the sorrows, disappointments, and anguish of life? How much of heaven's bliss would be enjoyed by those who were hovering over their friends on earth?"—*The Great Controversy*, p. 545.

**What ringing declaration by Christ permits the dying to look forward to life after death? John 5:28, 29.**

"Christ declared to His hearers that if there were no resurrection of the dead, the Scriptures which they professed to believe would be of no avail. . . . God counts the things that are not as though they were. He sees the end from the beginning, and beholds the result of His work as though it were now accomplished. The precious dead, from Adam down to the last saint who dies, will hear the voice of the Son of God, and will come forth from the grave to immortal life. God will be their God, and they shall be His people. There will be a close and tender relationship between God and the risen saints. This condition, which is anticipated in His purpose, He beholds as if it were already existing. The dead live unto Him."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 606.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What a thrill we will experience when we see our guardian angel in the resurrection. (See *Education*, p. 305.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, pp. 550, 551.

**Part 4  
DEATH AND  
VICTORY****What change of nature may the redeemed church expect at Christ's return?**

**"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:51-54).**

The most persistent problem of life—the problem of death—will have its answer in the resurrection and translation of the saints. "Jesus is coming, but not as at His first advent, a babe in Bethlehem; not as He rode into Jerusalem, when the disciples praised God with a loud voice and cried, 'Hosanna'; but in the glory of the Father and with all the retinue of holy angels to escort Him on His way to earth. . . . Then only those who are holy, those who have followed fully the meek Pattern, will with rapturous joy exclaim as they behold Him, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.' And they will be changed 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.'"—*Early Writings*, p. 110.

**What solution does the universal search for human longevity find in this after-life? Luke 20:35, 36; John 11:26.**

"The last thing they [the redeemed] acknowledged was the pangs of death. When they awake the pain is all gone. . . .

"Here they stand, and the finishing touch of immortality is put upon them, and they go up to meet their Lord in the air. The gates of the city of God swing back upon their hinges, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. There are the columns of angels on either side, and the ransomed of God walk in through the cherubims and seraphims. Christ bids them welcome and puts upon them His benediction. 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' What is that joy? He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied."—Ellen G. White *Comments, S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1093.

**THINK IT THROUGH****What will it take to be ready to be "caught up" when Jesus comes?****FURTHER STUDY***S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1093; *Early Writings*, pp. 35, 225.

Part 5  
IMMORTALITY  
BESTOWED

**Who alone has immortality now by nature and by right?**

**“Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen” (1 Tim. 6:15, 16).**

In demonstration of the truth that only God now has immortality, Christ made a challenging claim when He was here on earth as man: “ ‘I am the resurrection and the life.’ This language can be used only by the Deity. All created things live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capabilities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, could say, ‘I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.’ All the human beings in our world take their life from Him. He is the spring, the fountain of life.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1113.

**May we in this life partake of the quality of eternal life while we wait for the reality in the life to come? 1 John 5:11, 12.**

In conversion, we now must claim by faith what Adam had potentially by nature—life eternal upon meeting the conditions. In the resurrection we will receive by nature what we now claim by faith. In the resurrection this corruptible will put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. Amen!

The attractiveness of living forever depends upon the character each person develops. The seasoned sinner loses any desire to live forever. Sin has its pleasure but it is transitory. The indulgence of sinful pleasure soon sours.

Those who find joy in the prospect of life eternal are those who find Christ here! The enrichment of the human experience here whets the appetite for more of the same in the hereafter. Only the righteous would want to live forever. Death is merciful to the sinner.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**My character here determines what I shall be when I shall see Him as He is! Oh, solemn thought!**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Evangelism*, p. 247; *The Great Controversy*, p. 533; *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 379.

**Part 6  
ETERNAL  
LIFE,  
ETERNAL  
JOY**

**To possess Christ is to enjoy life to the fullest, now and eternally. What evidence do we have that this is so?**

**"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."**

**"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 16:33; 15:11, 12).**

"In His parting conversation with His disciples on the night before the crucifixion the Saviour made no reference to the suffering that He had endured and must yet endure. He did not speak of the humiliation that was before Him, but sought to bring to their minds that which would strengthen their faith, leading them to look forward to the joys that await the overcomer."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 23. (Emphasis supplied.)

**What special privilege will be accorded those who victoriously survive the final tribulation? Rev. 14:3, 4.**

With all the redeemed, the 144,000 share the unending joy of the earth made new. "There [in the City of God], immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. . . . There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 677.

**Is life in eternity likely to be exciting and challenging?**

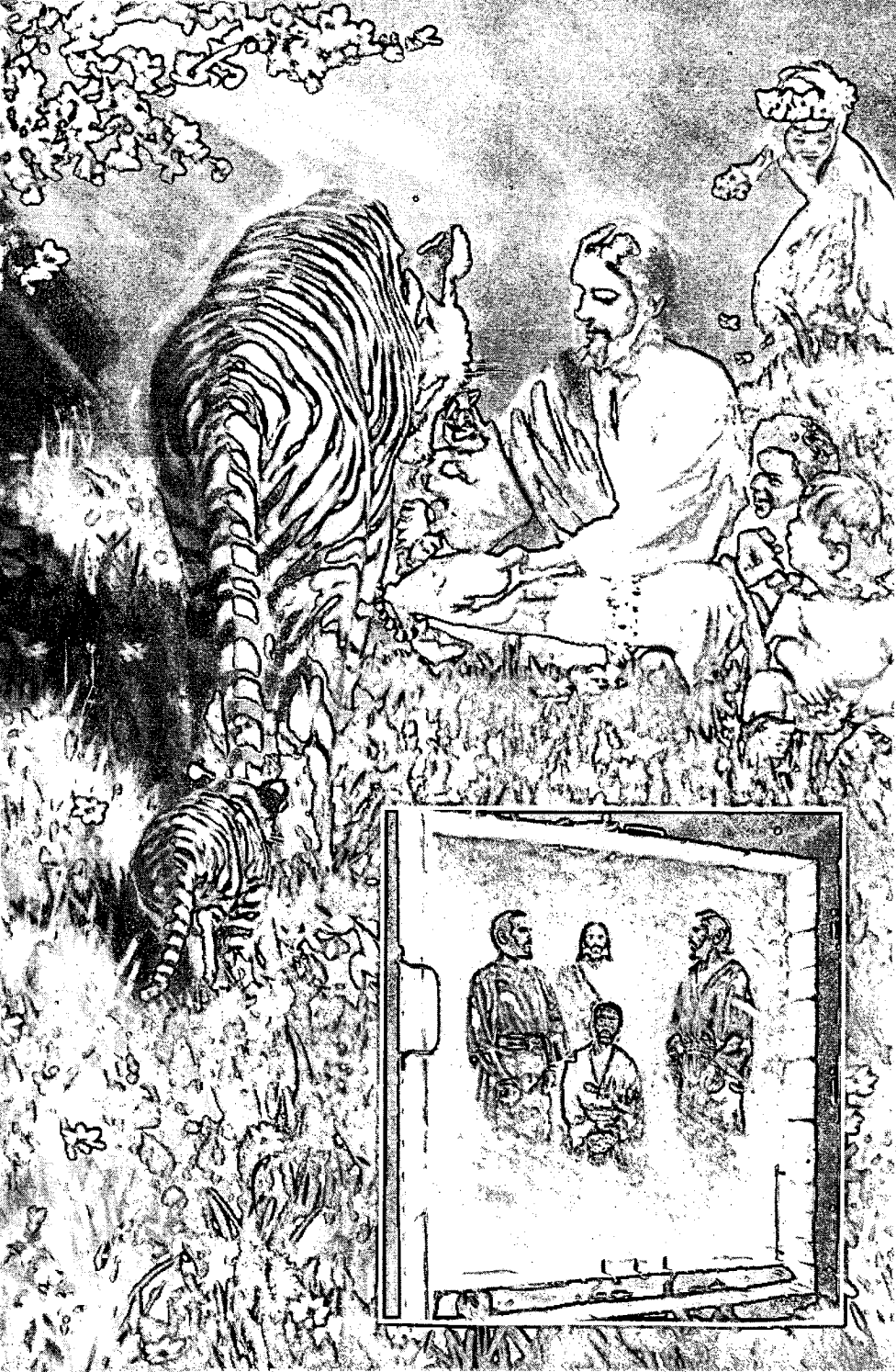
"Many seem to have the idea that this world and the heavenly mansions constitute the universe of God. Not so. The redeemed throng will range from world to world, and much of their time will be employed in searching out the mysteries of redemption. And throughout the whole stretch of eternity, this subject will be continually opening to their minds. The privileges of those who overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony are beyond comprehension."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 990.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Eternal life—mine for the grasping! (See 1 Tim. 6:12, 19.) Amen.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 88, 89.



# 12. The Church's Spiritual Resources

**“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isa. 55:6, 7).**

As we move toward the difficult days before the church will be home at last, we find that we have not been left to face the enemy alone. There are at our disposal ample provisions for successful spiritual combat. Angels of God that excel in strength are commissioned to protect our lives and lighten our burdens. There are, however, some initiatives that rest with us. As Adam took the initiative, when he partook of the forbidden fruit, so we have decisions to make in God's recovery plan. These can be neglected only at the peril of our souls. The tapping of our spiritual resources is of the first priority.

It is the studied purpose of Satan to provide distractions to divert our attention from our primary needs. He has a mixed bag of persons, places, things, and situations that have worked well for him through the centuries. The list of great and good men who have succumbed to his wiles is endless. Patriarchs and prophets have not been immune to his blandishments. This has in turn discouraged many from attempting the good life.

There is nothing mysterious, however, about our spiritual failures. Invariably they occur when we fail to take advantage of our spiritual resources. The promises of God are backed up by the total resources of heaven, and they are more than

adequate. But there is nothing automatic about their dispensation. Our Lord has admonished us, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matt. 7:7). This requires an exercise of the will.

Under the tree in Eden, God did not move arbitrarily to restrain Eve from yielding to temptation. She fastened her attention on the serpent and came under his mesmeric influence. Finally, she was believing things that she should have doubted and doubting things that she should have believed. In this state of mental confusion she sinned against God, and Adam followed her deliberately. Surrounded by angels of God who longed to rescue them but were helpless before the human will, Eve and Adam went the way all flesh has followed. Prayer, a study of the Word of God, and sincere repentance are basic essentials in our search for spiritual excellence.

In our study we are now considering Heaven's spiritual provisions for preparing the church and keeping the church for the triumphal return of Christ when she will be home at last—in Eden restored, “Paradise Regained.”

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **“I Am With You”**  
(Matt. 28:20)
2. **“Make You Clean”**  
(Isa. 1:16)
3. **“Every Word”**  
(Matt. 4:4)
4. **“Not Forsaking”**  
(Heb. 10:25; 1 John 1:7)
5. **Angels in Charge**  
(Ps. 91:11, 12)
6. **He Will Perform It**  
(Phil. 1:6)

**Part 1**  
**"I AM**  
**WITH YOU"**

**What assurance did Christ express to His disciples that He would never forsake them or us?**

**"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. 28:20).**

When we wonder how this promise of Christ's was fulfilled to faithful John the Baptist, we might want to consider the following words of encouragement:

"Though no miraculous deliverance was granted John, he was not forsaken. He had always the companionship of heavenly angels, who opened to him the prophecies concerning Christ, and the precious promises of Scripture. These were his stay, as they were to be the stay of God's people through the coming ages. To John the Baptist, as to those that came after him, was given the assurance, 'Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end.' Matt. 28:20, R.V., margin."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 224.

**Is Christ's promise to be with His disciples true even when they are under direst persecution? Isa. 43:2.**

"As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 513.

The knowledge that Christ is with us when all else turns against us is comforting indeed.

A little boy accompanied his father on a long journey. On their return trip, night fell. His father lighted a lantern as they entered the dark forest. Soon the night obscured the father's form as he led the way, carrying the lantern.

"Father, I don't see you: I'm scared," shouted the little boy.

"Can you see the light, Son?" the father asked.

"Yes, Daddy," came the answer. "But I can't see you."

"No matter," answered the father, "just follow the light."

The light of God's Word never shone more brightly than today. We do not always understand the fiery trials or heavy seas through which we pass. But we may know that He is with us, whether or not we feel His presence; for to follow the light is to follow Him.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The promises of God's Word will never fail, even as God Himself will never fail us. (See God's pledge to Joshua in Joshua 1:5.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

Read John 15 as rendered in a modern version.



**Part 2**  
**"MAKE YOU**  
**CLEAN"**

**In a parallel to the call made by Isaiah to God's ancient people, what urgent preparation should God's modern messengers urge every Christian to undertake in readiness for Christ's soon return?**

**"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil" (Isa. 1:16).**

"Oh, how many will be found unready when the Master shall come to reckon with His servants! . . . Self-righteousness will then be of no avail. Only those can stand the test who shall be found having on the righteousness of Christ, who are imbued with His spirit, and walk even as He walked, in purity of heart and life. The conversation must be holy, and then the words will be seasoned with grace."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 317, 318.

**Describe the part to be played by prayer in this preparation for the advent. Matt. 26:41.**

"'Watch and pray,' is an injunction often repeated in the Scriptures. In the lives of those who obey this injunction there will be an undercurrent of happiness that will bless all with whom they are brought in contact. Those who are sour and cross in disposition will become sweet and gentle; those who are proud will become meek and lowly."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 293.

**Faced by the rejection of unbelieving persecutors, how will the triumphant saints be fortified in their times of test? Isa. 26:3.**

"Let all who are afflicted or unjustly used, cry to God. Turn away from those whose hearts are as steel, and make your requests known to your Maker. Never is one repulsed who comes to Him with a contrite heart. Not one sincere prayer is lost. Amid the anthems of the celestial choir, God hears the cries of the weakest human being. We pour out our heart's desire in our closets, we breathe a prayer as we walk by the way, and our words reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. . . . Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the confusion of the multitude, to the heavenly courts. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 174.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**I must develop a strong prayer life now so that in the final crisis I will be able to lay hold of divine strength in order to endure to the end.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 219, 393; *Steps to Christ*, "Confession," pp. 40, 41.

**Part 3**  
**"EVERY**  
**WORD"**

**How basic is the part played by the Word of God in the development of spiritual life?**

**"He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).**

The promises of Christ and His instruction were not limited in application to those who first heard them. "With the consecrated worker for God, in whatever place he may be, the Holy Spirit abides. *The words spoken to the disciples are spoken also to us. The Comforter is ours as well as theirs.*"—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 51. (Emphasis supplied.)

**What must be the Christian's attitude toward the words of God as he stands for Christ and truth in the last days? 2 Tim. 2:15.**

"We must cherish carefully the words of our God lest we be contaminated by the deceptive workings of those who have left the faith. We are to resist their spirit and influence with the same weapon our Master used when assailed by the prince of darkness—"It is written." We should learn to use the Word of God skilfully. The exhortation is, 'Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' There must be diligent work and earnest prayer and faith to meet the winding error of false teachers and seducers; for 'in the last days perilous times shall come.'"—*Evangelism*, pp. 625, 626.

God has revealed Himself to man in many ways. Intuitively man senses that there is a God. Nature in her order and beauty adds evidence. And then there is, of course, the supreme revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is His living successor. But visible to the eye is the Book—in fact 66 books—authored by 40 Spirit-filled men as God's unerring guide to the better world. It has been vilified, neglected, and rejected by some; studied, believed, respected, and obeyed by others. Blessed are the latter, for they shall indeed inherit the world to come.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**In the physical realm, it is a fact that in many circumstances, one seeking to help another finds that he has in the process prolonged his own life. In a spiritual sense, this is likewise true. In helping to save others through the merits of Jesus—"ye are complete in him" (Col. 2:10)—we are in an attitude to maintain a saving relationship to Christ and His righteousness which alone makes possible the salvation of our own souls.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Child Guidance*, pp. 510, 511, 538, 539.

Part 4  
"NOT  
FORSAKING"

In what sense is Christian fellowship and church attendance where possible a strength to the believer in the time of the end?

**"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25).**

**"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).**

In moments of discouragement members sometimes stop attending church. These fail to recognize that the church is a hospital for sinners, not an honor society for saints. The most needy souls should never miss an opportunity to fellowship and worship. When under extreme pressures, we most need the encouragement of fellow travelers on the King's highway. Jesus Christ established the church. It is His body (1 Cor. 12:12-27). We are members of His body. We are not in this world alone. As church members, we share our joys and sorrows. While we need our God, we also need each other.

**In a time of prevailing apostasy and daring challenges to the Majesty of heaven, what special recognition was given to those who supported each other in loyalty to Jehovah? Mal. 3:16.**

"[Mal. 3:16, 17 quoted.] It will pay . . . to improve the privileges within our reach, and, even at some sacrifice, to assemble with those who fear God and speak for Him; for He is represented as hearkening to those testimonies, while angels write them in a book. God will remember those who have met together and thought upon His name, and He will spare them from the great conflagration. They will be as precious jewels in His sight, but His wrath will fall on the shelterless head of the sinner. It is not a vain thing to serve God. There is a priceless reward for those who devote their life to His service."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 107.

"In chs. 3:16-18 and 4:2 [of Malachi] God acknowledges the faithful few in Israel who remain loyal to Him and assures them of His unfailing love. At the same time (ch. 4:1, 3) He warns the wicked of their fate on the day of final judgment. The message of Malachi closes with the assurance that prior to the great day of the Lord a messenger will appear to assist Him in the work of preparing the 'jewels' for His crown and preserving them through the day of judgment (chs. 4:4-6, 2; 3:17)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1123.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 654; vol. 6, pp. 32, 33; vol. 7, p. 190.

**Part 5  
ANGELS  
IN CHARGE**

**What promises of angel ministry given to the psalmist will have supreme testing during the times of trouble before Jesus comes?**

**"He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone" (Ps. 91:11, 12). (Note the whole psalm.)**

"The power and malice of Satan and his host might justly alarm us were it not that we may find shelter and deliverance in the superior power of our Redeemer. We carefully secure our houses with bolts and locks to protect our property and our lives from evil men; but we seldom think of the evil angels who are constantly seeking access to us, and against whose attacks we have, in our own strength, no method of defense. . . . But those who follow Christ are ever safe under His watchcare. Angels that excel in strength are sent from heaven to protect them. The wicked cannot break through the guard which God has stationed about His people."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 517.

**In the Mount of Olives discourse, what instruction did Jesus give those who would be interrogated by authorities because of their loyalty to Him? Mark 13:11.**

"Every soul who believes present truth will be brought where he will be required to give a reason of the hope that is in him. . . . The universe is looking upon the controversy that is going on upon the earth. At an infinite cost, God has provided for every man an opportunity to know that which will make him wise unto salvation. How eagerly do angels look to see who will avail himself of this opportunity!"—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 415, 416.

**In our times of test, in what way does the Holy Spirit support the ministry of angels? John 14:26.**

Beyond concern for power to endure physical hardship and punishment, the persecuted follower of Jesus needs the assurance of being given Christlike words to speak.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**During the time of trouble when we will be hailed before civil and political authorities to answer for our faith, what only can the Holy Spirit bring to my mind of the promises and truths of God's Word?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

Contemplate the present application of the counsel of Jesus to His apostles as recorded in Matthew 10:16-42.

**Part 6  
HE WILL  
PERFORM IT**

**What assurance have we been given as to how long God's mercy and redeeming power will overshadow the faithful?**

**"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).**

One of the simplest statements of the divine plan to save sinners has long been in the hands of God's people:

"There are those who have known the pardoning love of Christ and who really desire to be children of God, yet they realize that their character is imperfect, their life faulty, and they are ready to doubt whether their hearts have been renewed by the Holy Spirit. To such I would say, Do not draw back in despair. . . . Said the beloved John, 'These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' 1 John 2:1. And do not forget the words of Christ, 'The Father Himself loveth you.' John 16:27. . . . If you will but yield yourself to Him, *He that hath begun a good work in you will carry it forward to the day of Jesus Christ.*"—*Steps to Christ*, p. 64. (Emphasis supplied.)

**In "the day of the Lord," what words of welcome to the kingdom of glory await the saints? Matt. 25:34.**

**"Come in his glory.** At His first advent Jesus veiled His divine glory and lived as a man among men. . . . The kingdom He then established was the kingdom of His grace. . . . However, He will come again, 'in his glory,' to inaugurate His eternal kingdom (Dan. 7:14, 27; Rev. 11:15 . . .). Jesus' second advent is the theme of Matt. 24 and 25. . . .

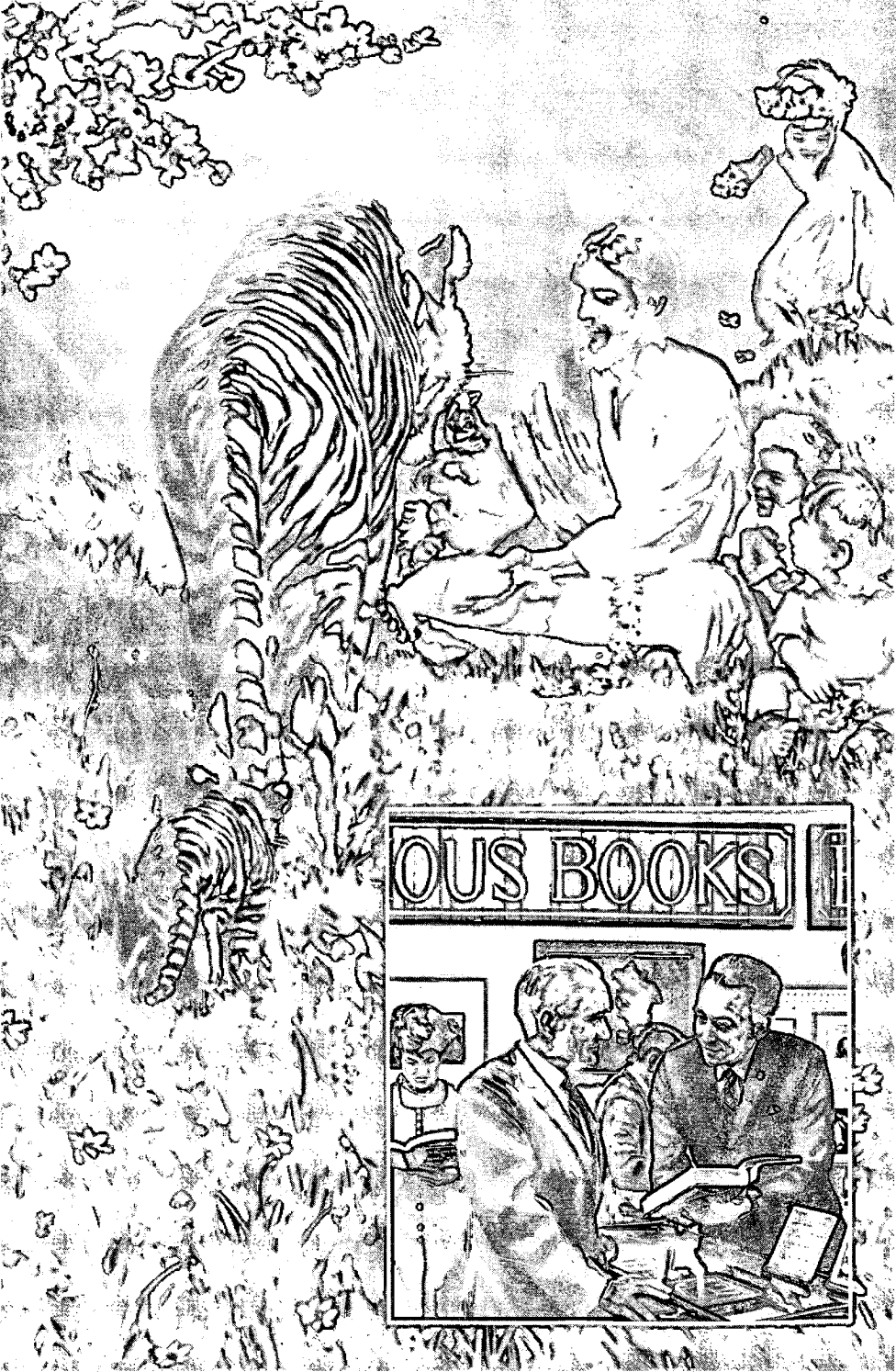
**"Throne of his glory.** Or, 'His glorious throne.' Christ was seated upon the throne of the universe prior to His incarnation (DA 22, 23). Upon His ascension He was once more enthroned (AA 38), as Priest and King (Zech. 6:13; AA 39), and shared His Father's throne (DA 832; Rev. 3:21). At the completion of the work of investigative judgment, begun in 1844 . . . , Jesus will receive 'His kingdom' (GC 426, 613, 614; EW 55, 280). The final coronation and enthronement of Christ as King of the universe takes place at the close of the millennium, before all men—those who are subjects of His glorious kingdom and those who have refused allegiance to Him."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 511, 512.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Oh, the inexpressible joy that will be ours as redeemed saints, to sweep through the gates of the New Jerusalem, having been washed in the blood of the Lamb!**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 131; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 279; *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 340, 341.



OUS BOOKS



# 13. Life's Real Meaning

**"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14).**

Millions walk the earth with no clear view of the meaning of life. They have no sense of origin or destiny and therefore no understanding of the present. While no man can penetrate the inscrutable infinity of divine wisdom, there is enough in the divine record to provide some insights into the character and actions of God. We do have some light on such concerns as (1) why God permitted sin, (2) why He permits it to continue, (3) the ultimate good that must come of it all. This final study of the quarter examines some of this light in the hope that rebirth, revival, and reformation may be the sure result.

We understand so little of our own place in a moral universe. Just the plan of salvation itself will claim our attention and tax our minds throughout eternity. Yet some questions now haunt our thoughts about this mysterious transaction. That God's love could lead Him to create man—knowing that he would rebel—puts our minds to the stretch. The fact remains that the great God who knows all went ahead with His creation. This miniature replica of Himself called man—male and female—was the product of God's own character. Creation was, in essence, God sharing Himself with His environment. And this not in the pantheistic

sense, but of divine intelligence and power giving expression to new and different forms of life. Thus, the decision to make us. What if we should sin against our Maker? Jesus Himself would assume our guilt and carry our sorrows. The Creator would become our Substitute before the justice of God. He would risk all to reclaim us, and all of this He did. On lonely Golgotha's slope He bore our hell that we might share His heaven. And thus, by the shedding of His blood, He opened a door of hope for all. "Rejoice, O heavens: be astonished, O earth," for the Lord has done this thing. Think you for one moment that He could turn His back on this, Heaven's costliest investment? He promises, "I will come again and receive you unto myself." The crucifixion justifies creation, and the second coming validates them both.

So for the believer life has meaning, origin, purpose, fulfillment, rewards—not for selfish purposes—to be shared always with others.

## DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **"It Was Very Good"**  
(Gen. 1:31)
2. **A Witnessing Church**  
(Matt. 24:14)
3. **Power for Witnessing**  
(Acts 1:8)
4. **Everybody Say "Come"**  
(Rev. 22:17)
5. **He That Endureth**  
(John 6:66-68)
6. **Building the Brethren**  
(Matt. 12:20)

Part 1  
"IT WAS  
VERY GOOD"

**What biblical evidence have we that the world was created free from sin?**

**"God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day" (Gen. 1:31).**

Of our first parents, it is commented that:

"It was not the will of God that this sinless pair should have any knowledge of evil. He had freely given them the good but withheld the evil. Eve thought the words of the serpent wise, and she received the broad assertion, 'Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil'—making God a liar. Satan boldly insinuated that God had deceived them to keep them from being exalted in knowledge equal with Himself. God said: If ye eat ye shall surely die. The serpent said, If ye eat, 'ye shall not surely die.'"—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 34.

**Why has God permitted sin's continuance these many centuries? 2 Peter 3:9.**

One of the greatest of life's meanings is that God has an answer for the sin problem for those earnestly choosing to receive it.

"We are living in an age when all should especially give heed to the injunction of the Saviour: 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' Let everyone bear in mind that he should be true and loyal to God, believing the truth, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Saviour's invitation is: 'Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.' The Lord is willing to help us, to strengthen and bless us; but we must pass through the refining process until all the impurities in our character are burned away. Every member of the church will be subjected to the furnace, not to consume, but to purify."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 485.

Should God move now to punish sinners, He would find so many of His children unprepared. He must be seen, then, as delaying judgment for the sake of the saints and the salvation of sinners, rather than because He is tolerant of sin. He is "not willing that any should perish" (2 Peter 3:9). And so mercy has lingered and lingers still.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How much of an answer can we find to the question of why God seemingly permitted sin to enter this particular planet only?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Education*, pp. 16, 17, 128-130; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 113; *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 427.



Part 2  
A  
WITNESSING  
CHURCH

**For what basic purpose did God place the church on the earth, and how well is it being realized?**

**"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).**

Every convert should be a convert-maker. Ministry is not the exclusive privilege of the clergy. This state of things took place after the first century of the church. Jesus commissioned all men to bear His message. The possessor of truth becomes debtor to the world. We cannot know what we know and keep it to ourselves. We cannot. We must not. We will not.

Surely life could have no more realistic purpose or meaning than that which inspiration has here portrayed:

"God and the angels are watching. God desires His people to show by their lives the advantage of Christianity over worldliness, to show that they are working on a high, holy plane. He longs to see them showing that the truth they have received has made them children of the heavenly King. He longs to make them channels through which He can pour His boundless love and mercy.

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of the Saviour shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim His own. It is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for, but to hasten, the coming of our Lord. Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel! Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 324.

**What charge did Christ give His followers? Mark 16:15.**

"My brother, my sister, what are you doing for Christ? Are you seeking to be a blessing to others? Are your lips uttering words of kindness, sympathy, and love? Are you putting forth earnest efforts to win others to the Saviour?"—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 39.

THINK IT THROUGH

**What has my witnessing done today to help others to be ready for the impending second advent? (Ponder again Matthew 24:14.)**

FURTHER STUDY

*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 32; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 313.

**Part 3  
POWER FOR  
WITNESSING**

**What power provided for the apostolic preaching of the gospel is still awaiting our demand today?**

**"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

In a world marked by divisions, tensions, and seemingly overwhelming problems in international affairs, the promise of the Spirit's universal ministry brings courage to the believer.

"The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. The men and women who through the long centuries of persecution and trial enjoyed a large measure of the presence of the Spirit in their lives, have stood as signs and wonders in the world. Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 49.

**From the prophecies concerning God's "servant," what may we gather regarding the extent of Christ's work of grace? Isa. 42:4.**

Although the apostles of Christ were to begin their witness in Jerusalem, reaping the harvest of His preaching, that was only the beginning of their work.

"But the work was not to stop here. It was to be extended to the earth's remotest bounds. To His disciples Christ said, You have been witnesses of My life of self-sacrifice in behalf of the world. You have witnessed My labors for Israel. . . . You have seen that all who come to Me, confessing their sins, I freely receive. Him that cometh to Me I will in nowise cast out. All who will, may be reconciled to God, and receive everlasting life. To you, My disciples, I commit this message of mercy. It is to be given to Israel first, and then to all nations, tongues, and peoples. It is to be given to Jews and Gentiles. All who believe are to be gathered into one church."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 821.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**When and where shall I bear my witness to Christ's love today?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 17, 27-29.

**Part 4  
EVERYBODY  
SAY "COME"**

**Who cannot find some way of extending the divine invitation that crowns the life with purpose and meaning?**

**"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).**

"Every follower of Jesus has a work to do as a missionary for Christ in the family, in the neighborhood, in the town or city where he lives. All who are consecrated to God are channels of light. God makes them instruments of righteousness to communicate to others the light of truth."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 632.

**As we go out or reach out with our varied witnessing methods, what sort of reception may we expect? Luke 8:5-8.**

Not many of us will have the success of Jonah at Nineveh. Heartache often accompanies the work of the gospel worker. Atheists, agnostics, and infidels will often sit in our pews. Add to this the members who show little appreciation for the gospel of the kingdom. There are, on the other hand, the eager, the hungry, and the desperate, who welcome truth like a cool breeze on a summer day.

"The world's Redeemer had many hearers, but few followers. Noah preached one hundred and twenty years to the people before the Flood, and yet there were few who appreciated this precious, probationary time. Save Noah and his family, not one was numbered with the believers and entered into the ark. Of all the inhabitants of the earth, only eight souls received the message; but the message condemned the world. The light was given in order that they might believe; their rejection of the light proved their ruin. Our message to the world will be a savor of life unto life to all who accept it, and of condemnation to all who reject it."—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 36.

As there is in the natural world a limit to what the human agent can do to cause seed to grow and be fruitful, so in the spiritual realm the human efforts to sow the seeds of gospel truth have certain limitations. The farmer or gardener digs and rakes and plants; he may even feed and water the seed. But God implanted, and He controls the spark of life dormant in the seed. It is His sun that shines to stimulate germination. Only God can "give the increase" to our witnessing.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How can we more fully appreciate and take dedicated advantage of our remaining probationary time? (See Rom. 13:11.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Christian Service*, pp. 67-70.

Part 5  
HE THAT  
ENDURETH

**How old is the problem of unfaithfulness in the church?**

**"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:66-68).**

"'No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.' What is the drawing?—'It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me.' There are men who hear, but who do not learn the lesson as diligent students. They have a form of godliness, but are not believers. They know not the truth by practice. They receive not the engrafted word."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 460.

The Word of God tests the validity of a Christian experience. Some cannot bear the straight testimony. Yet others have received only a surface conversion. Many of these fall away. However, the church must go on making disciples. Apostasy must not dampen our evangelistic ardor. Many fell away and walked no more with Jesus. We can expect no more. "He that shall endure unto the end . . . shall be saved" (Mark 13:13).

**What inspired encouragement have we concerning many who fall away from the church?**

"When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together and present to the enemy a united front. . . .

" . . . The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 401.

Should we not, in the light of the above statement, pursue with all diligence the privilege of prayer and Bible study for the stability of our souls? There is no substitute for this. This alone breeds faith, without which it is impossible to please God. These initiatives are immediately imperative.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What degree of concern should I have that I will never look back and fall away? (See Luke 9:62; 2 Tim. 1:12.)**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 147; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 211-213.

**Part 6  
BUILDING  
THE  
BRETHREN**

**Perhaps the church best demonstrates the real meaning of life when she reflects most fully the spirit predicted of her Master.**

**"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory" (Matt. 12:20).**

"In all our associations it should be remembered that in the experience of others there are chapters sealed from mortal sight. On the pages of memory are sad histories that are sacredly guarded from curious eyes. There stand registered long, hard battles with trying circumstances, perhaps troubles in the home life, that day by day weaken courage, confidence, and faith. Those who are fighting the battle of life at great odds may be strengthened and encouraged by little attentions that cost only a loving effort. To such the strong, helpful grasp of the hand by a true friend is worth more than gold or silver. Words of kindness are as welcome as the smile of angels.

"There are multitudes struggling with poverty, compelled to labor hard for small wages, and able to secure but the barest necessities of life. Toil and deprivation, with no hope of better things, make their burden very heavy. When pain and sickness are added, the burden is almost insupportable. Careworn and oppressed, they know not where to turn for relief. Sympathize with them in their trials, their heartaches, and disappointments. This will open the way for you to help them."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 158.

**A parallel aspect of life's real meaning is seen in the unity of all believers. John 17:11.**

"Only as they were united with Christ could the disciples hope to have the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit and the co-operation of angels of heaven. With the help of these divine agencies they would present before the world a united front and would be victorious in the conflict they were compelled to wage unceasingly against the powers of darkness. As they should continue to labor unitedly, heavenly messengers would go before them, opening the way; hearts would be prepared for the reception of truth, and many would be won to Christ."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 90, 91.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Truth and God's church will triumph. Although it takes all, I must triumph with them! Life has real meaning now. It will have through eternity. Home at last, brethren! Home at last!**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 292, 293; vol. 8, p. 183; *Early Writings*, pp. 266-277.

# Lessons for 3rd Quarter 1981

Sabbath School members who have not received a copy of the Adult Lessons for the third quarter of 1981 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first two lessons. The title of the series is THIS WE BELIEVE.

## First Lesson

### GOD THE REVELATOR

**Memory Text, Heb. 1:1, 2**

1. *In His Creation (Rom. 1:19, 20)*
2. *In the Heavens (Ps. 19:1)*
3. *In His Word—I (2 Tim. 3:16)*
4. *In His Word—II (2 Pet. 1:20, 21)*
5. *In His Son (John 1:18)*
6. *Our Response (Heb. 4:12)*

## Second Lesson

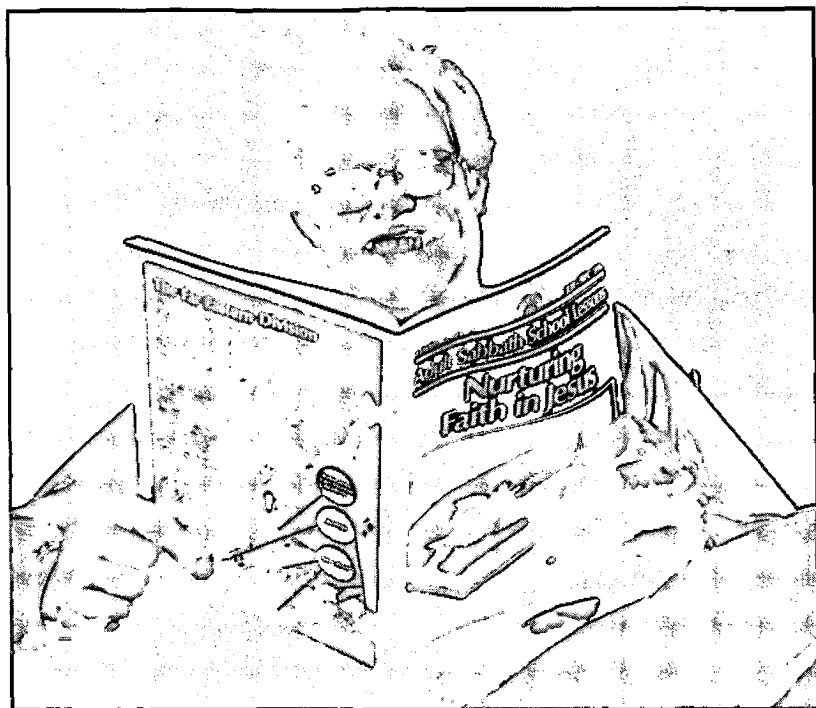
### EVERLASTING FATHER

**Memory Text, Deut. 33:27**

1. *The Eternal (Ps. 90:2)*
2. *The Creator (Isa. 40:28)*
3. *Royal Lord (Ps. 95:3)*
4. *The Holy One (Isa. 6:3)*
5. *Loving Father (Ex. 34:6)*
6. *Our Saviour (John 3:16)*

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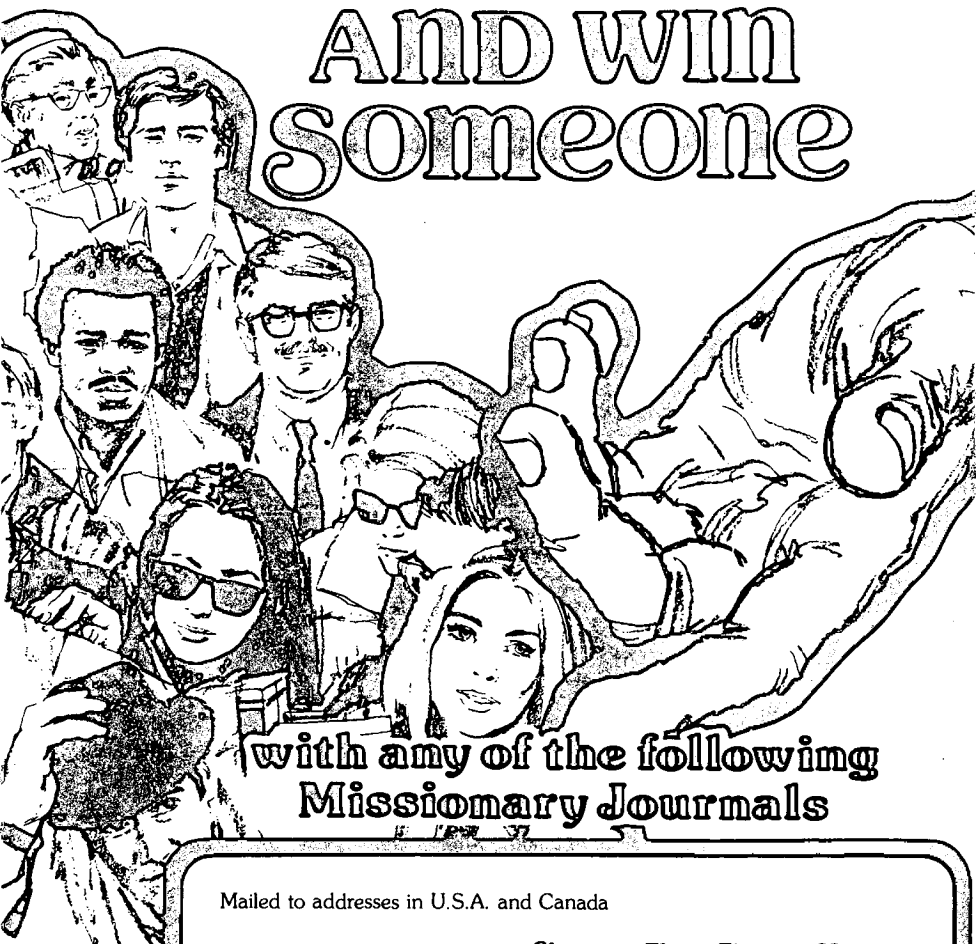
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Central Philippines	12,830,383	409	63,568	75,256
East Indonesia	11,009,376	334	36,041	46,758
Japan	115,690,000	92	9,700	8,640
Korea	37,029,000	322	42,743	41,219
North Philippines	36,191,497	748	79,324	56,051
South China Island	22,247,588	48	9,235	7,981
South Philippines	9,807,884	482	94,247	97,571
Southeast Asia	87,107,259	182	28,588	25,858
West Indonesia	125,943,542	347	37,277	43,484
Guam-Micronesia Mission	200,000	9	1,264	1,077
<b>Division Totals</b>	<b>451,956,302</b>	<b>2,974</b>	<b>402,087</b>	<b>405,875</b>

Figures as of fourth quarter 1979

