

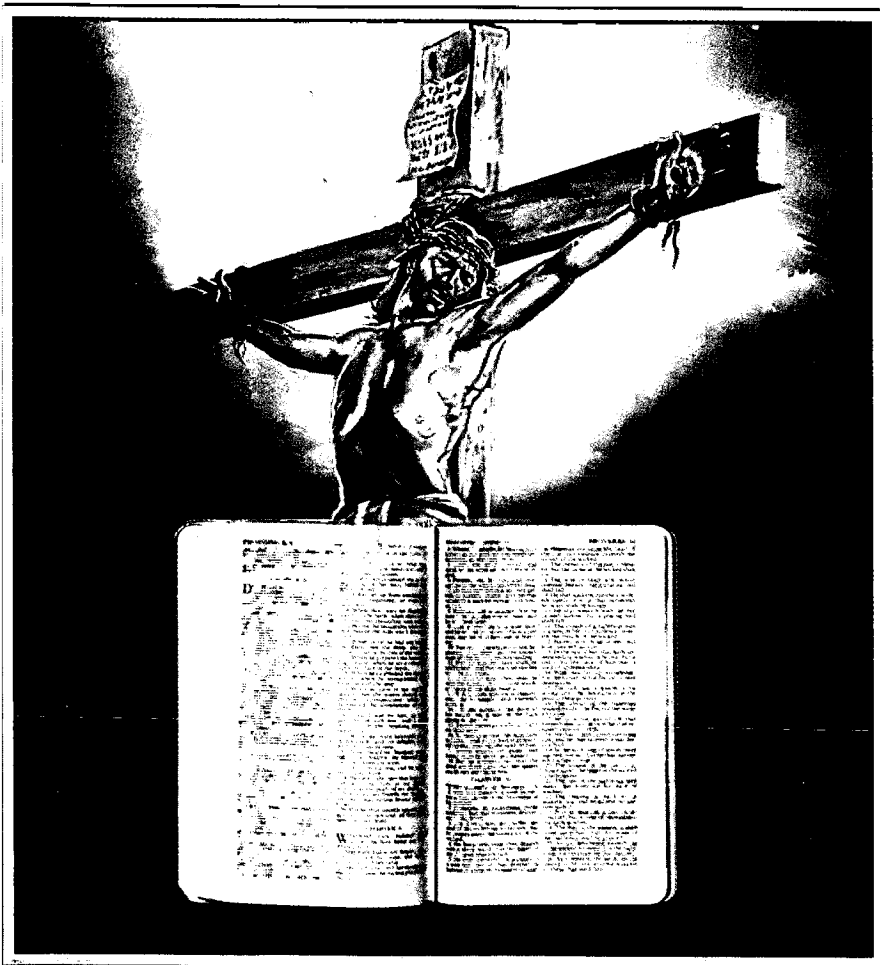
DAYBREAK SERIES



July-Sept. 1981

Adult Sabbath School Lessons

This We Believe-I



THESE TRUTHS WE HOLD



by **Bernard Seton**

Prepared especially to give you broader scope in your study of this quarter's Sabbath School lessons, there is a chapter for each lesson in the quarter. Take advantage of this opportunity to enhance your study.

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General Conference Corporation of Seventh-Day Adventists

South American Division

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70000 Brasilia, DF, Brazil

Dear Sabbath School Members,

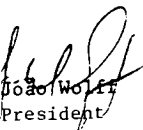
The Lord is pouring out such rich and abundant blessings upon our South American Division that it is like the widow's cruse of oil, and we are discovering that it is necessary to go to our neighbors to ask for more "containers" so that these too can be filled with God's overflowing blessings--the blessings of new members joining our church ranks in great numbers.

What the South American Division needs most at this time are chapels and schools made necessary by the increase of membership. The recently organized West-Amazon Mission in particular needs new chapels urgently. The city of Fortaleza needs an evangelistic center. A great deal of help is needed for the new Trans-Amazon Academy already under construction and for other academy construction in Brazil. We are thankful for the evangelistic outreach of our secondary schools and rejoice in their growth.

I would like to express our gratitude to all of you in the Sabbath Schools throughout the world for your help in the past as well as for the assistance you will be giving us this Thirteenth Sabbath, for we are sure that your traditional generosity will be abundantly manifest. As a result of this united effort by the people of God, we will see the fruition of these projects in the South American Division.

We extend to you our love, fully abiding in the glorious hope of our Lord's soon return.

Yours in Christ,


João Wolff
President

L.S. SUP. - Q811 - TELEPHONE 244-8066 - CABLE: DIVISION - TELEX: 811812



Caring Is Life

Gifts are a sign of caring. We like to give gifts to those we love. How about the best gift? Let's invite someone we love to Sabbath School and church on the next Community Guest Day. Your friend may accept the best gift of all, eternal life. Caring can mean eternal life. Yes, caring is life.



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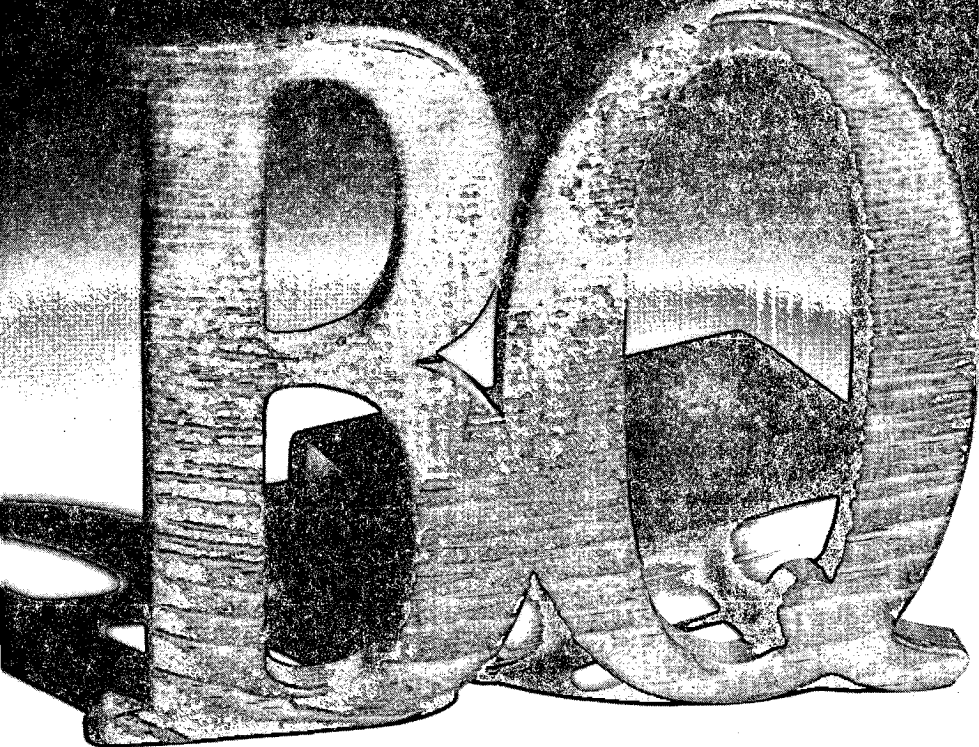
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WHAT'S YOUR



How well do you know your Bible?

Do you have to ask your pastor or Bible instructor to answer those difficult Bible questions your associates are asking?

It is just a matter of time before what you have in your head is all you will be able to depend on.

If your B Q is down, daily lesson study will help you to get prepared for the soon-coming conflict.

THIS WE BELIEVE

Studies in Christian Doctrine—Part I

Introduction

There are several reasons for studying the Christian doctrines on which the beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists are based. First, memories are weak, and we need to refresh our knowledge. Second, we are expected to grow in knowledge, and so we need to restudy our faith in order to enlarge our understanding of it. Third, biblical truth is of so rich a nature that fresh glimpses of its wealth always await our discovery. Fourth, while the substance of truth does not change, the form in which it is cast and the appeal that it makes need study from time to time to keep them relevant to the time and place where truth is taught. But jewels that are reset do not change their nature though their value may be increased. So it is with truth. After all, God has adapted His teachings to the constantly changing human scene—from the Garden of Eden to the advent movement and modern times.

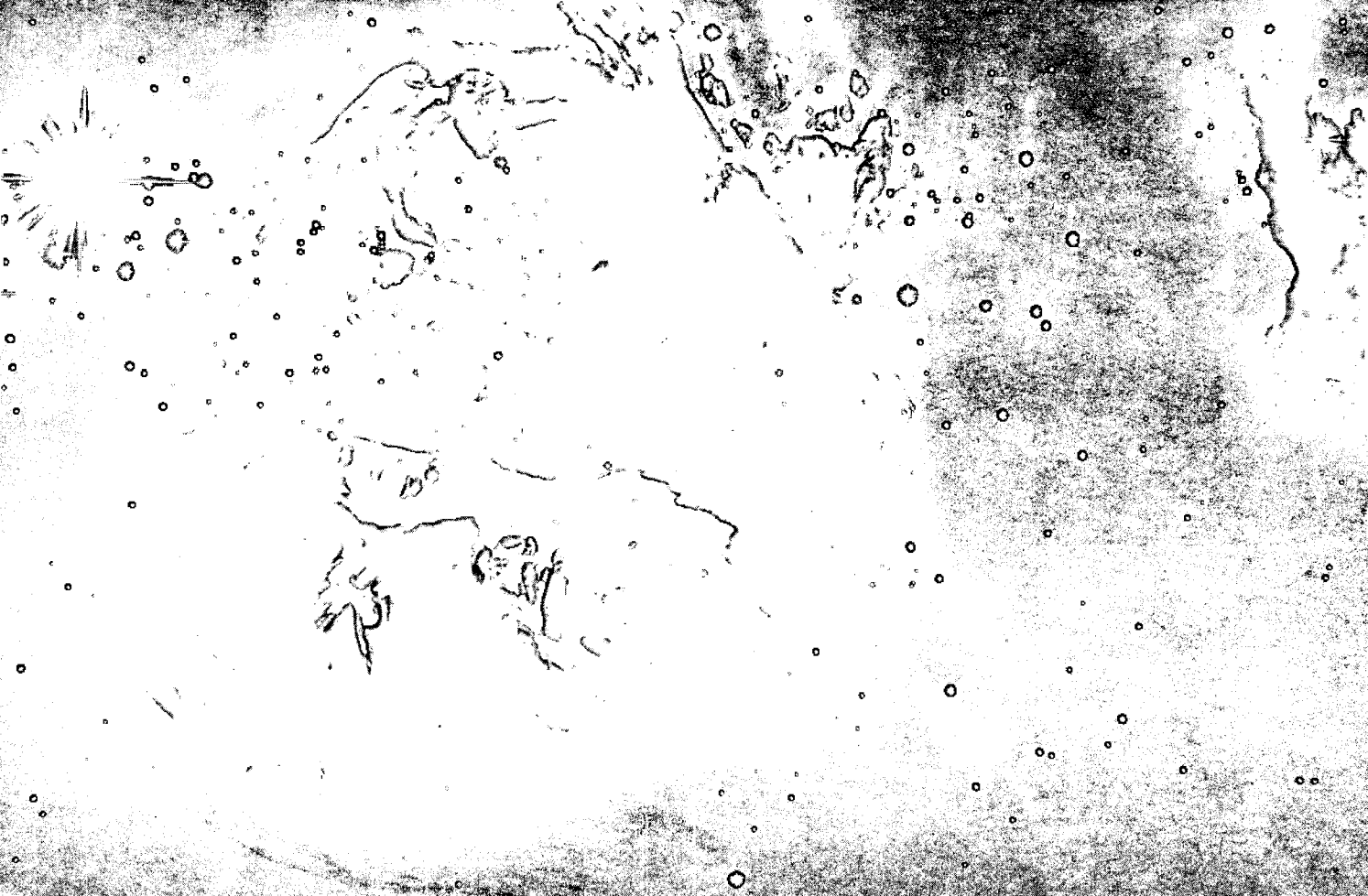
On a much smaller scale, each generation of Adventists must take a fresh look at its beliefs, applying them to local circumstances and expressing them to meet contemporary needs. Such study does not yield to unbelief; indeed it provides an opportunity to strengthen faith in eternal truths.

Let us consider one more reason for a fresh look at some of our major beliefs. When we first accepted them, they probably came through another person. We need to make them our own by means of mature study. By regular, thoughtful attention to Scripture we can make each doctrine an expression of our own conviction on that subject. We can thus gain a deeply personal faith that is founded on a rich understanding of the Bible and a closer fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And while we are studying, we should remember that our God expects us to serve Him with all our mind as well as with our other abilities. It has been said that the duty to use our intelligence is a moral duty, especially in the area of religious knowledge. Carrying out that duty may spell the difference between life and death!

Two quarters' Sabbath School lessons (as we shall have) will not suffice for a survey of all the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; so we have to choose some and leave others. The very act of selection may help to underline those teachings that we see as most necessary for the 1980s. Similarly with the choice of supporting verses—it may stimulate us to find varied scriptural support for beliefs we hold dear.

Finally, and most important of all, there is the need to apply each article of faith to our way of living. Unless this is done, we are merely collecting lifeless theological declarations that become as dry as the proverbial hills of Gilboa. It is our act of applying that gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to breathe anew into each doctrine the breath of life that brings a change in our lives. There is not one biblical teaching that does not require personal application to make it come alive for each of us; and there is not one, no matter how difficult or even theoretical it may appear, that will not bring spiritual life to them that accept and apply it in daily living.

Therefore, in the words of the most famous of all citizens of Tarsus: "Keep before you an outline of the sound teaching which you heard from me, living by the faith and love which are ours in Christ Jesus. Guard the treasure put into our charge, with the help of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us" (2 Tim. 1:14, NEB). Then with confidence we shall be able to proclaim, "This we believe!"



1 God the Revelator

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Heb. 1:1, 2).

This text is our first memory verse for the quarter. It deserves to be memorized. It contains much vital information in a few words. It covers about 4000 years of God’s dealings with His people, recording that which He had spoken to them in the

persons of the prophets, then, in early New Testament times, in the Person of His Son. Through the same Son, He had created the universe, of which the Son had already been appointed heir and therefore Sovereign Lord.

Such a text provides a firm foundation for our first week’s lesson, which teaches that He whom Christians worship is a God who makes Himself known. If He had not chosen to reveal Himself to His creatures, they would have no means of finding Him. God must take any first step, therefore; and our lesson touches briefly on the three principal ways in which He has given His self-revelation to men. This deals with a foundational doctrine. Without it, none of the others would have been formulated: from it, those others flow.

This first lesson for the new quarter falls into four parts. First comes the revelation of God through His creation (parts 1 and 2); then comes the unfolding through inspired Scripture (parts 3 and 4); then the supreme revelation in the Person of Christ (part 5); and last, the application of this doctrine of revelation to our lives, or our response to what God has revealed.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

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 Peter 1:20, 21)
5. In His Son
(John 1:18)
6. Our Response
(Heb. 4:12)

**Part 1
IN HIS
CREATION**

How may all men and women receive their introduction to the nature and works of Deity?

“All that may be known of God by men lies plain before their eyes; indeed God himself has disclosed it to them. His invisible attributes, that is to say his everlasting power and deity, have been visible, ever since the world began, to the eye of reason, in the things he has made” (Rom. 1:19, 20, NEB).

This is a special statement, not a broad, general one. Paul has earlier introduced “the gospel of Christ” (verse 16), and now he turns to consider those who have not heard it. They have not been left completely without a way to know God. All that men are capable of learning about Him without special revelation has been widely displayed in nature. Sufficient revelation of “his everlasting power and deity” (verse 20, NEB) has been given in His creation that all who will may know that God is.

While even the most careful study of nature cannot tell us anything about the *person* of God, it can prepare us to accept His *presence* in the universe. Nature is not found to be self-creative or self-sustaining. “It is not by inherent power that year by year the earth yields it bounties and continues its march around the sun. The hand of the Infinite One is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God’s power continually exercised that keeps the earth in position in its rotation.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 416.

God invites skeptic and believer alike to examine the visual evidence for His creative activity. Isa. 40:26.

A more literal translation of the second half of this verse and adjustment of the punctuation brings out the prophet’s message more clearly: “that bringeth out their host by number, and calleth them all by names: through the greatness of his might and great power not one faileth,” or “not one is missing.”

Before man was made, the stars and planets in their brilliant and orderly array silently spoke of the existence of a Creator. The heavenly bodies continue to present that evidence, and all men and women are invited to take time to lift up their eyes on high and read it. Our survey of the heavens can open the eyes of our minds to the greatness of Him who conceived, created, and sustains the stars in their courses.

THINK IT THROUGH

What more can I yet learn about God from nature? What effort am I making to acquire additional knowledge?

FURTHER STUDY

The Ministry of Healing, pp. 410-417.

**Part 2
IN THE
HEAVENS**

What convictions did the psalmist receive as he gazed into the heavens?

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Ps. 19:1).

The psalmist employs the same Hebrew words for "heavens" and "firmament" as are used in Genesis 1:1 and 6. It is possible to distinguish between the two by defining "heavens" as the entire space in which all heavenly bodies are suspended, while "firmament" is applied to the dome of the atmosphere into which we look when we gaze at the space above us. The word "declare" translates a Hebrew term that comes from a special form of the verb "to write," and may be more richly rendered as "tell with praise" or "celebrate." The word translated as "sheweth" is still more vivid and suggests "proclaims" or "celebrates with praise."

To him who thoughtfully looks at them both, the "heavens" and the "firmament" reveal many aspects of their Creator's nature—"the glory of God," His power, His majesty, His infinite nature; "his handywork," His inventiveness, His skill, His supreme sense of order and beauty. To such an observer "day unto day" will "pour out" or "gush forth" speech (as the original word for "uttereth" implies), and "night unto night" will "breathe out" or "declare" knowledge (verse 2). And this revelation is worldwide, even universal (verse 3).

What questions concerning man did David's study of astronomy provoke in him? Ps. 8:3, 4.

The psalmist was a keen observer of the heavens. What he saw confirmed his belief in a Creator and led him to ask how such an Almighty Being could bow low to care for so lowly, so earthy and weak a creature as man. The answer revealed man as the intended and still to be crown of creation, invested with authority over animals, birds, and fish (verses 6-8). The revelation increased the psalmist's admiration for the Maker of the universe and Restorer of fallen man: "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (verses 1, 9). Modern man, having gained a deeper knowledge of that universe, has still more reason for believing in that Creator.

THINK IT THROUGH

When did you last explore the night sky? Why not, on the first clear night this week, spend five silent minutes gazing into the starry heavens and gaining a fresh glimpse of the glory and greatness of God?

FURTHER STUDY

Read all of Psalm 19, noting the close relation between acceptance of the revelation of God in nature and fulfillment of "the law of the Lord." Read also Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1085.

**Part 3
IN HIS
WORD—I**

What additional revelation, beyond that offered by nature, has been given to man?

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16).

The realm of nature speaks a wordless language that can say very different things to different people. Mankind, therefore, needs clearer instruction if he is to gain deeper insight into the attributes and powers of the Creator. Christianity claims that this is given in the Bible or Scripture, and that this has been “given by inspiration of God.”

There are two permissible ways of translating the Greek original of the text quoted above. It can be rendered “Every God-breathed writing is,” or, “All scripture is God-breathed,” that is, “inspired.” Some interpreters would wish to use the former to suggest that some scriptures are inspired and some are not. As we shall note, however, there is no compelling reason to decline the second reading which harmonizes best with the total witness of the Bible about itself.

It is difficult and dangerous to build a doctrine on one text, and here it is not necessary, for the whole Bible unites to support the claim that it is “given by inspiration of God.” Repeatedly from beginning to end it claims to quote the speech of the Most High in many of its passages (see examples in Gen. 1:3, 6, 26, 28, 29; and Rev. 22:13, 17, 20), without claiming a dictatorial inspiration, its writers repeatedly declare that they are giving out “the word of the Lord” (2 Kings 17:13; Isa. 1:2, 10; 6:8; 42:5-8; Joel 1:1; Gal. 1:11, 12; Rev. 1:1, 2).

List some of the personal benefits that may be gained from a personal knowledge of the Bible. 2 Tim. 3:15-17.

The Holy Scriptures are the only books that hold within their pages a worthy original revelation of God and His plan for recreating the creation that has been so brutally marred by sin. Those Scriptures can make their students “wise unto salvation,” and convincingly teach, rebuke, correct, and train them in righteousness or in right conduct. In so doing, they reveal their more-than-human origin and establish their claim to inspiration and to being a prime source of our knowledge of God.

THINK IT THROUGH

Of what value is the Bible’s own testimony concerning its divine origin?

FURTHER STUDY

Discover in 1 Peter 1:10-12, 23, 25 further contributions to the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible.

**Part 4
IN HIS
WORD—II**

What claim is made concerning the source of biblical prophecy?

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:20, 21).

The primary application of Peter's words is to prophetic passages in the Old Testament; but since Scripture itself makes no distinction between the inspiration that produced prophecy and that which prompted the remainder of the Bible, the apostle's declaration embraces all scriptures from Genesis to Malachi. The same principle can be carried over to all New Testament writings, for these clearly endorse the Old Testament and similarly claim God as their Inspirer. Compare 2 Peter 3:15, 16, where Paul's epistles are classed with "the other scriptures."

Although the Bible was written by men, its messages were not created by them. They were mouthpieces or penmen for the Holy Spirit, who "drove" or "impelled" them to convey for the record the divine disclosures. Thus the two Testaments preserve revelations from God about God and His plan to save mankind. The Scriptures, then, speaking in human language, present us with a fuller portrait of the Creator than we can ever discover in nature. (See Ex. 34:5-7; Isa. 57:15; Micah 7:18; 1 Tim. 1:17.)

Evaluate the claim to authorship conveyed in the following passages. Ex. 20:1 with Deut. 5:22; 2 Sam. 23:1-3; Jer. 1:1-10; 1 Cor. 2:12, 13; Heb. 1:1, 2.

On many occasions Moses, David, Jeremiah, Paul, and other Bible prophets claimed to be recording or proclaiming the direct speech of the Lord, as distinct from passing on His messages in their own words. This gives impressive authority to their communications and closely connects the attentive reader with God's own thoughts on matters of eternal consequence.

"The Bible is God's voice speaking to us, just as surely as though we could hear it with our ears. If we realized this, . . . the reading and contemplation of the Scriptures would be regarded as an audience with the Infinite One."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 393.

THINK IT THROUGH

What does the Bible reveal about the nature of the Almighty that cannot be clearly drawn from nature?

FURTHER STUDY

Nine of the twelve minor prophets speak "the word of the Lord" to their peoples. Trace this in the opening verses of all the twelve save Amos, Nahum, and Habakkuk, then discover that same "word of the Lord" in those three also.

**Part 5
IN HIS SON**

In spite of all that is declared in nature, and in spite of the abundant revelation in Scripture, men and women still sadly misunderstand the character of God. If Deity had not decided to reveal Himself more clearly, men would have formed poorer and poorer ideas of His character and intentions and would have lost all saving knowledge of their Creator. To save man from this destructive ignorance, God planned a still clearer revelation of Himself.

By what means has God worked to make up for man's inability to see Him?

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18).

Some have had visions of God (Isa. 6:1; Eze. 1:1; Dan. 7:9, 10), but not even Moses (Ex. 33:18-23) or Elijah (1 Kings 19:9-13), or Paul (2 Cor. 12:1-4) has been permitted to see God. God's glory is so great and man's sin-weakened capacity is so small that no human eye can bear to look upon the divine radiance (John 5:37; 6:46; 1 Tim. 6:16). A pitying, merciful God chose, therefore, to reveal Himself in the Person of His Son, who so lived on earth that our text can state: "He [God the Son] hath declared him," and the Son Himself could say: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

Think upon the significance of each item in Paul's summary of the incarnate revelation of God in Christ. 1 Tim. 3:16.

It is thought that this verse reflects an early Christian confession of faith, set in the form of a hymn. "Mystery" comes from the Greek *mustērion*, "a hidden thing" or "a secret." "Among . . . pagans *mustērion* . . . was used for secrets or secret doctrines, to be made known only to those who had been specially initiated. . . .

"In the NT, *mustērion* refers to something that God wills to make known to those who are willing to receive His revelation, rather than to something that He desires to keep secret."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 610.

"Godliness" is rendered by most modern translators as "our religion"; while the best manuscripts favor "he who was manifest in the flesh" rather than "God was manifest." The text clearly refers to Jesus, who in His human form so appealingly revealed the character of His Father. (See also John 1:14.)

THINK IT THROUGH

Which principal characteristics of the divine mind do you see most clearly revealed by Jesus of Nazareth?

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 8, pp. 265, 266.

Part 6
OUR
RESPONSE **Apart from its revelations concerning the Creator and His works, what does God's Word reveal about ourselves?**

"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

The Word is very much "quick" or "alive" today. Age does not lessen its powers to reach us. It still has a special ability to pierce our self-protective armor, to get to the heart of our aspirations and our temptations, our strengths and our weaknesses. The Word lays bare our secret thoughts and exposes our motives. It challenges us to accept its teachings and heed its biddings.

What other benefits accrue to those who allow themselves to be guided by divine revelation? Ps. 119:1, 105.

Those who faithfully follow the Bible's counsel find it is reliable and rewarding. As a result, they become "blessed" or "happy." They also receive guidance for daily living. Divine light shines on their pathway. In this respect, the Word may be likened to a map which, if followed, will direct its reader to his desired destination. But note that its directives must be heeded; the Word cannot help those who reject its counsels. To see God in nature, to learn about Him from the Bible, to become acquainted with His Son—beneficial as all these accomplishments may be, they are deceptive, they are useless if we do not yield to their messages and allow them to bring us in penitence to our Maker.

In the light of all that has been revealed to us, what should be our response to God the Revelator? Ps. 95:6, 7.

This is the natural response from those who truly see God. It might rightly be said that those who do not render Him such homage have not really seen Him. They have caught a distorted view which leads them to deny what their finer senses would confess. And remember that there are none so blind as those who will not see. May we be preserved from such blindness! Rather, may we "see the king in his beauty," and say: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power" (Isa. 33:17; Rev. 4:11).

THINK IT THROUGH **To what extent has our personal knowledge of God as Creator, King, Redeemer increased during the past year? Face whatever truth an honest answer brings.**

FURTHER STUDY *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 409, 410.



2 Everlasting Father

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27).

It is amazing that such a concept of God should have come from such a time and setting. Israel was still on the east of Jordan, it had not yet conquered Canaan, and Moses was about to die and be buried in the alien land of Moab. Yet the veteran leader yielded not an iota of his vision and knowledge of the

Almighty. After 40 frustrating years that would have destroyed the faith of a lesser man, he firmly retained his understanding of the Lord whose lieutenant he had been throughout those four difficult decades. In unshaken conviction he saw Him as the Eternal, the Guardian, the Sustainer, the Champion of His chosen people.

The God who lived in Moses' time is just the same today. The Eternal will not alter. "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6). We, then, having accepted His eternity, can range throughout human history and find the everlasting Father revealed in many different times and ways. This aspect is touched upon in Sunday's lesson. Succeeding days consider His creatorship, His kingship, His holiness, His paternal love, and His redemptive act in giving His Son. Study of these features should bring us to our knees in humility and gratitude before Him in whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). We may be led to confess, "My God, Thy benefits demand more praise than I can give" (*The Church Hymnal*, no. 71), but we should give Him the highest adoration of which we are capable.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

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)

Part 1 **Note Moses' telling contrast in his statement of belief in the**
THE ETERNAL **eternal nature of God.**

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Ps. 90:2).

In this, the only psalm that has come down to us from Moses, the veteran leader records his unquestioning belief in God's eternity. He who wrote Genesis, chapter 1, clearly sees that the Creator Himself must have existed before His creative activities. Moses sees no bounds to that existence. God is from everlasting to everlasting, that is, from timeless eternity in the past, continuing into timeless eternity in the future. But that is expressed in human terms. There can be no "time" with the Eternal. He lives in an eternal present. Therefore Moses can say: "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past" (verse 4).

Consider the mind-stretching character of God's definition of Himself to Moses. Ex. 3:13-15; 6:2, 3.

The exiled Hebrew was being commissioned to lead his people out of Egyptian slavery. He needed to know the identity of Him who was sending him on that fearsome task. The reply came, "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3:14), which answer, it is now generally agreed, may be better expressed in English as "I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE." To the Hebrews, this conveyed the concept of the eternity and possibly the self-existence of God. The proper name derived from that expression used to be rendered "Yahweh," but this, for reasons of language into which we shall not enter here, has been adjusted to "Jehovah." That name is translated as "LORD" in Exodus 6:2 and is printed in capital letters throughout the KJV. In Exodus 6:3, however, the old anglicized form "JEHOVAH" is preserved. (See also Ps. 83:18; Isa. 12:2; 26:4.) The most helpful rendering is probably that given in the French: "L'Éternel." The English-speaking world might well adopt the truly reverent title of "The Eternal," even as James Moffatt has done in his translation.

It may be persuasively argued that the eternity of God is one of His prime attributes and one of the weightiest incentives for us to worship Him. He who always has been, ever is, and ever will be (Rev. 1:4-6; 4:8) is the Creator and can have no rival (compare Ex. 20:3; Isa. 40:25; 43:10; 1 Tim. 1:17).

THINK IT THROUGH

Here we have only touched the lowest thread on the hem of the glorious garment of God. Ought we not to seek a higher understanding of His greatness? Let us consecrate some time to doing this during this week's study.

FURTHER STUDY

Gen. 21:33; Ps. 41:13; 93:1, 2; Dan. 7:9, 10.

Part 2
THE CREATOR

The Eternal must also be the Creator, for, so far as human reasoning can perceive, there must have been a time when the Eternal was alone. If that aloneness was to change, creation had to begin. Creation is shown solely as an act of the Godhead. Although nature and man can do wonders in continuing the productive processes on planet Earth, neither has the power to start a creation. Creation demands a creative power outside that which is created. The mystery of life remains in the mind and hand of the Creator. The magnificent simplicity of Genesis 1:1 still stands: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This is spelled out more fully in Isaiah 42:5.

In the light of the glory of Creation, what questions concerning the Creator should men solemnly consider?

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding" (Isa. 40:28).

We hear, but we easily forget. We therefore need repeatedly to face life's greatest questions and to remind ourselves of the answers. Today's scripture enquires: "Hast thou not known: hast thou not heard?" and we must admit that we *have* known, we *have* heard—but alas, we are so apt to forget. We need to reject the temptation to create Him in our own feeble image: He is never weak, never tired; His resources are unlimited; His knowledge is fathomless. He is able, then, to be "the Creator of the ends of the earth" and all that lies beyond.

As Paul immersed himself in a study of God's ways, what awe-inspiring conclusions did he reach? Rom. 11:33-36.

If we were to meditate on the person, the character, and the works of God as deeply as did Paul, we, while not inspired, would be led to express a level of wonder similar to his. In particular we would recognize our God as the Originator, the Sustainer, the Monarch of all created things, and to Him we would render the highest adoration of which we would then be capable (Rom. 11:36).

THINK IT THROUGH

"Great, O Lord, is Thy kingdom, Thy power, and Thy glory; great are Thy works, Thy wonders, and Thy praises; great also is Thy wisdom, Thy goodness, Thy justice, Thy mercy; and for all these we do bless Thee, and will magnify Thy holy name for ever and ever." Attributed to George Wither (1588-1667).

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pp. 99-101.

Part 3
ROYAL LORD **Examine the significance of the brief description of our God given by one of the psalmists.**

“The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods” (Ps. 95:3).

The poet lived in a world of many gods. Only one small nation had the vision and the courage to accept the revelation and to choose to worship one God. Its spiritual leaders saw the “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel” (1 Kings 18:36) as the only deity worthy of worship; and in their better moments of faith the ordinary citizens of Israel cried: “The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God” (verse 39). When truly worshipping Him, they turned from all other gods and saw their Lord as Sovereign Ruler of the universe.

The psalms of David and other writers contain a wealth of revelation concerning God’s majesty, power, glory, justice, holiness, and love. The Christian church has used the psalms for some two thousand years and has thereby greatly enriched its worship. We can enlarge our understanding of God by exploring these same poems. We might begin with Psalms 11, 16, 18, 25, and 29 and continue till we reach the unparalleled insights in Psalms 139, 145, and 147.

On the threshold of eternity, what charge is given to the godly? What shout of praise will greet the ears of the Almighty? Rev. 19:5, 6.

This nineteenth chapter of Revelation opens with four “Alleluias” (verses 1, 3, 4, 6) that proclaim the triumph of “the Lord our God” over all opponents. The godly acclaim the Supreme Being as “the Lord God omnipotent,” acknowledging that their Master and God is the Almighty, the All-powerful. This is not a fresh discovery. It was revealed in Creation and in the Exodus. It was recognized by Job (the title “Almighty” is used in the book of Job more than in any other section of the Bible), Abram (Gen. 17:1), Isaac (Gen. 28:3), Jacob (Gen. 49:25), the psalmists (Ps. 68:14; 91:1), and by the New Testament believers, whose theology was drawn so largely from the Old Testament. But this final “Alleluia” is different from all others that have sounded in human history. It is based, not on faith, but on visible, conclusive evidence. (See Rev. 11:15.)

“Those who in heaven join with the angelic choir in their anthem of praise must learn on earth the sound of heaven, the keynote of which is thanksgiving.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 244.

THINK IT THROUGH

What practical application does my belief in God’s omnipotence have to my daily life as a professed Christian?

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 33-43.

Part 4
THE
HOLY ONE

Christianity is a courageous religion. It dares to offer standards that are above and beyond the merely human. It calmly does this while knowing that none of its followers is humanly capable of reaching those standards. Its calm is based on its knowledge of the Christian's God. *He* is sinless. *He* is the Perfect One. *He* wants His followers to be perfect as He is and has provided the power for them to be remade in His image. The Christian, then, can regard his Lord's holiness in peace, knowing that his own sin can be overcome and forgiven by grace from the Holy One.

In Isaiah's vision of God (6:1-8), which of the divine qualities was most prominent?

"One cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa. 6:3).

We should join the seraphim and Isaiah in contemplating the Lord's perfect holiness. If we catch even a glimpse of what they saw, we shall join Isaiah in crying, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips" (verse 8). If we fail to reach that conclusion, we probably have not drawn near enough to behold the King, the Lord of hosts, in His "endless wisdom, boundless power, and awful purity."—Frederick W. Faber, *The New Advent Hymnal* (Watford, Herts.: Stanborough Press, 1952), no. 35.

What connection does Peter make between God's holiness and the moral standard set for Christians? 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

This call to holiness is no new requirement. (See Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7, 26.) It stems from the quality of the divine nature. The Holy One originally created only holy beings, and when and since they fell (as all humans have done), He will re-create them only in holiness. But "sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. . . . Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 560, 561.

THINK IT THROUGH

Have we tried fervently to see "the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up" (Isa. 6:1)? What progress are we now making toward being holy as He is holy?

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 8, pp. 312-314.

**Part 5
LOVING
FATHER**

When, in response to Moses' request, God unveiled all of Himself that the great leader could endure, what revelation was given to Moses?

"The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Ex. 34:6).

After the crisis at Sinai when Israel worshiped the golden calf, Moses asked God: "Shew me thy glory" (Ex. 33:18). In response the Lord replied, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee" (verse 19), and He did this (34:5-7). Moses then saw, not man's idea of God, but God's understanding of Himself. Since He is the embodiment of truth, God's revelation of His character could not be more accurate—though for man's sake it was only partial in its coverage. But what a portrait it paints! Until the incarnation, it remained the deepest and highest revelation ever granted mankind outside of Eden. It merits our constant remembrance, that we might ever know our Maker's mercy, grace, patience, goodness, and truthfulness. We must also perceive the Judge in the picture, realizing He holds us accountable for cherished iniquity, while forgiving what we confess (verse 7).

What description does the God-man who knows God best frequently apply to Him? Matt. 6:9.

Although in Old Testament days the Creator was sometimes perceived to be the Father (2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 89:26; 103:13; Isa. 9:6; Jer. 31:9), it was Jesus who most vividly taught God's Fatherhood. From His Sermon on the Mount onward He introduced His hearers to their "Father which art in heaven" and made them aware of hitherto scarcely known divine attributes. (See Matt. 5:16, 45, 48.) And the Son, in His own hours of deepest need, addressed His divine Companion by the tender, trustful title of "Father." (See Luke 22:42; 23:34, 46.)

THINK IT THROUGH

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" (Micah 7:18).

"He [Christ] pointed His hearers to the Ruler of the universe, under the new name, 'Our Father.' He would have them understand how tenderly the heart of God yearned over them. He teaches that God cares for every lost soul; that 'like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.' . . . such a conception of God was never given to the world by any religion but that of the Bible."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 74.

FURTHER STUDY

Fundamentals of Christian Education, pp. 307-309.

**Part 6
OUR SAVIOUR**

During the past five days our lesson has glanced—and no more than glanced—at a few of Deity's most notable qualities. We believe them to be essentials of God's nature: they are what He is. Today's study invites us to see the fruitage borne by those qualities in relation to our sinfulness.

"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).

Let us look at these words as if we had never seen or heard them before. What a startling, humbling, hope-creating announcement they bring! The great God, "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" (Isa. 57:15), not only made our world but loves it so wholeheartedly and everlastingly that He has given Himself in His Son to save His creation from its self-destructive sin. He need not have done this: He could have left us to our fate. But that would have been contrary to the highest of all His qualities—love!

Compare Paul's and John's expressions of the same redemptive news. Rom. 5:8; 1 John 5:11.

The Bible clearly places the initiative for our salvation with the Father: it is God who "gave," who "commendeth," who "sent." It is not He who belatedly responded to our despairing cry, but we who respond to His loving act. He wants His erring children to be saved from sin and to live forever. This glorious fact should arouse in us an ever-deepening gratitude. Study Ephesians 2:4-7 and savor that love once again, and again!

"It is a thing most wonderful,
Almost too wonderful to be,
That God's own Son should come from heaven,
And die to save a child like me."

—Bishop William W. How,
The Church Hymnary, rev. ed. (London:
Oxford University Press, 1942), no. 436.

What does Jesus see as the kernel of eternal life? John 17:3.

In verse 2 the Son has acknowledged His privilege of giving eternal life to those whom the Father designates. In verse 3 He is not defining "life eternal" but rather speaking of one of the essential conditions for enjoying that life, namely, possession of a personal, experiential knowledge of God and of His Son. It is also true, however, that eternal life brings with it the blessing of knowing God in a way that is impossible during a normal life-span.

THINK IT THROUGH

How may I increase my personal knowledge of God's love?



3 Eternal Son

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4, 5).

We must never forget that it was God the Father who took the initiative in man's salvation. It was He who "so loved the world, that he gave"; it was He who "sent forth his Son" to be the Saviour of the world. But we must also realize that "the counsel of peace" was between Them both, that it was by mutual agreement (humanly speaking) that the Son left the heavenly family and came to earth as a human babe. At the end of His short earthly life, He laid down that life by His own choice and will; no man took it from Him (John 10:17, 18). There was thus perfect cooperation between Father and Son for the redemption of those who were made in Their image.

"By His obedience to all the

commandments of God, Christ wrought out a redemption for men. This was not done by going out of Himself to another, but by taking humanity into Himself. Thus Christ gave to humanity an existence out of Himself. To bring humanity into oneness with divinity, is the work of redemption. Christ took human nature that men might be one with Him as He is one with the Father, that God may love man as He loves His only-begotten Son, that men may be partakers of the divine nature, and be complete in Him."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 250, 251.

This week's lesson presents a few of the many glimpses of the Son's nature that are known to us. This is done in the knowledge that much of that nature is yet unknown and unrevealed to man. From His virgin birth we perceive His deity and eternity. In the same breath we acknowledge His humanity and rejoice that His favorite self-designation was "Son of man."

On the last day of our study, leaving so much unsaid, we see Him as Saviour. But He is also the hero of our faith; so later lessons will add to the portrait that is sketched this week.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. His Incarnation
(Luke 1:35)
2. His Deity
(John 1:1-3)
3. His Eternity
(Micah 5:2)
4. His Humanity
(John 1:14)
5. Son of Man
(Mark 6:3)
6. Our Saviour
(Heb. 4:15)

**Part 1
HIS INCAR-
NATION**

Men and women had known of God from the days of Eden, but their knowledge weakened and was increasingly distorted as time removed them far from the original revelation of their Creator. This was foreseen by the Father. From times eternal He planned to give a direct disclosure of Himself in the Person of His Son. Christians see this foreshadowed in Old Testament prophecies. (See Gen. 3:15; 49:10; Num. 24:17; Deut. 18:18; Isa. 9:6, 7; Micah 5:2.) "Like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 32. And 40 centuries passed after the Fall before the Son left heaven and came to reveal God's character in His own Person through the incarnation.

What momentous news did the angel Gabriel bring from God to an engaged Jewish girl in Nazareth?

"The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

Here we are observers of a most holy moment in human history. The Godhead was visiting a humble but dedicated young woman to appoint her as the mother of her Lord. The Holy Spirit was to be the Agent to bring about that motherhood; the Most High was to "overshadow" her to the same end; and the Second Person of the Godhead was Himself to be the divine-human Babe, the Son of Mary as well as the Son of God. Thus did God demonstrate His intention of saving man from the folly of his sin.

Discover the Godhead's two principal objectives in the incarnation. Matt. 1:18-23.

To Luke's beautiful account of the incarnation, Matthew adds further vital details that arise from Mary's conception of Jesus, which has already taken place. It is without question a virgin conception, "of [that is, by] the Holy Ghost" (verses 18, 20). That miracle was for the saving of "his people from their sins" (verse 21) by giving them a Saviour who was sinless—"in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15), and therefore "able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:18). The virgin birth also brought God among His people as "Emmanuel" (Matt. 1:23). So eternity was linked with time in the Person of the God-man Jesus.

THINK IT THROUGH

What effect does the virgin birth of Jesus have on my daily life? To what extent is Jesus saving me from my sins?

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 34, 366, 367.

Part 2 In a series of related declarations, the apostle John
HIS DEITY presents the subject of Christ's divine nature.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:1-3).

In these words that are the New Testament counterpart to Genesis 1:1, the apostle introduces his Master as the *Logos*—the "expression of God." He portrays Him as eternal and divine, the co-Creator of all things with God the Father. "If Christ made all things, He existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed for evermore."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1126.

In speaking of Christ, how does Paul express similar exalting thoughts? Col. 1:15-17.

In verse 13 Paul speaks of God's "dear Son" and then launches into one of his sublime passages concerning the Lord (verses 14-18). He depicts Him not only as Redeemer (verse 14), but as "the image" or similitude "of the invisible God" (verse 15), the Creator (verse 16), and the Eternal One who holds all things together (verse 17). Note that the act of creation is set in the past tense ("were created"), while the nature of Christ is expressed in the present tense ("is the image," "is before all things"), thus conveying the truth of the ever-continuing likeness of the Son to the Eternal Father.

In His self-knowledge, what striking claim did Jesus make before the Jews of His day? John 10:30.

Stark in its simplicity, astounding in its significance, the announcement staggered His hearers. They knew the identity of the Father, and had demanded of Jesus: "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly" (verse 24). When He told them the truth, they recognized what it meant: "Thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (verse 33). Jesus, of course, was referring here to a unity of spirit, thought, purpose rather than person; each divine Person had in His deity the same convictions as the Other.

THINK IT THROUGH Is my belief in the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth strong enough to give me complete confidence in His power to save me from my sin?

FURTHER STUDY *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 246-251.

Part 3
HIS
ETERNITY

Belief in the divine Sonship of Christ calls for belief in His eternity. Also, the incarnation could only be possible for a preexistent one—a person who did not previously exist could not appear in another form—he would be making his first appearance. The doctrine of Christ's preexistence, then, merits at least a further day's study.

What specific prophecy pinpoints Messiah's birthplace and ancestry?

"Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Micah, a younger contemporary of Isaiah, also had the Messianic hope. He looked forward to the restoration of "the first dominion" (4:8). He saw Bethlehem as the birthplace of the "ruler in Israel." (See also Matt. 2:1-6.) He speaks of Him "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." That phrase is more than a reference to ancient ancestry; it proclaims Messiah's eternity. "Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore.

"The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 247.

When Messiah appeared as Jesus of Nazareth, what startling claim did He make? John 8:58.

"The Jews had committed the error of ascribing to Jesus a merely temporal existence. They saw only the historical *manifestation*, not the eternal *Person*; only the human, not the divine. Jesus, therefore, reaffirms his eternal, timeless, absolute essence."—William Hendriksen, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 3rd ed. (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964), vol. 2, p. 66.

Christ reveals that, even when clad in human garb, He had come to be conscious of His eternity, aware of the divine glory, responsibility, and knowledge of man's failures and triumphs.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what ways does your knowledge of Christ's eternity strengthen you today?

Assuredly as a knowledge of His eternity sustained our Saviour in the last dread hours of His earthly life (see John 17:5, 24), so our belief in His eternal oneness with the Father will sustain us until we are united with Him in eternal glory.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 306-310.

**Part 4
HIS
HUMANITY**

Note how the beloved disciple confirms his Master's humanity after asserting His divinity.

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

John 1:1-3 instructs us as to Christ's eternal divinity, while John 1:14 teaches that He took humanity upon Himself. The Word, God's thought made audible, became man and thereby God's thought made visible. The inspired writer chooses his words carefully, and we should do the same when speaking of the union of two natures—divine and human—in one Person. The more accurate translation of the Greek of verse 14 is "the Word became flesh" rather than "was made flesh," for our Lord was never "made" a man. He, already existing, "became" a man.

Trace the steps recorded by Paul in Philippians 2:5-8 by which the Son of God fully identified Himself with man.

He who is in every respect equal with God did not allow that prized position to prevent Him from rescuing man from the clutches of sin. He emptied Himself of divine glory, took the form of a human servant or slave, and humbled Himself still further by obediently submitting to all that God saw necessary for man's redemption. This led Him to the shameful, agonizing death on a cross where He bore our sins and was thereby subjected to temporary but awful separation from His Father. This gives us a minute glimpse of the demands that were made upon our Lord when He was born in Bethlehem. "He voluntarily assumed human nature. It was his own act, and by his own consent. He clothed his divinity with humanity. He was all the while as God, but he did not appear as God."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Sept. 4, 1900.

THINK IT THROUGH

What can I do today to avoid taking my Saviour's sacrifice for granted?

" 'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.' We must come to the study of this subject [Christ's humanity] with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, and will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth."—Ellen G. White *Comments, S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 905.

FURTHER STUDY

Ellen G. White *Comments, S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 1126-1131.

Part 5
SON OF MAN **In what ways can you understand the views that Christ's generation held concerning His origins?**

"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him" (Mark 6:3).

The young Preacher and His family were well known in His hometown of Nazareth and lower Galilee. His humanity loomed large in their eyes, so large that they did not even guess at His veiled divinity. Some went so far as to hint that He was an illegitimate child (John 8:41; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 387). Matthew 13:55 records the townspeople's question, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" which suggests that they believed Him to be the son of Joseph. These reactions confirm the genuineness of His humanity.

What reasons can you give for the choice of the term by which Jesus most frequently referred to Himself? Matt. 8:20; 9:6; 12:8; Mark 13:26; Luke 19:10; John 3:14, etc.

The Gospels record more than 40 instances where Jesus called Himself "the Son of man." The title had Old Testament origins (Ps. 8:4; Eze. 2:1 and numerous times thereafter; Dan. 7:3) and had Messianic associations for some Jews. On the Master's lips, the Messianic overtones were strong (Mark 2:28; 14:62; Luke 12:8; John 13:31, etc.). The title simultaneously stressed His humanity and His divinity.

We need to meditate more on the dual nature of our Lord.

"We never think of Christ enough as God, never enough as Man; the instinctive habit of our minds being always to miss of the Divinity, and the reasoning and enforced habit to miss of the Humanity. We are afraid to harbour in our own hearts, or to utter in the hearing of others, any thought of our Lord, as hungering, tired, sorrowful, having a human soul, a human will, and affected by events of human life as a finite creature is; and yet one half of the efficiency of His atonement, and the whole of the efficiency of His example, depend on His having been this to the full."—John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, n.d.), vol. 4, p. 372.

THINK IT THROUGH **How balanced are we in our understanding of our Lord's twofold nature? What significance does this teaching have for our everyday living?**

FURTHER STUDY *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 19-26.

**Part 6
OUR
SAVIOUR**

What assurance do we have that Jesus truly understands the daily struggles that face us?

"We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

Our great High Priest is "Jesus the Son of God" (verse 14)—Jesus, forever retaining our human nature, and the Son of God having divine strength. He therefore has the ability, the capacity to *sympathize* (a literal translation); that is, to feel with our *frailties* (both physical and spiritual weaknesses). For the sake of emphasis, the writer expresses this first statement with a double negative, then records the historical facts of Christ's having been tempted just as we are while Himself remaining free from all personal taint of sin in body and mind. At the same time, His personal exposure to and victory over sin enables Him to fortify us in our areas of individual need.

"By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 24.

**Which aspect of the incarnation most deeply affects us?
1 Tim. 1:15.**

This text is but one of several which may be used to answer our question. (See also Matt. 1:21; 9:13; John 3:16; Luke 19:10; Gal. 4:4, 5.) It states very plainly that Jesus came to save us from our sins. If, by clinging to those sins, we do not permit Him to wean us from them, then, so far as we are concerned, His mission has failed—but the fault is ours alone. Are we willing to face the responsibility for our continued sinning, not just now, but on judgment day? That is the disturbing question posed by the Person of Jesus. But it is more than balanced by the assurance that is proffered by His priesthood (Heb. 7:25).

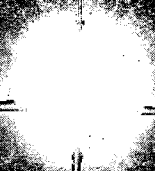
THINK IT THROUGH

Have I proved the Saviour of the world to be MY Saviour too?

"In His promises and warnings, Jesus means me. God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that / by believing in Him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. The experiences related in God's word are to be *my* experiences. Prayer and promise, precept and warning, are mine."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 390.

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "Growing Up Into Christ," pp. 67-75.



4 Holy Spirit and Holy Trinity

“The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).

This memory verse alerts us to the need for studying the nature and office of the Holy Spirit in relation to the other members of the Godhead. When doing this, we should be aware that one week’s lessons are just not sufficient for such study and that recently a whole quarter has been devoted to the topic. Many books have been written on the subject. We, then, can here do no more than introduce ourselves to the Third Person and the Trinity and leave deeper study to other occasions and to eternity.

This week’s theme centers on one of the deepest mysteries of our religion. We generally feel more comfortable studying about our heavenly Father and His Son than about the Holy Spirit. But that comfort may be due to our being too easily satisfied with an extremely limited knowledge of those whom we worship. We need to be less complacent. In any case, we do need to recognize that the Spirit is no less

important than His Companions, and that He is very intimately involved in our spiritual life.

The doctrine of the Trinity is a revealed rather than a natural doctrine, for we could never discover it for ourselves. It comes from the divine self-disclosure in Scripture, and even there is revealed more in deeds rather than formed into words. But most Bible students will agree that it is difficult, if not impossible, to read the New Testament with an open spirit without believing in the Trinity. At the same time, we should be sure we hold truth for the right reasons. It is questionable, for instance, that we should try to support belief in the Trinity from the Hebrew word most commonly used for God—*Elohim*. Though the word is plural in form, it is seldom seen by scholars as requiring a three-in-one concept of God. We may also try to penetrate the mystery by means of biblical illustrations (see John 3:8), but let us not mistake the illustration for the divine reality. Few teachings are so productive of error as those that deal with the Godhead. Here we should tread delicately, with reverent care. (See *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 427-429.)

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Creator and Inspirer**
(Gen. 1:2)
2. **Spirit and Son**
(Matt. 1:18)
3. **Spirit and Ourselves**
(John 3:3)
4. **Ourselves and the Spirit**
(1 Cor. 3:16)
5. **Spirit and Church**
(Acts 1:8)
6. **Holy Trinity**
(2 Cor. 13:14)

**Part 1
CREATOR AND
INSPIRER**

Who worked with Father and Son in the creation of heaven and earth?

"The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2).

We usually speak of the Creator, using the singular form, but the plural more accurately reflects biblical teaching. The Father and Son worked so closely in Creation that John could write of Jesus: "Without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). (Compare with Gen. 1:1.) In addition, our text reveals participation by "the Spirit of God." Thus, from the beginning, a Third Member of the Godhead has been involved in our world's history.

Through which divine agency has prophecy been given? 2 Peter 1:21.

This scripture also takes us back to the beginning, for the book of Genesis contains not only history but prophecy. During the thousand years in which the Old Testament was being written, the Holy Spirit was at work, communicating God's thoughts to its writers and guiding men in God's ways. Such work could be done only by an Eternal One, a member of the Godhead.

What other evidence does the Bible provide for the deity of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: *Omnipotence*: Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 12:11. *Omnipresence*: Ps. 139:7-11. *Omniscience*: 1 Cor. 2:10, 11. *Eternity*: Heb. 9:14.

His divine personality is also deduced from the service He performs (see John 14:26)—He has the name of Comforter, Paraclete, or Advocate; He is sent by the Son and the Father; He teaches believers; He recalls to the disciples all that Jesus said. He witnesses to Christ (John 15:26); is another of the same kind as Christ (John 14:26); He guides into all truth and forewarns of future events (John 16:13).

In the Old Testament, God the Father is often called "the Holy One of Israel;" but after the Holy Spirit is more fully revealed in the New Testament, the description "holy" is reserved almost entirely for Him.

THINK IT THROUGH

In my devotional life, am I according the Holy Spirit His full measure of divine personality, or is He still only a vague "influence"?

FURTHER STUDY

S.D.A. Bible Commentary, vol. 6, pp. 670-672.

**Part 2
SPIRIT
AND SON****How vital a role did the Holy Spirit play in the incarnation?**

"The birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 1:18).

Matthew, under the Spirit's guidance, shows great care in recording the background to his Master's birth. He identifies Mary as Christ's mother but refrains from calling Joseph His father. The chosen pair were not yet married, yet Mary found herself pregnant and knew that this arose from the Holy Spirit's visitation (Luke 1:35). Joseph accepted the same explanation and, braving public opinion, took Mary to wife and served as human father to the Son of God (Matt 1:20-25). Here, then, is a total divine involvement with humanity for the salvation of mankind. The Father sends His angel to the virgin Mary (Luke 1:26, 27), the Holy Ghost comes upon Mary (verse 35), and Jesus takes on human form (Luke 2:4-7). The Spirit might therefore be called the central figure, linking heaven and earth in the drama of our Saviour's birth.

What role did the Spirit continue to play in our Lord's earthly life? Luke 2:25-29.

A careful reading of Luke's Gospel reveals that the author was very sensitive to the Spirit's role in Christ's life and ministry. In addition to His directing Simeon's recognition of the infant Saviour, there was that of the prophetess Anna (Luke 2:36-38). The Child's unusual growth (verses 40, 52; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 68-74) was only possible by His unusual submission to the Spirit's guidance. This spiritual cooperation led Jesus to the Jordan for baptism and the Spirit's visible descent upon Him (Luke 3:21, 22), and to His "being full of the Holy Ghost" (Luke 4:1). Immediately the Spirit led Him into the wilderness (verse 1; compare Mark 1:12), and afterward gave Him power for His Galilean ministry (Luke 4:14).

THINK IT THROUGH

If the Spirit could so empower Jesus of Nazareth in His amazing ministry, can not the same Spirit also give me daily strength to live the Christian life?

"The Spirit furnishes the strength that sustains striving, wrestling souls in every emergency, amidst the hatred of the world, and the realization of their own failures and mistakes. In sorrow and affliction, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone,—these are the times when, in answer to the prayer of faith, the Holy Spirit brings comfort to the heart."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 51.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 50-58.

**Part 3
SPIRIT AND
OURSELVES**

By what means may we arrive at that point in spiritual development from which the Child Jesus started?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

In every true believer's heart there is the desire, a holy ambition to become like Christ. How can that dream be fulfilled? The answer is simple and utterly uncompromising: We must be born again. That transformation can come only by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. “The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 172.

How, then, can we “enter into the kingdom of God”? Jesus says: “Of water and of the Spirit” (John 3:5)—and Paul states: “By the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5). On the road to the kingdom, there is no way of bypassing the Spirit!

When once we have been born again, how may we develop Christian stature? John 16:7-14.

The Lord here speaks of the Spirit's service both to His disciples and to the unbelieving world. We need to accept His message—to welcome the Comforter, to be convicted of sin and concerned about righteousness and judgment, to be guided into all truth, to listen to what the Spirit says about Jesus and future events, and to accept His revelation of Christ's glory.

“It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given us His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

THINK IT THROUGH

Are we growing as Jesus grew—“in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man”? If not, why not? Are we allowing the Holy Spirit to develop our full spiritual potential?

FURTHER STUDY

Take the hymn “Our Blessed Redeemer” (*The Church Hymnal*, no. 214) and thoughtfully apply each stanza to our present spiritual condition, making the last stanza our own prayer.

**Part 4
OURSELVES
AND THE
SPIRIT**

What signal honor has the Godhead placed within the reach of each believer?

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth In you?" (1 Cor. 3:16).

You are the temple of God. This is a metaphor to convey a profound spiritual truth, namely, that God, being spirit (John 4:24), will dwell in the hearts of His contrite and humble followers (Isa. 57:15). The Son will do the same (John 14:23; Rev. 3:20). But, so far as our finite minds can comprehend, this is done in the Person of the Holy Spirit, who would seem to have the particular task of representing the Godhead to the consciousness of the believer. Paul can therefore say: "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you" (1 Cor. 6:19). What higher honor can come to a sinful, not-yet-perfect human being?

What provision can make my heart ready for its heavenly Guest and worthy of being His temple? Gal. 5:22, 23.

There are some rare personalities who bring peace and order into the homes they enter. The Spirit does more. He prepares the heart to be His own shrine and residence. The gifts He brings with Him will sweep out the sin and make each welcoming heart so clean that it will begin to be an acceptable temple for His most holy Self. We should therefore say to Him as to the Lord Jesus:

"Come, not to find, but make this troubled heart
A dwelling worthy of Thee as Thou art."

—H. G. C. Moule,

The Church Hymnal, no. 336.

"The faculties devoted unreservedly to God, under the guidance of the divine Spirit, develop steadily and harmoniously. Devotion and piety establish so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like Him. Through the power of God, his weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. He becomes a person of sound principle, clear perception, and reliable, well-balanced judgment. Having a connection with God, the source of light and understanding, his views, unbiased by his own preconceived opinions, become broader, his discernment more penetrative and farseeing. The knowledge of God, the understanding of His revealed will, as far as human minds can grasp it, will, when received into the character, make efficient men."—*Counsels to Teachers*, pp. 37, 38.

THINK IT THROUGH

How may I encourage the growth of the fruit of the Spirit in my life?

FURTHER STUDY

Gospel Workers, pp. 284-289.

**Part 5
SPIRIT AND
CHURCH**

Let the imagination dwell on the manner in which Christ's disciples received power to witness for Him.

"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 Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

From a human point of view the Redeemer took a terrible risk when He returned to heaven after three and one half years of earthly ministry. How could His cause prosper when left in the hands of 11 all-too-human men? The assuring answer lay in two potent realities. First, He had personally trained those disciples—and that fact must never be ignored. Second, He was leaving an adequate legacy in the promised presence of His Spirit. "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). (See also Luke 24:49.) And now, immediately prior to His ascension, He states the fact: "Ye shall receive power." History confirms that the power came at Pentecost (Acts 2:4, 16-21). This explains how such a group could set the church in motion throughout the then-known world. The existence of the Christian church became one of the greatest evidences of the Holy Spirit's reality.

After the apostles had received power from on high, who else shared in the heavenly gift? Acts 4:31; 5:32; 6:3.

If the Spirit had been restricted to the original apostles, His ministry would have ceased with their deaths. But such was not the divine plan. "The church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord" (Acts 9:31, NIV).

THINK IT THROUGH

How may the church today accomplish its worldwide mission?

Answer: By fulfilling similar conditions to those that brought power to the early church, namely, prayerful, unselfish unity (Acts 1:14; 2:1, 41-47; 4:31-35).

"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. . . . 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 Acts of the Apostles*, p. 49.

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 49-56.

Part 6
HOLY
TRINITY

In the beautiful benediction penned to the Corinthian church, which central Christian doctrine did Paul reveal?

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen"
(2 Cor. 13:14).

This is not a doctrinal but a devotional statement, yet it reveals one of the most fundamental of all Christian doctrines. It gives, with inspired brevity, a firm basis for belief in the threefold nature of the Godhead, the Trinity. (Compare Christ's own reference to the divine Three in Matthew 28:19.) It does not attempt to explain it. Rather, it is a distillation of thoughtful, reverent Christian contemplation of what has been disclosed concerning Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, especially in the light of the Son's incarnation. As has been so rightly stated: "The doctrine of the Trinity is not so much heard as overheard in the statements of Scripture."—*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1930), p. 3012.

Or, to express it another way: "What becomes patent in the New Testament is latent in the Old."

Man's inability to explain the nature of the Trinity should surprise no one—it should rather be expected. The object of man's worship, while clear enough to command love and loyalty, should soar far beyond human understanding. Here, if anywhere, the statement attributed to St. Anselm applies: "I do not seek to understand in order to believe, but I believe in order to understand."

In humble awareness of our inability to fathom the nature of the God whom we worship, we should be very careful in our thinking to safeguard the equality and unity of each living Person of the Trinity with the other Two. To use the definition of fourth-century Greek theologians, we should confess that "the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the Glory Equal, the Majesty eternal."—J. S. Whale, *Christian Doctrine* (Fontana Books, 1941), p. 111.

The difficulties we meet in thinking of the Trinity should not lead us to reject the doctrine or refuse to meditate upon it. "If it were possible for us to attain to a full understanding of God and His word, there would be for us no further discovery of truth, no greater knowledge, no further development. God would cease to be supreme, and man would cease to advance."—*Education*, p. 172.

THINK IT THROUGH

"What doth it avail thee to discourse profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of humility and art thereby displeasing the Trinity?"—Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ* (Hackensack, N.J.: Wehman Brothers), bk. 1, ch. 1:2.

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pp. 169-172.



5 Creator and Sustainer

“Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee” (Neh. 9:6).

Most human beings ask questions of themselves and others concerning origins—origin of self, of others, of animals, of vegetation, of stars, of our universe and beyond. Out of the many suggested answers, there emerge two principal replies—we, and the world around us, originated either by accident or by design. Moral considerations lead us to opt for design, and that choice leads us to God.

Once we accept that God is, the thought of creation seems to follow. Creation would seem to be a natural activity of Deity; it may even be said to be inevitable. We may also find room in our understanding for God’s continuing creativity. In all such

thoughts, however, let us remember our human limitations in the light of God’s infinite nature. (See Isa. 55: 8, 9.)

The doctrine of creation is basic to the whole structure of our religion, and proclaims: “In the beginning, God.”

This lesson, then, is biblically based. Details of true science are left to the scientists and to other quarterlies.

By the very nature of the operation, no earth-bound observer could see creation in action. No matter how near to the time of Creation he might approach, it would all be over before he himself was made. There are two possible keys to the question of origin—(1) *deduction* from what man sees around him in the physical world and (2) *faith* based on his religious experience with a self-revealing God whom he has come to know as his Lord and Saviour. The first has all the limitations of human knowledge and reasoning. Faith, however, can always take him one step farther back than the keenest and most believable of his physical deductions and show him, by special revelation, the Creator at work before the first man was formed.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. Faith and Creation
(Heb. 11:3)
2. The Creation Process
(Isa. 45:18)
3. The Creation of Man—I
(Gen. 1:26)
4. The Creation of Man—II
(Isa. 43:6, 7)
5. The Sustainer
(Col. 1:17)
6. The Re-creator
(Isa. 65:17)

**Part 1
FAITH AND
CREATION**

The limitations of reason in perceiving the way in which our universe was created are indicated by Scripture.

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Heb. 11:3).

The writer of Hebrews is not suggesting that we, in our present state, can *understand* the process of creation, but rather that faith enables our minds to *perceive* (a more accurate translation) how our universe owes its origins to God. Understanding will come only in the hereafter. Until then, faith enables us to accept the mind-staggering concept that our physical universe came into existence and continues to be knit together by a word or saying of God. (See Ps. 33:6, 9.) This faith, established in our own Christian experience, is based on meditation and observation subjected to revelation. It recognizes that a Mind or Power—God—must have designed all creation. The word rendered as “worlds” is literally translated as “ages,” but mention of “things which are seen” in contrast to “things which do appear” clearly refers to visible creation rather than to vague periods of time.

Adventists understand the Bible to teach that “God was not indebted to preexisting matter. By His mighty power God called matter into being, and then by that same power imparted life to creatures formed from it. Prior to the dawn of the so-called Atomic Age, it was one of the prime tenets of science that matter is eternal, that it can neither be created nor destroyed. But now scientists declare that matter and energy are interchangeable. Why, then, should it be thought strange that an almighty God can create matter that did not previously exist?”—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 472.

With what particular language does Jeremiah summarize the creative acts that formed our universe? Jer. 10:12.

In concise language the prophet spells out the initial creative process: The living God (Jer. 10:10) made the earth by His power, set up the habitable globe by His wisdom, and stretched or unfolded the heavens by His skillfulness. Verses 12 through 16 appear again in chapter 51:15-19. They express a frequent theme in the writings of the prophets—God’s creative acts set Him apart from all false gods. The New Testament makes an even greater claim in Colossians 1:16, 17. These concepts cannot fit into an evolutionary pattern!

THINK IT THROUGH

Is my faith strong enough to accept all that might be included in God’s creatorship? If not, how can I strengthen it?

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 8, pp. 255-262.

Part 2
THE
CREATION
PROCESS

On which acts that only God could perform is the lordship of God based?

“Thus says the Lord, the creator of the heavens, he who is God, who made the earth and fashioned it and himself fixed it fast, who created it no empty void, but made it for a place to dwell in: I am the Lord, there is no other” (Isa. 45:18, NEB).

If any other than God were the creator of heaven and earth, that being would be the lord of mankind, and to him would man direct his worship. But the God revealed in the Bible is the only One who can claim such an office. There is none other who can lay claim to His creatorship. “The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 436, 437.

Where does Scripture leave room, if at all, for an evolutionary theory of origins? Gen. 1:1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 29; Ex. 20:11.

The Bible offers no hospitality to evolutionary theories. It is unashamedly creationist. Creationism is woven into the very warp and woof of the Book. It offers only one explanation for the origin of our earth and all that lives and grows upon it—God’s creative acts. Nevertheless, we must be careful not to harm the Bible’s reputation for truthfulness by making claims for it that are not really in it. Sometimes it is suggested that the use of the Hebrew verb *bara’* (to create) in Genesis 1:1 supports the teaching that “in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” out of nothing. It has to be remembered, however, that the same verb *bara’* is also used in Genesis 1:27: “God created man in his own image . . . ; male and female created he them.” We know from Genesis 2:7 that the Lord God used existing material when He “formed man of the dust of the ground,” and from Genesis 2:22 we learn that Eve was then formed from the already-existing Adam. We have not been called to proclaim as biblical what may go beyond what the Bible teaches about this. On the other hand, we do well to remember that any material the Creator might have used in completing His work in Creation week was itself created by Him.

If we insist that God *needed* six days for Creation, we would be making Him the prisoner of time, somewhat as we are. It would be more correct to think of His *choosing* to use six days to give His creatures their placement in time, to provide the pattern of the seven-day week for governing their relation to time, and to give them the weekly blessing of the Sabbath.

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 111-116.

**Part 3
THE
CREATION
OF MAN—I**

What lessons do you gather from the nature of God's climactic work on the sixth day of Creation?

"God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26).

The scene was set (verses 1-25), but from our viewpoint, it lacked an important element—those morally responsible beings for whose primary benefit all the beauty had been produced by the Creator's word. The Creation story seems to suggest this. Earlier creative acts had followed a simple "And God said" (for example, verses 3, 6, 9), but prior to the creation of man there is a suggestion of taking counsel within the Godhead, as indicated by the phrase "Let us make" (verse 26). In verse 27 the making of man and woman is recorded, and they are then asked to care for the earth (verse 28). In this fuller treatment, the crowning act of Creation is recognized. "In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 415.

As we consider the miracle of how human beings are made, how should it make us feel? Ps. 100:3, 4.

Every one of us carries around in his or her body a marvelous laboratory in which to study the most wonderful of all our Maker's creative works. We are free to conduct that study at any hour of the day. The simple act of breathing, the spontaneous movement of the eye, of hand, of foot—these are miracles beyond our understanding. They should lead us to glorify our Creator. (See Ps. 139:14.)

"The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, is kept in order and activity by the power of an ever-present God."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 417.

THINK IT THROUGH

What do my family, my friends, my fellow citizens see of the image of God in me?

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 44-51.

Part 4
THE
CREATION
OF MAN—II

What reason does the Lord Himself give for having created human beings?

“Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him” (Isa. 43:6, 7).

Those who are called by God’s name, that is, those who are members of His worldwide family, have been created to add to His glory. At first thought, this might sound as though God were pleasing Himself, as if He were a praise-hungry tycoon who has made a world full of puppets to bring Him unending flattery. Fortunately, our God is utterly unlike that. In one sense, He does not *need* our praise. Unnumbered multitudes of sinless beings are constantly worshiping Him out of grateful hearts, and our tokens of praise can add but little to what He is already receiving.

Yet, our text clearly states that the Lord created (*bara’*, again) His sons and daughters for His glory. A little thought enables us to accept that without question, for we see the divine purpose shining above the sin that overshadows the human race. The original plan would have filled our world with a perfect people whose sinless lives would have added to the Creator’s glory. When sin shattered that prospect, unselfish love proved itself strong enough to redeem the fallen, to re-create them in the divine image, and to convince the watching universe that their Sovereign does all things well.

Note how Paul enlarges on this overview of the outworking of the plan of salvation. Eph. 1:5, 6. (See also verses 12, 14.)

Here the apostle refers to the glory that comes to God as redeemed men and women are adopted into His family by virtue of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection. “As a result of the revelation of God’s grace in the adoption, the universe will gain a true conception of the character and purposes of God and respond with expressions of praise. One of the purposes of the plan of salvation is the vindication of the character of God before the universe (see PP 68; cf. DA 625, 626; Eph. 3:10, 11).”—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 999.

The Jerusalem Bible has a very attractive translation of Ephesians 2:10: “We are God’s work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.”

THINK IT THROUGH

In what areas is my daily life bringing glory to my Redeemer?

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, “The Beatitudes” (Matt. 5:13, 14), pp. 35-44.

Part 5 In contrast to scientific theories, how does the Bible account for the way all things keep on working in the natural world?
THE SUSTAINER

“He is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:17).

In verse 16 Paul has affirmed Christ’s creatorship—all things were created by Him or through Him—and now in verse 17 he looks both before and after Creation. The Son, he declares, existed before all things. Many commentators see in the phrase “he is” a reference to the Eternal’s self-explanation, the “I AM” of Exodus 3:14 (see John 8:58), and to His creatorship. The forward look depends on the word translated “consist” which can also be rendered “cohere” or “hold together.” (See also Heb. 1:3, NEB: He “sustains the universe by His word of power.”) Nature is not a machine that keeps itself running and tuned. “God is constantly employed in upholding and using as His servants the things that He has made. He works through the laws of nature, using them as His instruments. They are not self-acting. Nature in her work testifies of the intelligent presence and active agency of a Being who moves in all things according to His will.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 416.

How does Paul apply the same truth to the upholding of mankind? Acts 17:25, 28.

Man loves to do things his way. He likes to believe that he is self-contained and self-sustaining, that he needs no external power to keep him going. Yet, of himself, he has not solved the mystery of his beginning or of his end. In spite of all that he has done to prolong his life—and life expectancy for men in the United States has risen from 47 years in 1905 to 69.3 years in 1977—he has not discovered how to live forever. Lack of breath still spells death. Paul’s thought, therefore, rings true: God giveth to all men life, and breath, and all things needful for life (Acts 17:25). It is still in God alone that we live, have power to move, and continue to exist (verse 28). “It is not because the mechanism that has once been set in motion continues to act by its own inherent energy that the pulse beats and breath follows breath; but every breath, every pulsation of the heart, is an evidence of the all-pervading care of Him in whom ‘we live, and move, and have our being.’ ”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 115.

THINK IT THROUGH

Remind yourself of modern man’s dependence on electricity, and the chaos that comes when such power fails. Apply such thoughts to man’s careless but real dependence upon God.

FURTHER STUDY

Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 1067, 1068.

**Part 6
THE
RE-CREATOR**

In the light of the damage done by sin to His creation, what decision has the Creator reached?

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

Do our minds hesitate before the prospect of a new creation? They should not. Our religion is founded on miracles—Creation, the virgin birth, the resurrection, the ascension, the new birth. All are supernatural occurrences, above the control and comprehension of man. The new creation, the making of new heavens and a new earth, presents no difficulty to our omnipotent God. The only problem lies with ourselves—shall we permit Him to remake us?

Only the Father and His two Eternal Companions know the measure of sorrow caused by the Fall. Only They can know the joy with which They anticipate the restoration of all things by re-creation. What unselfish pleasure will be Theirs as They “make all things new” (Rev. 21:5). What satisfaction in knowing that no sin will ever mar the perfection of the new creation!

What corresponding change must take place in us if we are to enjoy the new heavens and new earth? 2 Cor. 5:17.

It would be a disaster if unregenerate men and women were settled in the new earth. Their sin would soon ruin the sinless beauty of the new creation. Those who are to inherit the new Eden must be in harmony with their surroundings, and this demands that they be sinless too. This requires that they be born again (John 3:3, 5, 7), that they be new creatures. It requires that they be remade by Christ, living their new lives in Christ, and thus being fitted for sinless living throughout eternity. It is not difficult to agree to this—for others. The harder part is to accept it for ourselves. Hard though it may be, however, that is the goal of Sabbath School lesson study!

“The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the sacred ties that bind together ‘the whole family in heaven and earth’ (Ephesians 3:15)—these help to constitute the happiness of the redeemed.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 677.

THINK IT THROUGH

What relation is there between Creation and re-creation? Is my belief in both equally strong? Am I ready to face a new heaven and a new earth?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 674-678.



6 The Law of the Lord-I

“This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people” (Heb. 8:10).

This memory verse needs hiding in each Christian’s heart. It shows that a believer’s salvation and obedience come not from a keeping of commandments to earn salvation, but as a result of God’s saving grace and power working in the mind of God’s child. It is God who makes the covenant; He puts His laws in the mind, and He writes them upon the heart. The Lord offers Himself as our God and accepts us as His people.

If God wants to write His laws in our minds, what can be wrong in cheerfully observing those laws? Nothing! Yet, mention of law, especially the Ten Commandment law, arouses much opposition in many minds, for they equate law keeping with salvation by works. They agree that it is wrong to blaspheme, to kill, to commit adultery, to steal, and would hesitate to accuse those who do not commit these sins of being legalists. Yet, when observance of the fourth commandment is advocated, big theological guns are turned against the Decalogue and those who

recommend its precepts.

These considerations call for a fresh look at the law of the Lord. We need to perceive its kind purpose—to guide us into life, not to condemn us to death. At the same time, its condemnation of our sins leads us to repentance. We need to grasp its scope—it covers every part of our lives. We need to see its spiritual nature, its concern with the inner thoughts that produce outward acts.

For our part, we should see obedience as love’s response to divine concern. “If ye love me,” you will “keep my commandments.” As Meister Eckhart, the fourteenth-century mystic, is reputed to have observed: “Love God, and do as you please, say the Free Spirits. Yes, but as long as you like anything contrary to God’s will, you do not love Him.”

Our reference to law should not be restricted to God’s Ten Words. Both the Old and the New Testament are filled with counsel, even commands, that are not directly related to the Decalogue. This helps us to view the law as an expression of God’s loving will for us and not as a series of prohibitions that always run counter to our inborn inclinations.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Creator and Law**
(Ps. 45:6)
2. **Man and God’s Law**
(Ps. 19:7, 8)
3. **Primacy of God**
(Ex. 20:3)
4. **Reverence for God**
(Ex. 20:4, 5)
5. **Remember the Sabbath**
(Ex. 20:8)
6. **Sabbath Observance**
(Isa. 58:13, 14)

Part 1
THE
CREATOR
AND LAW

What is the significance of the words of the psalmist as he describes the nature of God's kingdom?

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre" (Ps. 45:6).

The fact that God is eternal has great meaning for the Christian. It gives God an everlasting kingdom and establishes the eternal rightness of its laws. Its host of heavenly inhabitants freely observe their Creator's commands, delighting to do His all-wise will and willingly giving Him their service. This past eternity provides a firm foundation for the creation of our world and its inhabitants. If it had made the right choice, mankind could have inherited the timeless experience of the heavenly host and have joined other obedient worlds in serving their Maker. Alas, the human race chose and still chooses to reject that option, preferring to pit its preferences against the wisdom of eternal ages.

What qualities are seen in the Lord's words and in His commands? Ps. 111:7, 8.

The Jerusalem Bible's rendering of these verses is refreshing: "All that he does is done in faithfulness and justice, in all his ways his precepts are dependable, ordained to last for ever and ever, framed in faithfulness and integrity." What a God! How foolish to turn Him away! How reasonable to heed His commands!

"When the heart yields to the influence of the Spirit of God; the conscience will be quickened, and the sinner will discern something of the depth and sacredness of God's holy law, the foundation of His government in heaven and on earth. The 'Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,' illumines the secret chambers of the soul, and the hidden things of darkness are made manifest. . . . Conviction takes hold upon the mind and heart. The sinner has a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah and feels the terror of appearing, in his own guilt and uncleanness, before the Searcher of hearts. He sees the love of God, the beauty of holiness, the joy of purity; he longs to be cleansed and to be restored to communion with Heaven."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 24.

Note how the psalmist stresses the everlasting nature of God's righteousness and the reliability of His law. Ps. 119:142.

THINK IT THROUGH

What weight in our thinking do we give to the age-long experience of the Godhead and the angels in knowing what is best for human beings?

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 33, 34, 52.

Part 2
MAN AND
GOD'S LAW

What flawless qualities characterize the law of the Lord, and what will the law accomplish for those who follow its guidance?

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes" (Ps. 19:7, 8).

In this passage, four different Hebrew words are used to speak of the guidance given by the Lord to His children. The first, *torah*, has the basic meaning of "direction," developing into "teaching," "instruction," "doctrine." In the Old Testament it is translated "law" 216 times. It does not specifically refer to the Decalogue; rather, it is a term signifying all the revealed will of God or any part of it. The second word, *eduth*, is generally translated "testimony"; but it also has the sense of "witness." The third, *piqqudim*, is only here translated "statutes." Throughout Psalm 119 it is uniformly rendered "precepts." The fourth, *miswah*, is the usual word for "commandment" and is so used 173 times in the Old Testament, mostly in the plural form.

These four words, then, embrace the Lord's total instruction to His children in Old Testament times. They include the Ten Commandments but are not restricted to them. God's various forms of instruction to His people are here said to be "perfect," "sure," "right" and "pure." In turn, they convert or revive the soul, educate the simple believer, bring joy to the heart, and give moral clear-sightedness. They have intensely spiritual functions, helping their observers to live according to God's directives.

What is the larger spiritual setting or experience, of which commandment keeping is a basic part? Deut. 10:12.

The Lord never intended that commandment keeping should produce legalism or the error of salvation by works. He has always urged that obedience to His precepts be the outcome of godly fear or reverence and wholehearted love. (See Deut. 6:4, 5, 25; 11:1; Matt. 22:35-40.) Any other motivation is misleading, unacceptable to God and useless to man.

THINK IT THROUGH

What breadth and depth do we see in "the law of the Lord"? Do we grasp that it can only be fulfilled by a love-based obedience that goes deeper than a surface observance of its teachings?

FURTHER STUDY

Read all of Psalm 119. This can be done in about 25 minutes. Note its broad portrayal of God's law, testimonies, statutes, commandments, and precepts. How do our attitudes compare?

**Part 3
PRIMACY
OF GOD**

Which is the first commandment?

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” (Ex. 20:3).

This commandment was given against the background of worldwide idolatry at the time of the Exodus—but it has always been first in the heavenly statute book, and there has never been a time when it was not valid. On the surface it may seem to do no more than make the Lord first among all the other gods whose worship flourished in the Middle East. But Israel came to know that when the Lord is given first place in worship, the falsity, the worthlessness of all other deities is revealed. This revelation made Israel monotheistic—worshippers of one God—and the nation recognized that “the Lord our God is one Lord” (Deut. 6:4).

God’s insistence on His being above all is in no way self-centered. Since the Lord is God, He can have no one above Him. (See Isa. 44:6; Ps. 97:9.) He is first by nature and would be denying that nature if He stepped aside for any competitor whatsoever—and there is a rabble of competitors, though not one can hold a candle to our God!

“Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, uncreated One, Himself the Source and Sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship. Man is forbidden to give to any other object the first place in his affections or his service. Whatever we cherish that tends to lessen our love for God or to interfere with the service due Him, of that do we make a god.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 305.

Note how the One who knows God best quoted an enlargement on the first commandment. Luke 4:8.

In rejecting Satan’s invitation to worship him, Jesus uses a free rendering of Deuteronomy 6:13 based on the Greek version. This expands the principle at the heart of the first commandment and introduces the subjects of worship and service. These flow naturally from the thought of God’s uniqueness, His supremacy—these qualities exalt Him above all other so-called gods and make Him alone worthy of the highest adoration man can offer.

THINK IT THROUGH

Consider the four faculties (listed in Luke 10:27) through which we may express our love for God. Recall the formal giving of the Decalogue—on release from Egyptian slavery (Ex. 20:2)—and know that even then gratitude was to be the main motivation behind commandment keeping. That gratitude, which leads to love, provides the foundation on which true worship is built.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, “The Spirituality of the Law,” pp. 73-78.

Part 4
REVERENCE
FOR GOD

What is at the heart of the second commandment?

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them” (Ex. 20: 4, 5).

After weary centuries of Egyptian slavery, Israel was well versed in idolatry. Now its people were on their way to the Promised Land, where heathen peoples were engaging in cruel and licentious worship of deities that did not exist anyway. They needed to keep themselves separate from all such idolatry. To aid their detachment, there came this command, which also prohibited their making even an image of the true God!

In prosperous lands, the most appealing idol is probably Mammon, worshiped under many different forms, but always placing material prosperity above self-forgetful dedication to God. We may thus bow down to cars, TV and stereo sets, houses, family demands, creature comforts—the list is endless. In less favored lands, the daily struggle for existence may claim first attention. Each Sabbath School member must search his own life and say what we so often sing:

“The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee.”

—William Cowper,
The Church Hymnal, no. 383.

In what way may we show our reverence for the Lord our God? Ex. 20:7.

This third commandment is expressed negatively, but its observance is best promoted by such a profound reverence for the name and character of our Maker that we shall naturally honor Him and have no urge to refer carelessly to Him or to blaspheme His holy name.

“This commandment not only prohibits false oaths and common swearing, but it forbids us to use the name of God in a light or careless manner, without regard to its awful significance. By the thoughtless mention of God in common conversation, by appeals to Him in trivial matters, and by the frequent and thoughtless repetition of His name, we dishonor Him.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 306, 307.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is there anything in my life that has priority over the Lord my God? What honor or what shame does my life bring on the Lord's name?

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, “The Spirituality of the Law” (Matt. 5:34), pp. 66-69.

**Part 5
REMEMBER
THE SABBATH**

What concluding guidance does the first table of the Decalogue give to maintain man's relationship to his God?

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8).

Remember. It is not possible to remember that which one has never known. Adam and Eve remembered their first Sabbath. (See *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.) It was their first complete 24-hour day, the first Sabbath ever observed, and memories of its hallowed significance were shared with their descendants. The fourth commandment reveals that the Israelites knew of the Sabbath before they reached Sinai (see Ex. 16:22-30), but it must have been exceedingly difficult to remember it in Egypt.

Keep it holy. The same Hebrew verb, *quadesh*, is used at the close of the commandment for the Lord's own act in hallowing the Sabbath, even as it is in Genesis 2:3 where the English translation speaks of *sanctifying*. Mankind, then, is given the same privilege as God Himself exercised at the close of Creation.

The commandment places Sabbath observance on the same level with the first three precepts, as part of man's acknowledgement of God's lordship. The command has never been revoked.

In what way is man to emulate his Creator in Sabbath observance? Ex. 20:9-11.

Six days shalt thou labour. Without adding an eleventh commandment, there is a sense in which this places a moral obligation upon all God-fearers to work diligently during the week, even as did the Lord during the six days of Creation. "God saw that a Sabbath was essential for man, even in Paradise. He needed to lay aside his own interests and pursuits for one day of the seven, that he might more fully contemplate the works of God and meditate upon His power and goodness. He needed a Sabbath to remind him more vividly of God and to awaken gratitude because all that he enjoyed and possessed came from the beneficent hand of the Creator."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.

In it thou shalt not do any work. This prohibits performance of secular work on Sabbath—Saturday, the seventh day—and should alert us to guard the holy hours so that secular occupations and interests do not break into the Sabbath. We are also morally obligated to avoid causing others to work unnecessarily on the sacred day. (See Deut. 5:14.)

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I faithful in observing the spirit as well as the letter concerning Sabbath observance? In what areas do I need to raise my standards?

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 2, pp. 582-585.

Part 6
SABBATH
OBSERVANCE

"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; . . . then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord" (Isa. 58:13, 14).

These verses reveal that standards of Sabbath keeping had fallen to very low levels in Isaiah's day (see ch. 56:2), and the prophet was calling for reform. We can rightly apply his message to our own Seventh-day Adventist situation and make a similar two-edged approach—negative and positive—to grapple with the problem. We must turn away from Sabbath desecration, must refrain from doing our own pleasure on God's holy day, not "clutching at business" (Variorum), "not speaking idle words" (NIV). On the contrary, we should "call the sabbath 'Delightful'" (Jerusalem Bible), "a day of joy," "a day to be honoured"—"then you shall find your joy in the Lord" (verse 14, NEB). Do not these phrases arouse in us a longing for the deeply spiritual delights that should be ours every Sabbath?

"When the Sabbath commences, we should place a guard upon ourselves, upon our acts and our words, lest we rob God by appropriating to our own use that time which is strictly the Lord's. We should not do ourselves, nor suffer our children to do, any manner of our own work for a livelihood, or anything which could have been done on the six working days. Friday is the day of preparation. Time can then be devoted to making the necessary preparation for the Sabbath and to thinking and conversing about it. Nothing which will in the sight of Heaven be regarded as a violation of the holy Sabbath should be left unsaid or undone, to be said or done upon the Sabbath. God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 702, 703.

Define Christ's attitude toward the Sabbath. Luke 4:16; Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-5.

He who had given the seventh-day Sabbath to mankind welcomed the weekly day of rest and of worship. The Sabbath found Him in the synagogue, joining His neighbors in prayer, praise, and Scripture study. In addition, He widened contemporary ideas on rightful Sabbath observance, leading His disciples to see that "it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days." If the Master were physically present with us today, He would undoubtedly give the same example and teach the same lessons.

THINK IT THROUGH

To what degree are we following our Lord's example in the right use of each Sabbath day?

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pp. 250-252; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 281-289.

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7 The Law of the Lord-II

"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10).

Here is the Master's three-part program for us: (1) Love Me, keep My commandments; (2) If we do this, we shall abide in His love; (3) We shall follow His example. Loving obedience binds Father, Son, and Christians closely together.

What a different complexion that puts on the much-maligned doctrine of obedience! It leaves no room for slavery, no trace of legalism, no hint of salvation by works. It is salvation by love—by the mutual love of Father and Son, and Theirs for us, and ours for Them. It is the fruit of faith that works by love. Here is the beautiful secret of commandment keeping. Who can quarrel with it? Who can withhold obedience on such a basis?

This week's study of the six remaining commandments, numbers five to ten, will give the

opportunity to gauge the reality of our love for Christ. Its measure will be seen in the honor we give our parents, in our respect for human life, in loving faithfulness to marriage vows, in respect for our neighbor's property, in our love for truth and rejection of falsehood, in our refusal to covet another's possessions. And love will lead us beyond the formal observance of the Ten Commandments: it will make us sensitive and responsive to all our Lord's biddings. We shall echo His own words: "I delight to do thy will, O my God" (Ps. 40:8). This will apply to His daily counsel and requests as well as to the broad principles enshrined in the Ten Words. We shall want to know and to do His total will. When we reach that stage, we shall be truly emulating our Master.

Let us try this week to make each day's study very practical, applying each day's precept to our own lives. Unless we do this, the Decalogue will remain what it has so often been—a list of limiting rules that have little if any impact on us and our neighbors. Let us look at each command and see it as heavenly guidance to save us from sin and to bring us into complete harmony with the will of our all-wise heavenly Father.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. Honor to Parents
(Ex. 20:12)
2. Respect for Life
(Ex. 20:13)
3. Sacredness of Marriage
(Ex. 20:14)
4. Total Honesty
(Ex. 20:15)
5. Truth Tellers
(Ex. 20:16)
6. True Contentment
(Ex. 20:17)

**Part 1
HONOR TO
PARENTS**

“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” (Ex. 20:12).

This and the fourth commandment are the only two that are stated positively; the others are cast in a negative mold. The fifth heads the second table of law, and is the only commandment that specifically promises a blessing through its fulfillment, though the second implies its observers will receive mercy (Ex. 20:6).

The injunction in this fifth precept is addressed to children regardless of age. “It is binding upon childhood and youth, upon the middle-aged and the aged. There is no period in life when children are excused from honoring their parents. This solemn obligation is binding upon every son and daughter, and is one of the conditions to their prolonging their lives upon the land which the Lord will give the faithful.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 80.

To honor one’s parents involves more than formal respect. It includes expressing appreciation for all that our parents have done for us through earlier years, for warm love shown in practical care. It calls for showing concern for their welfare and gratitude for the ideals they have upheld.

In Deuteronomy 5:16 Moses enlarged on the promise, adding: “That it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” The primary reference was to life in Palestine, but the assurance can also apply to life in our own day and in the world to come.

What was Paul’s emphasis regarding the claims of the fifth commandment? Eph. 6:1-3.

The apostle followed the divine lead in Exodus 20:12 and addressed the children concerning attitudes to parents. He did not neglect the parents’ responsibilities (see Eph. 6:4), but first stressed the children’s duty both to obey and to honor their father and mother. He did so in awareness that filial respect would weaken as time flowed on. He recognized the rebellious tendencies in his own day (Rom. 1:30), but he foresaw a worsening family situation “in the last days” (2 Tim. 3:1, 2). The commandment therefore has particular relevance for our time.

The initial responsibility for children’s attitudes rests with their parents. To them has been given the duty and privilege of raising their sons and daughters “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4), that is, with Christian discipline and instruction.

THINK IT THROUGH

In today’s social system, what application do we make of the call to honor our fathers and mothers?

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 1, pp. 397-401.

Part 2
RESPECT
FOR LIFE

Note how the Lawgiver affirms His concern for the sacredness of human life.

“Thou shalt not kill” (Ex. 20:13).

There are at least eleven distinct words in the Hebrew Bible that deal with different aspects of the English verb “to kill.” The word used in Exodus 20:13 is *rasah*, which has the basic meaning “to break or to dash in pieces,” hence “to kill.” Apart from its use in the commandment (Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17), it is used in this sense only twice. But in 12 other places it conveys the thought of “to murder,” that is, “to commit manslaughter,” and would be better so rendered in this instance. The translations of Moffatt, the NEB, and the NIV use the word “murder.”

Murder is a shocking sin because its results can never be called back. No human power can restore the life that is ruthlessly ended. He who murders usurps a power that belongs to God alone or to the community that administers justice on His behalf.

What deeper appreciation of the sixth commandment does Jesus make in His exposition of the law? Matt. 5:21-26. (See also 1 John 3:14, 15.)

It is entirely appropriate that He who gave Israel its laws from Mount Sinai should explain the deeper meaning embedded in the four words, “Thou shalt not kill.” In so doing, Jesus shows His concern over the inner urges that produce the act of murder and that reveal the sinfulness of hatred and anger. Assassination of a brother’s character may call for judgment as much as the sudden taking of his life. As always, the Lord probes beneath the surface and lays bare the thoughts and intents of the heart, and in this case He offers love as the correction for anger and murder. He revokes the old rule of “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,” and He bids us replace hatred for an enemy with an all-forgiving love (Matt. 5:38, 39, 43-48).

“All acts of injustice that tend to shorten life; the spirit of hatred and revenge, or the indulgence of any passion that leads to injurious acts toward others, or causes us even to wish them harm (for ‘whoso hateth his brother is a murderer’); a selfish neglect of caring for the needy or suffering; all self-indulgence or unnecessary deprivation or excessive labor that tends to injure health—all these are, to a greater or less degree, violations of the sixth commandment.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 308.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I seeking to replace hatred, or even dislike, with love?

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, “The True Motive in Service” (Matt. 6:7-22), pp. 86-92.

Part 3
SACREDNESS
OF MARRIAGE

Meditate on the seventh commandment.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Ex. 20:14).

This command arises from God’s ideal set forth in Eden. He intended one man and one woman, moved by mutual love, to marry, to beget children, and establish an ideal home which would be copied by following generations. Marriage was designed to satisfy the legitimate, God-implanted desires of both men and women. The commandment was given from the beginning to safeguard the sacredness of marriage, a sanctity that is destroyed by adultery—which is defined as the voluntary sexual intercourse of two persons, one or both of whom are married, though not to each other. (Sexual activity outside marriage was not thereby countenanced.) Disregard of this command has ruined countless marriages, brought sorrow into innumerable lives, bewildered innocent children, and weakened the spiritual life and influence of the church.

What light does Jesus throw on the broader meaning of this forbidding of adultery? Matt. 5:27-32.

The Master’s teaching was directed first to men because in Jewish life only the man had power to initiate divorce; therefore he bore the principal responsibility in marriage. In the current trends toward equality of the sexes, however, the Saviour’s instruction is of concern to both sexes. Today both marriage partners carry the responsibility of preventing adultery by a love-filled giving of self in satisfying each other’s need for love.

Christ’s interpretation of the seventh commandment is not limited to husbands and wives. He sets standards of sexual conduct for all, married and unmarried, young and old. Resistance to the first sign of temptation, a turning from enticement, refusal to be drawn into sin—these can prevent the fall into any form of adultery.

In the sixth beatitude, our Lord reveals the key to sexual purity: “Blessed are the pure in heart” (Matt. 5:8). They are spared the griefs created by responding to unlawful desire. They, like the lily, can be pure in a muddy world. Unspotted, they can walk in white with Christ, their sinless Saviour. But such a state is not easily attained. “Those who would not fall a prey to Satan’s devices, must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. . . . The heart must be faithfully sentinelled, or evils without will awaken evils within, and the soul will wander in darkness.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 518.

THINK IT THROUGH

What can we do to help ourselves and our church maintain New Testament standards of purity?

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 7, pp. 45-50.

Part 4
TOTAL
HONESTY **With what words did the Lord set before His people ideals of honesty and respect for others' property?**

"Thou shalt not steal" (Ex. 20:15).

This is a necessary clause in the legal code of every human society. The need arises from the universal tendency to break the tenth commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," and the resultant breaking of the eighth which forbids stealing. And here, as in the question of adultery, the secret of victory lies in rejecting the first urge to sin. Refusal to desire another's property will prevent the taking of that property; while a harboring of desire, if unchecked, may lead to the act of stealing.

Each society produces its own inducements to dishonesty. The temptations in Israel during the Exodus must have been starkly simple, for a wandering people's possessions were necessarily few. But in Egypt, where lavish wealth was paraded before deep poverty, and in the more settled conditions that awaited the twelve tribes in Canaan, enticements to sin were and would be multiplied and intensified. We can apply the lesson to the situation that confronts ourselves.

What was Paul's plan for upholding the eighth commandment? Phil. 4:11. (Compare 1 Tim. 6:6-11.)

Those who cultivate a contented spirit spare themselves the shame of taking another's goods.

There are, however, many other forms of stealing, apart from the direct theft of money or materials. Consider our attitudes and actions in relation to payment or evasion of taxes and of customs duties. How faithful are we in giving to God a complete tenth of our income and offerings "as God hath prospered us"? Do we steal from the worthy poor by not assisting them when we have the means to do so? Do we limit our "charity" to the narrow circle of church-related needs, or do we show a generous spirit toward genuine need wherever we meet it? Do we, by working less than the agreed time, steal from our employer? Do we steal another's good name? The number and variety of questions relating to theft are embarrassingly rich!

The cure for any tendency to steal lies in unswerving honesty, prompted and upheld by God's Spirit. "When a man is indeed connected with God, and is keeping His law in truth, his life will reveal the fact; for all his actions will be in harmony with the teachings of Christ. He will not sell his honor for gain."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 310.

THINK IT THROUGH **What is the honesty record of Seventh-day Adventists—including myself—in my neighborhood?**

FURTHER STUDY *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 489-491.

Part 5
TRUTH
TELLERS

Consider God's plan for teaching truthfulness to His people.

**"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour"
(Ex. 20:16).**

Although this ninth commandment was not formally given to Israel until Sinai, its principle, as with the other nine, had been in force since Creation. Its instruction will continue to be needed as long as there are faulty human beings like ourselves.

False witness is a specific form of dishonesty. It states a lie as if it were truth in order to injure another, and is often done for personal gain. It may rob the victim of his goods, of his good name, or even of his life. It is therefore a form of stealing and illustrates the close connection of one commandment with another. Its central message bids us "Tell the truth, and nothing but the truth in respect of others—or keep quiet."

"This commandment is not only applicable to the lawcourts. It does include perjury, but it also includes all forms of scandal and slander, all idle talk and tittle-tattle, all lies and deliberate exaggerations or distortions of the truth. We can bear false witness by listening to unkind rumours as well as by passing them on, by telling jokes at somebody else's expense by creating false impressions, by not correcting untrue statements, and by our silence as well as by our speech."—J. R. W. Stott, *Basic Christianity* (London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1958), p. 69.

It will be seen that fulfillment of this command cannot be a mechanical process. The secret of keeping it lies in the state of one's mind, whether one has become prone to leave the path of uprightness or whether one has cultivated the mind of Christ in whom there is no kind of falsehood.

Where must truth reside for it to govern our lives? Ps. 15:1, 2; 51:6.

Truth is a resident quality that should dwell in every Christian's heart. When that is so, he will be incapable of bearing false witness or of telling a lie, for he will instinctively tell the truth. He is then the kind of person whom God wants to dwell in His holy hill, in Paradise.

The presence of truth in the heart will draw us to Him who is truth, prepare us to be like Him who is the True Witness (Rev. 3:14), and enable us to be eternally at ease in His presence.

THINK IT THROUGH

Does truth dwell in our hearts, or is it only an occasional visitor?

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, "The Lord's Prayer" (Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2), pp. 102-106.

Part 6
TRUE
CONTENTMENT

What negative discipline will encourage a contented frame of mind?

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's" (Ex. 20:17).

This commandment might well have appeared as number eight to introduce the command against stealing, for the two belong together. He who covets takes the first step on the road to theft. A refusal to covet, a firm rejection of the desire to possess what another has, will turn us aside from reaching out to take a brother's or sister's property—of any kind. In some countries the principle of the command may be made more clear by changing "ox" and "ass" to "car" or "plane" or "bicycle," but the spiritual intent remains the same. We may admire what others have, but when we grow envious and allow the acid of covetousness to eat into our souls, then we are injuring ourselves and preparing the way for injury to our neighbor.

The question of covetousness is a deeply spiritual matter, beyond the reach of human law. It transcends legal formalities and digs into "the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). Are we more interested in acquiring possessions, in keeping up with "the Joneses," in appearing affluent before our neighbors, than in possessing true godliness?

With what words does Paul introduce the basic cure for covetousness? 1 Tim. 6:6.

This quality does not come naturally to most people, but if there is the core of godliness in our hearts, we shall, by the aid of our Lord Jesus Christ, be able to cultivate the grace of contentment.

The positive form of this commandment is "Enjoy your own possessions." Let us be thankful for what the Lord has already given us. This attitude will spare us much heartache and make us better neighbors.

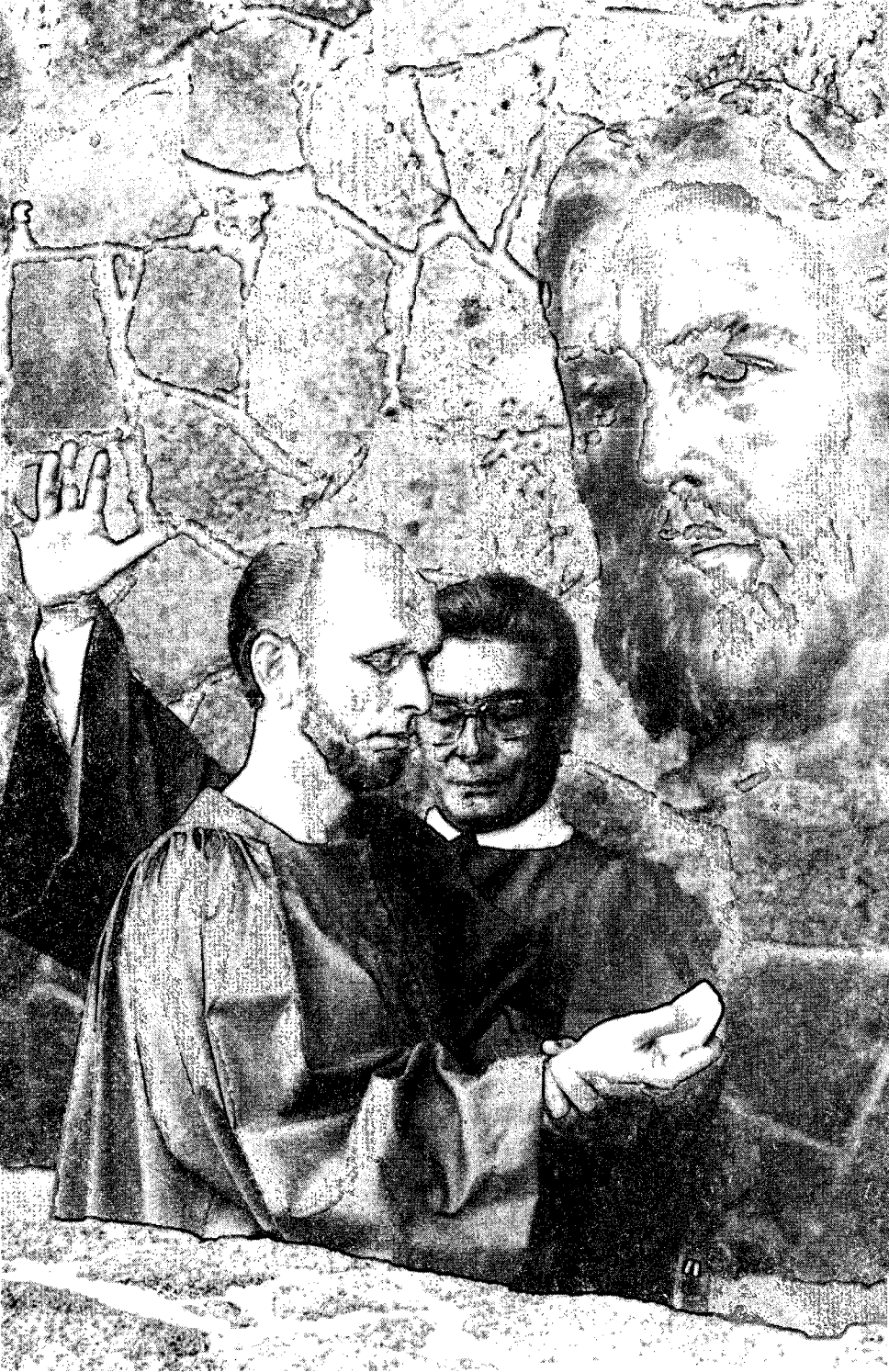
"Those who use their wealth in doing good will see no necessity for large accumulations in this world; for the treasure which is used to advance the cause of God and which is given to the needy in Christ's name is given to Christ, and He lays it up for us in the bank of heaven in bags which wax not old."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 546.

THINK IT THROUGH

Where are most of our energies centered—on gaining material possessions, or on developing a Christlike nature? What do our homes proclaim?

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 3, pp. 381-385.



8 New Lives for Old

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

During the past two weeks we have considered the law of the Lord—finding it to include the Ten Commandments but not being restricted to them—and seeing it as an expression of God's loving will for mankind. But human frailty grasps at mechanical means of salvation by works. It must learn that "no man is justified by the law in the sight of God" and that "the just shall live by faith."

This week we remind ourselves of long-held but often-forgotten truths. From David and Paul we gain realistic views of sinful human nature—plus how to turn to God's way of overcoming it. From our Lord Himself we learn of the need of a new birth for entry into the kingdom of God. Paul shows how we, through baptism by immersion, identify with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and thus signify the death of our old selves and the

spiritual resurrection to new lives as Christians, released from past sins and prepared for a sinless eternity. In Christ, and by His self-sacrifice, we become new creatures, living lives that are acceptable to God "by faith of the Son of God, who loved" us "and gave himself for" us.

And so to our memory verse—to receive Him and the power that enables (or the right that permits) us to become the sons of God through trust in His name. John and Paul both recognize the one and only means of salvation—personal faith in Christ as the Saviour of the world. In this, the two apostles are but supporting what Jesus Himself said: "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

It might be well to remember that, for the baby, it is relatively easy to be born. The serious business of life begins thereafter. Similarly, the new birth does not solve all of life's problems. It is still true that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). But "the trials of life are God's workmen, to remove the impurities and roughness from our character" (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 10), helping us to grow up into Christ.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Sinners All**
(Ps. 14:2, 3)
2. **Justified Sinners**
(Rom. 3:24)
3. **Born of the Spirit**
(John 3:3-7)
4. **Dead and Resurrected**
(Rom. 6:3, 4)
5. **From Death to Glory**
(Eph. 2:1-3)
6. **Made New in Christ**
(2 Cor. 5:17)

Part 1 Think upon the Lord's assessment of the human race as
SINNERS ALL recorded by David.

"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps. 14:2, 3).

This is not looking for the worst, it is looking for reality. Even in Eden sin had reared its ugly head, and thereafter tainted all who were born of Adam and Eve. Within 10 generations men and women had sunk so low that the Creator sent the Flood, and through Noah and his family gave humanity a new start. (See Gen. 6:5-8; 8:20 to 9:1.) But mankind showed itself unwilling to be changed and clung to its sin. In David's day the psalmist could state on the Lord's behalf: "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." The compilers of the book of Psalms were sufficiently impressed by the theme to include an almost identical psalm (53); while Paul (Rom. 3:10-18) uses selections from the book of Psalms (most from the Greek translation of the Old Testament) to establish the depravity of man and his lost estate: "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10).

With what conclusive declaration does Paul convey the Bible's verdict on man's sinfulness? Rom. 3:23.

In the Greek original of the phrase "all have sinned," Paul conveys the idea that this sinning was done once and for all in the past, specifically in Adam's sin. This should be compared with Romans 5:12, where the apostle teaches that Adam's transgression affected all of his descendants. "By their transgression, sin was introduced as an infectious power in human nature antagonistic to God, and this infection has continued ever since. It is because of this infection of nature, traceable to Adam's sin, that men must be born again."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 531. This is not an arbitrary act on God's part, for the second part of Romans 3:23 says—by the use of the present tense—"continue to fall short" or "keep on falling short" of the glory of God. No individual since Adam has completely disassociated himself or herself from Adam's fall by living free from sin. By their own sins all have shared in Adam's original guilt. There has only been One who lived on earth without sin; all others have fallen short of God's character and are therefore in need of redemption.

THINK IT THROUGH Is my realization of my sinfulness as vivid now as when I first felt my need of a Saviour? Is a deepening repentance a sign of progress toward holiness?

**Part 2
JUSTIFIED
SINNERS****After recognition of universal sinfulness, what great step toward salvation does Paul next take for his readers?****"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).**

When confronted by his sinfulness, the sincere man's instinct is to reform and demonstrate that he is better than others suppose him to be. He attempts to conform to God's standard, the law, but discovers that he cannot live according to its precepts. He then learns that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his [God's] sight" (verse 20), and is prepared for the almost incredible plan outlined in today's scripture. In His unfathomable mercy, God makes provision for a sinner to be treated as a righteous person. All sins can be pardoned and a new start in Christian living begun.

Being justified. The present tense is used, indicating that we can be justified, or declared righteous, at any time that we choose to cast ourselves on God's mercy and claim His assurance of forgiveness.

Freely. The Greek word means "as a gift" or "without payment," and is correctly rendered "freely" or "gratis." It is hard for human minds to grasp that no payment is demanded, it seems too good to be true—yet true it is!

By His grace. This expresses in another form, from a different angle, the same thought given by the word "freely." The phrase identifies the divine quality that makes our justification possible, namely, "grace." The usual definition, "unmerited favor," is not adequate in this context. "Grace" here refers to one of our Creator's intrinsic qualities. It arises out of His inexhaustible love for His creatures, leading Him to do all that is necessary to save them from the results of their own folly. Its operation plays a central role in salvation. (See Eph. 2:8.)

Through the redemption. God's *grace* is the motivating power in His plan for our salvation; *redemption* is the method He employs to effect our deliverance from sin's bondage. The English word "redemption" and its Greek equivalent are both connected with the thought of "buying back" or "ransom," hence, "deliverance."

In Christ Jesus. The Father chose to channel redemption through the Son. (See 1 John 5:11, 12.) It is in the total ministry of Jesus that our ransom from sin is effected at the cost of His own life. (See Rom. 3:25; 5:8.) This follows God's consistent practice of working through Christ in all things that pertain to our world and its inhabitants.

THINK IT THROUGH**We know the theory of redemption. Are we experiencing its liberating power in our daily lives?****FURTHER STUDY***Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 63-70.

**Part 3
BORN OF
THE SPIRIT**

What simple but essential truth regarding salvation did Jesus teach in His talk with Nicodemus? How does it affect us today?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again” (John 3:3-7).

Our studying this lesson and our presence in Sabbath School suggest that we do wish to enter the kingdom of heaven. Today's message, then, must be heeded by us. Unless we have been or shall be born again, we cannot even see the kingdom, much less *enter* that holy realm.

Let us earnestly ask ourselves, “Have we been born again, or have we just whitewashed our old lives, making them look respectable while they remain unchanged within?” This is a question we need to ask and answer. Jesus said to Nicodemus: “It is not theoretical knowledge you need so much as spiritual regeneration. You need not to have your curiosity satisfied, but to have a new heart. You must receive new life from above before you can appreciate heavenly things. Until this change takes place, making all things new, it will result in no saving good for you to discuss with Me My authority or My mission.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 171.

What additional explanation did Jesus offer concerning our new birth? John 3:5, 6.

The Saviour here offers two enlightenments. The first asserts the need for burial of the old life in the waters of baptism, followed by a resurrection that initiates the new life. The second affirms the need to be born of the Holy Spirit, to have a life that is conceived, sustained, and directed by that Spirit.

“The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. . . .

“When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. . . . The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 172, 173.

THINK IT THROUGH

What kind of life am I now living—a modified old one or a transformed new one?

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 167-177.

**Part 4
DEAD AND
RESURRECTED**

Having recognized our need for a new birth, how may we signify that this has taken place?

"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).

In these verses Paul clearly identifies the Christian experience at baptism with the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. This immeasurably increases the significance of baptism by immersion, making it not only a cleansing act (see John 3:5; Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5), but, more meaningfully still, the death of the old nature and its burial beneath the baptismal waters. This enables a resurrection to take place, but not of the old nature, for it is reckoned dead; it must be a new creature who rises from the water to "walk in newness of life."

Note the way in which death and resurrection are further symbolized in baptism. Rom. 6:5-7.

The comparison between the convert's spiritual death and resurrection in baptism is sharpened here. The death is likened to crucifixion, with the old self being rendered "powerless" rather than "destroyed." This is a dramatic comparison that should emphasize the need for a complete change of life-style for all believers. The way is then prepared for a resurrection that marks the beginning of the new life, even as Christ came from the tomb with His human form glorified.

Most of us will confess that our spiritual troubles arise from those parts of the old self that constantly seek to rise again. Hence the need for clearer and clearer glimpses of the cross that produce ever-deepening repentance, more complete trust in the merits of Jesus, and more complete submission to His indwelling Spirit.

"This passage [Rom. 6:6] emphasizes the fact that conversion and rebirth mean more than a mere change of profession and habits of life. They involve a radical change in the inner man, which can be wrought only by the regenerating Spirit of God. The plan for man's salvation brings not only deliverance from condemnation through acceptance of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice, it brings also the birth or creation of a new self free from the slavery of sin."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 538.

THINK IT THROUGH

How faithfully are we now fulfilling our baptismal vows?

FURTHER STUDY

S.D.A. Bible Commentary, vol. 6, pp. 536-541.

**Part 5
FROM DEATH
TO GLORY**

What black but truthful picture does Paul paint of the past lives of many believers?

“You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others” (Eph. 2:1-3).

In the original language of the Bible, the picture presented in these three verses looks blacker still, for the verb translated “quickened” does not appear until verse 5 and is inserted early in our version only to clarify Paul’s meaning. As we who have been called out of the world’s sin look at ourselves, we are probably tempted to think the colors are too dark; but as God in His purity looks upon our past, the picture may appear too light. We should not forget the depths from which even the best of us have been lifted!

In what sublime language does Paul depict the Christian’s present prospect of future glory? Eph. 2:4-7.

After his gloomy but accurate portrayal of the past (verses 1-3), the apostle looks up and sees what God has already done for us in Christ. The revelation is almost beyond belief. It shows us a God whose wealth is reckoned not in silver, gold, or jewels but in the inexhaustible mercy which flows to us because of the magnitude of His love toward us. This love has led Him to include us among the recipients of the benefits arising from Christ’s resurrection. Even though we were then, according to God’s foreknowledge, still “dead in trespasses” (verse 1), He guaranteed our being brought to life by virtue of His Son’s victory over death on that resurrection morning. So sure is God of saving us from our sin and its fatal result that, in His own mind and in the Person of Christ, He has already raised us up and seated us at His own right hand. And, as if that assurance is not breath-taking enough, He reveals His further plans. He has saved us for an astounding purpose, namely, “that in the ages to come he might shew” (verse 7) through us the extraordinary, indescribable, immeasurable wealth of His grace or kindness.

THINK IT THROUGH

O Father of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we thank Thee now for Thy great kindness, which needs all eternity in which to express itself toward us!

FURTHER STUDY

S.D.A. Bible Commentary, vol. 6, pp. 1006, 1007.

**Part 6
MADE NEW
IN CHRIST**

There are many, many facets to God's plan for saving us from our sins, and we need to keep their principal features in mind in order to form a balanced view of that plan. Overemphasis on one aspect to the neglect of others gives us a distorted view of redemption and may lead us astray. In our study this week we have caught a glimpse of the hopelessness of natural man and his inability to save himself from his sin. We have seen God enter human history in the Person of His Son to rescue man and give a new life through a new birth, which is signalized by baptism. There is always the danger, however, that we shall be satisfied with the symbol and miss the reality of experience it is meant to illustrate. Study and acceptance of today's texts will help to guard us from these mistakes.

How does Paul contrast the difference in quality of life before and after conversion?

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

Conversion is expressed as the state of being "in Christ," which is Paul's concise definition of what it means to be a Christian. In other places he speaks of "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 1:2), "the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:1), "the saints in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2), and of being "created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:10). Here (2 Cor. 5:17) he can state: If anyone is *in Christ*, or hidden in Christ, being completely identified with Him, then he becomes a different creature.

What contrasting parts are played by life and death in Paul's conception of the Christian life? Gal. 2:20.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 the Christian was shown to be "in Christ." Here Christ is said to be in the Christian. Both concepts are true, and we need to experience them both in order to enjoy a fully balanced Christian life. But how can Christ live in us? One answer is found in Ephesians 3:17, where the apostle prays "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." A free rendering of this reads: "that Christ may make His home in your hearts by faith," and that reveals the simple secret of Christian living. Our Lord must be our Guest, not just for a day or two, but as a permanent resident in our hearts, serving there as Mentor, Guide, and Saviour—the Conqueror of our sin.

THINK IT THROUGH

Which room does Jesus occupy in our hearts—the attic, the basement, or the best room?

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "The Test of Discipleship," pp. 56-65.



9 Trust and Obey

“Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works” (James 2:18).

The mysteries of our religion, especially its central truths concerning salvation, are simple but deep. They call first for a childlike trust in God’s ability to save from sin and reveal depths of truth that will keep us exploring throughout eternity. We need to retain the childlike trust while we increase our understanding of God’s love and mercy that make salvation possible. A few Sabbath School lessons are not sufficient for us to plumb the depths and measure the heights of the love that is shown toward us in Christ Jesus, but we can keep on trying to understand what has been revealed to us in the Word.

This week we shall try to gain a fresh glimpse of the central fact of redemption—that we are saved by faith and not by any merit of our own, seeing that in God’s eyes we possess none. Having once again

acknowledged that, we recognize our need to allow the Holy Spirit to produce in our lives the evidence that we have renounced sin and embraced righteousness. There must be no contradiction between our confession of faith in Jesus and our daily way of life. Our faith and our works or daily deeds must harmonize; or our profession is mere lip service to a beautiful theory that is unsupported by our conduct. This is why we must find the secret of combining faith and good works. One aspect of our religion should not be so stressed that it excludes or minimizes the other. Both must play their part in the working out of our salvation.

In an effort to come to grips with the apparent contradiction that seems to arise when we stress the need for faith and works, the daily lessons will deal with our need to trust and obey. It is a mistake to concentrate on one to the exclusion or belittling of the other. They are essential parts of one whole. But, being human and therefore erring, we tend to emphasize one at the expense of the other. A fresh look at biblical teaching should help us maintain a balance in theory and practice.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Believe and Live**
(John 3:16)
2. **Saved by Grace Through Faith**
(Gal. 2:16)
3. **Reconciled and Justified**
(2 Cor. 5:18, 19)
4. **Why Christ Came**
(Matt. 1:21)
5. **Clean and Active**
(1 John 1:9)
6. **A Question of Fruit**
(Col. 3:1, 2)

**Part 1
BELIEVE
AND LIVE**

What has always been man's part in God's plan for his salvation?

"For 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).

With good reason we usually give highest importance to the part taken by God the Father in this best-known of all Bible verses. But the text also pinpoints our part in redemption's plan: "Whosoever believeth in him [shall] . . . have everlasting life." He who would be saved must *believe*, must have faith in God's ability and desire to save him from sin and its results. This insures that only he who *wishes* to be saved will be rescued from the devil's clutches. None will be given eternal life against his own will. He must *desire* and choose to live eternally in the sinless company of Father, Son, Holy Spirit, angels, and multitudes of other redeemed human beings.

Under emergency conditions, how did two apostolic prisoners summarize the requirements for salvation? Acts 16:25-32.

Against the background of prison brutality and the alarm of "a great earthquake," there came the cry, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" In response there came the simple reply, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (verse 31). There was no time for more. No Bible study, no sermon, no doctrinal instruction, just the absolute essential for the sinner to be saved: *Believe*. This, of course, was just the beginning of the new life for the jailer and his family. Growth undoubtedly followed as they were more fully instructed in the Christian way. But belief had to continue. There never came a time when they could dispense with belief in the Lord Jesus.

"To talk of religion in a casual way, to pray without soul hunger and living faith, avails nothing. A nominal faith in Christ, which accepts Him merely as the Saviour of the world, can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. . . . It is not enough to believe *about* Christ; we must believe *in* Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

THINK IT THROUGH

What can we do to maintain the original freshness of our belief in Christ's power to save us from sin and grant us eternal life?

FURTHER STUDY

Gospel Workers, pp. 259-263.

Part 2
SAVED BY GRACE
THROUGH FAITH

Is it a matter of opinion as to how one is reckoned righteous—by faith or by works?

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. 2:16).

Paul teaches that we are justified, or declared righteous, by faith *in* Jesus Christ (rather than *of*) and not by observance of law. It is generally agreed that “law” here refers to the moral, civil, and ceremonial guidance given to Israel at Sinai and that this includes the Decalogue but is not limited to it. An attempt to be justified “by works of law” (there are no definite articles here in the original) is an attempt to obtain salvation by works, which is doomed to failure. All have sinned, and so none is able to claim righteousness. We are entirely dependent on the only known Righteous One who has ever lived—the Man Christ Jesus. If we are to be declared righteous, it is by faith in His sinless life and substitutionary death and not through any law-keeping efforts of our own.

From the exercise of which divine quality does our salvation spring? Eph. 2:8, 9.

The sinner’s natural urge is to *do* something to save himself from the results of his own sin. The apostle rings the death knell over all such attempts. There is no act which we can perform to effect our own deliverance from sin and its penalty. We can only accept the salvation that God’s grace offers as a free gift. And since there is no *visible* evidence of that gift, it must be accepted by *faith*.

“Some seem to feel that they must be on probation, and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing. But they may claim the blessing of God even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot resist evil. Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 52.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is my trust completely in God’s saving grace? Have I surrendered to it, or am I still struggling to supplement it by my own good works?

FURTHER STUDY

Gospel Workers, pp. 161, 162.

**Part 3
RECONCILED
AND
JUSTIFIED**

How can we, who by nature are at enmity with God, be transformed into His friends?

“All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18, 19).

We cannot reach across the chasm that sin has fixed between ourselves and God. But our Father's love for His wayward children has devised a way whereby we can be reconciled to Him—counted and treated as righteous because of our Saviour's righteousness. He presents Himself to us in the winsome life, death, resurrection, and priestly ministry of His Son. These loving manifestations are designed to draw us back to God, to make us His friends instead of His enemies. And God does more. By the revelation of His own self-humiliation and by the Spirit's indwelling, He makes us fit to be brought into His holy presence. By virtue of Christ's sacrificial ministry, He forgives our sins, not holding them against us, so that we can stand before Him as though we had never sinned. Indeed, in the Person of Christ, He makes us as righteous as He Himself is. (See verse 21.) Thus, by allowing Jesus to reconcile us to the Father, we open the way for our own justification. And all this operates through faith—our faith, God-given, directed to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Apart from pardon through justification, what additional blessing does exercise of faith bring to those who believe? Rom. 5:1.

In Romans, chapter 4, Paul has dealt very thoroughly with Abraham's exercise of faith which was “counted unto him for righteousness” (verse 3). (Compare also verses 5, 9, 22.) In verses 23-25 the apostle declares that we can enjoy similar justification through faith in God and in all that He has done in Jesus our Lord. In chapter 5, verse 1, indicating a further stage in his reasoning by use of the opening word “Therefore,” he concludes that justification also brings us “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Without justification a Christian could not enjoy peace, for his sinful past would haunt his every step and preclude all possibility of his being at peace with His Maker. With justification he is not only assured of pardon, but of restoration and of the peace of being set right with God.

THINK IT THROUGH

Are reconciliation and justification just printed doctrines, or are they vibrant experiences that we are continuing to enjoy since baptism?

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 739-746.

Part 4
WHY CHRIST
CAME

Many Christians, having been justified by faith, fail to follow the divine program further. They act as if justification were the end rather than the beginning of the believer's journey and something to be retained. Some have begun well by exercising *trust*; but, becoming self-dependent again, they fail to render *obedience* (the fruit of faith) and therefore make little progress on the heavenward pathway. We need both to trust and to obey. The remainder of this week's lesson emphasizes New Testament teaching that inseparably links faith to obedience.

What was Heaven's basic objective in the incarnation?

"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).

When the angel reassured Joseph concerning the Child that his betrothed would bear, the reason for the miracle of the virgin birth was disclosed in the simplest possible language: "He shall save his people from their sins." (Compare Titus 2:14.) If, then, His people are not saved from their sins, the purpose in the giving of God's Son is not achieved and the greatest sacrifice of all time has been in vain.

Nevertheless, observation of our neighbor's and our own daily experience demonstrates that Jesus cannot separate us from our sins if we choose to cling to them.

From the beginning of the gospel story, God has made it clear that salvation is a cooperative project. Responding to God's offers, we must *wish* to be saved from sin; we must *accept* the invitation "Come unto me"; we must *choose* to follow Christ. This is our initial part in the transaction; we simply make it possible for the Lord to redeem us from iniquity. The desire and the power to be free from sin come from above, not from within. "I am carnal, sold under sin [or, into the power of sin]. . . . For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:14-18). But when the Spirit pleads, we must respond. We, then, cooperate with the Spirit by yielding to His invitation and turning to God.

"God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God's service. But we can *choose* to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 176.

THINK IT THROUGH

Are we hindering God's gracious plans by preferring our sins to His promise of deliverance from them?

FURTHER STUDY

The Ministry of Healing, pp. 174-176.

**Part 5
CLEAN
AND ACTIVE**

On the strength of Christ's liberating sacrifice, how may we obtain forgiveness and cleansing from our sins?

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

This well-known and well-loved verse may still refresh our understanding of the science of salvation. Repentant confession of sin on our part will enable a faithful and righteous Lord to forgive us our sins. "Sins" refers to violation of God-given moral law. These will not only be forgiven us, but, if our confession includes a desire to forsake sin, then our Saviour will also "cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The word "cleanse" is used in the Gospels for the healing of lepers (Mark 1:40; Matt. 10:8; Luke 17:14) and here refers to cleansing from the leprosy of sin. "Unrighteousness" translates *adikia* (injustice, wrongdoing, as well as unrighteousness), and emphasizes the work done by Him who is righteous or just (*dikaïos*) in not only forgiving but in completely cleansing us from all *adikia*.

How can any Christian entertain the expectation that Christ will pardon and purify us from wickedness and then sanction our continuance in sinning? This would be contrary to the whole genius of our religion. Forgiveness and cleansing are to result in deliverance from evil in all its forms and not in continuance in its practice. The redeemed Christian will strive, therefore, to exhibit the ideal character, that of his Master, who went about doing good. The convert is not to live a sinless life in a sealed, antiseptic plastic bubble, insulated from the rest of humanity. (See Matt. 5:16; Acts 9:36; 1 Tim. 2:10; Titus 3:8; 1 Peter 2:12.)

What further definition of Christ's ambition for His people is provided in Titus 2:13, 14?

In addition to His principal purpose of redeeming us from all iniquity and preparing His own pure people, the Saviour plans that we shall be "zealous of good works." This sanctifies the association of faith and works and agrees with James's teaching that we show our faith by our works and that faith without good works is dead. (See James 2:18, 20.)

THINK IT THROUGH

As Jesus looks at my life, does He find satisfaction or disappointment in what He sees? Does He find a dead faith or a living, productive religion?

FURTHER STUDY

Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1979), pp. 59-61.

Part 6 **What counsel of Paul's reveals that we must make our contribution to spiritual victory in addition to being saved by grace through faith?**
A QUESTION
OF FRUIT

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3: 1, 2).

Our old self has died; we are reckoned dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God (verse 3). A spiritual resurrection has taken place; we are "risen with Christ." We have been baptized; we are Christians. Yet, says the apostle, we must "seek those things which are above"; we must set our affections on heavenly and not on earthly things. This seeking and this setting of our minds on spiritual matters show that after conversion we still have our part to play. Salvation by faith does not give us an undisturbed ride into the kingdom of heaven. We have to continue to "mortify" our "members which are upon the earth" (Col. 3:5); we have to subdue our carnal desires and reject the sinful traits of unregenerate natures (verses 8, 9). By a continuing act of our own wills, encouraged and sustained by the Holy Spirit's influence and the continuing assurance of our acceptance in Christ, we must retain the new life in Christ, putting on His attributes (verses 10, 12-14).

Note how Christ Himself illustrates that true faith will be shown by our works? Matt. 7:16-20.

The so-called Christian life that does not produce a harvest of Christian qualities is an empty profession, of no value to its professor and a stumbling block to his neighbors.

"The good tree will produce good fruit. If the fruit is unpalatable and worthless, the tree is evil. So the fruit borne in the life testifies as to the condition of the heart and the excellence of the character. Good works can never purchase salvation, but they are an evidence of the faith that acts by love and purifies the soul. And though the eternal reward is not bestowed because of our merit, yet it will be in proportion to the work that has been done through the grace of Christ."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 314.

THINK IT THROUGH

Our study this week can teach us that "there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey." Trust or faith is but an empty vaunt when it produces no obedience. Obedience that is not the fruit of faith degenerates into legalism. In salvation, there is trust in Christ's redeeming love that results in obedience to all His biddings.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, "Not Judging, but Doing," pp. 149-152.



10 Life, Death, and Resurrection

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John 11:25, 26).

Jesus is talking to Martha, the bereaved sister of Lazarus, and assures her that her brother will rise again. Martha believes this but thinks in terms of “the last day.” Jesus enlarges her knowledge and her faith by revealing more of His own nature and power than she then knew, by raising Lazarus from the dead (later that same day). He is the I AM. He is the resurrection. Apart from Him there is no hope of victory over death, no resurrection. He is the life. All life comes from Him; without Him no life is possible.

The truth of these assertions takes us back to the beginning of human life in Eden. There, He who is life shared that life with the first man and woman and, through them, with all their descendants. But the ideal situation is soon upset; and death, the very negation of life, comes and

reigns in every generation.

Mortal man cannot begin to understand or feel the anguish that death causes the Creator. This was especially keen at the time of the Fall when our first parents, by choosing sin, began to die; but because God does not get accustomed to evil in any form, great or infinitesimally small, the anguish continues and will only cease with the end of sin.

Recognition of the Godhead’s sorrow will help us understand a little of the sacrifice that Christ made when He who personally knew no sin became sin for us that we might become sinless as He is. (See 2 Cor. 5:21). It also explains the motivation behind His incarnation: “I am come that they might have life” (John 10:10). Similarly, we can begin to understand the divine purpose—“that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). In this matter of life and death, our Lord did not limit Himself to words. His raising of the dead provided dramatic evidence of His Godhead. Only one further question remained: If He died, would that same resurrecting power rob the grave of its most illustrious Victim? The empty tomb provided the answer.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Making of Man**
(Gen. 2:7)
2. **Sin’s Harvest**
(Gen. 3:24)
3. **What About Death?**
(Job 14:14, 15)
4. **The Life-giver**
(John 5:21-26)
5. **Resurrection**
(Several References)
6. **His Own Resurrection**
(Matt. 16:21)

Part 1
THE MAKING
OF MAN**What process did the Creator employ in the making of man?****"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).**

In chapter 1:26, 27 the fact of God's creation of man is stated but not described. In chapter 2:7 graphic details are given concerning that creation. The Lord takes matter that has already been created (dust of the ground) and from it formed the man. This is the first biblical use of the verb "to form" and indicates a different action from the verbs "to create" and "to make," both of which figure prominently in Genesis 1. The noun form of *yaşar*, "to form," is variously used for "potter," "artist," "creator." The use of *yaşar* here suggests the action of molding the dust of the ground into the form of the first man, Adam, whose name is related to the Hebrew word for "ground" (*'adamah*). At that stage the form was lifeless. Not until God breathed the breath into the form's nostrils did that form become Adam, a living soul (*nephesh*, used also for "life," "living creature," "heart," "mind," "person"). From the beginning his life was dependent on the breath that the Lord gave him.

How is the reversal of the life-giving process described? Eccl. 12:7.

Man had already been warned about the results of disobedience: "In the day that thou eatest thereof [the tree of the knowledge of good and evil] thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). When Adam and Eve sinned, the decree began to operate—they began to die. The Lord reminded them that they were taken from the dust of the ground and would eventually return to it (3:19). And that dust returns to the earth whence the Creator had first taken it for the formation of man. At the same time the spirit (*ruach*, used also for "breath" and "wind") returns to the God who had first breathed it into man's nostrils to make the lifeless clay form into a living creature (*nephesh*, used also for "breath"). The act of breathing had made man come alive; cessation of that action brought death, and that death brought decay—a return to the dust from which the first man was molded. There was no immortal soul in man. When his "breath" or "spirit" was taken from him, all of him was dead until God would once more breathe into his nostrils the breath of life.

THINK IT THROUGH**Consider the accuracy of the Genesis picture of the creation and nature of man. Reflect on the mystery of human life and its dependence on breath and the act of breathing.****FURTHER STUDY***Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 258-264.

Part 2
SIN'S HARVEST

Upon the entrance of sin, what steps did God take to save man and woman from eternal misery?

"He drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen. 3:24).

By eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, the first human pair became acquainted with evil and became sinners. If they had been allowed to eat of the tree of life, they would have become immortal sinners (verse 22). To spare them from such misery, God barred the way to the tree of life and allowed sin to bring about eventual death, while, through Christ, the Father made it possible for man and woman to enjoy sinless eternal life.

The episode reveals that humankind were originally dependent upon the tree of life for the privilege of enjoying eternity. They were not inherently immortal. They possessed only *conditional immortality*; and when by sinning they failed to fulfill the condition, they lost the intended possibility of living forever and became subject to death. They could afterward enjoy eternal life only as a gift from God through Christ. In the meantime the wages of sin would be death.

After Eden, how does history confirm the basic sentence upon sin—"thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17)?

Sin soon produced death. After the murder of Abel, there came the mournful refrain over the line of patriarchs—"and he died" (Gen. 5:5, 8, etc.). Through the gloom of human mortality there shine only occasional gleams of eternity. Enoch "was not; for God took him" (verse 24). Moses, after death and burial, was resurrected. Elijah was translated. The Shunamite's son was raised to life, but must later have died at a normal age.

Great spiritual leaders such as Abraham, Joseph, and Samuel died normal deaths and were buried. In the case of David there is additional light from Peter's pentecostal sermon; "he is both dead and buried," and "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:29, 34). The testimony from four thousand years of history is that "the dead know not any thing" (Eccl. 9:5). This lack of any inborn claims on immortality comes not from ignorance, nor from skepticism, but from knowledge—knowledge of the wages of sin and of the need to wait for the end of human history, the end of mortality.

THINK IT THROUGH

Try to understand what sorrow the ruin brought by death must bring to the life-giving Creator.

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 57-62.

Part 3
WHAT ABOUT
DEATH?

What is one of the earliest recorded questions concerning death?

"If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands" (Job 14:14, 15).

It is hardly surprising that Job, in the midst of his sore troubles, gave much thought to the death that might bring them to an end (ch. 14:10-13). But his faith in God led him to look beyond the grave to the possibility of living again. He believed the Lord would call him from the tomb, unwilling to lose His creation; and Job will gladly respond to the life-giving call.

According to a psalmist, what was the chosen people's understanding of man's condition in death? Ps. 146:4.

The writer is thinking of the son of man in whom there is no help or salvation (verse 3). His breath (*ruach*) goes out, that is, he expires, and he returns to the dust. Immediately his thoughts or plans perish. (See Eccl. 9:5, 6, 10.) There is no hint here of a soul that leaves the body at death and continues its own existence in a more blessed state. The fact that an individual's thoughts perish on the day of his death denies any possibility of conscious life after death prior to a resurrection.

But such an outlook is not comfortless. The writer goes out to find joy and hope in the God of Jacob, in the Lord his God (Ps. 146:5). The informed Christian will share in a similar optimism.

"The Bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection. . . . In the very day when the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken . . . , man's thoughts perish. They that go down to the grave are in silence. They know no more of anything that is done under the sun. . . . Blessed rest for the weary righteous! Time, be it long or short, is but a moment to them. They sleep; they are awakened by the trump of God to a glorious immortality. . . . The last sensation was the pang of death; the last thought, that they were falling beneath the power of the grave. When they arise from the tomb, their first glad thought will be echoed in the triumphal shout: 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' "—*The Great Controversy*, p. 550.

THINK IT THROUGH

In life are we facing the fact of death? Does our outlook differ from our neighbors'?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 544-550.

Part 4 **What life-giving power did the Son of God share with His**
THE **Father during His earthly ministry?**
LIFE-GIVER

“As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. . . . For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” (John 5:21-26).

Well into His public ministry, our Lord performed His first direct miracle of healing by restoring the man who had been paralyzed for 38 years. This merciful act brought Christ into conflict with the Jewish authorities, who accused Him of Sabbath breaking and claiming equality with God. (See John 5:18.) Jesus ignored the accusation of Sabbath desecration, but He vigorously upheld His own equality with the Father. In so doing He concentrated on Their possessing the same life-giving powers. He passed far beyond the healing of the paralytic and boldly dealt with His ability to raise the dead—“the Son quickeneth [makes alive] whom he will” (verse 21). This power, He explained, had been given Him by the Father. But it was not a temporarily assumed ability; it was intrinsic; He had “life in himself” (verse 26): “In him was life” (John 1:4). He developed this claim still more clearly in John 5:28, 29 and boldly applied it to the final resurrection. In the raising of Lazarus (John 11) Jesus went beyond words and demonstrated beyond doubt that He could bring the dead up from the grave.

Only hours before Calvary, how did the Master describe Himself to His disciples? John 14:6.

In the upper room the Son of God gives His eleven disciples a brief but comprehensive definition of His threefold function: He is the *way* (to God); He is the *truth* (about God); He is the *life* (from God). The revelation that concerns us here is seeing Him as the manifestation of life, the source and channel of life. There is no life apart from Him. The Godhead agreed that all life should flow through the Person of the Son. (See John 5:26; Col. 2:9.) This function of the Son first touched our world at Creation when He gave life not only to vegetation, but to all animate creatures, and supremely to man. From that first week He who is the Life has been sustaining life upon our world. (See Acts 17:25, 28; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3.)

THINK IT THROUGH

It is pleasant to contemplate Christ exercising His divine powers in healing and resurrecting others, but do we also see Him as our way, our truth, and our life? Is He currently, this very day, giving us power to live His kind of life? Are we using that power?

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 209-213.

Part 5 **In His recorded ministry, what events reveal Jesus as hav-**
RESURRECTION **ing life in Himself?**

Answer: The Gospels recount three miracles of resurrection. In order of occurrence they are:

1. Widow's Son at Nain—Luke 7:11-17. There was nothing noticeably premeditated here. Christ met the funeral procession and learned that a widow had lost her only son, the family bread winner. Jesus "had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not" (verse 13). He then addressed the young man, who had been dead long enough to be ready for burial, and said: "Arise." The authoritative voice penetrates the ears that would normally be deaf, and the dead one comes to life immediately. The revived youth sits up and speaks. There is no recall from a disembodied, conscious state.

2. Jairus's Daughter—Mark 5:22-24, 35-43. The 12-year-old girl was seriously ill. Jesus was delayed in reaching her and was then informed of her death. The mourning ceremonies had already begun. But He called to her and said, "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose" (verses 41, 42). Again, there was no doubt about the death, nor of the resurrection.

3. Lazarus of Bethany—John 11:1-46. This is the most decisive of all the Saviour's miracles. It marks the watershed in His ministry and caused the Sanhedrin to plot His death. Lazarus was a beloved personal friend of the Master, yet Jesus so delayed His response to the sisters' plea for help that Lazarus had been dead four days by the time Christ reached his tomb. There was, then, no doubt about his being truly dead. But Jesus gave the life-giving call: "Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes" (verses 43, 44).

John's narrative does more than record the raising of a dead man to life. It centers on Christ and His resurrecting power in relation to Lazarus and, on a wider scale, to all who die "in the Lord." Martha voiced her belief in a final resurrection (verse 24); but in response to Christ's own momentous declaration—"I am the resurrection, and the life" (verse 25)—she made her own amazing confession of faith: "I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (verse 27). She thus focused attention on the central significance of the miracle—it identifies Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God. When that is recognized, all resurrections become possible.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do we realize clearly that our hopes for everlasting life rest upon the reality of the resurrections about which we have studied in this lesson? The raising of Lazarus is a pledge of the raising of all believers who die before Christ's return.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 318-320, 342, 343, 524-536.

**Part 6
HIS OWN
RESURRECTION**

In addition to giving life to the dead, how was Jesus still more personally involved in the question of resurrection?

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16:21).

He through whom all things were made, He who had originally given life to all things that live, He knew, from an eternity of experience, that He had "life in himself" (John 5:26). This calm knowledge enabled Him to speak life to the dead. But would that power function when He allowed Himself to die? The Gospels show that Christ knew it would. He not only foresaw His arrest, trial, crucifixion, and death; He foresaw His own resurrection. This foreknowledge enabled Him to forecast on at least five occasions that He would rise again (John 2:19; Matt. 12:40; 16:21; 17:9, 22, 23; 20:17-19).

What faultless witnesses to Christ's resurrection brought conviction to His closest followers? Luke 24:1-9 with Matt. 28:1-8.

Two angels tell the two Marys (Matt. 28:1) that their crucified Master is risen. The angelic informants remind the women that Jesus had forewarned His disciples about His betrayal and had foretold His own resurrection (Luke 24:5-7). The women remembered and in turn reminded the "eleven" and "all the rest" (verses 8, 9).

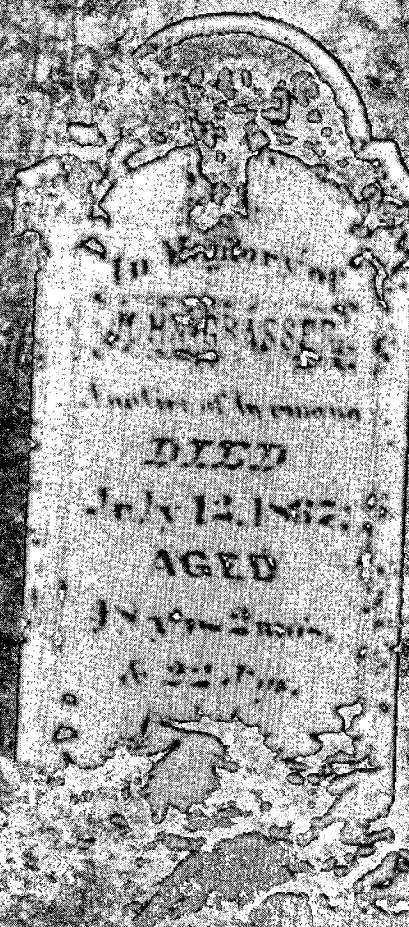
It is possible that there were 15 post-resurrection appearances (*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 558-560) which were distributed among different individuals and groups of the Resurrected One's followers. Those who at first were skeptical were convinced by seeing the risen Lord with their own eyes and became potent witnesses to the resurrection. The infant church was built on the fact of its Founder's conquest of death and drew its vitality from a knowledge of His being enthroned at the right hand of God, possessing all power and able to uphold and direct His people on earth. These were the central themes of apostolic preaching (Acts 2:22-36; 3:12-15, 26; 4:1-4, 8-12, 33; 5:29-32; 10:34-43; 13:30-37; 17:18, 29-32; 26:22, 23) and help to explain the rapid spread of the new religion throughout the Roman world.

THINK IT THROUGH

What are some of the benefits that come to us because Christ rose from the dead? Remember one of the most important: "God, having raised his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:26).

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 786, 787.



In Memory of
J. H. WISSE
A native of Vermont
DIED
July 12, 1862
AGED
37 years 2 months
& 22 days

11 Sleepers, Awake!

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (John 10:27, 28).

One of the most persistent of all the puzzles that confront mankind is the enigma of death. It is one of the certainties of life. It is not surprising, then, that the morbid topic has occupied some of the finest minds and that these have produced many explanations about death and its sequel. But of himself man is no nearer finding an answer to the question than were his forebears.

Death is a religious, a theological topic. It not only concerns man; on an infinitely larger scale it concerns his Creator. God cannot calmly contemplate the loss of billions upon billions of His creatures whom he designed in His own image. Though “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints” (Ps. 116:15),

in the sense that it is noted and cared for, it must bring the Father continuing sorrow, assuaged only by knowledge of the final solution in redemption and restoration.

What is the answer that confronts God and ourselves? As in all the divine economy, the answer is found in the Person of the Son. His gospel—His birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension, and eternal priesthood—provides the one and only answer to man’s need for solution to the problem of death. “I am come that they might have life” (John 10:10). And the price that Jesus paid for life—our life—was death—His death. The lay theologian C. S. Lewis has called Christ “the representative ‘Die-er’ of the universe.”—*Miracles* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), p. 157. But without His death there would be for us no life. With good reason, then, Ellen White writes: “Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high, is the science of salvation that we are to learn and to teach.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 424. This can be taught and learned in the context of our memory verse that strikes such a victorious note and forecasts the abolition of death.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Sleep of Death**
(John 11:11)
2. **Rest Before Resurrection**
(John 5:28, 29)
3. **Significance of Resurrection**
(1 Cor. 15:13, 14)
4. **Certainty of Resurrection**
(1 Cor. 15:20)
5. **Alive in Christ**
(1 Thess. 4:14)
6. **Life Eternal**
(1 John 5:11)

Part 1 **As the Source of life, how did Jesus make it clear that He**
THE SLEEP **would do something about the fatal illness that had stricken**
OF DEATH **Lazarus?**

“These things said he: and after that he saith to them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep” (John 11:11).

Christ’s proposal to visit Bethany—less than two miles from Jerusalem—alarmed the disciples, who feared that Jews from the capital would stone their Master. The Lord calmed their fears (verses 7-10) and turned their minds to the condition of Lazarus. “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep” (verse 11).

Death is often spoken of as a sleep, even by those who believe in an immortal soul that leaves the body at death. But Christ’s later actions and words leave no room for such belief. Neither does the disciples’ reaction: “Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well [lit. “shall be saved,” that is, “recover”]. As John explains, “they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep” (verse 12, 13). To remove all doubt, the Lord says plainly, “Lazarus is dead . . . ; nevertheless let us go unto him” (verses 14, 15). And they went.

It can only be long-held ideas that try to interpret John’s account of the miracle in terms of survival of an immortal soul after death. There is no hint of such views in the story. If a soul had left the body, the Saviour would have spoken differently. As it was, He clearly called to the whole being and brought his complete person out of the rocky grave.

In what ways did the burial and resurrection of Lazarus parallel the similar experience of our Lord?

Five similarities may be noted:

1. Lazarus had been dead and in the tomb four days. Jesus, according to Scripture reckoning, spent three days.

2. As Lazarus slept the unconscious sleep of death, so did his Master rest quietly in the grave. (See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 769.)

3. As the Life-giver’s voice aroused Lazarus from his sleep, so “the angel of the Lord” aroused Christ. (See *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 779, 780.)

4. As the raising of Lazarus was the “crowning miracle” of Christ’s earthly ministry (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 529), so our Lord’s own resurrection was the crowning act in His total redemptive deed. (See Rom. 1:4.)

5. In both cases the dead Lazarus and the dead Son of God slept in their tombs and knew no life until an animating Voice bade them rise. Lazarus had clearly been only in the grave, and Jesus Himself declared after His resurrection, “I am not yet ascended to my Father” (John 20:17).

**Part 2
REST BEFORE
RESURRECTION**

Why will both doers of good and doers of evil hear the voice of the Son of God?

“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28, 29).

The setting of these verses is Christ's discussion with the Jews following His healing of the paralytic (verses 1-16, 26, 27). In verse 18 those same Jews challenge the Lord's claims to divinity, and this leads Him into discussion of resurrecting power and judgment (verse 21, 22). The climax to His reasoning comes in verses 28 and 29, which teach that all who have died will be subject to one of the Judge's two resurrecting calls—the good to life; the evil to condemnation or judgment. But such calls would not be necessary if at death the righteous immediately enter on eternal life while the wicked are cast into an ever-burning hell. Judgment would already have been pronounced and rewards bestowed for good or ill.

In harmony with Christ's own teaching of death as sleep, what is a frequent New Testament way of referring to the dead? Matt. 27:52. (See also Acts 7:60; 1 Cor. 11:30; 1 Cor. 15:6, 18, 20, 21, 51; Eph. 5:14; 1 Thess. 4:14; 5:10.)

Although only New Testament references are listed, the softer word, “sleep” for “death,” is also an Old Testament term. In the New Testament examples cited, the references are uniformly to dead saints. It is surely not thinkable that the Inspired Word would use a false description for so important a matter as the condition of Christians who die before Christ returns—especially since, if the dead are not asleep, they must in some sense be awake and presumably living in the divine Presence. Our next two lessons will study portions of the key New Testament chapter that is devoted to the relation of Christ to resurrection.

“In consequence of Adam's sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave. And through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves. . . . They who have been 'accounted worthy' of the resurrection of life are 'blessed and holy.' 'On such the second death hath no power.' . . . But those who have not, through repentance and faith, secured pardon, must receive the penalty of transgression—'the wages of sin.' ”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 544.

THINK IT THROUGH

For which resurrection are we preparing?

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 257-259.

**Part 3
SIGNIFICANCE
OF RESURRECTION**

How does Paul teach the central importance of the resurrection for the truth of Christianity's message?

"If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor. 15:13, 14).

It is clear from verse 12 that some Christians in Corinth were denying the truth of the resurrection of the dead, and this denial was undermining the faith of many. The situation was serious enough for Paul to devote more space (the entire chapter 15) to correcting the heresy than he gave to any other single topic.

He begins by summarizing the Gospel (verses 3, 4) and by firmly establishing the scriptural and historical truth of the literal resurrection of Christ (verses 5-8). He then presents a closely reasoned argument which links the reliability of Christ's resurrection to the certainty of Christians' being raised. A rejection of the believers' hope denies the historicity of our Lord's conquest of death (verse 13). This is strong but necessary language, for the denial of either resurrection leaves a gaping hole in the fabric of Christian doctrine. Without the resurrection of Christ, the doctrine has no foundation; while without the hope of the saints' restoration, the Christian message has no point, and preaching it is not only useless but deceptive, and believing it is foolish.

What will be the practical result of denying the truth of Christ's resurrection? 1 Cor. 15:17, 18.

Belief or disbelief in the resurrection of Jesus is not a merely academic matter—it has eternal consequences. If there is no truth in the resurrection accounts, then we have based our faith on a fable and have no grounds for believing that Christ has power to grant eternal life to pardoned sinners. It also means that Christians who have died in the faith were trusting in a falsehood. There is no hope of their being raised—they have perished.

But, thanks be to God, there is no need to doubt. Paul was only pointing out the grim results that would have followed if he and his converts had been deluded. There is a further by-product from his reasoning. The dead saints were still dead; they were not in glory. Their redemption, no less than ours, depends not only on the truth of the resurrection narratives, but on Christ's triumphal return and His calling the sleepers from their graves.

THINK IT THROUGH

Carefully read 1 Corinthians 15:1-19, following the writer's line of reasoning and relating his argument to the topic of life after death. Consult also *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 798-804.

Part 4
CERTAINTY
OF RESURRECTION

After considering the losses that would accompany a denial of the resurrection, how does Paul assert the certainty and gain that follow the acceptance of the doctrine?

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20).

"Certainly, Paul implies, none of the Corinthian believers would deny that an integral part of the gospel message is the resurrection of Christ (15:1-4). Therefore, they must now accept the sequel—Christ guarantees the resurrection of the Christian dead, as the word 'firstfruits' teaches. By 'firstfruits' Paul brings to bear the rich imagery of the OT. The 'firstfruits'—the first sheaf of the harvest offered to the Lord (Lev. 23:10-11, 17, 20)—was not only prior to the main harvest but was also an assurance that the rest of the harvest was coming. So with Christ. He preceded his people in his bodily resurrection and he is also the guarantee of their resurrection at his second coming."—*The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), vol. 10, p. 285.

Then comes the bold and logical affirmation in verse 22: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Christ's virtue brings life, as Adam's son brought death. The believer's faith is not in vain (verse 14). Christ is the firstfruits of them that slept; the saints will rise "at his coming" (verse 23). This implies that the saints remain dead until the Lord's appearing.

In what confident language does the apostle portray the climax of Christian hope for immortality? 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

Here are two classes of Christians—those who "sleep" (in death), and those who are alive at Christ's coming. Both classes will be changed "at the last trump." If the righteous dead had already been enjoying immortality, even if only as nebulous spirits, they would not be needing transformation, neither would they need to be reunited with resurrected bodies.

The apostle also declares: "We shall all be changed" (verse 51). This includes the righteous dead and the righteous living. "The dead shall be raised incorruptible" (verse 52)—but if those same dead have already been enjoying the incorruption of immortality, they need no change. The truth is, however, that they have succumbed to corruption in the grave and will need Christ's transforming ministry no less than do their living brethren and sisters.

THINK IT THROUGH

Meditate upon Paul's conclusion (1 Cor. 15:58) to his long discourse on the resurrection.

FURTHER STUDY

S.D.A. Bible Commentary, vol. 6, pp. 812, 813.

**Part 5
ALIVE IN
CHRIST**

What comfort is there in the Bible's description of the righteous dead?

"If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Thess. 4:14).

We have already read (part 3) of those "which are fallen asleep in Christ" (1 Cor. 15:18). Here in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16 we learn of "them which are asleep," of those who "sleep in Jesus," and of "the dead in Christ." The common denominator for all descriptions is Jesus or Christ. The dead whom we describe as righteous have no merit of their own that will guarantee their resurrection. They have recognized that in Christ is their only hope of salvation and have surrendered themselves into His keeping, believing He "is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." They have committed themselves into strong hands. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," says the Saviour (John 10:28).

When will mortals put on immortality? 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

There is an assured harmony (concerning the first resurrection) between these verses and those we studied in yesterday's lesson (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). It is "the last trump" that wakes the righteous dead, who are said to be asleep, and that alerts the living saints to the nearness of their Lord's return. The dead are raised "incorruptible," and the righteous living are changed, both transformations taking place "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." While it is the sleeping saints who receive first attention—that they may join their living fellow Christians and be ready with them to meet the Lord—neither group takes priority in translation. "We which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air."

"The time when this glorious transformation will take place is next indicated. It will be at the second coming of Christ, for it is then that the 'trump of God' will sound, and faithful believers who have died will be raised in bodies that are entirely free from all effects of sin. . . . Then Christians who are alive and looking eagerly for the coming of their Lord will undergo a marvelous change, whereby all traces of corruption and imperfection will be removed from their bodies, which will be made like unto Christ's glorious body. . . . They will have the wondrous experience of being taken from earth to heaven without dying."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 812.

THINK IT THROUGH

Whether we live until the second coming or whether we die, are we going to be "in Christ"?

Part 6 In contrast to the prospect of death, in whom has our
LIFE ETERNAL heavenly Father made eternal life available to us?

"This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John 5:11).

This statement is so simple that it can hardly be reduced to simpler terms. Yet, within its simplicity it holds the deepest spiritual insights that were granted to the beloved disciple, John. Within it he distills the essence of the gospel—eternal life is a gift from God, who has channeled that life through His Son. This follows the pattern adopted by God in dealing with our fallen world and its inhabitants. (See John 3:16; 5:22; 17:2; Matt. 11:27.) He does all through Christ, the Mediator between God and man.

"But this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.' John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 13.

From the fact that eternal life is in God's Son, what further truths does the apostle draw? 1 John 5:12.

1. "He that hath the Son hath life." This teaching is not original with John; he received it from Jesus and from observing His influence on men and women. He records the Master's own words on the subject in his Gospel (John 5:24; 6:40, 47; 11:26) and includes his own conclusions (1:4, 12).

2. "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." This is an inevitable consequence of rejecting the Source of Life. "Belief or disbelief in the Son of God is a matter of life or death; for, while to the believer His coming is the supreme revelation of God's love bringing the assurance of eternal life, to the unbeliever it is the sign that he remains the object of God's displeasure."—R. V. G. Tasker, ed., *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, The Gospel According to St. John* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1973), p. 73.

Our possession or loss of eternal life depends on our attitude to Jesus. There is no way of bypassing this requirement. It makes possession of that life sound easy, deceptively so, and makes its loss sound arbitrary but inescapable. This is the gospel. Each one of us must decide to accept or reject it. Our decision will determine our future, whether it will be everlasting or tragically brief.

THINK IT THROUGH

What think ye of Christ? This is a large part of life's most important question. The remaining part is: What are you doing about Christ? How strong is His influence in your daily living?



12 Into Eternity

“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).

Humans are shortsighted in respect to the future. We cannot see one day ahead. A year, a decade, a century become increasingly foggy as they stretch ahead of us. It is easy then for us to go off on a tangent and wander far from truth. But we do have “a more sure word of prophecy” as “a light that shineth in a dark place” (2 Peter 1:19). So the general features of the future are sketched out before us—they loom as mountain peaks, sometimes wrapped in mist, other times lighted by a setting sun. Between those peaks lie extensive valleys of which we see nothing and of which we should say nothing apart from any information that comes from Him who sees the end from the beginning.

The subject of the resurrection leads us far into the future, to the threshold of eternity, into a land of

which we know little, and into which the Bible gives but a few entrancing glimpses. But since eternity lies ahead, there will be ample time for exploration and endless opportunities to enlarge our knowledge. Our present need is to discover the landmarks which our Lord has set up to save us from being lost.

Biblical records of resurrections and insistence on resurrection for all members of the human family give us the guidance we need. Those records and forecasts give us a compass bearing and set our eyes on some of the peaks that lie ahead. We cannot know all of the ups and downs that await us, no more than we can see all of a road over which we have never before traveled. But the “more sure word of prophecy” provides both map and compass, which will guide us to “the land that is very far off” (Isa. 33:17).

The highest event on our present horizon is the second coming of Christ. At this juncture we are not pausing to explore its awe-inspiring details, but we will stay to look at associated events—the first and second resurrections, and the period that lies between, which we call the millennium.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Eternal Life—When?**
(John 5:24)
2. **Redemption for the Righteous**
(1 Thess. 4:16)
3. **Privileged Employ—1000 Years**
(Rev. 20:4)
4. **Destruction for Sinners**
(Rev. 20:5)
5. **God’s Merciful Justice**
(Lam. 3:22, 23)
6. **New Bodies**
(1 Cor. 15:35)

Part 1
ETERNAL
LIFE—WHEN?**With what assurance does Jesus convey His expectations of resurrection and everlasting life for His followers?****“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24).**

Here we have only a small sample of our Lord’s teaching on this aspect of Christian belief. In many ways and at many times He taught the long-term nature of His redemptive program. He who knew all things was not expecting an immediate rescue of mankind from death’s clutches. He knew that untold numbers of His followers would go to the grave and remain there until “the last day” (see the second part of today’s lesson). This did not prevent Him, however, from foreseeing triumph over death by resurrection and the beginning of everlasting life for those who “believe on him that sent” Him.

What is God’s design for those who see His Son and believe on Him? John 6:40.

While speaking with skeptical and materialistic Jews in the Capernaum synagogue (verse 59), Jesus boldly declared His Father’s plan for all who would accept His Son. First, “every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life.” The linking of seeing and believing shows that more than physical sight is required. This is implied in the word used for “seeing,” which is better translated “beholding” or “looking upon”—that is, *perceiving* in Jesus of Nazareth the Son of God and consequently believing that He is the One through whom salvation comes. There is nothing arbitrary in God’s will for His people: He is only making their redemption possible. “Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into the heart, have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 388.

Second, faith is needed not only for the initial act of belief, but also for holding on to the promise of eternal life, for this will not be fully realized until “the last day.” This points to a resurrection, without which a great proportion of the divine promises would remain unfulfilled. As we continue our study, we should gain a deeper understanding of the crucial importance of resurrection in the divine design.

THINK IT THROUGH**The Lord has made it possible for us to be raised at the last day. Are we making it possible for Him to fulfill His intention?****FURTHER STUDY***The Desire of Ages*, p. 530.

Part 2
REDEMPTION FOR
THE RIGHTEOUS

In contrast to His ascension, how public will Christ's return be, and what will be its immediate result for believers?

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16).

These words that are so familiar to Adventists merit careful thought because, with verse 17, they unveil so many facets of our Lord's glorious return. After the resurrection of the sleeping saints, we are assured that "we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so will we be with the Lord forever" (verse 17, NIV).

Thus it is that the promises recorded in John 14:1-3 will be at last fulfilled. Christ had gone to prepare a place for His own, and that place is ready. He promised to come again and to take His disciples to Himself, and now they will be forever where He is. At that time the many assurances of being granted eternal life will be fulfilled to the resurrected and to the living believers.

In Scripture how is this resurrection designated? Rev. 20:4-6.

These verses may cause confused thinking unless they are read carefully. Let us summarize them here. John sees the faithful living and reigning with Christ 1000 years (verse 4). To account for the unfaithful dead, he inserts a phrase (verse 5, which is accepted by most as being parenthetical) to explain that they would not rise until the end of those thousand years. He then returns to his main theme begun in verse 4 and continuing in the closing sentence of verse 5 and into verse 6. There we meet the only two scriptural references to "the first resurrection," but they are enough to identify and define it for us—it is the resurrection of the righteous redeemed. In John 5:29 Jesus describes it as "the resurrection of life," and in Luke 14:14 it is called "the resurrection of the just."

THINK IT THROUGH

**"O then what raptured greetings,
On Canaan's happy shore!
What knitting severed friendships up
Where partings are no more!"**

**—Henry Alford,
The Lutheran Hymnary (Minneapolis,
Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House,
1935), no. 617.**

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 52-54.

**Part 3
PRIVILEGED
EMPLOY—
1000 YEARS****What will be a vital part of the work of the redeemed during the millennium?**

"I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4).

The revelator sees a vivid tableau in heaven. There are thrones, symbols of kingly and judicial power. "They" who sat upon them are quickly shown to be the saints who have remained faithful to Christ, many of them even unto death. To them was granted the responsibility of judgment—that is why they are enthroned. This appears to be the occasion foreseen by Daniel—"judgment was given to the saints of the most High" (Dan. 7:22), though it should be noted that many modern translations render the same phrase, "judgment was given in favour of the saints of the Most High" (NEB). Paul asks the Corinthians if they do not know that "the saints shall judge the world" and that "we shall judge angels" (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). "The world" must refer to unrepentant sinners, since the glorified saints will not come under any judicial review at that time and would, in any case, not be judging themselves. "Angels" must be those who followed Lucifer, since those who are loyal to God will need no judgment. It therefore appears that it is the resurrected saints of all ages who will participate with Christ in judging those who have spurned the love of God as revealed in Christ's saving ministry. "In union with Christ they judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 661.

What other activities will occupy the saints during the thousand years? Rev. 20:6.

The ransomed ones, united with Christ at the time of the first resurrection, will render priestly service in the presence of God, will be corulers with Christ during the millennium. This is not surprising. Angels have been ministering before the Most High God from time immemorial and have been assisting the Son in His kingly tasks through past eternity. It is surely appropriate that those who have become sons of God should also participate in heaven's government while in their Father's house.

THINK IT THROUGH**What preparation can we make today to be among the saints during the millennium?****FURTHER STUDY***The Great Controversy*, pp. 658-661.

**Part 4
DESTRUCTION
FOR SINNERS**

How can the resurrection of "the rest of the dead" be identified, and when will it take place?

"The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev. 20:5).

If the resurrection of the just is called "the first," the one that follows becomes "the second," though it is not so called in Scripture. We do read, however, of "the second death," which presupposes a second resurrection (verse 14). There is no room for doubt on the timing of this second event. It occurs at the end of the thousand years. At that time "they that have done evil" shall hear Christ's voice "and shall come forth . . . unto the resurrection of damnation," that is, judgment (John 5:28, 29).

"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 giant-like 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."—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 84.

What notable event signals the close of the thousand years? Rev. 20:7.

The devil, that is, Satan, has been bound for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1, 2). But the Lord of hosts cannot consider keeping the producer of sin in endless captivity, for that would perpetuate sin and keep the universe ever hostage to its evil possibilities. Neither can the Just One arbitrarily destroy the prime sinner and his dupes. Those who oppose God must be permitted to reveal their true natures, and that opportunity comes at the close of the millennium (verse 3). All who have chosen sin and rejected divine mercy, from Cain to the unrepentant who have been slain by the glory of the second advent (Rev. 6:15-17), now being raised, will make their final, desperate attempt to overthrow the government of God (Rev. 20:8, 9). Here is the supreme illustration of the inescapable truth concerning persistent, unrepented sin: "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15).

THINK IT THROUGH

What are our daily lives doing to save God's rebellious children from the horrors of the second death (Rev. 20:10-15)?

FURTHER STUDY

S.D.A. Bible Commentary, vol. 7, pp. 883, 884.

Part 5
GOD'S MERCIFUL
JUSTICE

Which of the divine characteristics is responsible for our own continued existence?

"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22, 23).

This beautiful, factual declaration of the Lord's mercy should give us a spiritual equilibrium in face of the havoc wrought by sin. Sin produces death—both that common to the human race and the eternal death of the lost. If it were not for the Lord's mercies, our ancestors would have been consumed long ago, and we might not even have existed. That we continue to live is due entirely to God's mercy and compassion—qualities derived from His being the embodiment of love. This revelation of God's mercy is woven into the warp and woof of both Testaments. In the Old, the pattern is superbly displayed in Exodus 34:5, 6, in Jeremiah 31:3, and in Micah 7:18. In the New, it is depicted in John 3:16, in Matthew 23:34-38, and in Titus 3:5. How grateful we should be for the depth and continuity of God's mercy!

When the Lord's mercy is rejected, what only can be the final outcome of sin? James 1:15.

Sin has always been destructive. It blights everything it touches and, if uninterrupted, causes death. A hint of the manner in which sin itself is finally destroyed may be seen in the fate that is prophetically forecast for Lucifer, the author of sin. The judgment of the fallen cherub comes not from a vengeful Deity, but, as Ezekiel foretells, "a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee." (Eze. 28:18.) When God's protecting hand is withdrawn from Lucifer, the sin he has so long cherished and which he has shared with his deluded hosts, will be as a fire within him, and will bring him "to ashes upon the earth." This may be one aspect of the terrible fate depicted in Revelation 20:10. It is undoubtedly the ultimate fulfillment of Romans 6:23: "The wages of sin is death."

"Satan deceives many with the plausible theory that God's love for His people is so great that He will excuse sin in them. . . . But in all His dealings with His creatures God has maintained the principles of righteousness by revealing sin in its true character—by demonstrating that its sure result is misery and death. The unconditional pardon of sin never has been, and never will be. Such pardon would show the abandonment of the principles of righteousness, which are the very foundation of the government of God."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 522.

THINK IT THROUGH

To what degree are we conscious that our daily lives are dependent on the Lord's mercies?

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 39-43.

**Part 6
NEW BODIES**

To which questions regarding resurrection, occurring naturally to an inquiring mind, does Paul give his inspired attention?

“Some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” (1 Cor. 15:35).

Those few who were raised from the dead and given a further lease on life during biblical times returned to their normal, earth-bound environments. Apart from being healed of fatal weakness and disease, their bodies remained as they had been before death. They were returned to life but were still subject to death. This cannot be so for those who participate in the first resurrection, or the living who are translated with them. Paul enlarged on this theme: “It [the body] is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power” (1 Cor. 15:42, 43). “Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image; but Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 645.

For what reason might the apostle bluntly turn our attention from the earthly to the eternal? 1 Cor. 15:49.

It is so easy to be obsessed with “the earthy,” and to give less than second place to “the heavenly.” But Paul reminds us that our present natural body has a limited life, while our future is linked to a heavenly or spiritual form. This is said in still more memorable language in 2 Corinthians 4:18: “The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” This piece of religious philosophy is closely tied to the question of resurrection and the firmness of our belief in it. We need, then, to “look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen” (verse 18). In other words, we need to cultivate the eternal outlook. “If we are indeed journeying thither, the spirit of heaven will dwell in our hearts here. But if we find no pleasure now in the contemplation of heavenly things; if we have no interest in seeking the knowledge of God, no delight in beholding the character of Christ; if holiness has no attractions for us—then we may be sure that our hope of heaven is vain.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 745.

THINK IT THROUGH

What does our life-style proclaim regarding our belief in the reality and the nearness of the first resurrection?

FURTHER STUDY

Phil. 3:18-21; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 705-707.



13 Fruits of Belief

“The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:20, 21).

This beautiful petition, coming at the close of the Epistle to the Hebrews, asks that the book’s message might lead its readers to perfection. This week’s lesson has a somewhat similar purpose. For twelve weeks we have had fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, studying Their creativity in nature and in our own lives. Now, at the close of the quarter, we are taking time for a backward glance over some of our beliefs, in an endeavor to apply their principles to our daily conduct. Belief and conduct should be inseparably

linked as cause and effect. Perhaps, whether we know it or not, they always are. When there is an apparent and regrettable contradiction between the two, our conduct may only be reflecting a corresponding weakness in one or more of our beliefs. There is an old confession which undoubtedly expresses truth for each one of us: “We have done those things we ought not to have done, and left undone those things we ought to have done.” A fresh confrontation with our own inconsistencies may help us to utter with new earnestness the prayer from Dryden’s translation of a ninth-century hymn: “Make us eternal truth receive, and practise all that we believe.” And that, after all, is the core and the touchstone of our religion: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21). As Thomas à Kempis said more than five hundred years ago, “When the Day of Judgment comes, we shall not be asked what we have read, but what we have done; not how well we have spoken, but how religiously [i.e., righteously] we have lived”—*The Imitation of Christ*, bk. 1, ch. 3:3.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. Father of Mercies
(Ps. 103:13, 14)
2. Saviour From Sin
(1 Tim. 1:15)
3. Promise of Power
(Acts 4:31)
4. Law Lovers
(Ps. 119:97)
5. Lovers of New Life
(Rom. 12:2)
6. Raised Like Christ
(Col. 2:12)

Part 1
FATHER OF
MERCIES**How effective is it for David to use the example of human parentage to reveal our heavenly Father's compassion for us?****"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Ps. 103:13, 14).**

The psalmist uses the created to introduce the Creator, but he realizes the poverty of the comparison. The purest of human affections, however, do reflect their source—the vast compassion of God. This is yoked to His qualities of mercy and grace (verse 8)—infinite in extent and eternal in duration (verse 17). Our response to them should be not only gratitude, but, with divine aid, imitation.

"The one thing essential for us in order that we may receive and impart the forgiving love of God is to know and believe the love that He has to us. Satan is working by every deception he can command, in order that we may not discern that love. . . . But we may tell the enemy that 'the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' When we feel that we have sinned, and cannot pray, it is then time to pray."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 115.

What should be our response to God's goodness toward us? Ps. 103:1, 2.

David was well acquainted with "the mercy of the Lord." He knew that his daily life depended on it, and much of his spirit of praise in psalms sprang from gratitude for benefits that flowed from the Lord's unfailing kindness toward him. That is why he cried, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." In saying this, he is not bestowing a blessing on the Almighty but is bidding himself—his soul—praise the Lord for all mercies received. It is we who are doubly blessed, first by divine benevolence, then by the act of praising the Giver. "It is for our own benefit to keep every gift of God fresh in our memory. Thus faith is strengthened to claim and to receive more and more. There is greater encouragement for us in the least blessing we ourselves receive from God than in all the accounts we can read of the faith and experience of others. The soul that responds to the grace of God shall be like a watered garden."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 348.

THINK IT THROUGH**When did you last count your blessings and thank God for them?****FURTHER STUDY***Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 753-755.

**Part 2
SAVIOUR
FROM SIN**

For what purpose above all others did the Son of God come into our world?

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1:15).

This has always been Christ's mission from Eden onward, but humanity has ever been willing to ignore the divine purpose and to substitute lesser objectives which fall short of salvation from sin. The Son certainly came to set us an example (1 Peter 2:21), but that alone would have done no permanent good, for we have no power in ourselves to copy that example (Rom. 7:18). Thank God that His sights were set higher. In Peter's words, He sent Jesus "to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:26). That is why the Son was given the name Jesus ("Jehovah is salvation"), "for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). "Jesus died, not to save man *in* his sins, but *from* his sins. Man is to leave the error of his ways, to follow the example of Christ, to take up his cross and follow Him, denying self, and obeying God at any cost."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 251.

At what personal cost did the Lord of glory make our salvation possible? Isa. 53:5.

This is only a very small part of the picture, but it lifts a corner of the veil to give a glimpse of the divine Sufferer. In moving language it shows His being wounded (or tormented), bruised (or crushed), punished, scourged because of our transgressions and iniquities, that we might find peace and healing. We need to read the whole of this chapter at frequent intervals to deepen our realization that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Such reading would also help us fulfill the counsel given in *The Desire of Ages*, page 83: "It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross."

THINK IT THROUGH

When did I last behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world? Am I allowing Him to free me from my sins?

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 25, 26.

**Part 3
PROMISE
OF POWER****What Power made it possible for the apostles to fulfill their Christ-given commission?****"When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31).**

One of the most striking of all the miracles that accompanied the founding and development of the early church was the transformation of timid disciples into powerful apostles. This change was brought about in large part by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. In accordance with Christ's promise, they had initially received power by the Spirit's coming upon them at Pentecost (Acts 1:8; 2:4). But this was not a one-time event. It was repeated in response to prayer and need, even as recorded in the above verse and in Acts 2:33. Their experience, which was shared by the central group of Christians in Jerusalem, may be ours, too, when we follow a similar Spirit-centered program. "Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50.

What effect did the coming of the Spirit have on "the multitude of them that believed"? Acts 4:32.

Unless He is restricted by us in His ministry, the Spirit does not make selections that exclude rank-and-file church members from receiving power from on high. The new believers had witnessed Pentecost, had been baptized, and had been promised "the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38, 39). That promise had been fulfilled (Acts 4:31). As a result they "were of one heart and of one soul" (verse 32). This Spirit-inspired unity not only gave power to themselves, but laid a strong foundation on which the apostles were able to build a still mightier ministry (verse 33). "Thus it was in the early church; and when in the church of today it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 71.

THINK IT THROUGH**We talk much about the gift of the Spirit. What are we personally doing, how are we personally living, to encourage the Spirit to come into our daily lives?****FURTHER STUDY***The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 49-56.

Part 4
LAW LOVERS**What is the ideal response to the law of the Lord?****"O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Ps. 119:97).**

The Hebrew word *torah* is translated in this text as "law." As we have observed in lesson 6, part 2, reference to law embraces more than the Decalogue. *Torah* denotes the total body of instruction given to God's people. It is appropriate, then, that the loyal follower love the Lord's instruction. He recognizes it is sound counsel, intended for his protection and guidance. He does not find it wearying. As he grows in religious experience, he can even echo his Lord's words: "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps. 40:8).

When the same loyalist says, "It is my meditation all the day," it is unlikely that he spends all his waking hours pondering on the Torah; but rather, he constantly—consciously or otherwise—seeks God's guidance for each day's situations and finds the law of the Lord adequate for all eventualities.

What is the most important issue in commandment keeping? Matt. 22:36-40.

This exposition of the essence of the law was already known in Judaism, having been clearly stated by Moses (Deut. 6:5; 10:12, 13; 30:6). But its truth had long been clouded by legalism, and the Lawgiver was needed to remind men that acceptable law keeping issued from love—love for God and man.

"It is not possible for the heart in which Christ abides to be destitute of love. If we love God because He first loved us, we shall love all for whom Christ died. We cannot come in touch with divinity without coming in touch with humanity; for in Him who sits upon the throne of the universe, divinity and humanity are combined. Connected with Christ, we are connected with our fellow men by the golden links of the chain of love. Then the pity and compassion of Christ will be manifest in our life. We shall not wait to have the needy and unfortunate brought to us. We shall not need to be entreated to feel for the woes of others. It will be as natural for us to minister to the needy and suffering as it was for Christ to go about doing good."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 384, 385.

THINK IT THROUGH**What hinders us from holding a right attitude to God's commandments—is it shallow thinking, unrecognized attachment to sinful thought and habit, or failure to love Him who first loved us?****FURTHER STUDY***The Great Controversy*, pp. 472-474.

**Part 5
LOVERS OF
NEW LIFE**

What counsel does Paul give to Christians which, if followed, will enable them to do God's will?

"Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

This message is for all believers. The apostle exhorts us to resist pressures that would turn us into worldlings. Instead, we are urged to permit ourselves to be completely changed. (The Greek word translated "transformed" is that from which our word *metamorphosis* is derived, and it is in Matthew 17:2 for the transfiguration of Christ.) When we are born again, we are given new minds as well as new hearts, but we must not stand still in mind or spirit. We must continually develop, striving to fulfill God's perfect will. (Compare Eph. 4:13.)

"Man, fallen man, may be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that he can 'prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.' How does he prove this? By the Holy Spirit taking possession of his mind, spirit, heart, and character. Where does the proving come in? 'We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.' A real work is wrought by the Holy Spirit upon the human character, and its fruits are seen."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1080.

How can we further assist the divine Power in the transformation of our characters? Col. 3:12.

While we are saved by God's grace and not by any merit of our own, it is not intended that we should be spiritual robots. We are meant to cooperate with the Lord in His redemptive work. It is in this spirit that we are urged to "put on" or "clothe ourselves with" a compassionate heart, kindness, humility—not merely of manner but of thought, meekness, or courtesy—and patience. Not everyone who possesses one or more of these qualities is a Christian, but a Christian should possess these spiritual, social gifts. "If you live upon the plan of addition, adding grace to grace, God will multiply unto you His grace. While you add, God multiplies. If you cherish a habitual impression that God sees and hears all that you do and say, and keeps a faithful record of all your words and actions, and that you must meet it all, then in all you do and say you will seek to follow the dictates of an enlightened and wakeful conscience."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 244.

THINK IT THROUGH

How much have I grown since baptism? What spiritual and intellectual growth has come during the past year?

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "Consecration," pp. 43-48.

**Part 6
RAISED
LIKE CHRIST**

In Christian doctrine there is a close connection between baptism and resurrection. The first is preparation for the second. He who refuses baptism has no right to expect resurrection. But baptism is more than immersion in water, and resurrection is more than rising from a grave. As genuine baptismal experience brings "newness of life," so the first resurrection will bring a new and eternal life (John 11:25, 26). In this closing lesson of the quarter, then, let us explore the deep spiritual significance of both experiences.

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:12).

Here the apostle clearly links baptism and resurrection, but only as both are associated with Christ. We must be "buried *with him* in baptism." Jesus Himself was baptized as an example for us to follow, and baptism is beneficial only as we consciously follow the Example. When that condition is fulfilled, then what God did for Christ in raising Him from the dead will operate similarly on our behalf.

What eternal assurance can we gain from our baptismal experience? Rom. 6:5.

The little word "if" has great significance here. It requires that in passing through baptismal waters we actually die to sin as surely as Jesus died and was buried after crucifixion. When this death takes place in our lives, then we have the promise of sharing in Christ's eternal life by His grace through the first resurrection. In this way our present choice of action decides our eternal future—for life or for death.

"The vows which we take upon ourselves in baptism embrace much. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we are buried in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. . . . Publicly he has declared that he will no longer live in pride and self-indulgence. He is no longer to live a careless, indifferent life. He has made a covenant with God. He has died to the world. He is to live to the Lord."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 98, 99.

THINK IT THROUGH

Most of us remember our birthdays. Would it help our spiritual growth if we annually commemorated the day of our baptism? Is our Christian life "newer" now than then?

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "Growing Up Into Christ," pp. 67-75.

Lessons for 4th Quarter/1981

Sabbath School members who have not received a copy of the Adult Lessons for the fourth 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 (Part Two)."

First Lesson

OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Memory Text, Heb. 3:1

1. *Tabernacle and Temple (Ex. 25:8, 9)*
2. *The Priest's Office (Ex. 28:1)*
3. *The Perfect Priest (Heb. 8:1, 2)*
4. *"Like Unto His Brethren" (Heb. 2:17)*
5. *Our Intercessor (Heb. 9:24)*
6. *The Believer's Response (Heb. 4:16)*

Second Lesson

JUDGMENT AND THE JUDGE

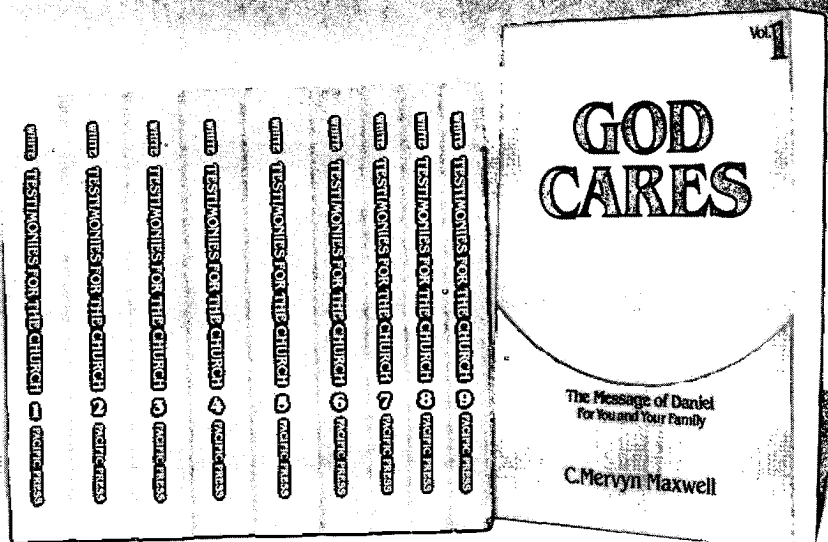
Memory Text, 2 Cor. 5:10

1. *Subject to Judgment (Gen. 1:28)*
2. *God and Judgment (Eccl. 12:13, 14)*
3. *Judgment on Earth (Lev. 6:2-7)*
4. *Judgment in Heaven (Dan. 8:14)*
5. *New Testament and Judgment (Acts 17:30, 31)*
6. *Preparation for Judgment (1 John 2:1)*

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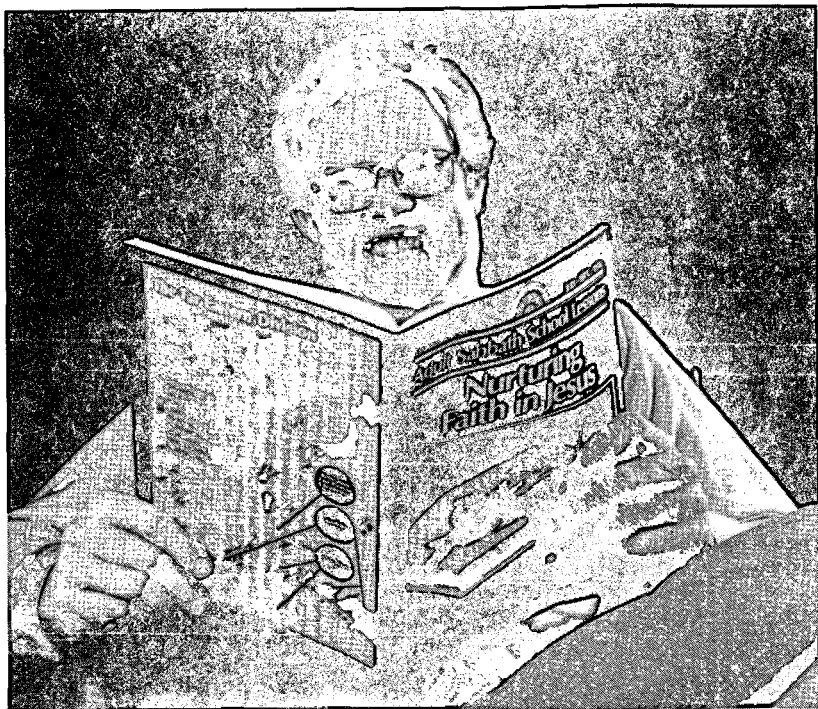
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