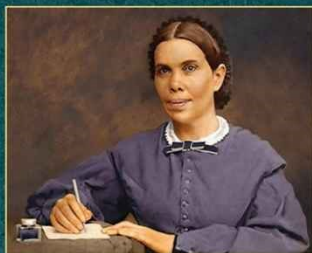


*Ellen G. White*  
**NOTES**

for the Sabbath School Lessons



THE  
**PROMISE**  
God's Everlasting Covenant

April | May | June 2021

Spirit of Prophecy quotations arranged for  
daily study with the adult Bible study guides

**E. G. White Notes**  
**for the Adult Bible Study Guide**

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# The Promise: God's Everlasting Covenant

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# What Happened?

**Sabbath Afternoon, March 27**

After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God said to His Son, "Let us make man in our image." As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator he was of noble height and of beautiful symmetry. He was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and was well proportioned. His features were perfect and beautiful. His complexion was neither white nor sallow, but ruddy, glowing with the rich tint of health. Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders. She, too, was noble, perfect in symmetry, and very beautiful.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 20.

Adam was surrounded with everything his heart could wish. Every want was supplied. There were no sin and no signs of decay in glorious Eden. Angels of God conversed freely and lovingly with the holy pair. The happy songsters caroled forth their free, joyous songs of praise to their Creator. The peaceful beasts in happy innocence played about Adam and Eve, obedient to their word. Adam was in the perfection of manhood, the noblest of the Creator's work.

Not a shadow interposed between them and their Creator. They knew God as their beneficent Father, and in all things their will was conformed to the will of God. And God's character was reflected in the character of Adam. His glory was revealed in every object of nature.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 26.

The law of God, from its very nature, is unchangeable. It is a revelation of the will and the character of its Author. God is love, and His law is love. Its two great principles are love to God and love to man. . . .

In the beginning, man was created in the image of God. He was in perfect harmony with the nature and the law of God; the principles of righteousness were written upon his heart. But sin alienated him from his Maker. He no longer reflected the divine image. His heart was at war with the principles of God's law. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7. But "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son," that man might be reconciled to God. Through the merits of Christ he can be restored to harmony with his Maker. His heart must be renewed by divine grace; he must have a new life from above. This change is

the new birth, without which, says Jesus, “he cannot see the kingdom of God.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 467.

### **Sunday, March 28: Turtles All the Way Down . . .**

Men of the greatest intellect cannot understand the mysteries of Jehovah as revealed in nature. Divine inspiration asks many questions which the most profound scholar cannot answer. These questions were not asked that we might answer them, but to call our attention to the deep mysteries of God and to teach us that our wisdom is limited; that in the surroundings of our daily life there are many things beyond the comprehension of finite minds; that the judgment and purposes of God are past finding out. His wisdom is unsearchable.

Skeptics refuse to believe in God because with their finite minds they cannot comprehend the infinite power by which He reveals Himself to men. But God is to be acknowledged more from what He does not reveal of Himself than from that which is open to our limited comprehension. Both in divine revelation and in nature, God has given to men mysteries to command their faith. This must be so. We may be ever searching, ever inquiring, ever learning, and yet there is an infinity beyond.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 261.

Face-to-face, heart-to-heart communion with his Maker was [Adam’s] high privilege. Had he remained loyal to God, all this would have been his forever. Throughout eternal ages he would have continued to gain new treasures of knowledge, to discover fresh springs of happiness, and to obtain clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the wisdom, the power, and the love of God. . . .

But by disobedience this was forfeited. Through sin the divine likeness was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man’s physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity was lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed. He had become subject to death. Yet the race was not left without hope. By infinite love and mercy the plan of salvation had been devised, and a life of probation was granted. To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life.

To honor Christ, to become like Him, to work for Him, is life’s highest ambition and its greatest joy.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 166.

All the systems of philosophy devised by men have led to confusion and shame when God has not been recognized and honored. To lose faith in God is terrible.

Prosperity cannot be a great blessing to nations or individuals, when once faith in his Word is lost. Nothing is truly great but that which is eternal in its tendencies. . . .

He whose soul is imbued with the Spirit of God will learn the lesson of confiding trust. Taking the Written Word as his counselor and guide, he will find in science an aid to understand God.”—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 310.

### **Monday, March 29: In the Image of the Maker**

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. All parts of the human organism were set in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the faculties of the mind, all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Christ the Word, a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power. . . .

Above all lower orders of being, God designed that man, the crowning work of His creation, should express His thought and reveal His glory. But man is not to exalt himself as God.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 415.

Adam was crowned king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of His hands.

Created to be “the image and glory of God,” Adam and Eve had received endowments not unworthy of their high destiny. Every faculty of mind and soul reflected the Creator’s glory. Endowed with high mental and spiritual gifts, Adam and Eve were made but “little lower than the angels.”—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 40.

The whole natural world is designed to be an interpreter of the things of God. To Adam and Eve in their Eden home, nature was full of the knowledge of God, teeming with divine instruction. To their attentive ears it was vocal with the voice of wisdom. Wisdom spoke to the eye and was received into the heart, for they communed with God in His created works.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 186.

The lost coin, in the Saviour’s parable, though lying in the dirt and rubbish, was a

piece of silver still. Its owner sought it because it was of value. So every soul, however degraded by sin, is in God's sight accounted precious. As the coin bore the image and superscription of the reigning power, so man at his creation bore the image and superscription of God. Though now marred and dim through the influence of sin, the traces of this inscription remain upon every soul. God desires to recover that soul and to retrace upon it His own image in righteousness and holiness.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 163.

## **Tuesday, March 30: God and Humankind Together**

He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food. "Behold," He said, "I have given you every herb yielding seed, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food." Genesis 1:29, A.R.V. Upon leaving Eden to gain his livelihood by tilling the earth under the curse of sin, man received permission to eat also "the herb of the field." Genesis 3:18.

Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 295, 296.

If men today were simple in their habits, living in harmony with nature's laws, as did Adam and Eve in the beginning, there would be an abundant supply for the needs of the human family. There would be fewer imaginary wants, and more opportunities to work in God's ways. But selfishness and the indulgence of unnatural taste have brought sin and misery into the world, from excess on the one hand, and from want on the other.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 367.

Every blessing bestowed upon us call for a response to the Author of all our mercies. The Christian should often review his past life and recall with gratitude the precious deliverances that God has wrought for him, supporting him in trial, opening ways before him when all seemed dark and forbidding, refreshing him when ready to faint. He should recognize all of them as evidences of the watchcare of heavenly angels. In view of these innumerable blessings he should often ask, with subdued and grateful heart, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" Psalm 116:12.

Our time, our talents, our property, should be sacredly devoted to Him who has given us these blessings in trust. Whenever a special deliverance is wrought in our behalf, or new and unexpected favors are granted us, we should acknowledge God's goodness, not only by expressing our gratitude in words,



but, like Jacob, by gifts and offerings to His cause. As we are continually receiving the blessings of God, so we are to be continually giving.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 187.

In our labor we are to be workers together with God. He gives us the earth and its treasures; but we must adapt them to our use and comfort. He causes the trees to grow; but we prepare the timber and build the house. He has hidden in the earth the gold and silver, the iron and coal; but it is only through toil that we can obtain them. . . .

. . . While God has created and constantly controls all things, He has endowed us with a power not wholly unlike His. To us has been given a degree of control over the forces of nature. As God called forth the earth in its beauty out of chaos, so we can bring order and beauty out of confusion.—*Education*, pp. 214, 215.

### **Wednesday, March 31: At the Tree**

In the midst of the garden, near the tree of life, stood the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This tree was especially designed of God to be the pledge of their obedience, faith, and love to Him. Of this tree the Lord commanded our first parents not to eat, neither to touch it, lest they die. He told them that they might freely eat of all the trees in the garden except one, but if they ate of that tree they should surely die.

When Adam and Eve were placed in the beautiful garden they had everything for their happiness which they could desire. But God chose, in His all-wise arrangements, to test their loyalty before they could be rendered eternally secure. They were to have His favor, and He was to converse with them and they with Him. Yet He did not place evil out of their reach. Satan was permitted to tempt them. If they endured the trial they were to be in perpetual favor with God and the heavenly angels.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 24.

When God made man He made him rule over the earth and all living creatures. So long as Adam remained loyal to Heaven, all nature was in subjection to him. But when he rebelled against the divine law, the inferior creatures were in rebellion against his rule. Thus the Lord, in His great mercy, would show men the sacredness of His law, and lead them, by their own experience, to see the danger of setting it aside, even in the slightest degree. . . .

The warning given to our first parents—"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17)—did not imply that they were to die on the very day when they partook of the forbidden fruit. But on that day the

irrevocable sentence would be pronounced. Immortality was promised them on condition of obedience; by transgression they would forfeit eternal life. That very day they would be doomed to death.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 59, 60.

Through the work of the Spirit the divine relationship between God and the sinner is renewed. The Father says: “I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. I will exercise forgiving love toward them, and bestow upon them my joy. They shall be to me a peculiar treasure; for this people whom I have formed for myself shall show forth my praise.”

The Father sets His love upon His elect people who live in the midst of men. These are the people whom Christ has redeemed by the price of His own blood; and because they respond to the drawing of Christ, through the sovereign mercy of God, they are elected to be saved as His obedient children. Upon them is manifested the free grace of God, the love wherewith He hath loved them. Everyone who will humble himself as a little child, who will receive and obey the word of God with a child’s simplicity, will be among the elect of God.—*Our High Calling*, p. 77.

#### **Thursday, April 1: Breaking the Relationship**

When Adam and Eve were placed in the beautiful garden, Satan was laying plans to destroy them. In no way could this happy couple be deprived of their happiness if they obeyed God. Satan could not exercise his power upon them unless they should first disobey God and forfeit His favor. Some plan must therefore be devised to lead them to disobedience that they might incur God’s frown and be brought under the more direct influence of Satan and his angels. It was decided that Satan should assume another form and manifest an interest for man. . . .

Satan commenced his work with Eve, to cause her to disobey. She first erred in wandering from her husband, next in lingering around the forbidden tree, and next in listening to the voice of the tempter, and even daring to doubt what God had said, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” She thought that perhaps the Lord did not mean just what He said, and venturing, she put forth her hand, took of the fruit and ate. It was pleasing to the eye and pleasant to the taste. Then she was jealous that God had withheld from them what was really for their good, and she offered the fruit to her husband, thereby tempting him.—*Early Writings*, pp. 146, 147.

After Adam and Eve had partaken of the forbidden fruit, they were filled with a sense of shame and terror. At first their only thought was how to excuse their sin before God and escape the dreaded sentence of death. When the Lord

inquired concerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt partly upon God and partly upon his companion: "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." . . . The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit and will not be acceptable before God. True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt himself and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy. . . .

The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God and the cost of Calvary; and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God. And it is written: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 637–641.

The mercies of God surround you every moment; and it would be profitable for you to consider how and whence your blessings come every day. Let the precious blessings of God awaken gratitude in you. You cannot number the blessings of God, the constant loving-kindness expressed to you, for they are as numerous as the refreshing drops of rain. Clouds of mercy are hanging over you, and ready to drop upon you. If you will appreciate the valuable gift of salvation, you will be sensible of daily refreshment, of the protection and love of Jesus; you will be guided in the way of peace.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 340.

### **Friday, April 2: For Further Reading**

*Education*, "Science and the Bible," pp. 128, 129;

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, "The Plan of Redemption," pp. 63–70.

# Covenant Primer

**Sabbath Afternoon, April 3**

There must be no withholding on our part, of our service or our means, if we would fulfill our covenant with God. The purpose of all God's commandments is to reveal man's duty not only to God, but to his fellow man. In this late age of the world's history, we are not, because of the selfishness of our hearts, to question or dispute the right of God to make these requirements, or we will deceive ourselves, and rob our souls of the richest blessings of the grace of God. Heart and mind and soul are to be merged in the will of God. Then the covenant, framed from the dictates of infinite wisdom, and made binding by the power and authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords, will be our pleasure. It is enough that He has said that obedience to His statutes and laws is the life and prosperity of His people.

The blessings of God's covenant are mutual. God accepts those who will work for His name's glory, to make His name a praise in a world of apostasy and idolatry. He will be exalted by His commandment-keeping people that He may make them "high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour" (Deuteronomy 26:19).—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 150.

Man gains everything by obeying the covenant-keeping God. God's attributes are imparted to man, enabling him to exercise mercy and compassion. God's covenant assures us of His unchangeable character. . . . It is not enough for us to have a general idea of God's requirements. We must know for ourselves what His requirements and our obligations are. The terms of God's covenant are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." These are the conditions of life. "This do," Christ said, "and thou shalt live."—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 932.

To the omnipotence of the King of Kings, our covenant-keeping God unites the gentleness and care of a tender shepherd. Nothing can stand in His way. His power is absolute, and it is the pledge of the sure fulfillment of His promises to His people. He can remove all obstructions to the advancement of His work. He has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be delivered. His goodness and love are infinite, and His covenant is unalterable. . . .

In the darkest days, when appearances seem so forbidding, fear not. Have faith

in God. He is working out His will, doing all things well in behalf of His people. The strength of those who love and serve Him will be renewed day by day. His understanding will be placed at their service, that they may not err in the carrying out of His purposes.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 10, 11.

### **Sunday, April 4: Covenant Basics**

God's people are to be distinguished as a people who serve Him fully, wholeheartedly, taking no honor to themselves, and remembering that by a most solemn covenant they have bound themselves to serve the Lord, and Him only. . . .

“And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.” Revelation 22:3, 4.

Who are these?—God's denominated people—those who on this earth have witnessed to their loyalty. Who are they?—Those who have kept the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus; those who have owned the Crucified One as their Saviour.—*Our High Calling*, p. 345.

[Christ] left the worlds unfallen, the society of holy angels in the universe of heaven, for He could not be satisfied while humanity was alienated from Him. The heavenly Merchantman lays aside His royal robe and crown. Though the Prince and Commander of all heaven, He takes upon Him the garb of humanity, and comes to a world that is marred and seared with the curse, to seek for the one lost pearl, to seek for man fallen through disobedience.

He finds His pearl buried in rubbish. Selfishness encrusts the human heart, and it is bound by the tyranny of Satan. But He lifts the soul out of its darkness to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. We are brought into covenant relationship with God, and receive pardon and find peace. Jesus finds the pearl of lost humanity, and resets it in His own diadem.

He would inspire the most sinful, the most debased, with hope. He says, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37). When a soul finds the Saviour, the Saviour rejoices as a merchantman that has found his goodly pearl. By His grace He will work upon the soul until it will be like a jewel polished for the heavenly kingdom.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 84.

You must make a daily, personal consecration of all to God, You must daily renew your covenant to be His wholly and forever. Place no dependence upon

changeable feelings, but plant your feet upon the sure platform of the promises of God: Thou hast said it; I believe the promise. This is an intelligent faith.

Your feelings will be troubled as you see some pursuing a course contrary to the principles of Christ; trials and tests of faith will come to you; but I entreat you to look only to Jesus, and allow none of these things to harden your heart, or to cause darkness or unbelief. Let nothing cause your faith to fail. Live as in the sight of God. Talk with Jesus as you would speak with a friend. He is ready to help you in the sorest trial; He is with you in the gravest perplexity. —*Our High Calling*, p. 124.

### **Monday, April 5: Covenant With Noah**

More than one hundred years before the Flood the Lord sent an angel to faithful Noah to make known to him that He would no longer have mercy upon the corrupt race. But He would not have them ignorant of His design. He would instruct Noah and make him a faithful preacher to warn the world of its coming destruction, that the inhabitants of the earth might be left without excuse. Noah was to preach to the people, and also to prepare an ark as God should direct him for the saving of himself and family. He was not only to preach, but his example in building the ark was to convince all that he believed what he preached.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 62.

Noah had faithfully followed the instructions which he had received from God. The ark was finished in every part as the Lord had directed, and was stored with food for man and beast. . . .

God commanded Noah, “Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation.” Noah’s warnings had been rejected by the world, but his influence and example resulted in blessings to his family. As a reward for his faithfulness and integrity, God saved all the members of his family with him. What encouragement to parental fidelity!—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 97, 98.

God has always given men warning of coming judgments. Those who had faith in His message for their time, and who acted out their faith, in obedience to His commandments, escaped the judgments that fell upon the disobedient and unbelieving. The word came to Noah, “Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before Me.” Noah obeyed and was saved. . . . So Christ’s disciples were given warning of the destruction of Jerusalem. Those who watched for the sign of the coming ruin, and fled from the city, escaped the destruction. So now we are given warning of Christ’s second coming and of the destruction to fall upon the world. Those who heed the warning will be saved.—

*The Desire of Ages*, p. 634.

True faith lays hold of and claims the promised blessing before it is realized and felt. We must send up our petitions in faith within the second veil and let our faith take hold of the promised blessing and claim it as ours. We are then to believe that we receive the blessing, because our faith has hold of it, and according to the Word it is ours. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. Here is faith, naked faith, to believe that we receive the blessing, even before we realize it. . . . When thick clouds of darkness seem to hover over the mind, then is the time to let living faith pierce the darkness and scatter the clouds. True faith rests on the promises contained in the Word of God, and those only who obey that Word can claim its glorious promises.—*Early Writings*, p. 72.

## **Tuesday, April 6: The Covenant With Abram**

God had chosen Israel. He had called them to preserve among men the knowledge of His law, and of the symbols and prophecies that pointed to the Saviour. He desired them to be as wells of salvation to the world. What Abraham was in the land of his sojourn, what Joseph was in Egypt, and Daniel in the courts of Babylon, the Hebrew people were to be among the nations. They were to reveal God to men.

In the call of Abraham the Lord had said, "I will bless thee; . . . and thou shalt be a blessing: . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:2, 3. The same teaching was repeated through the prophets. Even after Israel had been wasted by war and captivity, the promise was theirs, "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men." Micah 5:7.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 27.

The field of the controversy between Christ and Satan—the field on which the plan of redemption is wrought out—is the lesson book of the universe. Because Abraham had shown a lack of faith in God's promises, Satan had accused him before the angels and before God of having failed to comply with the conditions of the covenant, and as unworthy of its blessings. God desired to prove the loyalty of His servant before all heaven, to demonstrate that nothing less than perfect obedience can be accepted, and to open more fully before them the plan of salvation. . . .

The trial was far more severe than that which had been brought upon Adam. Compliance with the prohibition laid upon our first parents involved no suffering, but the command to Abraham demanded the most agonizing sacrifice.

All heaven beheld with wonder and admiration Abraham's unfaltering obedience. All heaven applauded his fidelity. Satan's accusations were shown to be false. God declared to His servant, "Now I know that thou fearest God [notwithstanding Satan's charges], seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." God's covenant, confirmed to Abraham by an oath before the intelligences of other worlds, testified that obedience will be rewarded.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 154, 155.

When God chose Abraham as a representative of His truth, He took him out of his country, and away from his kindred, and set him apart. He desired to mold him after His own model. He desired to teach him according to His own plan. The mold of the world's teachers was not to be upon him. He was to be taught how to command his children and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. This is the work that God would have us do. He would have us understand how to govern our families, how to control our children, how to command our households to keep the way of the Lord.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 409.

### **Wednesday, April 7: The Covenant With Moses**

Some [of the Israelites] were careful to instruct their children in the law of God, but many . . . had witnessed so much idolatry that they had confused ideas of God's law. Those who feared God cried to Him in anguish of spirit to break their yoke of grievous bondage and bring them from the land of their captivity, that they might be free to serve Him. God heard their cries and raised up Moses as His instrument to accomplish the deliverance of His people.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 147.

Not alone at the Saviour's advent, but through all the ages after the Fall and the promise of redemption, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. Christ was the foundation and center of the sacrificial system in both the patriarchal and the Jewish age. . . . It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel. They looked for salvation through man's Substitute and Surety. These holy men of old held communion with the Saviour who was to come to our world in human flesh; and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face.

Christ was not only the leader of the Hebrews in the wilderness—the Angel in whom was the name of Jehovah, and who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, went before the host—but it was He who gave the law to Israel. Amid the awful glory of Sinai, Christ declared in the hearing of all the people the ten precepts of His



Father's law. It was He who gave to Moses the law engraved upon the tables of stone.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 366.

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. Exodus 19:5.

This pledge was given not only to Israel but to all who are obedient to God's Word. . . . God is faithful, by whom we are called to fellowship with His Son. As men and women cooperate with God in doing the work He has given them, they go forward from strength to greater strength. As they exercise simple faith, believing day by day that God will not fail to establish them in Christ, God says to them as He did to ancient Israel: "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Deuteronomy 7:6.

Thus God is able and willing to lead all who will be led. He desires to teach each one a lesson of constant trust, unwavering faith, and unquestioning submission. He says to each one, I am the Lord thy God. Walk with Me, and I will fill thy path with light.—*Our High Calling*, p. 24.

#### **Thursday, April 8: The New Covenant**

Under the new covenant the conditions by which eternal life may be gained are the same as under the old—perfect obedience. Under the old covenant there were many offences of a daring, presumptuous character for which there was no atonement specified by law. In the new and better covenant Christ has fulfilled the law for the transgressors of law if they receive Him by faith as a personal Saviour. Mercy and forgiveness are the reward of all who come to Christ trusting in His merits to take away their sins. In the better covenant we are cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ. The sinner is helpless to atone for one sin. The power is in Christ's free gift, a promise appreciated by those only who are sensible of their sins and who forsake their sins and cast their helpless souls upon Christ, the sin-pardoning Saviour. He will put into their hearts His perfect law, which is "holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12), the law of God's own nature.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 299.

In the Bible the sacred and enduring character of the relation that exists between Christ and His church is represented by the union of marriage. The Lord has joined His people to Himself by a solemn covenant, He promising to be their God, and they pledging themselves to be His and His alone. He declares: "I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies." Hosea 2:19.—*The*

*Great Controversy*, p. 381.

There is an earnest work of preparation to be done by Seventh-day Adventists if they would stand firm in the trying experiences just before them. If they remain true to God in the confusion and temptation of the last days, they must seek the Lord in humility of heart for wisdom to resist the deceptions of the enemy.

Ever are we to keep in mind the solemn thought of the Lord's soon return, and in view of this to recognize the individual work to be done. Through the aid of the Holy Spirit we are to resist natural inclinations and tendencies to wrong, and weed out of the life every un-Christlike element. Thus we shall prepare our hearts for the reception of God's blessing, which will impart to us grace and bring us into harmony with the faith of Jesus. . . .

[At] this time a living testimony is to be borne in the lives of God's professing people, so that the world may see that in this age when evil reigns on every side, there is yet a people who are laying aside their will and are seeking to do God's will—a people in whose hearts and lives the law of God is written. There are strong temptations before us, sharp tests. The commandment-keeping people of God are to prepare for this time of trial by obtaining a deeper experience in the things of God and a practical knowledge of the righteousness of Christ. Not to unbelievers only, but to church members the words are spoken, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Isaiah 55:6).—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 347.

#### **Friday, April 9: For Further Reading**

*My Life Today*, "Not One Word of His Promise Has Failed," p. 337;

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, "Abraham in Canaan," pp. 132–138.

## “All Future Generations”

**Sabbath Afternoon, April 10**

In every period of this earth's history, God has had His men of opportunity, to whom He has said, “Ye are My witnesses.” In every age there have been devout men, who gathered up the rays of light as they flashed upon their pathway, and who spoke to the people the words of God. Enoch, Noah, Moses, Daniel, and the long roll of patriarchs and prophets,—these were ministers of righteousness. They were not infallible; they were weak, erring men; but the Lord wrought through them as they gave themselves to His service.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 13.

The world was in its infancy; yet iniquity had become so deep and widespread that God could no longer bear with it; and He said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth.” He declared that His Spirit should not always strive with the guilty race. If they did not cease to pollute with their sins the world and its rich treasures, He would blot them from His creation, and would destroy the things with which He had delighted to bless them. . . .

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” Hebrews 11:7. While Noah was giving his warning message to the world, his works testified of his sincerity. It was thus that his faith was perfected and made evident. He gave the world an example of believing just what God says. All that he possessed, he invested in the ark. As he began to construct that immense boat on dry ground, multitudes came from every direction to see the strange sight and to hear the earnest, fervent words of the singular preacher. Every blow struck upon the ark was a witness to the people.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 92, 95.

The world is no more favorable today for the development of Christian character than in Noah's day. Then wickedness was so widespread. . . . “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (Genesis 6:7-9). Yes, amid the corruption of that degenerate age, Noah was a pleasure to his Creator.

We are living in the last days of this earth's history, in an age of sin and corruption, and like Noah we are to so live that we shall be a pleasure to God, showing forth the praises of Him “who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). In the prayer which Christ offered to His Father just before His crucifixion, He said, “I pray not that thou shouldst take them out

of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15).—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 90.

### **Sunday, April 11: The Sin Principle**

Without the grace of God, men love to do evil. They walk in darkness, and do not possess the power of self-control. They give loose rein to their passions and appetites until all the finer feelings are lost and only the animal passions are manifested. Such men need to feel a higher, controlling power, which will constrain them to obey. If rulers do not exercise a power to terrify the evildoer, he will sink to the level of the brute. The earth is growing more and more corrupt.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 362.

It is a law of the human mind that by beholding we become changed. Man will rise no higher than his conceptions of truth, purity, and holiness. If the mind is never exalted above the level of humanity, if it is not uplifted by faith to contemplate infinite wisdom and love, the man will be constantly sinking lower and lower. The worshipers of false gods clothed their deities with human attributes and passions, and thus their standard of character was degraded to the likeness of sinful humanity. They were defiled in consequence. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence." God had given men His commandments as a rule of life, but His law was transgressed, and every conceivable sin was the result. The wickedness of men was open and daring, justice was trampled in the dust, and the cries of the oppressed reached unto heaven.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 91.

Will God compel your obedience, will He compel your will? Never. The Lord has furnished you with capacities, with intelligence, with reason. He has sent from heaven His only-begotten Son to open the way for you, and to place within your reach immortality. What account can you render to God for your weakness, your disobedience, your impurity, your evil thoughts and evil works? . . .

Do not think that God will work a miracle to save those weak souls who cherish evil, who practice sin; or that some supernatural element will be brought into their lives, lifting them out of self into a higher sphere, where it will be comparatively easy work, without any special effort, any special fighting, without any crucifixion of self; because all who dally on Satan's ground for this to be done will perish with the evildoers. They will be suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy.

If God has made provision for man to have eternal life, He has means to meet

the requirement that man shall practice holiness in this life. All who would evidence that they have a hold on the future life will give practical demonstrations in their life, their character, that they are living in newness of life, in purity and holiness here, following that which is revealed.—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 452, 453.

### **Monday, April 12: The Man Noah**

Noah stood like a rock amid the tempest. He was surrounded by every species of wickedness and moral corruption; but amid popular contempt and ridicule, amid universal wickedness and disobedience, he distinguished himself by His holy integrity and unwavering faithfulness. While the world around him were disregarding God, and were indulging in all manner of extravagant dissipation which led to violence and crimes of every kind, the faithful preacher of righteousness declared to that generation that a flood of water was to deluge the world because of the unsurpassed wickedness of its inhabitants. He warned them to repent and believe, and find refuge in the ark.

The message of Noah was to him a reality. Amid the scoffs and jeers of the world, he was an unbending witness for God. His meekness and righteousness were in bright contrast to the revolting crimes, intrigue, and violence continually practiced around him. A power attended his words; for it was the voice of God to man through His servant. Connection with God made him strong in the strength of infinite power. . . . How simple and childlike, amid the unbelief of a scoffing world, was the faith of Noah.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 322.

Noah did not mix the soft, pleasing deceptions of Satan with his message. He did not utter the sentiment of many of his day who declared that God was too merciful to do such a terrible work. Many asserted that God would grant the wicked another season of probation; but Noah did not indulge them in the faintest hope that those who neglected the present opportunity, who rejected the present message, would be favored with another opportunity of salvation. He knew the power of God, and realized that God would fulfill His word. His fear of God did not separate him from God, but served to draw him closer to Him, and to lead him to pour out his soul in earnest supplication.—*Signs of the Times*, April 18, 1895.

The pen of inspiration, true to its task, tells us of the sins that overcame Noah, Lot, Moses, Abraham, David, and Solomon, and that even Elijah's strong spirit sank under temptation during his fearful trial. Jonah's disobedience and Israel's idolatry are faithfully recorded. Peter's denial of Christ, the sharp contention of Paul and Barnabas, the failings and infirmities of the prophets and apostles, are all laid bare by the Holy Ghost, who lifts the veil from the human heart. There

before us lie the lives of the believers, with all their faults and follies, which are intended as a lesson to all the generations following them. If they had been without foible they would have been more than human, and our sinful natures would despair of ever reaching such a point of excellence. But **seeing where they struggled and fell, where they took heart again and conquered through the grace of God, we are encouraged, and led to press over the obstacles that degenerate nature places in our way.**—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 12.

## **Tuesday, April 13: Covenant With Noah**

It was through Noah's consistent faith and works combined that condemned the world. He not only preached the present truth appropriate for that time, but he acted every sermon. Had he never lifted his voice in warning, his works, his holy character among the corrupt and ungodly would have been condemning sermons to the unbelieving and dissolute of that age. He bore himself with a Christlike patience and meekness under the provoking insults, taunts, and mockery. His voice was often heard in prayer to God for His power and help that he might do all the commandments of God. This was a condemning power to the unbelieving.—*This Day With God*, p. 235.

The world has become bold in transgression of God's law. Because of His long forbearance, men have trampled upon His authority. They have strengthened one another in oppression and cruelty toward His heritage. . . . But there is a line beyond which they cannot pass. The time is near when they will have reached the prescribed limit. Even now they have almost exceeded the bounds of the long-suffering of God, the limits of His grace, the limits of His mercy. The Lord will interpose to vindicate His own honor, to deliver His people, and to repress the swellings of unrighteousness.

In Noah's day, men had disregarded the law of God until almost all remembrance of the Creator had passed away from the earth. Their iniquity reached so great a height that the Lord brought a flood of waters upon the earth, and swept away its wicked inhabitants.

From age to age the Lord has made known the manner of His working. When a crisis has come, He has revealed Himself, and has interposed to hinder the working out of Satan's plans. With nations, with families, and with individuals, He has often permitted matters to come to a crisis, that His interference might become marked. Then He has made manifest that there is a God in Israel who will maintain His law and vindicate His people.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 177, 178.

Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were

acquainted with its claims upon them; its precepts were written upon their hearts. When man fell by transgression the law was not changed, but a remedial system was established to bring him back to obedience. The promise of a Saviour was given, and sacrificial offerings pointing forward to the death of Christ as the great sin offering were established. . . .

Adam taught his descendants the law of God, and it was handed down from father to son through successive generations. But notwithstanding the gracious provision for man's redemption, there were few who accepted it and rendered obedience. By transgression the world became so vile that it was necessary to cleanse it by the Flood from its corruption. The law was preserved by Noah and his family, and Noah taught his descendants the Ten Commandments. — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 363.

### **Wednesday, April 14: Sign of the Rainbow**

In the joy of their release Noah did not forget Him by whose gracious care they had been preserved. His first act after leaving the ark was to build an altar and offer from every kind of clean beast and fowl a sacrifice, thus manifesting his gratitude to God for deliverance and his faith in Christ, the great sacrifice. This offering was pleasing to the Lord; and a blessing resulted, not only to the patriarch and his family, but to all who should live upon the earth. "The Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

Here was a lesson for all succeeding generations. Noah had come forth upon a desolate earth, but before preparing a house for himself he built an altar to God. His stock of cattle was small, and had been preserved at great expense; yet he cheerfully gave a part to the Lord as an acknowledgment that all was His. In like manner it should be our first care to render our freewill offerings to God. Every manifestation of His mercy and love toward us should be gratefully acknowledged, both by acts of devotion and by gifts to His cause. — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 105.

What compassion for erring man, to place the beautiful, variegated rainbow in the clouds, a token of the covenant of the great God with man! This rainbow was to evidence the fact to all generations that God destroyed the inhabitants of the earth by a flood, because of their great wickedness. It was his design that as the children of after generations should see the bow in the cloud, and should inquire the reason of this glorious circle that compasseth the earth, that their parents could explain to them the destruction of the old world by a flood,

because the people gave themselves up to all manner of wickedness, and that the hands of the Most High had bended the bow, and placed it in the clouds, as a token that he would never bring again a flood of waters on the earth.

This symbol in the clouds was to confirm the belief of all, and establish their confidence in God, for it was a token of divine mercy and goodness to man. That although God had been provoked to destroy the earth by the flood, yet his mercy still encompasseth the earth. God says, when he looketh upon the bow in the cloud he will remember. He would not have us understand that he would ever forget; but he speaks to man in his own language, that man may better understand him.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 74.

The words and promises of God are the only foundation of our faith. Take the word of God as truth, as a living, speaking voice to you, and obey faithfully every requirement. God is faithful, who hath promised. . . . Our blessings are limited by the weakness of our faith. God is not unwilling to bestow; He is a reservoir of power.—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 72.

#### **Thursday, April 15: “Only Noah Was Left”**

The inhabitants of the Noachian world were destroyed because, after being granted a period of one hundred and twenty years in which to choose between the evil and the good, they deliberately chose to follow their own wicked ways. Because they did not avail themselves of the opportunity God gave them to repent and turn to Him, they were destroyed by the flood.

Once again, before the great destruction of the world by fire, there is granted a period of test and trial. Men are given opportunity to show whether or not they will be loyal to God. Satan is seeking to lead men in positions of trust to seek the regeneration of the world by plans of their own devising. These men desire to be reformers, but they fail because they do not work in Christ’s lines. Can they reform others, when they cannot reform themselves?

As God’s witnesses, we have a message to bear to all the world. The Lord has many children who have never heard the truth for this time. God’s servants must give them the final warning.—*The Upward Look*, p. 88.

Of special value to God’s church on earth today—the keepers of His vineyard—are the messages of counsel and admonition given through the prophets who have made plain His eternal purpose in behalf of mankind. In the teachings of the prophets, His love for the lost race and His plan for their salvation are clearly revealed. The story of Israel’s call, of their successes and failures, of their restoration to divine favor, of their rejection of the Master of the vineyard, and



of the carrying out of the plan of the ages by a goodly remnant to whom are to be fulfilled all the covenant promises—this has been the theme of God’s messengers to His church throughout the centuries that have passed. . . .

Let Israel hope in God. The Master of the vineyard is even now gathering from among men of all nations and peoples the precious fruits for which He has long been waiting. Soon He will come unto His own; and in that glad day His eternal purpose for the house of Israel will finally be fulfilled.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 22.

Look at the cross of Calvary. It is a standing pledge of the boundless love, the measureless mercy, of the heavenly Father. O that all might repent and do their first works. When the churches do this, they will love God supremely and their neighbors as themselves. . . . The people of God will . . . abide in Christ, the love of Jesus will be revealed, and one Spirit will animate all hearts, regenerating and renewing all in the image of Christ, fashioning all hearts alike. As living branches of the True Vine, all will be united to Christ, the living head. Christ will abide in every heart, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, and presenting to the world the unity of the followers of Jesus, thus bearing testimony that the heavenly credentials are supplied to the remnant church. In the oneness of Christ’s church it will be proved that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world. — *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 385.

#### **Friday, April 16: For Further Reading**

*The Story of Redemption*, “Building the Ark,” pp. 63, 64;

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, “After the Flood,” pp. 105–110.

# An Everlasting Covenant

**Sabbath Afternoon, April 17**

Sorrow filled heaven, as it was realized that man was lost, and that world which God had created was to be filled with mortals doomed to misery, sickness, and death, and there was no way of escape for the offender. The whole family of Adam must die. I saw the lovely Jesus and beheld an expression of sympathy and sorrow upon His countenance. Soon I saw Him approach the exceeding bright light which enshrouded the Father. . . .

The anxiety of the angels seemed to be intense while Jesus was communing with His Father. Three times He was shut in by the glorious light about the Father, and the third time He came from the Father, His person could be seen. His countenance was calm, free from all perplexity and doubt, and shone with benevolence and loveliness, such as words cannot express. He then made known to the angelic host that a way of escape had been made for lost man. He told them that He had been pleading with His Father, and had offered to give His life a ransom, to take the sentence of death upon Himself, that through Him man might find pardon; that through the merits of His blood, and obedience to the law of God, they could have the favor of God, and be brought into the beautiful garden, and eat of the fruit of the tree of life.—*Early Writings*, p. 149.

Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which "angels desire to look," and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which "seeketh not her own" has its source in the heart of God.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 19.

Our God has heaven and earth at His command, and He knows just what we need. We can see only a little way before us; "but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Hebrews 4:13.

Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best.

Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's notice. Satan's hatred against God leads him to delight in destroying even the dumb creatures. It is only through God's protecting care that the birds are preserved to gladden us with their songs of joy. But He does not forget even the sparrows. "Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Matthew 10:31. — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 272, 273.

## **Sunday, April 18: Yahweh and the Abrahamic Covenant**

After the Flood the people once more increased on the earth, and wickedness also increased. Idolatry became well-nigh universal, and the Lord finally left the hardened transgressors to follow their evil ways, while He chose Abraham, of the line of Shem, and made him the keeper of His law for future generations.

In that age, idolatry was fast creeping in and conflicting with the worship of the true God. But Abraham did not become an idolater. Although his own father was vacillating between the true and the false worship, and with his knowledge of the truth false theories and idolatrous practices were mingled, Abraham kept free from this infatuation. He was not ashamed of his faith, and made no effort to hide the fact that he made God his trust. He "builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord."

If it were not possible for human beings under the Abrahamic covenant to keep the commandments of God, every soul of us is lost. The Abrahamic covenant is the covenant of grace. "By grace ye are saved." [John 1:11, 12 quoted.]—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1092.

I AM means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike to God. He sees the most remote events of past history, and the far distant future with as clear a vision as we do those things that are transpiring daily. We know not what is before us, and if we did, it would not contribute to our eternal welfare. God gives us an opportunity to exercise faith and trust in the great I AM.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1099.

God's word to us is, "I will bless thee, . . . and thou shalt be a blessing." Genesis 12:2. . . .

Wonderful, wonderful words, almost beyond the grasp of faith! The Creator of all worlds loves those who give themselves to His service, even as He loves His son. Even here and now His gracious favor is bestowed upon us to this marvelous extent. He has given us the Light and Majesty of heaven, and with Him He has bestowed all the heavenly treasure. Much as He has promised us for the life to come, He bestows princely gifts in this life. As subjects of His grace, He

desires us to enjoy everything that will ennoble, expand, and elevate our characters. He is waiting to inspire the youth with power from above, that they may stand under the blood-stained banner of Christ, to work as He worked, to lead souls into safe paths, to plant the feet of many upon the Rock of Ages.

All who are seeking to work in harmony with God's plan of education will have His sustaining grace, His continual presence, His keeping power.— *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 405.

### **Monday, April 19: 'El Shaddai**

God selected Abraham as His messenger through whom to communicate light to the world. The word of God came to him, not with the presentation of flattering prospects in this life of large salary, of great appreciation and worldly honor.

"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee," was the divine message to Abraham. The patriarch obeyed, and "went out, not knowing whither he went," as God's light bearer, to keep His name alive in the earth. He forsook his country, his home, his relatives, and all pleasant associations connected with his early life, to become a pilgrim and a stranger. . . .

Abraham's unquestioning obedience was one of the most striking instances of faith and reliance upon God to be found in the Sacred Record. With only the naked promise that his descendants should possess Canaan, without the least outward evidence, he followed on where God should lead, fully and sincerely complying with the conditions on his part, and confident that the Lord would faithfully perform His word. The patriarch went wherever God indicated his duty; he passed through wildernesses without terror; he went among idolatrous nations, with the one thought: "God has spoken; I am obeying His voice; He will guide, He will protect me."— *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 523, 524.

In its human wisdom the world cannot know God. Its wise men gather an imperfect knowledge of God from His created works, and then in their foolishness they exalt nature and the laws of nature above nature's God. Those who have not a knowledge of God through an acceptance of the revelation He has made of Himself in Christ, will obtain only an imperfect knowledge of Him in nature; and this knowledge, so far from giving elevated conceptions of God, and bringing the whole being into conformity to His will, will make men idolaters. Professing themselves to be wise, they will become fools.

Those who think they can obtain a knowledge of God aside from His Representative, whom the Word declares is "the express image of his person" (Hebrews 1:3), will need to become fools in their own estimation before

they can be wise. It is impossible to gain a perfect knowledge of God from nature alone; for nature itself is imperfect. In its imperfection it cannot represent God, it cannot reveal the character of God in its moral perfection. But Christ came as a personal Saviour to the world. He represented a personal God. As a personal Saviour, He ascended on high; and He will come again as He ascended to heaven—a personal Saviour. He is the express image of the Father's person. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 295.

## **Tuesday, April 20: From Abram to Abraham**

Jacob was raised from a man of feebleness and defects, through faith in God in prayer, to be a prince with God. He prevailed through faith. God is omnipotent. Man is finite. . . .

Who of us are really in earnest as was Jacob, who wrestled with the angel with all the energy of his being? Jacob put forth all his strength, supposing that he was wrestling with a lawless opponent, but the Lord put His finger with a divine touch upon him, and the wrestling ceased. Jacob knew that it was the Lord. Then, all broken, he fell upon the neck of the Angel, and held Him, pleading, "Bless me, even me." The Angel said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." . . .

It was now Jacob's turn to make the terms, and he said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Genesis 32:26–28).—*This Day With God*, pp. 104, 298.

God entered into covenant with Abraham, and took to Himself a people to become the depositaries of His law. To seduce and destroy this people, Satan began at once to lay his snares. The children of Jacob were tempted to contract marriages with the heathen and to worship their idols. But Joseph was faithful to God, and his fidelity was a constant testimony to the true faith. It was to quench this light that Satan worked through the envy of Joseph's brothers to cause him to be sold as a slave in a heathen land. God overruled events, however, so that the knowledge of Himself should be given to the people of Egypt. Both in the house of Potiphar and in the prison Joseph received an education and training that, with the fear of God, prepared him for his high position as prime minister of the nation. From the palace of the Pharaohs his influence was felt throughout the land, and the knowledge of God spread far and wide.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 332.

God permitted Daniel and his companions to be taken captive that they might

take to the king and nobles of Babylon the knowledge of Him, the only true God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. God brought Daniel into favor with the prince of the eunuchs because he behaved himself. He kept before him the fear of the Lord. His companions never saw in his life anything that would lead them astray. Those who had charge over him loved him, because he carried with him the fragrance of a Christlike disposition. . . .

God is connected with the threads of our existence. He knows every thought of the heart, every action of the life. Then, strive to live in harmony with Him. Seek to reach a high standard. Heavenly angels will help you, and more than that, Christ will help you.—*The Upward Look*, p. 47.

### **Wednesday, April 21: Covenant Stages**

Many are unable to make definite plans for the future. Their life is unsettled. They cannot discern the outcome of affairs, and this often fills them with anxiety and unrest. Let us remember that the life of God's children in this world is a pilgrim life. We have not wisdom to plan our own lives. It is not for us to shape our future. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Hebrews 11:8. . . .

Too many, in planning for a brilliant future, make an utter failure. Let God plan for you. As a little child, trust to the guidance of Him who will "keep the feet of His saints." 1 Samuel 2:9. God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him. —*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 478, 479.

The spirit of bondage is engendered by seeking to live in accordance with legal religion, through striving to fulfill the claims of the law in our own strength. There is hope for us only as we come under the Abrahamic covenant, which is the covenant of grace by faith in Christ Jesus. The gospel preached to Abraham, through which he had hope, was the same gospel that is preached to us today, through which we have hope. Abraham looked unto Jesus, who is also the Author and the Finisher of our faith.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1077.

To Isaiah it was given to make very plain to Judah the truth that among the Israel of God were to be numbered many who were not descendants of Abraham after the flesh. This teaching was not in harmony with the theology of his age, yet he fearlessly proclaimed the messages given him of God and brought hope to many a longing heart reaching out after the spiritual blessings

promised to the seed of Abraham. . . .

In the renewal of the covenant shortly before the birth of Isaac, God's purpose for mankind was again made plain. "All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him," was the assurance of the Lord concerning the child of promise. Genesis 18:18. And later the heavenly visitant once more declared, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Genesis 22:18.

The all-embracing terms of this covenant were familiar to Abraham's children and to his children's children. It was in order that the Israelites might be a blessing to the nations, and that God's name might be made known "throughout all the earth" (Exodus 9:16), that they were delivered from Egyptian bondage. If obedient to His requirements, they were to be placed far in advance of other peoples in wisdom and understanding; but this supremacy was to be reached and maintained only in order that through them the purpose of God for "all nations of the earth" might be fulfilled.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 367, 368.

#### **Thursday, April 22: Covenant Obligations**

Abraham is a noble example of a faithful householder, and he has given us an example of the unquestioning obedience that all should render. He who blesses the righteous said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him" (Genesis 18:19). They will keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. He will not speak words of hypocrisy or deception. There will be no betraying of sacred trusts.

Just as surely as we labor together as Abraham did, so surely will we receive the commendation of Heaven. Abraham was, in a marked manner, selected to walk in the way of the Lord, governing his household by the combined influences of authority and affection. The Holy One has given us rules to obey, from which there can be no sinless swerving. We are bought with a price. Faith and works are to make us complete in Christ. Thus we shall keep the way of the Lord. When the heart is meek and lowly, God can impress the soul. The Word of God is our counselor. Let us obey its teachings.—*The Upward Look*, p. 249.

Obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, "I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." Hebrews 10:16.

And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 60.

We must have an increase of faith, else we cannot be renewed in the divine image, and love and obey the requirements of God. Let the prayer go forth from unfeigned lips, “Lord, increase my faith; give me divine enlightenment; for without help from Thee I can do nothing.” Come in humility and bow before God; open before the Lord your Bibles, containing the divine promises; take your position upon them; make a covenant with God that you will answer His requirements; tell Him you will believe, without any other evidence except the naked promise. This is not presumption; but unless you work with zeal, unless you are earnest and determined, Satan will obtain the advantage, and you will be left in unbelief and darkness.—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 72.

#### **Friday, April 23: For Further Reading**

*My Life Today*, “God Sees Me,” p. 291;

*The Acts of the Apostles*, “Jew and Gentile,” pp. 188–200.



# Children of the Promise

**Sabbath Afternoon, April 24**

For a few weeks past I have had a deep sense of the promises of God and the hope of the Christian. The Bible never seemed to me so full of rich gems of promise as within the last few weeks. It seems that the dews of heaven are ready to fall upon us and refresh us, if we will only take the promises to ourselves. We can never overcome our own natural tendencies without the help of Heaven, and the precious Jesus places Himself right by our side to help us in this work. He says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20). We want to believe just what Christ has said. We want that our faith shall compass the promises.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 118.

Christ took humanity upon Himself. He laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and stepped down from His high command in the heavenly courts. Clothing His divinity with humanity, Christ encircled the race with His long human arm. He stands at the head of humanity, not as a sinner but as a Saviour. It is because there is no spot or stain of sin upon His divine soul that He can stand there as the sinner's surety. Because He is sinless He can take away our sins and place us on vantage ground with God, if we will believe in Him and trust Him as the One that will be our sanctification and righteousness.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 93.

What kind of faith is it that overcomes the world? It is that faith which makes Christ your own personal Saviour—that faith which, recognizing your helplessness, your utter inability to save yourself, takes hold of the Helper who is mighty to save, as your only hope. It is faith that will not be discouraged, that hears the voice of Christ saying, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, and My divine strength is yours." It is the faith that hears Him say, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." . . .

Christ should never be out of the mind. The angels said concerning Him, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Jesus, precious Saviour! Assurance, helpfulness, security, and peace are all in Him. He is the dispeller of all our doubts, the earnest of all our hopes. How precious is the thought that we may indeed become partakers of the divine nature, whereby we may overcome as Christ overcame! Jesus is the fullness of our expectation. He is the melody of our songs, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He is living water to the thirsty soul. He is our refuge in the storm. He is our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption. When Christ is our personal Saviour, we shall show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out

of darkness into His marvelous light.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 21.

### **Sunday, April 25: Thy Shield**

When trials arise that seem unexplainable, we should not allow our peace to be spoiled. However unjustly we may be treated, let not passion arise. By indulging a spirit of retaliation we injure ourselves. We destroy our own confidence in God, and grieve the Holy Spirit. There is by our side a witness, a heavenly messenger, who will lift up for us a standard against the enemy. He will shut us in with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Beyond this Satan cannot penetrate. He cannot pass this shield of holy light.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 171, 172.

When His people shall be in the greatest danger, seemingly unable to stand against the power of Satan, God will work in their behalf. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. . . .

I am so thankful at this time that we can have our minds taken off from the difficulties that surround us, and the oppression that is to come upon the people of God, and can look up to the heaven of light and power. If we place ourselves on the side of God, of Christ and the heavenly intelligences, the broad shield of Omnipotence is over us, the mighty God of Israel is our helper, and we need not fear.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 373.

We must have that faith which works by love and purifies the soul, that this belief in Christ will lead us to put away everything that is offensive in His sight. Unless we have this faith that works, it is of no advantage to us. You may admit that Christ is the Saviour of the world, but is He your Saviour? Do you believe today that He will give you strength and power to overcome every defect in your character?

We have individually this lesson to learn of special trust in our Saviour. We are to trust our heavenly Father just as a child trusts its earthly parents, and believe that He is working for our good in all things; and that every struggling cry and every effort against the adversary of our soul enters into the ears of the God of Sabaoth, and that He will send us help every time we need it. He will help us over every temptation if we call upon Him in faith.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 118.

If we commit ourselves to God we have the assurance, He "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Corinthians 10:13.

The only safeguard against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through

faith in His righteousness. It is because selfishness exists in our hearts that temptation has power over us. But when we behold the great love of God, selfishness appears to us in its hideous and repulsive character, and we desire to have it expelled from the soul. As the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ, our hearts are softened and subdued, the temptation loses its power, and the grace of Christ transforms the character.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 118.

## **Monday, April 26: The Messianic Promise—Part 1**

“To Abraham and his seed were the promises made.” Galatians 3:16. Abraham himself was to share the inheritance. The fulfillment of God’s promise may seem to be long delayed—for “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Peter 3:8); it may appear to tarry; but at the appointed time “it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Habakkuk 2:3.

The gift to Abraham and his seed included not merely the land of Canaan, but the whole earth. So says the apostle, “The promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.” Romans 4:13. And the Bible plainly teaches that the promises made to Abraham are to be fulfilled through Christ. All that are Christ’s are “Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise”—heirs to “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away”—the earth freed from the curse of sin. Galatians 3:29; 1 Peter 1:4. For “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High;” and “the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” Daniel 7:27; Psalm 37:11. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 169.

It was a high honor to which Abraham was called, that of being the father of the people who for centuries were the guardians and preservers of the truth of God for the world—of that people through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed in the advent of the promised Messiah. . . .

His religion was not held as a precious treasure to be jealously guarded and enjoyed solely by the possessor. True religion cannot be thus held; for such a spirit is contrary to the principles of the gospel. While Christ is dwelling in the heart, it is impossible to conceal the light of His presence, or for that light to grow dim. On the contrary, it will grow brighter and brighter as day by day the mists of selfishness and sin that envelop the soul are dispelled by the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 56.

Through the beloved John . . . the Holy Spirit declared to the churches, “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He

that hath the Son hath life." 1 John 5:11, 12. And Jesus said, "I will raise him up at the last day." Christ became one flesh with us, in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave,—not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours. 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.

## **Tuesday, April 27: The Messianic Promise—Part 2**

The people of God are His representatives upon the earth, and He intends that they shall be lights in the moral darkness of this world. Scattered all over the country, in the towns, cities, and villages, they are God's witnesses, the channels through which He will communicate to an unbelieving world the knowledge of His will and the wonders of His grace. It is His plan that all who are partakers of the great salvation shall be missionaries for Him. The piety of the Christian constitutes the standard by which worldlings judge the gospel. Trials patiently borne, blessings gratefully received, meekness, kindness, mercy, and love, habitually exhibited, are the lights that shine forth in the character before the world.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 56.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Corinthians 2:9. As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require. God Himself is "the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:26. And "whom He justified, them He also glorified." Romans 8:30. Great as is the shame and degradation through sin, even greater will be the honor and exaltation through redeeming love. To human beings striving for conformity to the divine image there is imparted an outlay of heaven's treasure, an excellency of power, that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 162.

If we could have but one view of the celestial city, we would never wish to dwell on earth again. . . .

There, when the veil that darkens our vision shall be removed, and our eyes shall behold that world of beauty of which we now catch glimpses through the microscope; when we look on the glories of the heavens, now scanned afar through the telescope; when, the blight of sin removed, the whole earth shall appear in "the beauty of the Lord our God," what a field will be open to our

study! There the student of science may read the records of creation and discern no reminders of the law of evil. He may listen to the music of nature's voices and detect no note of wailing or undertone of sorrow. In all created things he may trace one handwriting—in the vast universe behold "God's name writ large," and not in earth or sea or sky one sign of ill remaining.

Let your imagination picture the home of the saved, and remember that it will be more glorious than your brightest imagination can portray. In the varied gifts of God in nature we see but the faintest gleaming of His glory.

Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 364.

### **Wednesday, April 28: A Great and Mighty Nation . . .**

Often the Israelites seemed unable or unwilling to understand God's purpose for the heathen. Yet it was this very purpose that had made them a separate people and had established them as an independent nation among the nations of the earth. Abraham, their father, to whom the covenant promise was first given, had been called to go forth from his kindred, to the regions beyond, that he might be a light bearer to the heathen. Although the promise to him included a posterity as numerous as the sand by the sea, yet it was for no selfish purpose that he was to become the founder of a great nation in the land of Canaan. God's covenant with him embraced all the nations of earth. "I will bless thee," Jehovah declared, "and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:2, 3.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 367.

God gave to Abraham a view of [an] immortal inheritance, and with this hope he was content. "By faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Hebrews 11:9, 10.

Of the posterity of Abraham it is written, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Verse 13. We must dwell as pilgrims and strangers here if we would gain "a better country, that is, an heavenly." Verse 16. Those who are children of Abraham will be seeking the city which he looked for, "whose builder and maker is God."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 170.

Christians will be in this world “an holy nation, a peculiar people,” showing forth the praises of Him who hath called them “out of darkness into His marvelous light.” This light is not to grow dim, but to shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Christ’s standard-bearers are never to be off duty. They have a vigilant foe who is waiting and watching to take the fort. Some of Christ’s professed watchmen have invited the enemy into their stronghold, have mingled with them, and in their efforts to please have broken down the distinction between the children of God and the children of Satan. . . .

The thrilling truth that has been sounding in our ears for many years, “The Lord is at hand; be ye also ready,” is no less the truth today than when we first heard the message.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 14.

#### **Thursday, April 29: “Make Your Name Great”**

The Lord selected Abraham to carry out his will. He was directed to leave his idolatrous nation, and separate from his kindred. The Lord had revealed himself to Abraham in his youth, and gave him understanding, and preserved him from idolatry. He designed to make him an example of faith, and true devotion, for his people who should afterward live upon the earth. His character was marked for integrity, generosity and hospitality. He commanded respect as a mighty prince among the people. His reverence and love for God, and his strict obedience in performing his will, gained for him the respect of his servants and neighbors. His godly example, and righteous course, united with his faithful instructions to his servants, and all his household, led them to fear, love, and reverence the God of Abraham.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 98.

The Jews claimed to have descended from Abraham, but by failing to do the works of Abraham, they proved that they were not true children of his. Only those who are spiritually in harmony with him are reckoned as true descent. . . .

There are in our world today many wounded, cheerless hearts who need relief. The Lord has agencies for brightening the lives of these disconsolate ones. We may each put our talents out to usury by lifting the clouds, and letting in the sunlight of hope and faith in Him who “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).—*This Day With God*, p. 183.

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. . . .

We see by experience that in our own human strength, resolutions and purposes are of no avail. Must we, then, give up our determined efforts? No; although our experience testifies that we cannot possibly do this work ourselves, help has been laid upon One who is mighty to do it for us. But the only way we can secure the help of God is to put ourselves wholly in His hands, and trust Him to work for us. As we lay hold of Him by faith, He does the work. The believer can only trust. As God works, we can work, trusting in Him and doing His will.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1080.

### **Friday, April 30: For Further Reading**

*God's Amazing Grace*, "Christ's Representative," p. 196;

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, "The Test of Faith," pp. 145–155.

# Abraham's Seed

**Sabbath Afternoon, May 1**

Through His people Israel, God designed to give to the world a knowledge of His will. His promises and threatenings, His instructions and reproofs, the wonderful manifestations of His power among them, in blessings for obedience, and judgment for transgression and apostasy,—all were designed for the education and development of religious principle among the people of God until the close of time. Therefore it is important that we acquaint ourselves with the history of the Hebrew host, and ponder with care the dealings of God with them.

The words which God spoke to Israel by His Son were spoken for us also in these last days. The same Jesus who, upon the mount, taught His disciples the far-reaching principles of the law of God, instructed ancient Israel from the cloudy pillar and from the tabernacle, by the mouth of Moses and Joshua. Religion in the days of Moses and Joshua was the same as religion today.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 994.

The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9.

I was shown many things concerning the people of God in connection with His work for these last days. I saw that many professed Sabbathkeepers will come short of everlasting life. They fail to take warning from the course pursued by the children of Israel and fall into some of their evil ways. If they continue in these sins they will fall like the Israelites and never enter the heavenly Canaan. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 533.

We are in constant danger of becoming self-sufficient, relying upon our own wisdom, and not making God our strength. Nothing disturbs Satan so much as our not being ignorant of his devices. If we feel our dangers, we shall feel the



need of prayer as did Nehemiah, and, like him, we shall obtain that sure defense that will give us security in peril. If we are careless and indifferent, we shall surely be overcome by Satan's devices. We must be vigilant.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1138.

### **Sunday, May 2: "Above All People . . ."**

Through the chosen nation, God had purposed to bring blessing to all mankind. "The vineyard of the Lord of hosts," the prophet declared, "is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant." Isaiah 5:7.

To this people were committed the oracles of God. They were hedged about by the precepts of His law, the everlasting principles of truth, justice, and purity. Obedience to these principles was to be their protection, for it would save them from destroying themselves by sinful practices. And as the tower in the vineyard, God placed in the midst of the land His holy temple. . . .

[It] was God's purpose that by the revelation of His character through Israel men should be drawn unto Him. To all the world the gospel invitation was to be given. Through the teaching of the sacrificial service, Christ was to be uplifted before the nations, and all who would look unto Him should live. All who, like Rahab the Canaanite and Ruth the Moabitess, turned from idolatry to the worship of the true God were to unite themselves with His chosen people. As the numbers of Israel increased, they were to enlarge their borders until their kingdom should embrace the world.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 17–19.

In all the dealings of God with His people there is, mingled with His love and mercy, the most striking evidence of His strict and impartial justice. This is exemplified in the history of the Hebrew people. God had bestowed great blessings upon Israel. His loving-kindness toward them is touchingly portrayed: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him." And yet what swift and severe retribution was visited upon them for their transgressions!

The infinite love of God has been manifested in the gift of His only-begotten Son to redeem a lost race. Christ came to the earth to reveal to men the character of His Father, and His life was filled with deeds of divine tenderness and compassion. And yet Christ Himself declares, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." Matthew 5:18.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 469.

He whose mind is enlightened by the opening of God's word to his

understanding will realize his responsibility to God and to the world, and he will feel that his talents must be developed in a way that will produce the very best results; for he is to “show forth the praises” of Him who has called him “out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9. While growing in grace and in a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, he will realize his own imperfections, he will feel his real ignorance, and he will seek constantly to preserve and put to the stretch his powers of mind, that he may become an intelligent Christian.— *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 37.

### **Monday, May 3: Land Deal**

Joseph outlived his father fifty-four years. . . . He witnessed the increase and prosperity of his people, and through all the years his faith in God’s restoration of Israel to the Land of Promise was unshaken.

When he saw that his end was near, he summoned his kinsmen about him. Honored as he had been in the land of the Pharaohs, Egypt was to him but the place of his exile; his last act was to signify that his lot was cast with Israel. His last words were, “God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which He sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” And he took a solemn oath of the children of Israel that they would carry up his bones with them to the land of Canaan. . . . And through the centuries of toil which followed, the coffin, a reminder of the dying words of Joseph, testified to Israel that they were only sojourners in Egypt, and bade them keep their hopes fixed upon the Land of Promise, for the time of deliverance would surely come.— *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 240.

[The] Israelites fixed their hopes upon worldly greatness. From the time of their entrance to the land of Canaan, they departed from the commandments of God, and followed the ways of the heathen. It was in vain that God sent them warning by His prophets. In vain they suffered the chastisement of heathen oppression. Every reformation was followed by deeper apostasy.

Had Israel been true to God, He could have accomplished His purpose through their honor and exaltation. If they had walked in the ways of obedience, He would have made them “high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor.” “All people of the earth,” said Moses, “shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee.” “The nations which shall hear all these statutes” shall say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” Deuteronomy 26:19; 28:10; Deuteronomy 4:6.— *The Desire of Ages*, p. 28.

Heaven may be attained by all who will comply with the conditions laid down in

the word of God. Our Redeemer was obedient unto death; He gave Himself an offering for sin. Ye are redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish.” . . . The precious blood of Jesus is the fountain prepared to cleanse the soul from the defilement of sin. When you determine to take Him as your friend, a new and enduring light will shine from the cross of Christ. A true sense of the sacrifice and intercession of the dear Saviour will break the heart that has become hardened in sin; and love, thankfulness, and humility will come into the soul. The surrender of the heart to Jesus subdues the rebel into a penitent, and then the language of the obedient soul is: “Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 625.

## **Tuesday, May 4: Israel and the Covenant**

The unfaithfulness of the church to Christ in permitting her confidence and affection to be turned from Him, and allowing the love of worldly things to occupy the soul, is likened to the violation of the marriage vow. The sin of Israel in departing from the Lord is presented under this figure; and the wonderful love of God which they thus despised is touchingly portrayed: “I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest Mine.” “And thou wast exceeding beautiful and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee. . . . But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown.” “As a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord;” “as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband!” Ezekiel 16:8, 13-15, 32; Jeremiah 3:20. — *The Great Controversy*, p. 381.

If we would come into possession of the heavenly inheritance, the glorious, eternal substance, we must be in covenant relation with God. . . . God’s people must be a peculiar, holy people, distinct in character and practice from the world, distinguished from all the religionists of the day. They must be patterns in personal piety and good works. There is higher, holier work for us to do than we have yet done. Christ has said, “My Kingdom is not of this world.” It has no principles that will meet the principles of the world. The Lord has set His church as a light in the world, to guide the world to heaven. It is to be a part of heaven on the earth, flashing divine light on the pathway of benighted souls.

You are a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. God’s people should now receive the light and diffuse it. They need not try to shine; if their hearts are enlightened by Christ, they cannot help shining. The brightness will appear; every true disciple will reveal Christ to the world as the sin-pardoning Saviour.—

*The Faith I Live By*, p. 304.

With untold love our God has loved us, and our love awakens toward Him as we comprehend something of the length and breadth and depth and height of this love that passeth knowledge. By the revelation of the attractive loveliness of Christ, by the knowledge of His love expressed to us while we were yet sinners, the stubborn heart is melted and subdued, and the sinner is transformed and becomes a child of heaven. God does not employ compulsory measures; love is the agent which He uses to expel sin from the heart. By it He changes pride into humility, and enmity and unbelief into love and faith.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 76.

### **Wednesday, May 5: The Remnant**

The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon His law. . . . [But] what are these, in contrast with the terrors of that day when the restraining Spirit of God shall be wholly withdrawn from the wicked, no longer to hold in check the outburst of human passion and satanic wrath! The world will then behold, as never before, the results of Satan's rule.

But in that day, as in the time of Jerusalem's destruction, God's people will be delivered, everyone that shall be found written among the living. Isaiah 4:3. Christ has declared that He will come the second time to gather His faithful ones to Himself: "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:30, 31.—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 36, 37.

In the courts above, Christ is pleading for His church—pleading for those for whom He has paid the redemption price of His blood. Centuries, ages, can never lessen the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice. Neither life nor death, height nor depth, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; not because we hold Him so firmly, but because He holds us so fast. If our salvation depended on our own efforts, we could not be saved; but it depends on the One who is behind all the promises. Our grasp on Him may seem feeble, but His love is that of an elder brother; so long as we maintain our union with Him, no one can pluck us out of His hand. . . .

O how privileged we are that we may come to Jesus just as we are and cast

ourselves upon His love! We have no hope but in Jesus. He alone can reach us with His hand to lift us up out of the depths of discouragement and hopelessness and place our feet upon the Rock. Although the human soul may cling to Jesus with all the desperate sense of his great need, Jesus will cling to the souls bought by His own blood with a firmer grasp than the sinner clings to Him.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 80.

Have faith in God. However stormy may be the times, looking unto Jesus who is the author and the finisher of your faith, you will be complete in Him. Abide in the old paths, whoever may turn back. Be rooted and grounded and built up in the most holy faith, a living epistle known and read of all men.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 212.

### **Thursday, May 6: Spiritual Israel**

The church is God's fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son. From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people.

Through centuries of persecution, conflict, and darkness, God has sustained His church. Not one cloud has fallen upon it that He has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork His work, that He has not foreseen. All has taken place as He predicted. He has not left His church forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and that which His Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell has been brought about. All His purposes will be fulfilled. His law is linked with His throne, and no power of evil can destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; and it will triumph over all opposition.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 11.

The purpose which God seeks to accomplish through His people today is the same that He desired to accomplish through Israel when He brought them forth out of Egypt. By beholding the goodness, the mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in the church, the world is to have a representation of His character. And when the law of God is thus exemplified in the life, even the world will recognize the superiority of those who love and fear and serve God above every other people on the earth. The Lord has His eye upon every one of

His people; He has His plans concerning each. It is His purpose that those who practice His holy precepts shall be a distinguished people. To the people of God today as well as to ancient Israel belong the words written by Moses through the Spirit of Inspiration: "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Deuteronomy 7:6.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 12.

[The] Israel of God today, the representatives of heaven that make up the true church of Christ, must be strong; for upon them devolves the task of finishing the work that has been committed to man, and of ushering in the day of final awards. Yet the same influences that prevailed against Israel in the time when Solomon reigned are to be met with still. The forces of the enemy of all righteousness are strongly entrenched; only by the power of God can the victory be gained.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 74.

### **Friday, May 7: For Further Reading**

*Faith and Works*, "What God Requires," p. 52;

*Prophets and Kings*, "The House of Israel," pp. 703–721.

# Covenant at Sinai

**Sabbath Afternoon, May 8**

Now mark the words of the Lord: "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians" (Exodus 3:7, 8).

The Lord is not regardless of His people, and He will punish and reprove everyone who oppresses them. He hears every groan; He listens to every prayer; He observes the movements of everyone; He approves or condemns every action. The Lord of heaven is represented as raising up the fallen. He is the Friend of all who love and fear Him, and He will punish everyone who dares to lead them astray from safe paths, putting them in positions of distress as they conscientiously endeavor to keep the way of the Lord and reach the abodes of the righteous.—*The Upward Look*, p. 364.

The Lord commanded Moses to go and speak unto Pharaoh, bidding him to allow Israel to leave Egypt. For four hundred years they had been in Egypt, and had been in slavery to the Egyptians. They had been corrupted by idolatry, and the time came when God called them forth from Egypt, in order that they might obey His laws and keep His Sabbath, which He had instituted in Eden. He spoke the ten commandments to them in awful grandeur from Mount Sinai, that they might understand the sacred and enduring character of the law, and build up the foundation of many generations, by teaching their children the binding claims of God's holy precepts.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 287.

Among [Christ's] hearers many were drawn to Him in faith, and to them He said, "if ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

These words offended the Pharisees. The nation's long subjection to a foreign yoke, they disregarded, and angrily exclaimed, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest Thou, Ye shall be made free?" Jesus looked upon these men, the slaves of malice, whose thoughts were bent upon revenge, and sadly answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." They were in the worst kind of bondage,—ruled by the spirit of evil.

Every soul that refuses to give himself to God is under the control of another

power. He is not his own. He may talk of freedom, but he is in the most abject slavery. He is not allowed to see the beauty of truth, for his mind is under the control of Satan. While he flatters himself that he is following the dictates of his own judgment, he obeys the will of the prince of darkness. Christ came to break the shackles of sin-slavery from the soul. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" sets us "free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:2.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 466.

### **Sunday, May 9: On Eagles' Wings**

Often had God revealed Himself . . . as one "full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." Psalm 86:15. "When Israel was a child," He testified, "then I loved him, and called My son out of Egypt." Hosea 11:1.

Tenderly had the Lord dealt with Israel in their deliverance from Egyptian bondage and in their journey to the Promised Land. "In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old. Isaiah 63:9.

"My presence shall go with thee," was the promise given during the journey through the wilderness. Exodus 33:14. This assurance was accompanied by a marvelous revelation of Jehovah's character, which enabled Moses to proclaim to all Israel the goodness of God, and to instruct them fully concerning the attributes of their invisible King. "The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Exodus 34:6, 7.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 311, 312.

Thy brother, sick in spirit, needs thee as thou thyself has needed a brother's love. He needs the experience of one who has been as weak as he, one who can sympathize with him and help him. The knowledge of our own weakness should help us to help another in his need. Never should we pass by one suffering soul without seeking to impart to him the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

It is fellowship with Christ, personal contact with a living Saviour, that enables the mind and heart and soul to triumph over the lower nature. Tell the wanderer of an almighty Hand that will hold him up, of an infinite humanity in Christ that pities him. It is not enough for him to believe in law and force, things that have no pity and never hear the call for help. He needs to clasp a hand that



is warm, to trust in a heart full of tenderness. Keep his mind stayed on the thought of a divine presence ever beside him, ever looking upon him with pitying love. Bid him think of a Father's heart that ever grieves over sin, of a Father's hand stretched out still, of a Father's voice saying, "Let him take hold of my strength, and make peace with me" (Isaiah 27:5).—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 295.

When the afflicted ones came to Christ, He beheld not only those who asked for help, but all who throughout the ages should come to Him in like need and with like faith. . . .

So with all the promises of God's word. In them He is speaking to us individually, speaking as directly as if we could listen to His voice. It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. They are leaves from that tree which is "for the healing of the nations." Revelation 22:2.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 122.

### **Monday, May 10: The Pattern of Salvation**

Remember that working with Christ as your personal Saviour is your strength and your victory. This is the part that all are to act. To those who do this comes the assurance: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." John 1:12. Christ declares: "Without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. And the humble, believing soul responds: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13.

Christ is the sympathetic, compassionate Redeemer. He has given His commission: "Go ye into all the world." Mark 1:15. All must hear the message of warning. A prize of richest value is held up before those who are running the Christian race. Those who run with patience will receive a crown of life that fadeth not away.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 39.

Christ is the sympathetic, compassionate Redeemer. In His sustaining power, men and women become strong to resist evil. As the convicted sinner looks at sin, it becomes to him exceeding sinful. He wonders that he did not come to Christ before. He sees that his faults must be overcome and that his appetites and passions must be subjected to God's will, that he must be a partaker of the divine nature, having overcome the corruption that is in the world through lust. Having repented of his transgression of God's law, he strives earnestly to overcome sin. He seeks to reveal the power of Christ's grace, and he is brought into personal touch with the Saviour. Constantly he keeps Christ before him. Praying, believing, receiving the blessings he needs, he comes nearer and nearer to God's standard for him.

New virtues are revealed in his character as he denies self and lifts the cross, following where Christ leads the way. He loves the Lord Jesus with his whole heart, and Christ becomes his wisdom, his righteousness, his sanctification, and his redemption.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 151.

Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that humanity might touch humanity; that He might live with humanity and bear all the trials and afflictions of man. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. In His humanity He understood all the temptations that will come to man. . . .

According to the law Christ Himself gave, the forfeited inheritance was ransomed by the nearest of kin. Jesus Christ laid off His royal robe, His kingly crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity, in order to become a substitute and surety for humanity, that dying in humanity He might by His death destroy him who had the power of death. He could not have done this as God, but by coming as man Christ could die. By death He overcame death. The death of Christ bore to the death him who had the power of death, and opened the gates of the tomb for all who receive Him as their personal Saviour.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 925.

## **Tuesday, May 11: The Sinai Covenant**

The Hebrew nation were in servitude for a great number of years. . . . But the Lord was not indifferent to their condition, He had not forgotten His oppressed people. The record says: “God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.” “The Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians.” . . .

Though they had lost in years of bondage the knowledge of the true God and of His holy law, yet God again revealed Himself to them. In terrible grandeur and awful majesty He proclaimed to them His holy precepts, and commanded them to obey His law. The Ten Commandments are a transcript of the divine character, and are as unchangeable as the eternal throne.—*The Southern Work*, pp. 41, 42.

Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of

your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 62.

Amid the perplexities that will press upon the soul, there is only One who can help us out of all our difficulties, and relieve all our disquietude. We are to cast all our care upon Jesus, and bear in mind that He is present, and is directing us to commune with Him. We are to keep our minds stayed upon God; and in our weakness, He will be our strength; in our ignorance, He will be our wisdom; in our frailty, He will be our enduring might.

We may be assured that we need not go into the heavens to bring Jesus down to us, neither into the deep to bring Him up; for He is at our right hand, and His eye is ever upon us. We should ever seek to realize that the Lord is very near us, to be our counselor and guide. —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 27.

### **Wednesday, May 12: God and Israel**

Paul learned that there was no power in the law to pardon the transgressor of law. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified" (Romans 3:20). . . .

The Lord saw our fallen condition; He saw our need of grace, and because He loved our souls, He has given us grace and peace. Grace means favor to one who is undeserving, to one who is lost. The fact that we are sinners, instead of shutting us away from the mercy and love of God, makes the exercise of His love to us a positive necessity in order that we may be saved. Christ says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16).—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 347.

The work of gaining salvation is one of copartnership, a joint operation. There is to be co-operation between God and the repentant sinner. This is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. Man is to make earnest efforts to overcome that which hinders him from attaining to perfection. But he is wholly dependent upon God for success. Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power it avails nothing. God works and man works. Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power; on the

other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness.

God wishes us to have the mastery over ourselves. But He cannot help us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the powers and faculties given to man. Of ourselves, we are not able to bring the purposes and desires and inclinations into harmony with the will of God; but if we are “willing to be made willing,” the Saviour will accomplish this for us, “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:5.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 482.

Justification by faith in Christ will be made manifest in transformation of character. This is the sign to the world of the truth of the doctrines we profess. The daily evidence that we are a living church is seen in the fact that we are practicing the Word. A living testimony goes forth to the world in consistent Christian action. . . .

This matter is so dimly comprehended that thousands upon thousands claiming to be sons of God are children of the wicked one, because they will depend on their own works. God always demanded good works, the law demands it, but because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus’ righteousness alone can avail. Christ is able to save to the uttermost because He ever liveth to make intercession for us.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1071.

#### **Thursday, May 13: Promises, Promises . . .**

While the law is holy, the Jews could not attain righteousness by their own efforts to keep the law. The disciples of Christ must obtain righteousness of a different character from that of the Pharisees, if they would enter the kingdom of heaven. God offered them, in His Son, the perfect righteousness of the law. If they would open their hearts fully to receive Christ, then the very life of God, His love, would dwell in them, transforming them into His own likeness; and thus through God’s free gift they would possess the righteousness which the law requires. But the Pharisees rejected Christ; “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness” (Romans 10:3), they would not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 54.

It is the sophistry of Satan that the death of Christ brought in grace to take the place of the law. The death of Jesus did not change or annul or lessen in the slightest degree the law of Ten Commandments. That precious grace offered to men through a Saviour’s blood establishes the law of God. Since the fall of man,

God's moral government and His grace are inseparable. They go hand in hand through all dispensations. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:10).

Jesus, our Substitute, consented to bear for man the penalty of the law transgressed. He clothed His divinity with humanity and thus became the Son of man, a Saviour and Redeemer. The very fact of the death of God's dear Son to redeem man shows the immutability of the divine law. How easily, from the transgressor's standpoint, could God have abolished His law, thus providing a way whereby men could be saved and Christ remain in heaven! The doctrine which teaches freedom, through grace, to break the law is a fatal delusion. Every transgressor of God's law is a sinner, and none can be sanctified while living in known sin.—*Faith and Works*, p. 30.

Whatever the character of your sin, confess it. If it is against God only, confess only to Him. If you have wronged or offended others, confess also to them, and the blessing of the Lord will rest upon you. In this way you die to self, and Christ is formed within. . . .

Those who acknowledge reproof and correction as from God, and are thus enabled to see and correct their errors, are learning precious lessons, even from their mistakes. Their apparent defeat is turned into victory. They stand, trusting not to their own strength, but to the strength of God. They have earnestness, zeal, and affection, united with humility and regulated by the precepts of God's Word. They walk not stumblingly, but safely, in a path where the light of heaven shines.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 239.

### **Friday, May 14: For Further Reading**

*Lift Him Up*, "Created in God's Image," p. 48;

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, "The Law Given to Israel," pp. 303–314.

# Covenant Law

**Sabbath Afternoon, May 15**

We are called to be holy, and we should carefully avoid giving the impression that it is of little consequence whether or not we retain the peculiar features of our faith. Upon us rests the solemn obligation of taking a more decided stand for truth and righteousness than we have taken in the past. The line of demarcation between those who keep the commandments of God and those who do not is to be revealed with unmistakable clearness. We are conscientiously to honor God, diligently using every means of keeping in covenant relation with Him, that we may receive His blessings—the blessings so essential for a people who are to be so severely tried. . . .

Putting our trust in God, we are to move steadily forward, doing His work with unselfishness, in humble dependence upon Him, committing ourselves and our present and future to His wise providence, holding the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end, remembering that it is not because of our worthiness that we receive the blessings of heaven, but because of the worthiness of Christ, and our acceptance, through faith in Him, of God's abounding grace.—*Our High Calling*, p. 344.

Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest. The Lord says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." Isaiah 26:3. Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master Worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory. And that character which expresses the glory—character—of Christ will be received into the Paradise of God. A renovated race shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331.

Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God, and "God is love." 1 John 4:16. It is conformity to the law of God, for "all Thy commandments are righteousness" (Psalm 119:172), and "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10). Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him.

Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is

righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat, . . . without money and without price." "Their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord," and, "This is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness." Isaiah 55:1; 54:17; Jeremiah 23:6.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 18.

## **Sunday, May 16: The Election of Israel**

The Lord gave special direction to Israel to keep themselves distinct from idolaters. They were not to intermarry with the heathen nor form any confederacy with them. . . .

"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers" (Deuteronomy 7:6-8).—*Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 121, 122.

It is impossible to enumerate the advantages the Lord prepared for the world in making the Jewish nation the repository of His rich treasures of knowledge. They were the subjects of His special favor. As a people who knew and worshiped the true God, they were to communicate the principles of His kingdom. They were instructed by the Lord. He withheld from them nothing favorable to the formation of characters which would make them fit representatives of His kingdom. Their feasts, the Passover, the Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, and the ceremonies attending these gatherings, were to proclaim the truths that God had entrusted to His people. At these gatherings the people were to show gladness and joy, expressing their thanksgiving for their privileges and the gracious treatment of their Lord. Thus they were to show to a world that knew not God that the Lord does not forsake those who trust in Him. . . .

The history of the children of Israel is written for our admonition and instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. Those who would stand firm in the faith in these last days, and finally gain an entrance into the heavenly Canaan, must listen to the words of warning spoken by Jesus Christ to the Israelites. These lessons were given to the church in the wilderness to be studied and heeded by God's people throughout their generations forever. The experience of the people of God in the wilderness will be the experience of His people in this age. Truth is a safeguard in all time to those who will hold fast the faith once delivered to the saints.—*The Upward Look*, p. 232.

It is through the sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth, that we become laborers together with God. God waits for the co-operation of His church. . . . The object of all this provision of heaven is before us,—the souls for whom Christ died,—and it depends upon us to lay hold of the promises God has given, and become laborers together with Him; for divine and human agencies must co-operate in this work.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 188.

### **Monday, May 17: Ties That Bind**

Jehovah revealed Himself, not alone in the awful majesty of the judge and lawgiver, but as the compassionate guardian of His people: “I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” He whom they had already known as their Guide and Deliverer, who had brought them forth from Egypt, making a way for them through the sea, and overthrowing Pharaoh and his hosts, who had thus shown Himself to be above all the gods of Egypt—He it was who now spoke His law.

The law was not spoken at this time exclusively for the benefit of the Hebrews. God honored them by making them the guardians and keepers of His law, but it was to be held as a sacred trust for the whole world. The precepts of the Decalogue are adapted to all mankind, and they were given for the instruction and government of all. Ten precepts, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, cover the duty of man to God and to his fellow man; and all based upon the great fundamental principle of love. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” Luke 10:27. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 305.

Let it be made plain that the way of God’s commandments is the way of life. God has established the laws of nature, but His laws are not arbitrary exactions. Every “Thou shalt not,” whether in physical or in moral law, implies a promise. If we obey it, blessing will attend our steps. God never forces us to do right, but He seeks to save us from the evil and lead us to the good.

Let attention be called to the laws that were taught to Israel. God gave them definite instruction in regard to their habits of life. He made known to them the laws relating to both physical and spiritual well-being; and on condition of obedience He assured them, “The Lord will take away from thee all sickness.” Deuteronomy 7:15. “Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day.” “For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.” Deuteronomy 32:46; Proverbs 4:22.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 114.

So ready, so eager is the Saviour’s heart to welcome us as members of the family of God, that in the very first words we are to use in approaching God, He



places the assurance of our divine relationship,—“Our Father.” . . .

We are bound to the Lord by the strongest ties, and the manifestation of our Father’s love should call forth the most filial affection and the most ardent gratitude. The laws of God have their foundation in the most immutable rectitude, and are so framed that they will promote the happiness of those who keep them.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 267.

## **Tuesday, May 18: Law Within the Covenant**

What said God to Abraham? “I know him,” said the heartsearching God, “that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment” (Genesis 18:19). Abraham would cultivate home religion, and the fear of the Lord would lead to integrity of life. He who blesses the habitation of the righteous says, “I know him that he will command.” There is no betraying of sacred trusts, no hesitating between right and wrong. The Holy One has given rules for the guidance of all—the standard of character from which none can swerve and be guiltless. God’s will is to be diligently and conscientiously studied, and it must be made paramount in all the affairs of life. The laws which every human agent is to obey flow from the heart of infinite love.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 216.

Moses, who understood the character and value of the law of God, assured the people that no other nation had such wise, righteous, and merciful rules as had been given to the Hebrews. “Behold,” he said, “I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” [Deuteronomy 4:5-6](#)

Moses called their attention to the “day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb.” And he challenged the Hebrew host: “What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” Today the challenge to Israel might be repeated. The laws which God gave His ancient people were wiser, better, and more humane than those of the most civilized nations of the earth. The laws of the nations bear marks of the infirmities and passions of the unrenewed heart; but God’s law bears the stamp of the divine.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 464, 465.

Divine grace never leads away from mercy and the love of God. It is the power

of Satan that does this. When Christ preached, His message was like a sharp, two-edged sword, piercing the consciences of men and revealing their inmost thoughts. The work that Christ did His faithful messengers will have to do. In simplicity, purity, and the strictest integrity they are to preach the Word. Those who labor in word or doctrine are to be faithful to their charge. They are to watch for souls as they that must give an account. Never are they to clothe a “Thus saith the Lord” with enticing words of man’s wisdom. Thus they destroy its living energy, making it weak and powerless, so that it fails to convict of sin. Every word spoken by the direction of the Holy Spirit will be full of the deepest solicitude for the salvation of souls.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 158.

### **Wednesday, May 19: The Stability of God’s Law**

Jehovah engraved His Ten Commandments on tables of stone, that all the inhabitants of earth might understand His eternal, unchangeable character. Those . . . who desire to advance in learning and proficiency need to lay hold of these wonderful revelations of God. But it is only as heart and mind are brought into harmony with God that they will understand the divine requirements.

None need concern themselves about those things which the Lord has not revealed to us. In these days, speculation will abound, but God declares, “The secret things belong unto the Lord.” Deuteronomy 29:29. The voice that spoke to Israel from Sinai is speaking in these last days to men and women, saying, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” Exodus 20:3. The law of God was written with His own finger on tables of stone, thus showing that it could never be changed or abrogated. It is to be preserved through the eternal ages, immutable as the principles of His government. Men have set their will against the will of God, but this cannot silence His words of wisdom and command, though they may set their speculative theories in opposition to the teachings of revelation, and exalt human wisdom above a plain “Thus saith the Lord.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 248.

Through Jesus, God’s mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God’s character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man’s redemption. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19.

The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God’s holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the

forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:26.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 762.

Behold the world today in open rebellion against God. . . .

Many do not hesitate to sneer at the word of God. Those who believe that word just as it reads are held up to ridicule. There is a growing contempt for law and order, directly traceable to a violation of the plain commands of Jehovah. Violence and crime are the result of turning aside from the path of obedience. Behold the wretchedness and misery of multitudes who worship at the shrine of idols and who seek in vain for happiness and peace.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 185.

**Thursday, May 20: If . . .**

There is divine grace for all who will accept it, yet there is something for us to do. There is a work for us to do to fit ourselves for the society of angels. We must be like Jesus, free from the defilement of sin. He was all that He requires us to be; He was a perfect pattern for childhood, for youth, for manhood. We must study the Pattern more closely. . . .

We have a work to do to fashion the character after the divine Model. All wrong habits must be given up. The impure must become pure in heart, the selfish man must put away his selfishness, the proud man must get rid of his pride, the self-sufficient man must overcome his self-confidence and realize that he is nothing without Christ.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 300.

God desires us to reach the standard of perfection made possible for us by the gift of Christ. He calls upon us to make our choice on the right side, to connect with heavenly agencies, to adopt principles that will restore in us the divine image. In His written word and in the great book of nature He has revealed the principles of life. It is our work to obtain a knowledge of these principles, and by obedience to co-operate with Him in restoring health to the body as well as to the soul.

Men need to learn that the blessings of obedience, in their fullness, can be theirs only as they receive the grace of Christ. It is His grace that gives man power to obey the laws of God. It is this that enables him to break the bondage of evil habit. This is the only power that can make him and keep him steadfast in

the right path. —*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 114, 115.

The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been—just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents—perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any condition short of this, then the happiness of the whole universe would be imperiled. The way would be open for sin, with all its train of woe and misery, to be immortalized.

Christ does not lessen the claims of the law. In unmistakable language He presents obedience to it as the condition of eternal life—the same condition that was required of Adam before his fall. The requirement under the covenant of grace is just as broad as the requirement made in Eden—harmony with God's law, which is holy, just, and good.

The standard of character presented in the Old Testament is the same that is presented in the New Testament. This standard is not one to which we cannot attain. In every command or injunction that God gives there is a promise, the most positive, underlying the command. God has made provision that we may become like unto Him, and He will accomplish this for all who do not interpose a perverse will and thus frustrate His grace.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 134.

#### **Friday, May 21: For Further Reading**

*The Faith I Live By*, "Faithful and True," p. 42;

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, "The Law and the Covenants," pp. 363–373.

# Covenant Sign

**Sabbath Afternoon, May 22**

God created the world in six days and rested upon the seventh. He sanctified and blessed the seventh day and made it His sacred memorial. "Wherefore," He declares, "the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant." Exodus 31:16. Those who do this, keeping all of God's commandments, may claim the promises contained in Isaiah 58:11-14. The instruction given in this chapter is full and decided. Those who refrain from labor on the Sabbath may claim divine comfort and consolation. . . .

Man is not to do his own pleasure on God's holy day. He has six days in which to work at secular business, but God claims the seventh as His own. "In it," He says, "thou shalt not do any work." Exodus 20:10. The servant of God will call sacred that which the Lord calls sacred. Thus he will show that he has chosen the Lord as his leader. The Sabbath was made in Eden, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. God has placed it in our charge. Let us keep it pure and holy.—*Medical Ministry*, p. 215.

Great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath, and God desires that the Sabbath day shall be to us a day of joy. There was joy at the institution of the Sabbath. God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All things that He had made He pronounced "very good." Genesis 1:31. Heaven and earth were filled with rejoicing. . . . Though sin has entered the world to mar His perfect work, God still gives to us the Sabbath as a witness that One omnipotent, infinite in goodness and mercy, created all things. Our heavenly Father desires through the observance of the Sabbath to preserve among men a knowledge of Himself. He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that through knowing Him we may have life and peace.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 349.

The true Sabbath is to be exalted to its rightful position as God's rest day. In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah is outlined the work which God's people are to do. They are to magnify the law and make it honorable, to build up the old waste places, and to raise up the foundations of many generations. To those who do this work God says: "Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight

thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 351. [Isaiah 58:12-14](#)

## **Sunday, May 23: Origins**

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, the Sabbath was given to the world, that man might ever remember that in six days God created the world. He rested upon the seventh day, blessing it as the day of His rest, and gave it to the beings He had created, that they might remember Him as the true and living God. By His mighty power, notwithstanding the opposition of Pharaoh, God delivered His people from Egypt, that they might keep the law which had been given in Eden. He brought them to Sinai to hear the proclamation of this law.

By proclaiming the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel with His own voice, God demonstrated their importance. In awful grandeur He made known His majesty and authority as Ruler of the world. This He did to impress the people with the sacredness of His law and the importance of obeying it. The power and glory with which the law was given reveal its importance. It is the faith once delivered to the saints by Christ our Redeemer speaking from Sinai. — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 197, 198.

We have the positive word of God in regard to the Sabbath.

Is it possible that so much importance can be clustered about those who observe the Sabbath, and yet no one can tell when the Sabbath comes? Then where is the people who bear the badge or sign of God? What is the sign? The seventh-day Sabbath, which the Lord blessed and sanctified, and pronounced holy, with great penalties for its violation.

The seventh-day Sabbath is in no uncertainty. It is God’s memorial of his work of creation. It is set up as a heaven-given memorial, to be observed as a sign of obedience. God wrote the whole law with his finger on two tables of stone. — *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 318.

God’s holy rest day was made for man, and acts of mercy are in perfect harmony with its intent. God does not desire His creatures to suffer an hour’s pain that may be relieved upon the Sabbath or any other day. . . .

Heaven’s work never ceases, and men should never rest from doing good. The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular labor on the rest day of the Lord; the toil that gains a livelihood must

cease; no labor for worldly pleasure or profit is lawful upon that day; but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds. The work of Christ in healing the sick was in perfect accord with the law. It honored the Sabbath.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207.

### **Monday, May 24: Sabbath Before Sinai**

The Sabbath was embodied in the law given from Sinai; but it was not then first made known as a day of rest. The people of Israel had a knowledge of it before they came to Sinai. On the way thither the Sabbath was kept. When some profaned it, the Lord reproved them, saying, “How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws?” Exodus 16:28.

The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. It had been made known to man in Eden, and, like the other precepts of the Decalogue, it is of imperishable obligation. Of that law of which the fourth commandment forms a part, Christ declares, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law.” So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator’s power. And when Eden shall bloom on earth again, God’s holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun. “From one Sabbath to another” the inhabitants of the glorified new earth shall go up “to worship before Me, saith the Lord.” Matthew 5:18; Isaiah 66:23. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 283.

While preparation for the Sabbath is to be made all through the week, Friday is to be the special preparation day. Through Moses the Lord said to the children of Israel: “Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.” “And the people went about, and gathered it [the manna], and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it.” Exodus 16:23; Numbers 11:8. There was something to be done in preparing the heaven-sent bread for the children of Israel. The Lord told them that this work must be done on Friday, the preparation day. This was a test to them. God desired to see whether or not they would keep the Sabbath holy.

This direction from the lips of Jehovah is for our instruction. The Bible is a perfect guide, and if its pages are prayerfully studied by hearts willing to understand, none need err upon this question.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 354, 355.

Death entered the world because of transgression. But Christ gave His life that man should have another trial. He did not die on the cross to abolish the law of God, but to secure for man a second probation. He did not die to make sin an immortal attribute; He died to secure the right to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. He suffered the full penalty of a broken law for the whole world. This He did, not that men might continue in transgression, but that they might return to their loyalty and keep God's commandments and His law as the apple of their eye.—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 134.

## **Tuesday, May 25: Covenant Sign**

The fourth commandment alone of all the ten contains the seal of the great Lawgiver, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Those who obey this commandment take upon themselves His name, and all the blessings it involves are theirs. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put My Name upon the children of Israel; And I will bless them." Numbers 6:22-27.

Through Moses was given also the promise: "The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto Himself, as He hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord." Deuteronomy 28:9, 10.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 350, 351.

Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, and when we yield to His hand we shall steadily grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. We shall make progress until we reach the full stature of men and women in Christ. Faith works by love, and purifies the soul, expelling the love of sin that leads to rebellion against, and transgression of, the law of God. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit the character is transformed and the mind and will of the human agent are brought into perfect conformity to the divine will, and this is conformity to the divine standard of righteousness. To those who are thus transformed Christ will say, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).—*That I May Know Him*, p. 162.

We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from Friday noon until the beginning of the



Sabbath. Give them time for preparation, that they may welcome the Lord's day with quietness of mind. By such a course you will suffer no loss even in temporal things. . . .

Before the Sabbath begins, the mind as well as the body should be withdrawn from worldly business. God has set His Sabbath at the end of the six working days, that men may stop and consider what they have gained during the week in preparation for the pure kingdom which admits no transgressor. We should each Sabbath reckon with our souls to see whether the week that has ended has brought spiritual gain or loss.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 356.

### **Wednesday, May 26: Sign of Sanctification**

By the observance of the Sabbath the children of Israel were to be distinguished from all other nations. "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep," Christ said, "for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Exodus 31:13. . . .

The Sabbath is a sign of the relationship existing between God and His people, a sign that they are His obedient subjects, that they keep holy His law. The observance of the Sabbath is the means ordained by God of preserving a knowledge of Himself and of distinguishing between His loyal subjects and the transgressors of His law. This is the faith once delivered to the saints, who stand in moral power before the world, firmly maintaining this faith.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 198.

The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience.

To us as to Israel the Sabbath is given "for a perpetual covenant." To those who reverence His holy day the Sabbath is a sign that God recognizes them as His chosen people. It is a pledge that He will fulfill to them His covenant. Every soul who accepts the sign of God's government places himself under the divine, everlasting covenant. He fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 350.

Because the Sabbath was made for man, it is the Lord's day. It belongs to Christ.

For “all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” John 1:3. Since He made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. It declares that He who created all things in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things hold together, is the head of the church, and that by His power we are reconciled to God. For, speaking of Israel, He said, “I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them,” —make them holy. Ezekiel 20:12. Then the Sabbath is a sign of Christ’s power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power, the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become a part of the Israel of God. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 288.

### **Thursday, May 27: Remembering the Sabbath**

At the very beginning of the fourth precept, God said, “Remember,” knowing that man, in the multitude of his cares and perplexities, would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirements of the law or, in the press of worldly business, would forget its sacred importance. “Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work,” the usual business of life, for worldly profit or pleasure. These words are very explicit; there can be no mistake. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 249.

All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment. We are not merely to observe the Sabbath as a legal matter. We are to understand its spiritual bearing upon all the transactions of life. All who regard the Sabbath as a sign between them and God, showing that He is the God who sanctifies them, will represent the principles of His government. They will bring into daily practice the laws of His kingdom. Daily it will be their prayer that the sanctification of the Sabbath may rest upon them. Every day they will have the companionship of Christ and will exemplify the perfection of His character. Every day their light will shine forth to others in good works. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 353.

In the name of the Lord I advise all his people to have trust in God and not begin now to prepare to find an easy position for any emergency in the future, but to let God prepare for the emergency.

When the Christian is looking forward to duties and severe trials that he anticipates are to be brought upon him, because of his Christian profession of faith, it is human nature to contemplate the consequences, and shrink from the prospects, and this will be decidedly so as we near the close of this earth’s history. We may be encouraged by the truthfulness of God’s word, that Christ

never failed his children as their safe Leader in the hour of their trial; for we have the truthful record of those who have been under the oppressive powers of Satan, that his grace is according to their day. God is faithful who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able.

There may be large mountains of difficulties in regard to how to meet the claims of God and not stand in defiance of the laws of the land. He [the believer] must not be making ample provisions for himself to shield himself from trial, for he is only God's instrument and he is to go forward in singleness of purpose with his mind and soul garrisoned day by day, that he will not sacrifice one principle of his integrity, but he will make no boasts, issue no threats, or tell what he will or will not do. For he does not know what he will do until tested.—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 398.

### **Friday, May 28: For Further Reading**

*Early Writings*, "The Mystery of Iniquity," pp. 215–217;

*Testimonies for the Church*, "The Observance of the Sabbath," vol. 6, pp. 349–351.

# The New Covenant

**Sabbath Afternoon, May 29**

Love is the principle that underlies God's government in heaven and on earth, and this love must be interwoven in the life of the Christian. The love of Christ is not a fitful love; it is deep, and broad, and full. Its possessor will not say, "I will love only those who love me." The heart that is influenced by this holy principle will be carried above everything of a selfish nature.

The religion of Jesus Christ is not merely to prepare us for the future immortal life; it is to enable us to live the Christ life here on earth. Jesus is not only our pattern, He is also our friend and our guide, and by taking hold of His strong arm and partaking of His Spirit, we may walk "even as he walked." —*That I May Know Him*, p. 298.

[If] the Abrahamic covenant contained the promise of redemption, why was another covenant formed at Sinai? In their bondage the people had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them His power and His mercy, that they might be led to love and trust Him. He brought them down to the Red Sea—where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible—that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then He wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God and with confidence in His power to help them. He had bound them to Himself as their deliverer from temporal bondage.

But there was a still greater truth to be impressed upon their minds. Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 371.

The apostle Paul clearly presents the relation between faith and the law under the new covenant. He says: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh"—it could not justify man, because in his sinful nature he could not keep the law—"God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Romans 5:1; 3:31; 8:3, 4.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 373.

### **Sunday, May 30: “Behold, the Days Are Coming . . .”**

God’s work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development and different manifestations of His power, to meet the wants of men in the different ages. Beginning with the first gospel promise, and coming down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, and even to the present time, there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption. The Saviour typified in the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law is the very same that is revealed in the gospel. The clouds that enveloped His divine form have rolled back; the mists and shades have disappeared; and Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, stands revealed. He who proclaimed the law from Sinai, and delivered to Moses the precepts of the ritual law, is the same that spoke the Sermon on the Mount.

The great principles of love to God, which He set forth as the foundation of the law and the prophets, are only a reiteration of what He had spoken through Moses to the Hebrew people: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” Deuteronomy 6:4, 5. “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Leviticus 19:18. The teacher is the same in both dispensations. God’s claims are the same. The principles of His government are the same. For all proceed from Him “with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” James 1:17.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 373.

Where there is not only a belief in God’s Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God. And the heart that in its unrenewed state is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, now delights in its holy precepts, exclaiming with the psalmist, “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day” (Psalm 119:97). And the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:1).—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 137.

The Jews had misinterpreted God’s promise of eternal favor to Israel. . . . The Jews regarded their natural descent from Abraham as giving them a claim to [His favor]. But they overlooked the conditions which God had specified. Before giving the promise, He had said, “I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. . . . For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31:33, 34.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 106.

## Monday, May 31: Heart Work

For 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. Hebrews 8:10.

The blessings of the new covenant are grounded purely on mercy in forgiving unrighteousness and sins. The Lord specifies, I will do thus and thus unto all who turn to Me, forsaking the evil and choosing the good. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 8:12). All who humble their hearts, confessing their sins, will find mercy and grace and assurance. — *That I May Know Him*, p. 299.

The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth "the fruits of the Spirit." Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts. Having the Spirit of Christ, we shall walk even as He walked. Through the prophet He declared of Himself, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. And when among men He said, "The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him." John 8:29. — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 372.

To a people in whose hearts His law is written, the favor of God is assured. They are one with Him. But the Jews had separated themselves from God. Because of their sins they were suffering under His judgments. This was the cause of their bondage to a heathen nation. Their minds were darkened by transgression, and because in times past the Lord had shown them so great favor, they excused their sins. They flattered themselves that they were better than other men, and entitled to His blessings.

These things "are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Corinthians 10:11. How often we misinterpret God's blessings, and flatter ourselves that we are favored on account of some goodness in us! God cannot do for us that which He longs to do. His gifts are used to increase our self-satisfaction, and to harden our hearts in unbelief and sin. — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 106.

The danger that lies before those living in these last days, is the absence of pure religion, the absence of heart holiness. The converting power of God has not wrought in transforming their characters. They profess to believe sacred truths

as did the Jewish nation; but in their failing to practice the truth, they are ignorant both of the Scriptures and the power of God. The power and influence of God's law are around about, but not within the soul, renewing it in true holiness.—*This Day With God*, p. 146.

## **Tuesday, June 1: Old and New Covenants**

Though [the] covenant was made with Adam and renewed to Abraham, it could not be ratified until the death of Christ. It had existed by the promise of God since the first intimation of redemption had been given; it had been accepted by faith; yet when ratified by Christ, it is called a new covenant. The law of God was the basis of this covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God's law.

Another compact—called in Scripture the “old” covenant—was formed between God and Israel at Sinai, and was then ratified by the blood of a sacrifice. The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the “second,” or “new,” covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant. That the new covenant was valid in the days of Abraham is evident from the fact that it was then confirmed both by the promise and by the oath of God—the “two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie.” Hebrews 6:18.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 370, 371.

The Saviour had not come to set aside what patriarchs and prophets had spoken; for He Himself had spoken through these representative men. All the truths of God's word came from Him. But these priceless gems had been placed in false settings. Their precious light had been made to minister to error. God desired them to be removed from their settings of error and replaced in the framework of truth. This work only a divine hand could accomplish. By its connection with error, the truth had been serving the cause of the enemy of God and man. Christ had come to place it where it would glorify God, and work the salvation of humanity.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 287.

Paul likens the remnant in Israel to a noble olive tree, some of whose branches have been broken off. He compares the Gentiles to branches from a wild olive tree, grafted into the parent stock. . . .

Through unbelief and the rejection of Heaven's purpose for her, Israel as a nation had lost her connection with God. But the branches that had been separated from the parent stock God was able to reunite with the true stock of Israel—the remnant who had remained true to the God of their fathers. “They

also," the apostle declares of these broken branches, "if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again." "If thou," he writes to the Gentiles, "wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 377.

### **Wednesday, June 2: "A Better Covenant"**

To believe in Christ merely as the Saviour of the world can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere assent to the truth of the gospel. True faith is that which receives Christ as a personal Saviour. God gave His only-begotten Son, that I, by believing in Him, "should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. When I come to Christ, according to His word, I am to believe that I receive His saving grace. The life that I now live, I am to "live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20.

Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which, through the grace of Christ, the soul becomes a conquering power. —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 62.

Let us be hopeful and courageous. . . . [God] knows our every necessity. To the omnipotence of the King of kings our covenant-keeping God unites the gentleness and care of the tender shepherd. His power is absolute, and it is the pledge of the sure fulfillment of His promises to all who trust in Him. He has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be sustained. His love is as far above all other love as the heavens are above the earth. He watches over His children with a love that is measureless and everlasting.

In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, have faith in God. He is working out His will, doing all things well in behalf of His people. The strength of those who love and serve Him will be renewed day by day.

He is able and willing to bestow upon His servants all the help they need. He will give them the wisdom which their varied necessities demand. —*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 481, 482.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and



gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” . .

In partaking with His disciples of the bread and wine, Christ pledged Himself to them as their Redeemer. He committed to them the new covenant, by which all who receive Him become children of God, and joint heirs with Christ. By this covenant every blessing that heaven could bestow for this life and the life to come was theirs. This covenant deed was to be ratified with the blood of Christ. And the administration of the Sacrament was to keep before the disciples the infinite sacrifice made for each of them individually as a part of the great whole of fallen humanity.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 653, 656.

### **Thursday, June 3: The New Covenant Priest**

In His teachings, Christ showed how far-reaching are the principles of the law spoken from Sinai. He made a living application of that law whose principles remain forever the great standard of righteousness—the standard by which all shall be judged in that great day when the judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened. He came to fulfill all righteousness, and, as the head of humanity, to show man that he can do the same work, meeting every specification of the requirements of God. Through the measure of His grace furnished to the human agent, not one need miss heaven. Perfection of character is attainable by everyone who strives for it. This is made the very foundation of the new covenant of the gospel. The law of Jehovah is the tree; the gospel is the fragrant blossoms and fruit which it bears.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 211.

Christ Himself was the originator of the Jewish system of worship, in which, by types and symbols, were shadowed forth spiritual and heavenly things. Many forgot the true significance of these offerings; and the great truth that through Christ alone there is forgiveness of sin, was lost to them. The multiplying of sacrificial offerings, the blood of bulls and goats, could not take away sin.

A lesson was embodied in every sacrifice, impressed in every ceremony, solemnly preached by the priest in his holy office, and inculcated by God Himself—that through the blood of Christ alone is there forgiveness of sins. How little we as a people feel the force of this great truth! How seldom, by living, acting faith, do we bring into our lives this great truth, that there is forgiveness for the least sin, forgiveness for the greatest sin.

The atonement of Christ sealed forever the everlasting covenant of grace. It was

the fulfilling of every condition upon which God suspended the free communication of grace to the human family. Every barrier was then broken down which intercepted the freest exercise of grace, mercy, peace, and love to the most guilty of Adam's race.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 933.

As Jesus died on Calvary, He cried, "It is finished," and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom. This was to show that the services of the earthly sanctuary were forever finished, and that God would no more meet with the priests in their earthly temple, to accept their sacrifices. The blood of Jesus was then shed, which was to be offered by Himself in the heavenly sanctuary. —*Early Writings*, p. 253.

The infinite sufficiency of Christ is demonstrated by His bearing the sins of the whole world. He occupies the double position of offerer and of offering, of priest and of victim. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. "The prince of this world cometh," He declares, "and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30). He was a Lamb without blemish and without spot.—Letter 192, June 8, 1906.

#### **Friday, June 4: For Further Reading**

*My Life Today*, "Reverence for God's Name," p. 282;

*This Day With God*, "Heart Holiness," p. 146.

# New Covenant Sanctuary

**Sabbath Afternoon, June 5**

The question, What is the sanctuary? is clearly answered in the Scriptures. The term “sanctuary,” as used in the Bible, refers, first, to the tabernacle built by Moses, as a pattern of heavenly things; and, secondly, to the “true tabernacle” in heaven, to which the earthly sanctuary pointed. At the death of Christ the typical service ended. The “true tabernacle” in heaven is the sanctuary of the new covenant. And as the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 is fulfilled in this dispensation, the sanctuary to which it refers must be the sanctuary of the new covenant. At the termination of the 2300 days, in 1844, there had been no sanctuary on earth for many centuries. Thus the prophecy, “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” unquestionably points to the sanctuary in heaven.— *The Great Controversy*, p. 417.

Directly before the ark, but separated by the curtain, was the golden altar of incense. The fire upon this altar was kindled by the Lord Himself, and was sacredly cherished by feeding it with holy incense, which filled the sanctuary with its fragrant cloud day and night. Its fragrance extended for miles around the tabernacle. When the priest offered the incense before the Lord he looked to the mercy seat. Although he could not see it he knew it was there, and as the incense arose like a cloud, the glory of the Lord descended upon the mercy seat and filled the most holy place and was visible in the holy place, and the glory often so filled both apartments that the priest was unable to officiate and was obliged to stand at the door of the tabernacle.

The priest in the holy place, directing his prayer by faith to the mercy seat, which he could not see, represents the people of God directing their prayers to Christ before the mercy seat in the heavenly sanctuary. They cannot behold their Mediator with the natural eye, but with the eye of faith they see Christ before the mercy seat and direct their prayers to Him, and with assurance claim the benefits of His mediation.— *The Story of Redemption*, pp. 154, 155.

Taking humanity upon Him, Christ came to be one with humanity and at the same time to reveal our heavenly Father to sinful human beings. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of men, and yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was a stranger and sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin.

Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man.

“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth.” — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 286. ([see John 1:14](#))

## **Sunday, June 6: Relationships**

God commanded Moses for Israel, “Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8), and He abode in the sanctuary, in the midst of His people. Through all their weary wandering in the desert, the symbol of His presence was with them. So Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment. He pitched His tent by the side of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us, and make us familiar with His divine character and life. “The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.” John 1:14, R. V., margin.

Since Jesus came to dwell with us, we know that God is acquainted with our trials, and sympathizes with our griefs. Every son and daughter of Adam may understand that our Creator is the friend of sinners. For in every doctrine of grace, every promise of joy, every deed of love, every divine attraction presented in the Saviour’s life on earth, we see “God with us.” — *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 23, 24.

Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the tabernacle was a symbol—that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all, the priests robed in spotless white, and in the deep mystery of the inner place, above the mercy seat, between the figures of the bowed, worshiping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul. — *The Faith I Live By*, p. 192.

God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. . . . It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men. . . .

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. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 10, 13.

### **Monday, June 7: Sin, Sacrifice, and Acceptance**

God is approached through Jesus Christ, the Mediator, the only way through which He forgives sins. God cannot forgive sins at the expense of His justice, His holiness, and His truth. But He does forgive sins and that fully. There are no sins He will not forgive in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the sinner's only hope, and if he rests here in sincere faith, he is sure of pardon and that full and free. . . .

These lessons were taught to the chosen people of God thousands of years ago, and repeated in various symbols and figures, that the work of truth might be riveted in every heart, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. The great lesson embodied in the sacrifice of every bleeding victim, impressed in every ceremony, inculcated by God Himself, was that through the blood of Christ alone is forgiveness of sins. . . .

Justice demanded the sufferings of man; but Christ rendered the sufferings of a God. He needed no atonement of suffering for Himself; all His sufferings were for us; all His merits and holiness were open to fallen man, presented as a gift.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 912, 913.

At every Passover and Feast of Tabernacles, thousands of animals were slain, and their blood was caught by the priests and poured upon the altar. The Jews had become familiar with the offering of blood, and had almost lost sight of the fact that it was sin which made necessary all this shedding of the blood of beasts. They did not discern that it prefigured the blood of God's dear Son, which was to be shed for the life of the world, and that by the offering of sacrifices men were to be directed to a crucified Redeemer.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 589.

Paul showed how closely God had linked the sacrificial service with the prophecies relating to the One who was to be "brought as a lamb to the slaughter." The Messiah was to give His life as "an offering for sin." Looking

down through the centuries to the scenes of the Saviour's atonement, the prophet Isaiah had testified that the Lamb of God "poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isaiah 53:7, 10, 12.

The Saviour of prophecy was to come, not as a temporal king, to deliver the Jewish nation from earthly oppressors, but as a man among men, to live a life of poverty and humility, and at last to be despised, rejected, and slain. The Saviour foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures was to offer Himself as a sacrifice in behalf of the fallen race, thus fulfilling every requirement of the broken law. In Him the sacrificial types were to meet their antitype, and His death on the cross was to lend significance to the entire Jewish economy. — *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 227.

## **Tuesday, June 8: The Substitution**

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal." Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. . . .

This was a voluntary sacrifice. Jesus might have remained at the Father's side. He might have retained the glory of heaven, and the homage of the angels. But He chose to give back the scepter into the Father's hands, and to step down from the throne of the universe, that He might bring light to the benighted, and life to the perishing. — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

Jesus looked upon the innocent victims of sacrifice, and saw how the Jews had made these great convocations scenes of bloodshed and cruelty. In place of humble repentance of sin, they had multiplied the sacrifice of beasts, as if God could be honored by a heartless service. The priests and rulers had hardened their hearts through selfishness and avarice. The very symbols pointing to the Lamb of God they had made a means of getting gain. Thus in the eyes of the people the sacredness of the sacrificial service had been in a great measure destroyed. The indignation of Jesus was stirred; He knew that His blood, so soon to be shed for the sins of the world, would be as little appreciated by the priests and elders as was the blood of beasts which they kept incessantly flowing. — *The*

*Desire of Ages*, p. 590.

By giving His life for the life of the world, Christ bridged the gulf that sin had made, joining this sin-cursed earth to the universe of heaven as a province. God chose this world to be the theater of His mighty works of grace. While the sentence of condemnation was suspended over it because of the rebellion of its inhabitants, while the clouds of wrath were accumulating because of the transgression of the law of God, a mysterious voice was heard in heaven, “Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O God” (Psalm 40:7, 8). Our substitute and surety came from heaven declaring that He had brought with Him the vast and inestimable donation of eternal life. Pardon is offered to all who will return their allegiance to the law of God. . . .

Jesus is now sending His message to a fallen world. He delights to take apparently hopeless material, those through whom Satan has worked, and make them the subjects of His grace. He rejoices to deliver them from the wrath which is to fall upon the disobedient.—*This Day With God*, p. 84.

### **Wednesday, June 9: The New Covenant High Priest**

Christ is our Mediator and officiating High Priest in the presence of the Father. He was shown to John as a Lamb that had been slain, as in the very act of pouring out His blood in the sinner’s behalf. When the law of God is set before the sinner, showing him the depth of his sins, he should then be pointed to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. He should be taught repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus will the labor of Christ’s representative be in harmony with His work in the heavenly sanctuary.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 395.

Christ took upon Himself humanity, and laid down his life a sacrifice, that man, by becoming a partaker of the divine nature, might have eternal life. Not only was Christ the Sacrifice but he was also the Priest who offered the sacrifice. “The bread that I will give,” said He, “is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John 6:51). He was innocent of all guilt. He gave Himself in exchange for the people who had sold themselves to Satan by transgression of God’s law—his life for the life of the human family, who thereby became his purchased possession.

“Therefore doth my Father love me,” said Christ, “because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:17, 18).—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 141.

As in the typical service the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes and officiated in the white linen dress of an ordinary priest; so Christ laid aside His royal robes and garbed Himself with humanity and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. As the high priest, after performing his service in the holy of holies, came forth to the waiting congregation in his pontifical robes; so Christ will come the second time, clothed in garments of whitest white, "so as no fuller on earth can white them." Mark 9:3. He will come in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father, and all the angelic host will escort Him on His way.

Thus will be fulfilled Christ's promise to His disciples, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:3. Those who have loved Him and waited for Him, He will crown with glory and honor and immortality. The righteous dead will come forth from their graves, and those who are alive will be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. They will hear the voice of Jesus, sweeter than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, saying to them, Your warfare is accomplished. "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34. — *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 33, 34.

#### **Thursday, June 10: Heavenly Ministry**

After His ascension our Saviour began His work as our high priest. Says Paul: "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Hebrews 9:24.

The ministration of the priest throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary, "within the veil" which formed the door and separated the holy place from the outer court, represents the work of ministration upon which Christ entered at His ascension. It was the work of the priest in the daily ministration to present before God the blood of the sin offering, also the incense which ascended with the prayers of Israel. So did Christ plead His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners, and present before Him also, with the precious fragrance of His own righteousness, the prayers of penitent believers. Such was the work of ministration in the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven. — *The Great Controversy*, p. 420.

The intercession of Christ in our behalf is that of presenting His divine merits in the offering of Himself to the Father as our substitute and surety; for He ascended up on high to make an atonement for our transgressions. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make



intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 75.

In His intercession as our Advocate, Christ needs no man's virtue, no man's intercession. Christ is the only sin bearer, the only sin offering. Prayer and confession are to be offered only to Him who has entered once for all into the holy place.

Christ represented His Father to the world, and He represents before God the chosen ones in whom He has restored the moral image of God. They are His heritage. No priest, no religionist, can reveal the Father to any son or daughter of Adam. Men have only one Advocate, one Intercessor, who is able to pardon transgression. Shall not our hearts swell with gratitude to Him who gave Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins? Think deeply upon the love the Father has manifested in our behalf, the love that He has expressed for us. We cannot measure this love. Measurement there is none. We can only point to Calvary, to the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. It is an infinite sacrifice. Can we comprehend and measure infinity?—*That I May Know Him*, p. 73.

#### **Friday, June 11: For Further Reading**

*The Upward Look*, "Who Is King?" p. 74;

*Our High Calling*, "Take Care of God's Property," p. 43.

# Covenant Faith

**Sabbath Afternoon, June 12**

It was taught by the Jews that before God's love is extended to the sinner, he must first repent. In their view, repentance is a work by which men earn the favor of Heaven. And it was this thought that led the Pharisees to exclaim in astonishment and anger. "This man receiveth sinners." According to their ideas He should permit none to approach Him but those who had repented. But in the parable of the lost sheep, Christ teaches that salvation does not come through our seeking after God but through God's seeking after us. "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way." Romans 3:11, 12. We do not repent in order that God may love us, but He reveals to us His love in order that we may repent.

When the straying sheep is at last brought home, the shepherd's gratitude finds expression in melodious songs of rejoicing. He calls upon his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." So when a wanderer is found by the great Shepherd of the sheep, heaven and earth unite in thanksgiving and rejoicing.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 189.

As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ's atonement in his behalf, and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, his sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. . . .

The sinner may err, but he is not cast off without mercy. His only hope, however, is repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Father's prerogative to forgive our transgressions and sins, because Christ has taken upon Himself our guilt and reprieved us, imputing to us His own righteousness. His sacrifice satisfies fully the demands of justice.

Justification is the opposite of condemnation. God's boundless mercy is exercised toward those who are wholly undeserving. He forgives transgressions and sins for the sake of Jesus, who has become the propitiation for our sins. Through faith in Christ, the guilty transgressor is brought into favor with God and into the strong hope of life eternal.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1070.

We must live by faith; for without faith it is impossible to please God. . . .

It is the privilege of every soul to exercise faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But pure spiritual life comes only as the soul surrenders itself to the will of God through Christ, the reconciling Saviour. It is our privilege to be worked by the Holy Spirit. Through the exercise of faith we are brought into communion with Christ Jesus, for Christ dwells in the hearts of all who are meek and lowly. Theirs is a faith that works by love and purifies the soul, a faith that brings peace to the heart, and leads in the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice.—*This Day With God*, p. 359.

### **Sunday, June 13: Reflections of Calvary**

Christ's death proves God's great love for man. It is our pledge of salvation. To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. With the relenting compassion of a father's love, Jehovah looks upon the suffering that His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death, and accepts us in the Beloved.

Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of the Saviour's love, and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy, for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain.

Through the cross we learn that the heavenly Father loves us with a love that is infinite. Can we wonder that Paul exclaimed, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Galatians 6:14. It is our privilege also to glory in the cross, our privilege to give ourselves wholly to Him who gave Himself for us. Then, with the light that streams from Calvary shining in our faces, we may go forth to reveal this light to those in darkness.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 209, 210.

The cross of Christ,—how many believe it to be what it is? How many bring it into their studies, and know its true significance? There could not be a Christian in our world without the cross of Christ. . . . Let all, from the highest to the lowest, understand what it means to glory in the cross of Christ. That cross is to be bravely and manfully borne. . . .

This is the highest science that we can learn,—the science of salvation. The cross of Calvary, rightly regarded, is true philosophy, pure and undefiled religion. It is eternal life to all who believe. By painstaking effort, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, it should be impressed upon the minds . . . that the cross of Christ is just as efficacious now as in Paul's day, and should be

as perfectly understood by them as it was by the great apostle. —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 231.

Looking upon the crucified Redeemer, we more fully comprehend the magnitude and meaning of the sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven. The plan of salvation is glorified before us, and the thought of Calvary awakens living and sacred emotions in our hearts. Praise to God and the Lamb will be in our hearts and on our lips; for pride and self-worship cannot flourish in the soul that keeps fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary.

He who beholds the Saviour's matchless love will be elevated in thought, purified in heart, transformed in character. He will go forth to be a light to the world, to reflect in some degree this mysterious love. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 661.

### **Monday, June 14: The Covenant and the Sacrifice**

Wonderful—almost too wonderful for man to comprehend—is the Saviour's sacrifice in our behalf, shadowed forth in all the sacrifices of the past, in all the services of the typical sanctuary. And this sacrifice was called for. When we realize that His suffering was necessary in order to secure our eternal well-being, our hearts are touched and melted. . . .

No one less holy than the Only Begotten of the Father, could have offered a sacrifice that would be efficacious to cleanse all—even the most sinful and degraded—who accept the Saviour as their atonement and become obedient to Heaven's law. Nothing less could have reinstated man in God's favor. . . .

Our ransom has been paid by our Saviour. No one need be enslaved by Satan. Christ stands before us as our all-powerful helper. "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2:17, 18). —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 309.

In his hatred of God, in falsifying His character, in manifesting irreverence, contempt, and hatred toward the laws of His government, Satan had made iniquity reach unto the heavens, and it was his purpose to swell iniquity to such great proportions, that it would make atonement seem impossible, so that the Son of God, who sought to save a lost world, should be crushed beneath the curse of sin. The working of the vigilant foe in presenting to Christ the vast proportions of transgression, caused such poignant pain that He felt that He

could not remain in the immediate presence of any human being. . . . The sword of justice was unsheathed, and the wrath of God against iniquity rested upon man's substitute, Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father.

In the Garden of Gethsemane Christ suffered in man's stead, and the human nature of the Son of God staggered under the terrible horror of the guilt of sin, until from His pale and quivering lips was forced the agonizing cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:" but if there is no other way by which the salvation of fallen man may be accomplished, then "not as I will, but as thou wilt." Human nature would then and there have died under the horror of the sense of sin, had not an angel from heaven strengthened Him to bear the agony.

The power that inflicted retributive justice upon man's substitute and surety, was the power that sustained and upheld the suffering One under the tremendous weight of wrath that would have fallen upon a sinful world. Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God's law.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 1102, 1103.

## **Tuesday, June 15: The Faith of Abraham—Part 1**

This same covenant [given to Adam] was renewed to Abraham in the promise, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Genesis 22:18. This promise pointed to Christ. So Abraham understood it (see Galatians 3:8, 16), and he trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sins. It was this faith that was accounted unto him for righteousness. The covenant with Abraham also maintained the authority of God's law. . . . The testimony of God concerning His faithful servant was, "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Genesis 26:5. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 370.

By faith—faith that renounces all self-trust—the needy suppliant is to lay hold upon infinite power.

No outward observances can take the place of simple faith and entire renunciation of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul.

It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed. All our good works are dependent on a power outside of ourselves. Therefore there needs to be a continual reaching out of the heart after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the soul before Him. Only by constant renunciation of self and dependence of Christ can we walk safely. — *Reflecting Christ*, p. 260.

Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light.

The touch of faith opens to us the divine treasure house of power and wisdom; and thus, through instruments of clay, God accomplishes the wonders of His grace. This living faith is our great need today. We must know that Jesus is indeed ours; that His Spirit is purifying and refining our hearts. If the followers of Christ had genuine faith, with meekness and love, what a work they might accomplish! What fruit would be seen to the glory of God!—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 265.

### **Wednesday, June 16: The Faith of Abraham—Part 2**

We must learn in the school of Christ. Nothing but His righteousness can entitle us to one of the blessings of the covenant of grace. We have long desired and tried to obtain these blessings, but have not received them because we have cherished the idea that we could do something to make ourselves worthy of them. We have not looked away from ourselves, believing that Jesus is a living Saviour. We must not think that our own grace and merits will save us; the grace of Christ is our only hope of salvation.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 351.

Works will not buy for us an entrance into heaven. The one great Offering that has been made is ample for all who will believe. The love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. He who drinks from the water of the fountain of life, will be filled with the new wine of the kingdom. Faith in Christ will be the means whereby the right spirit and motive will actuate the believer, and all goodness and heavenly-mindedness will proceed from him who looks unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith. Look up to God, look not to men. God is your

heavenly Father who is willing patiently to bear with your infirmities, and to forgive and heal them.—“Christ the Center of the Message,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 20, 1894.

Christ came from the courts of glory to this sin-polluted world and humbled Himself to humanity. He identified Himself with our weaknesses and was tempted in all points like as we are. Christ perfected a righteous character here upon the earth, not on His own account, for His character was pure and spotless, but for fallen man. His character He offers to man if he will accept it. The sinner, through repentance of his sins, faith in Christ, and obedience to the perfect law of God, has the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; it becomes his righteousness, and his name is recorded in the Lamb’s book of life. He becomes a child of God, a member of the royal family.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 371.

The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. **The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken. If he can control minds so that doubt and unbelief and darkness shall compose the experience of those who claim to be the children of God, he can overcome them with temptation.** . . .

God’s people must have that faith which will lay hold of divine power; “for by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” [Ephesians 2:8.]—*Gospel Workers*, p. 161.

### **Thursday, June 17: Resting on the Promises**

There is an evidence that is open to all,—the most highly educated, and the most illiterate,—the evidence of experience. God invites us to prove for ourselves the reality of His word, the truth of His promises. He bids us “taste and see that the Lord is good.” Psalm 34:8. Instead of depending upon the word of another, we are to taste for ourselves. He declares, “Ask, and ye shall receive.” John 16:24. His promises will be fulfilled. They have never failed; they never can fail. And as we draw near to Jesus, and rejoice in the fullness of His love, our doubt and darkness will disappear in the light of His presence.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 111.

Our Saviour purchased the human race by humiliation of the very severest kind. He points us to the only path that will lead to the strait gate, opening into the narrow way, beyond which lie broad and pleasant pastures. He has marked out every step of the way; and that no one may make a mistake, He tells us just

what to do. “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:29, 30). This is the only way in which sinners can be saved. Knowing that no one can obey this command in his own strength, Christ tells us not to be worried nor afraid, but to remember what He can do if we come to Him, trusting in His strength. He says, If you yoke up with Me, your Redeemer, I will be your strength, your efficiency.

The blessings connected with Christ’s invitation can be realized and enjoyed by those only who wear Christ’s yoke. Accepting this invitation, you withdraw your sympathy, your affections, from the world, and place them where you can enjoy the blessing of close fellowship and communion with God. By coming to Christ, you bind up your interests with His.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 53.

“If any man will come after me,” Christ said, “let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23). This is the proof of discipleship. If church members would be doers of the Word, as they solemnly pledged themselves to be when they received baptism, they would love their brethren, and would be constantly seeking for unity and harmony.

Those who believe in Christ and walk humbly with Him, who watch to see what they can do to help and bless and strengthen the souls of others, cooperate with the angels who minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Jesus gives them grace, and wisdom, and righteousness, making them a blessing to all with whom they are brought in contact. The more humble they are in their own estimation, the more blessings they receive from God, because receiving does not exalt them. They make a right use of their blessings, for they receive to impart.—*This Day With God*, p. 356.

#### **Friday, June 18: For Further Reading**

*Gospel Workers*, “The Way to Christ,” pp. 158–160;

*Our High Calling*, “Wearing Christ’s Yoke,” p. 100.



# The New Covenant Life

**Sabbath Afternoon, June 19**

Communion with God is for each one personal and direct. The heart under the guidance of the Holy Spirit will burn within them with the love of God. They are like trustful children. Christ looks not for merit. **O if all would come just as they are, and let Him make the preparation in taking them as His. The Lord only wants them to receive Him and learn to wear His yoke, and lift His burdens, that heaven may behold that they are laborers together with God.** Why cannot every soul that needs help and rest come to the burden bearer, that he may have light and life.

Christ could not help being bright and shining. His very work was to shine. . . . Light means revelation, and the light is to shine amid moral darkness. Christ is everything to those who receive Him. He is their Comforter, their safety, their healthfulness. Apart from Christ there is no light at all. There need not be a cloud between the soul and Jesus. His great heart of love is longing to flood the soul with the bright beams of His righteousness.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 221.

What fullness is expressed in the words, “I am the light of the world.” John 8:12. “I am the bread of life.” John 6:35. “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14:6. “I am the good shepherd.” John 10:14. “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10. This life is what we must have, and we must have it more abundantly. God will breathe this life into every soul that dies to self and lives to Christ. But entire self-renunciation is required. Unless this takes place, we carry with us the evil that destroys our happiness. But when self is crucified, Christ lives in us, and the power of the Spirit attends our efforts. . . .

We must daily consecrate ourselves to God’s service. We must come to God in faith. We need to humble ourselves before God. It is self that we have first to do with. Criticize the heart closely. Search it to see what hinders the free access of God’s Spirit. We must receive the Holy Ghost. Then we shall have power to prevail with God.—*Our High Calling*, p. 21.

All heaven is interested in the happiness of man. Our heavenly Father does not close the avenues of joy to any of His creatures. . . . He will not only cleanse from sin and grant redemption through His blood, but will satisfy the heart-longing of all who consent to wear His yoke, to bear His burden. It is His purpose to impart peace and rest to all who come to Him for the bread of life. He

requires us to perform only those duties that will lead our steps to heights of bliss to which the disobedient can never attain. The true, joyous life of the soul is to have Christ formed within, the hope of glory.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 46.

### **Sunday, June 20: Joy**

When the light of heaven shines upon the human agent, his countenance will express the joy of the Lord within. It is the absence of Christ from the soul that makes people sad and of a doubtful mind. It is the want of Christ that makes the countenance sad, and their life is a pilgrimage of sighs. Rejoicing is the very keynote of the Word of God for all who receive Him. Why? Because they have the Light of life. Light brings gladness and joy, and that joy is expressed in the life and the character.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1144.

When the Holy Spirit is breathing upon the soul, the will and the powers of the man must respond to Its influence. Those who abide in Jesus will be happy, cheerful, and joyful in God. A subdued gentleness will mark the voice, reverence for spiritual and eternal things will be expressed in the actions, and music, joyful music, will echo from the lips; for it is wafted from the throne of God. This is the mystery of godliness, not easily explained, but nonetheless felt and enjoyed. A stubborn and rebellious heart can close its doors to all the sweet influences of the grace of God and all the joy in the Holy Ghost; but the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. The more closely we are connected with Christ, the more will our words and actions show the subduing, transforming power of His grace.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 625.

After healing the woman, Jesus desired her to acknowledge the blessing she had received. The gifts which the gospel offers are not to be secured by stealth or enjoyed in secret. So the Lord calls upon us for confession of His goodness. “Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.” Isaiah 43:12.

Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven’s chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked by our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christ-like life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls. . .

The soul that responds to the grace of God shall be like a watered garden. His health shall spring forth speedily; his light shall rise in obscurity, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon him. Let us then remember the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the multitude of His tender mercies. Like the people of Israel, let us set up our stones of witness, and inscribe upon them the precious story of what God has wrought for us.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

## **Monday, June 21: Guilt Free**

It is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1.

Henceforth you are not your own; you are bought with a price. “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1 Peter 1:18, 19. Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 51.

The cities of refuge appointed for God’s ancient people were a symbol of the refuge provided in Christ. The same merciful Saviour who appointed those temporal cities of refuge has by the shedding of His own blood provided for the transgressors of God’s law a sure retreat, into which they may flee for safety from the second death. No power can take out of His hands the souls that go to Him for pardon. . . . “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;” that “we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” Romans 8:34; Hebrews 6:18.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 516.

Israel had returned to God with deep sorrow for backsliding. They had made confession with mourning and lamentation. They had acknowledged the righteousness of God’s dealings with them, and had covenanted to obey His law. Now they must manifest faith in His promises. God had accepted their repentance; they were now to rejoice in the assurance of sins forgiven and their restoration to divine favor. . . .

Every true turning to the Lord brings abiding joy into the life. When a sinner yields to the influence of the Holy Spirit, he sees his own guilt and defilement in

contrast with the holiness of the great Searcher of hearts. He sees himself condemned as a transgressor. But he is not, because of this, to give way to despair; for his pardon has already been secured. He may rejoice in the sense of sins forgiven, in the love of a pardoning heavenly Father. It is God's glory to encircle sinful, repentant human beings in the arms of His love, to bind up their wounds, to cleanse them from sin, and to clothe them with the garments of salvation.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 667, 668.

## **Tuesday, June 22: New Covenant and New Heart**

The heart that has once tasted of the love of Christ, cries out continually for a deeper draft; and as you impart, you will receive in richer and more abundant measure. Every revelation of God to the soul increases the capacity to know and to love. The continual cry of the heart is, More of thee, and ever the Spirit's answer is, Much more.

The life of Christ was a life charged with a divine message of the love of God, and He longed intensely to impart this love to others in rich measure. Compassion beamed from His countenance, and His conduct was characterized by grace and humility, love and truth. Every member of His church militant must manifest the same qualities, if he would join the church triumphant. The love of Christ is so broad, so full of glory, that in comparison to it, everything that man esteems so great dwindles into insignificance. When we obtain a view of it, we exclaim, O the depth of the riches of the love that God bestowed upon men in the gift of His only begotten Son!—*Our High Calling*, p. 366.

When Jesus speaks of the new heart, He means the mind, the life, the whole being. To have a change of heart is to withdraw the affections from the world, and fasten them upon Christ. To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart?—a changed life. There is a daily, hourly dying to selfishness and pride.

One of the most earnest prayers recorded in the Word of God is that of David when he plead, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." God's response to such a prayer is, A new heart will I give you. This is a work that no finite man can do. Men and women are to begin at the beginning, seeking God most earnestly for a true Christian experience. They are to feel the creative power of the Holy Spirit. They are to receive the new heart, that is kept soft and tender by the grace of heaven. The selfish spirit is to be cleansed from the soul. They are to labor earnestly and with humility of heart, each one looking to Jesus for guidance and encouragement. Then the building, fitly framed together, will grow into a holy temple in the Lord.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, pp. 1164, 1165.

Be not discouraged because your heart seems hard. Every obstacle, every internal foe, only increases your need of Christ. He came to take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. Look to Him for special grace to overcome your peculiar faults. . . . Cry to the dear Saviour for help to sacrifice every idol and to put away every darling sin. Let the eye of faith see Jesus standing before the Father's throne, presenting His wounded hands as He pleads for you. Believe that strength comes to you through your precious Saviour.—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 90.

### **Wednesday, June 23: New Covenant and Eternal Life**

To the Christian, death is but a sleep, a moment of silence and darkness. The life is hid with Christ in God, and "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Colossians 3:4.

The voice that cried from the cross, "It is finished," was heard among the dead. It pierced the walls of sepulchers, and summoned the sleepers to arise. Thus will it be when the voice of Christ shall be heard from heaven. That voice will penetrate the graves and unbar the tombs, and the dead in Christ shall arise. At the Saviour's resurrection a few graves were opened, but at His second coming all the precious dead shall hear His voice, and shall come forth to glorious, immortal life. The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Him, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 787.

Christ is life itself. He who passed through death to destroy him that had the power of death is the Source of all vitality. There is balm in Gilead, and a Physician there. Christ endured an agonizing death under the most humiliating circumstances that we might have life. He gave up His precious life that He might vanquish death. But He rose from the tomb, and the myriads of angels who came to behold Him take up the life He had laid down heard His words of triumphant joy as He stood above Joseph's rent sepulcher proclaiming: "I am the resurrection, and the life."—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 51.

When we are born from above, the same mind will be in us that was in Jesus, the mind that led Him to humble Himself that we might be saved. Then we shall not be seeking the highest place. We shall desire to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him. We shall understand that the value of our work does not consist in making a show and noise in the world, and in being active and zealous in our own strength. The value of our work is in proportion to the impartation of the Holy Spirit. Trust in God brings holier qualities of mind, so that in patience we may possess our souls. . . .

As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come, learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 330, 331.

#### **Thursday, June 24: New Covenant and Mission**

There can be no such thing as a narrow life for any soul connected with Christ. Those who love Jesus with heart and mind and soul and their neighbor as themselves have a broad field in which to use their ability and influence. There is no talent to be used for selfish gratification. Self must die, and our lives be hid with Christ in God.

The Lord would have us value our souls according to the estimate—as far as we can comprehend it—that Christ has placed upon them. Jesus died that He might redeem man from eternal ruin. Then we are to hold ourselves as property purchased. “Ye are not your own.” “Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). All our powers of mind and soul and body are the Lord’s. Our time belongs to Him. We are to place ourselves in the very best possible condition to do His service, keeping constantly in connection with Christ, and considering daily the costly sacrifice made for us that we should be made the righteousness of God in Him.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 60.

Every moment of our life is intensely real. Life is no play; it is charged with awful importance, fraught with eternal responsibilities. When we look upon life from this point of view, we realize our need of divine help. The conviction will be forced upon us that a life without Christ will be a life of utter failure, but if Jesus abides with us, we shall live for a purpose. We shall then realize that without the power of God’s grace and Spirit we cannot reach the high standard He has placed before us. There is a divine excellence of character to which we are to attain, and in striving to meet the standard of heaven, divine incentives will urge us on, the mind will become balanced, and the restlessness of the soul will be banished in repose in Christ.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 85.

He who is truly converted will be so filled with the love of God that he will long to impart to others the joy that he himself possesses. The Lord desires His church to hold forth to the world the beauty of holiness. She is to demonstrate the power of Christian religion. Heaven is to be reflected in the character of the Christian. The song of gratitude and praise is to be heard by those in darkness.

For the good tidings of the gospel, for its promises and assurances, we are to express our gratitude by seeking to do others good. . . .

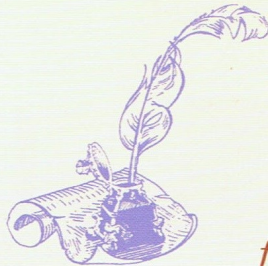
The duty and delight of all service is to uplift Christ before the people. This is the end of all true labor. Let Christ appear; let self be hidden behind Him. This is self-sacrifice that is of worth.

All around us are doors open for service. We should become acquainted with our neighbors, and seek to draw them to Christ. As we do this, He will approve and co-operate with us.—*A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, pp. 26, 27.

#### **Friday, June 25: For Further Reading**

*My Life Today*, “Abundant Life in Christ,” p. 295;

*Sons and Daughters of God*, “God Promises Us a New Heart of Flesh,” p. 100.



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