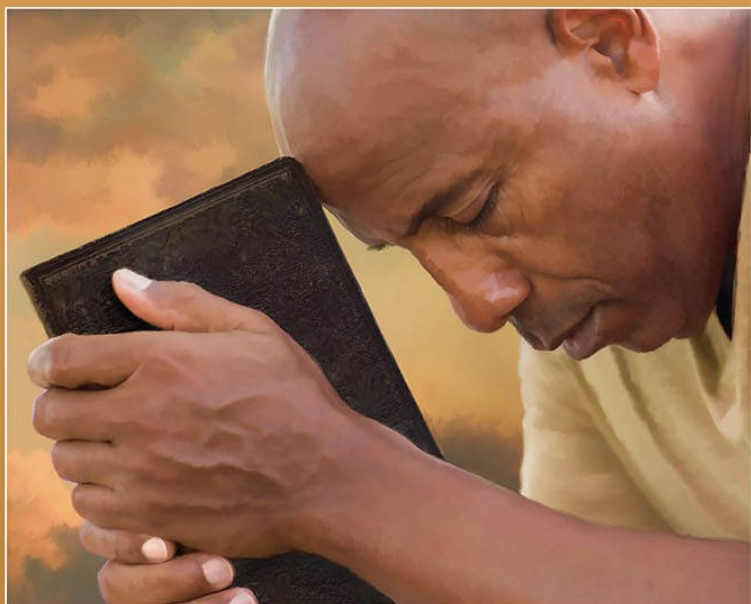
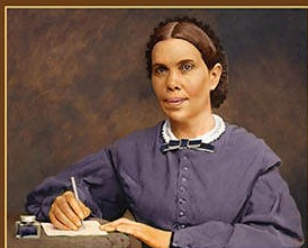


Ellen G. White
NOTES
for the Sabbath School Lessons



REST IN CHRIST

July | Aug | Sept 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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Rest in Christ

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Lesson 1

Living in a 24-7 Society

Sabbath Afternoon, June 26

In this speck of a world, the heavenly universe manifests the greatest interest. Yet we come in contact with the busy activity of our cities, we mingle with the multitude in the crowded thoroughfares, we enter marts of trade and walk the streets; and through all, from morning till evening, the people act as if business, sport, and pleasure were all there is to life,—as if this world were all there is to occupy the mind. How few contemplate the unseen agencies!

All heaven is intensely interested in the human beings who are so full of activity, and yet have no thought for the unseen. Sometimes the heavenly intelligences draw aside the curtain that hides the unseen world, that our minds may be withdrawn from the hurry and rush, and consider that there are witnesses to all we do and say, when engaged in business, or when we think ourselves alone.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 37.

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Psalm 84:2.

When God's people take their eyes off the things of this world and place them on heaven and heavenly things they will be a peculiar people, because they will see the mercy and goodness and compassion that God has shown to the children of men. His love will call forth a response from them, and their lives will show to those around them that the Spirit of God is controlling them, that they are setting their affections on things above, not on the things of the earth.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 368.

We need to appreciate more fully the meaning of the words: "I sat down under His shadow with great delight." Song of Solomon 2:3. These words do not bring to our minds the picture of hasty transit, but of quiet rest. There are many professing Christians who are anxious and depressed, many who are so full of busy activity that they cannot find time to rest quietly in the promises of God, who act as if they could not afford to have peace and quietness. To all such Christ's invitation is: "Come unto Me, ... and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28.

Let us turn from the dusty, heated thoroughfares of life to rest in the shadow of Christ's love. Here we gain strength for conflict. Here we learn how to lessen toil and worry, and how to speak and sing to the praise of God. Let the weary and the heavy-laden learn from Christ the lesson of quiet trust. They must sit under

His shadow if they would be possessors of His peace and rest.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol, 7, p. 69.

Sunday, June 27: Worn and Weary

In Eden, God set up the memorial of His work of creation, in placing His blessing upon the seventh day. The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the father and representative of the whole human family. Its observance was to be an act of grateful acknowledgment, on the part of all who should dwell upon the earth, that God was their Creator and their rightful Sovereign; that they were the work of His hands and the subjects of His authority. Thus the institution was wholly commemorative, and given to all mankind. There was nothing in it shadowy or of restricted application to any people.

God saw that a Sabbath was essential for man, even in Paradise. He needed to lay aside his own interests and pursuits for one day of the seven, that he might more fully contemplate the works of God and meditate upon His power and goodness. He needed a Sabbath to remind him more vividly of God and to awaken gratitude because all that he enjoyed and possessed came from the beneficent hand of the Creator.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.

We are sustained every moment by God's care, and upheld by His power. He spreads our tables with food. He gives us peaceful and refreshing sleep. Weekly He brings to us the Sabbath, that we may rest from our temporal labors, and worship Him in His own house. He has given us His word to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. In its sacred pages we find the counsels of wisdom; and as oft as we lift our hearts to Him in penitence and faith, He grants us the blessings of His grace. Above all else is the infinite gift of God's dear Son, through whom flow all other blessings for this life and for the life to come.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 18.

Overwork sometimes causes a loss of self-control. But the Lord never compels hurried, complicated movements. Many gather to themselves burdens that the merciful heavenly Father did not place on them. Duties He never designed them to perform chase one another wildly. God desires us to realize that we do not glorify His name when we take so many burdens that we are overtaken and, becoming heart weary and brain weary, chafe and fret and scold. We are to bear only the responsibilities that the Lord gives us, trusting in Him, and thus keeping our hearts pure and sweet and sympathetic.—*My Life Today*, p. 81.

Each day brings its responsibilities and duties, but the work of tomorrow must not be crowded into the hours of today. God is merciful, full of compassion, reasonable in His requirements. He does not ask us to pursue a course of action

that will result in the loss of physical health or the enfeebling of the mental powers. He would not have us work under a pressure and strain until exhaustion follows, with prostration of the nerves.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 244.

Monday, June 28: Running on Empty

The servants of Christ are not to treat their health indifferently. Let no one labor to the point of exhaustion, thereby disqualifying himself for future effort. Do not try to crowd into one day the work of two. At the end, those who work carefully and wisely will be found to have accomplished as much as those who so expend their physical and mental strength that they have no deposit from which to draw in time of need.

God's work is world-wide; it calls for every jot and tittle of the ability and power that we have. ... After His servants have done their best, they may say, The harvest truly is great, and the laborers are few; but God "knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." [Psalm 103:14.]—*Gospel Workers*, p. 244.

There are three ways in which the Lord reveals His will to us, to guide us, and to fit us to guide others. How may we know His voice from that of a stranger? How shall we distinguish it from the voice of a false shepherd? God reveals His will to us in His word, the Holy Scriptures. His voice is also revealed in His providential workings; and it will be recognized if we do not separate our souls from Him by walking in our own ways, doing according to our own wills, and following the promptings of an unsanctified heart, until the senses have become so confused that eternal things are not discerned, and the voice of Satan is so disguised that it is accepted as the voice of God.

Another way in which God's voice is heard is through the appeals of His Holy Spirit, making impressions upon the heart, which will be wrought out in the character. If you are in doubt upon any subject you must first consult the Scriptures. If you have truly begun the life of faith you have given yourself to the Lord to be wholly His, and He has taken you to mold and fashion according to His purpose, that you may be a vessel unto honor.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 512.

Let all who are afflicted or unjustly used, cry to God. Turn away from those whose hearts are as steel, and make your requests known to your Maker. Never is one repulsed who comes to Him with a contrite heart. Not one sincere prayer is lost. Amid the anthems of the celestial choir, God hears the cries of the weakest human being. We pour out our heart's desire in our closets, we breathe a prayer as we walk by the way, and our words reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. They may be inaudible to any human ear, but they cannot die

away into silence, nor can they be lost through the activities of business that are going on. Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the confusion of the multitude, to the heavenly courts. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 174.

Tuesday, June 29: Defining Rest in the Old Testament

In all ages God's appointed witnesses have exposed themselves to reproach and persecution for the truth's sake. Joseph was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue and integrity. David, the chosen messenger of God, was hunted like a beast of prey by his enemies. Daniel was cast into a den of lions because he was true to his allegiance to heaven. Job was deprived of his worldly possessions, and so afflicted in body that he was abhorred by his relatives, and friends; yet he maintained his integrity. Jeremiah could not be deterred from speaking the words that God had given him to speak; and his testimony so enraged the king and princes that he was cast into a loathsome pit. Stephen was stoned because he preached Christ and Him crucified. Paul was imprisoned, beaten with rods, stoned, and finally put to death because he was a faithful messenger for God to the Gentiles. And John was banished to the Isle of Patmos "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

These examples of human steadfastness bear witness to the faithfulness of God's promises—of His abiding presence and sustaining grace. They testify to the power of faith to withstand the powers of the world. It is the work of faith to rest in God in the darkest hour, to feel, however sorely tried and tempest-tossed, that our Father is at the helm. The eye of faith alone can look beyond the things of time to estimate aright the worth of the eternal riches.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 575.

Adam's life was one of sorrow, humility, and continual repentance. As he taught his children and grandchildren the fear of the Lord, he was often bitterly reproached for his sin which resulted in so much misery upon his posterity. When he left the beautiful Eden, the thought that he must die thrilled him with horror. He looked upon death as a dreadful calamity. He was first made acquainted with the dreadful reality of death in the human family by his own son Cain slaying his brother Abel. Filled with the bitterest remorse for his own transgression, and deprived of his son Abel, and looking upon Cain as his murderer, and knowing the curse God pronounced upon him, bowed down Adam's heart with grief. Most bitterly did he reproach himself for his first great transgression. He entreated pardon from God through the promised Sacrifice. Deeply had he felt the wrath of God for his crime committed in Paradise. He witnessed the general corruption which afterward finally provoked God to

destroy the inhabitants of the earth by a flood. The sentence of death pronounced upon him by his Maker, which at first appeared so terrible to him, after he had lived some hundreds of years, looked just and merciful in God, to bring to an end a miserable life.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 55.

Wednesday, June 30: Rest in the New Testament

Christ's words of compassion are spoken to His workers today just as surely as they were spoken to His disciples. "Come ye yourselves apart, ... and rest awhile," He says to those who are worn and weary. It is not wise to be always under the strain of work and excitement, even in ministering to men's spiritual needs; for in this way personal piety is neglected, and the powers of mind and soul and body are overtaxed. Self-denial is required of the disciples of Christ, and sacrifices must be made; but care must also be exercised lest through their overzeal Satan take advantage of the weakness of humanity, and the work of God be marred.

In the estimation of the rabbis it was the sum of religion to be always in a bustle of activity. They depended upon some outward performance to show their superior piety. Thus they separated their souls from God, and built themselves up in self-sufficiency. The same dangers still exist. As activity increases and men become successful in doing any work for God, there is danger of trusting to human plans and methods. There is a tendency to pray less, and to have less faith. Like the disciples, we are in danger of losing sight of our dependence on God, and seeking to make a savior of our activity. We need to look constantly to Jesus, realizing that it is His power which does the work. While we are to labor earnestly for the salvation of the lost, we must also take time for meditation, for prayer, and for the study of the word of God.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 362.

Those who learn of Jesus His meekness and lowliness find rest in the experience of practicing His lessons. It is not in indolence, in selfish ease and pleasure-seeking, that rest is obtained. Those who are unwilling to give the Lord faithful, earnest, loving service will not find spiritual rest in this life or in the life to come. Only from earnest labor comes peace and joy in the Holy Spirit—happiness on earth and glory hereafter.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 928.

There will be peace, constant peace, flowing into the soul, for the rest is found in perfect submission to Jesus Christ. Obedience to God's will finds the rest. The disciple that treads in the meek and lowly steps of the Redeemer finds rest which the world cannot give, and the world cannot take away. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Isaiah 26:3.—*Our High Calling*, p. 98.

A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be an abiding, peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ. Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 70.

Thursday, July 1: A Restless Wanderer

[Cain and Abel] had been instructed in regard to the provision made for the salvation of the human race. They were required to carry out a system of humble obedience, showing their reverence for God and their faith and dependence upon the promised Redeemer, by slaying the firstlings of the flock and solemnly presenting them with the blood as a burnt offering to God. This sacrifice would lead them to continually keep in mind their sin and the Redeemer to come, who was to be the great sacrifice for man.

Cain ... was unwilling to strictly follow the plan of obedience and procure a lamb and offer it with the fruit of the ground. He merely took of the ground and disregarded the requirement of God. ... Abel advised his brother not to come before the Lord without the blood of sacrifice. Cain, being the eldest, would not listen to his brother. He despised his counsel, and with doubt and murmuring in regard to the necessity of the ceremonial offerings, he presented his offering. But God did not accept it.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 52.

When Cain saw that his offering was rejected, he was angry with the Lord and with Abel; he was angry that God did not accept man's substitute in place of the sacrifice divinely ordained, and angry with his brother for choosing to obey God instead of joining in rebellion against Him. ... Through an angel messenger the divine warning was conveyed: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." The choice lay with Cain himself. If he would trust to the merits of the promised Saviour, and would obey God's requirements, he would enjoy His favor. But should he persist in unbelief and transgression, he would have no ground for complaint because he was rejected by the Lord. ...

Cain hated and killed his brother, not for any wrong that Abel had done, but "because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." 1 John 3:12. So in all ages the wicked have hated those who were better than themselves. Abel's life of obedience and unswerving faith was to Cain a perpetual reproof. ... The brighter the heavenly light that is reflected from the character of God's faithful servants, the more clearly the sins of the ungodly are revealed, and the more determined will be their efforts to destroy those who disturb their peace.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 73, 74.

It is the love of self that brings unrest. 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.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.

Friday, July 2: For Further Reading

My Life Today, “Rest,” p. 133;

Steps to Christ, “Growing Up Into Christ,” p. 72.

Lesson 2

Restless and Rebellious

Sabbath Afternoon, July 3

I was pointed back to ancient Israel. But two of the adults of the vast army that left Egypt entered the land of Canaan. Their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness because of their transgressions. Modern Israel are in greater danger of forgetting God and being led into idolatry than were His ancient people. Many idols are worshiped, even by professed Sabbathkeepers. God especially charged His ancient people to guard against idolatry, for if they should be led away from serving the living God, His curse would rest upon them, while if they would love Him with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might, He would abundantly bless them in basket and in store, and would remove sickness from the midst of them.

A blessing or a curse is now before the people of God—a blessing if they come out from the world and are separate, and walk in the path of humble obedience; and a curse if they unite with the idolatrous, who trample upon the high claims of heaven. The sins and iniquities of rebellious Israel are recorded and the picture presented before us as a warning that if we imitate their example of transgression and depart from God we shall fall as surely as did they. “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. 609.

The history of the wilderness life of Israel was chronicled for the benefit of the Israel of God till the close of time. The record of God’s dealing with the wanderers in all their marchings to and fro, in their exposure to hunger, thirst, and weariness, and in the striking manifestations of His power for their relief, is fraught with warning and instruction for His people in this age. The varied experiences of the Hebrews was a school of preparation for their promised home in Canaan. God would have His people review in these days, with a humble heart and a teachable spirit, the trials through which ancient Israel passed, that they may be instructed in their preparation for the heavenly Canaan.—*This Day With God*, p. 77.

The land to which we are traveling is in every sense far more attractive than was the land of Canaan to the children of Israel. What stayed their progress just in sight of the goodly land? ... It was their own willful unbelief that turned them back. ... The history of the children of Israel is written as a warning to us “upon whom the ends of the world are come.” We are standing, as it were, upon the very borders of the heavenly Canaan. We may, if we will, look over on the other

side and behold the attractions of the goodly land. If we have faith in the promises of God we shall show in conversation and in deportment that we are not living for this world, but are making it our first business to prepare for that holy land.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 169.

Sunday, July 4: Restless in a Wilderness

When God led the children of Israel out of Egypt, it was His purpose to establish them in the land of Canaan a pure, happy, healthy people. Let us look at the means by which He would accomplish this. He subjected them to a course of discipline, which, had it been cheerfully followed, would have resulted in good, both to themselves and to their posterity. He removed flesh food from them in a great measure. He had granted them flesh in answer to their clamors, just before reaching Sinai, but it was furnished for only one day. God might have provided flesh as easily as manna, but a restriction was placed upon the people for their good. It was His purpose to supply them with food better suited to their wants than the feverish diet to which many of them had been accustomed in Egypt. The perverted appetite was to be brought into a more healthy state, that they might enjoy the food originally provided for man,—the fruits of the earth, which God gave to Adam and Eve in Eden.—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 377.

Satan, the author of disease and misery, will approach God's people where he can have the greatest success. ... He came with his temptations first to the mixed multitude, the believing Egyptians, and stirred them up to seditious murmurings. They would not be content with the healthful food which God had provided for them. Their depraved appetites craved a greater variety, especially flesh meats.

This murmuring soon infected nearly the whole body of the people. At first, God did not gratify their lustful appetites, but caused his judgments to come upon them, and consumed the most guilty by lightning from Heaven. Yet this, instead of humbling, only seemed to increase their murmurings. ...

“And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp ... And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails. ... And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague.”

... They gave themselves up to seditious murmurings against Moses, and against the Lord, because they did not receive those things which would prove an injury to them. Their depraved appetites controlled them, and God gave them flesh meats, as they desired, and he let them suffer the results of gratifying their

lustful appetites.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, pp. 15 – 18.

Monday, July 5: It's Contagious

After Miriam became jealous, she imagined that Aaron and herself had been neglected, and that Moses' wife was the cause—that she had influenced the mind of her husband—that he did not consult them in important matters as much as formerly.

The Lord heard the words of murmuring against Moses, and he was displeased. . . And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle, and behold Miriam became leprous, white as snow." . . . And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee." "And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days; and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again." . . .

[By] the complaints of Miriam against God's chosen servant, she not only behaved irreverently to Moses, but toward God himself, who had chosen him. Aaron was drawn into the jealous spirit of his sister Miriam. He might have prevented the evil if he had not sympathized with her, and had presented before her the sinfulness of her conduct. But instead of this, he listened to her words of complaint. The murmurings of Miriam and Aaron are left upon record as a rebuke to all who will yield to jealousy, and complain of those upon whom God lays the burden of his work.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, pp. 20, 21.

We are to direct the weapons of our warfare against our foes, but never to turn them toward those who are under marching orders from the King of Kings, who are fighting manfully the battles of the Lord of lords. Let no one aim at a soldier whom God recognizes, whom God has sent forth to bear a special message to the world and to do a special work.

The soldiers of Christ may not always reveal perfection in their step, but their mistakes should call out from their fellow comrades not words that will weaken, but words that will strengthen, and will help them recover their lost ground. They should not turn the glory of God into dishonor, and give an advantage to the bitterest foes of their King.—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 344.

Let not fellow soldiers be severe, unreasonable judges of their comrades, and make the most of every defect. Let them not manifest satanic attributes in becoming accusers of the brethren. We shall find ourselves misrepresented and falsified by the world, while we are maintaining the truth and vindicating God's downtrodden law; but let no one dishonor the cause of God by making public some mistake that the soldiers of Christ may make, when that mistake is seen

and corrected by [the] ones who have taken some false position.

God will charge those who unwisely expose the mistakes of their brethren with sin of far greater magnitude than he will charge the one who makes a misstep. Criticism and condemnation of the brethren are counted as criticism and condemnation of Christ.—*Letter 48*, 1894.

Tuesday, July 6: Restlessness Leads to Rebellion

[A]fter describing the beauty and fertility of the land, all but two of the spies enlarged upon the difficulties and dangers that lay before the Israelites should they undertake the conquest of Canaan. . . .

Hope and courage gave place to cowardly despair, as the spies uttered the sentiments of their unbelieving hearts, which were filled with discouragement prompted by Satan. Their unbelief cast a gloomy shadow over the congregation, and the mighty power of God, so often manifested in behalf of the chosen nation, was forgotten. The people did not wait to reflect; they did not reason that He who had brought them thus far would certainly give them the land; they did not call to mind how wonderfully God had delivered them from their oppressors, cutting a path through the sea and destroying the pursuing hosts of Pharaoh. They left God out of the question, and acted as though they must depend solely on the power of arms.

In their unbelief they limited the power of God and distrusted the hand that had hitherto safely guided them. And they repeated their former error of murmuring against Moses and Aaron.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 387, 388.

Caleb was faithful and steadfast. He was not boastful, he made no parade of his merits and good deeds; but his influence was always on the side of right. And what was his reward? When the Lord denounced judgments against the men who refused to hearken to His voice, He said: "But My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it." While the cowards and murmurers perished in the wilderness, faithful Caleb had a home in the promised Canaan.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 303.

These men, [the ten spies], having entered upon a wrong course, stubbornly set themselves against Caleb and Joshua, against Moses, and against God. Every advance step rendered them the more determined. They were resolved to discourage all effort to gain possession of Canaan. They distorted the truth in order to sustain their baleful influence. It "is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof," they said. This was not only an evil report, but it was also a

lying one. It was inconsistent with itself. ... But when men yield their hearts to unbelief they place themselves under the control of Satan, and none can tell to what lengths he will lead them. ...

Revolt and open mutiny quickly followed; for Satan had full sway, and the people seemed bereft of reason. ... [T]hey accused not only Moses, but God Himself, of deception, in promising them a land which they were not able to possess. And they went so far as to appoint a captain to lead them back to the land of their suffering and bondage, from which they had been delivered by the strong arm of Omnipotence.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 389.

Wednesday, July 7: An Intercessor

Moses was the greatest man who ever stood as leader of the people of God. He was greatly honored by God, not for the experience which he had gained in the Egyptian court, but because he was the meekest of men. God talked with him face to face, as a man talks with a friend. If men desire to be honored by God, let them be humble. Those who carry forward God's work should be distinguished from all others by their humility. Of the man who is noted for his meekness, Christ says, He can be trusted. Through him I can reveal Myself to the world. He will not weave into the web any threads of selfishness. I will manifest Myself to him as I do not to the world.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1113.

When Moses heard the people weeping in the door of their tents, and complaining throughout their families, he was displeased. He presented before the Lord the difficulties of his situation, and the unsubmissive spirit of the Israelites, and the position in which God had placed him to the people, that of a nursing father, who should make the sufferings of the people his own. He inquired of the Lord how he could bear this great burden of continually witnessing the disobedience of Israel, and hearing their murmurings against his commands, and against God himself. He declared before the Lord that he had rather die than see Israel, by their perverseness, drawing down judgments upon themselves, while the enemies of God were rejoicing in their destruction.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, p. 16.

Sin blinds the eyes and defiles the heart. Integrity, firmness, and perseverance are qualities which all should seek earnestly to cultivate; for they clothe the possessor with a power which is irresistible, a power which makes him strong to do good, strong to resist evil, strong to bear adversity. It is here that true excellence of character shines forth with the greatest luster. ...

God has given us our intellectual and moral powers, but to a great extent every

person is the architect of his own character. Every day the structure is going up. The word of God warns us to take heed how we build, to see that our building is founded upon the eternal Rock. The time is coming when our work will stand revealed just as it is. Now is the time for all to cultivate the powers which God has given them, that they may form characters for usefulness here and for a higher life hereafter.

Every act of life, however unimportant, has its influence in forming the character. A good character is more precious than worldly possessions, and the work of forming it is the noblest in which men can engage.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 655–657.

Thursday, July 8: Faith Versus Presumption

We must rise to a higher standard on the subject of faith. We have too little faith. The Word of God is our endorsement. We must take it, simply believing every word. With this assurance, we may claim large things, and according to our faith it will be unto us. If we humble our hearts before God, if we seek to abide in Christ, we shall have a higher, holier experience.

True faith consists in doing just what God has enjoined, not manufacturing things He has not enjoined. Justice, truth, mercy, are the fruit of faith. We need to walk in the light of God's law; then good works will be the fruit of our faith, the proceeds of a heart renewed every day. ...

If we had exercised more faith in God and had trusted less to our own ideas and wisdom, God would have manifested His power in a marked manner on human hearts. By a union with Him, by living faith, we are privileged to enjoy the virtue and efficacy of His mediation. Hence we are crucified with Christ, dead with Christ, risen with Christ, to walk in newness of life with Him.—*The Upward Look*, p. 346.

As Satan seeks to break down the barriers of the soul, by tempting us to indulge in sin, we must by living faith retain our connection with God, and have confidence in His strength to enable us to overcome every besetment. We are to flee from evil, and seek righteousness, meekness, and holiness.

It is time for every one of us to decide whose side we are on. The agencies of Satan will work with every mind that will allow itself to be worked by him. But there are also heavenly agencies waiting to communicate the bright rays of the glory of God to all who are willing to receive Him.

It is ours to choose whether we will be numbered with the servants of Christ or

the servants of Satan. Every day we show by our conduct whose service we have chosen.—*Our High Calling*, p. 15.

The prevailing spirit of our time is one of infidelity and apostasy—a spirit of avowed illumination because of a knowledge of truth, but in reality of the blindest presumption. Human theories are exalted and placed where God and His law should be. Satan tempts men and women to disobey, with the promise that in disobedience they will find liberty and freedom that will make them as gods. There is seen a spirit of opposition to the plain word of God, of idolatrous exaltation of human wisdom above divine revelation. Men have allowed their minds to become so darkened and confused by conformity to worldly customs and influences that they seem to have lost all power to discriminate between light and darkness, truth and error. So far have they departed from the right way that they hold the opinions of a few philosophers, so-called, to be more trustworthy than the truths of the Bible. The entreaties and promises of God's word, its threatenings against disobedience and idolatry—these seem powerless to melt their hearts. A faith such as actuated Paul, Peter, and John they regard as old-fashioned, mystical, and unworthy of the intelligence of modern thinkers.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 178.

Friday, July 9: For Further Reading

Conflict and Courage, “Two Ways to Go,” p. 25;

Patriarchs and Prophets, “From Sinai to Kadesh,” pp. 377–386.

Lesson 3

The Roots of Restlessness

Sabbath Afternoon, July 10

It is a wicked pride that delights in the vanity of one's own works, that boasts of one's excellent qualities, seeking to make others seem inferior in order to exalt self, claiming more glory than the cold heart is willing to give to God. The disciples of Christ will heed the Master's instruction. He has bidden us love one another even as He has loved us. Religion is founded upon love to God, which also leads us to love one another. It is full of gratitude, humility, long-suffering. It is self-sacrificing, forbearing, merciful, and forgiving. It sanctifies the whole life and extends its influence over others.

Those who love God cannot harbor hatred or envy. When the heavenly principle of eternal love fills the heart, it will flow out to others, not merely because favors are received of them, but because love is the principle of action and modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and elevates and ennoble the affections. This love is not contracted so as merely to include "me and mine," but is as broad as the world and as high as heaven, and is in harmony with that of the angel workers. This love cherished in the soul sweetens the entire life and sheds a refining influence on all around. ... This love is the spirit of God. It is the heavenly adorning that gives true nobility and dignity to the soul and assimilates our lives to that of the Master.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 223.

Seek to be an evergreen tree. Wear the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Cherish the grace of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. This is the fruit of the Christian tree. Planted by the rivers of water, it always brings forth its fruit in due season.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1142.

Before you are two ways—the broad road of self-indulgence and the narrow path of self-sacrifice. Into the broad road you can take selfishness, pride, love of the world; but those who walk in the narrow way must lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset. Which road have you chosen—the road which leads to everlasting death, or the road which leads to glory and immortality?

There never was a more solemn time in the history of the world than the time in which we are now living. Our eternal interests are at stake, and we should

arouse to the importance of making our calling and election sure. We dare not risk our eternal interests on mere probabilities. We must be in earnest. What we are, what we are doing, what is to be our course of action in the future, are all questions of untold moment, and we cannot afford to be listless, indifferent, unconcerned. It becomes each one of us to inquire, "What is eternity to me?" Are our feet in the path that leads to heaven, or in the broad road that leads to perdition?—*Our High Calling*, p. 8.

Sunday, July 11: Jesus Brings Division

The Saviour bade His disciples not to hope that the world's enmity to the gospel would be overcome, and that after a time its opposition would cease. He said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." This creating of strife is not the effect of the gospel, but the result of opposition to it. Of all persecution the hardest to bear is variance in the home, the estrangement of dearest earthly friends. But Jesus declares, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me."

The mission of Christ's servants is a high honor, and a sacred trust. "He that receiveth you," He says, "receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me." No act of kindness shown to them in His name will fail to be recognized and rewarded. And in the same tender recognition He includes the feeblest and lowliest of the family of God: "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones"—those who are as children in their faith and their knowledge of Christ—"a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in nowise lose his reward."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 357.

Shortly before His crucifixion Christ bequeathed to His disciples a legacy of peace. This peace is not the peace that comes through conformity with the world. It is an internal rather than an external peace. Without will be wars and fightings, through the opposition of avowed enemies, and the coldness and suspicion of those who claim to be friends. The peace of Christ is not to banish division, but it is to remain amid strife and division.

Though he bore the title of Prince of Peace, Christ said of Himself, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Matthew 10:34. The Prince of Peace, He was yet the cause of division.

Families must be divided in order that all who call upon the name of the Lord may be saved. All who refuse His infinite love will find Christianity a sword, a disturber of their peace.—*Our High Calling*, p. 328.

In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.

As the flower turns to the sun, that the bright beams may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should we turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven's light may shine upon us, that our character may be developed into the likeness of Christ.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 68.

Monday, July 12: Selfishness

By the parable of the foolish rich man, Christ showed the folly of those who make the world their all. This man had received everything from God. The sun had been permitted to shine upon his land; for its rays fall on the just and on the unjust. The showers of heaven descend on the evil and on the good. The Lord had caused vegetation to flourish, and the fields to bring forth abundantly. The rich man was in perplexity as to what he should do with his produce. His barns were full to overflowing, and he had no place to put the surplus of his harvest. He did not think of God, from whom all his mercies had come. He did not realize that God had made him a steward of His goods that he might help the needy. He had a blessed opportunity of being God's almoner, but he thought only of ministering to his own comfort. ...

In living for self he has rejected that divine love which would have flowed out in mercy to his fellow men. Thus he has rejected life. For God is love, and love is life. This man has chosen the earthly rather than the spiritual, and with the earthly he must pass away. ...

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." — *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 256, 258.

Among those to whom bitter disappointment will come at the day of final reckoning will be some who have been outwardly religious, and who apparently have lived Christian lives. But self is woven into all they do. They pride themselves on their morality, their influence, their ability to stand in a higher position than others, [and] their knowledge of the truth, for they think that these will win for them the commendation of Christ. "Lord," they plead ... "Have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" (Matthew 7:22).

But Christ says, "I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me." "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;

but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). — *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 81, 82.

Paul ... was convinced that if men could be led to consider the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, selfishness would be banished from their hearts. ... He directs the mind first to the position which Christ occupied in heaven in the bosom of His Father; he reveals Him afterward as laying aside His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to the humbling conditions of man's life, assuming the responsibilities of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, and that the most ignominious and revolting, the most agonizing—the death of the cross. Can we contemplate this wonderful manifestation of the love of God without gratitude and love, and a deep sense of the fact that we are not our own? Such a Master should not be served from grudging, selfish motives. — *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 501.

Tuesday, July 13: Ambition

How often our service to Christ, our communion with one another, is marred by the secret desire to exalt self! How ready the thought of self-gratulation, and the longing for human approval! It is the love of self, the desire for an easier way than God has appointed that leads to the substitution of human theories and traditions for the divine precepts. To His own disciples the warning words of Christ are spoken, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees."

The religion of Christ is sincerity itself. Zeal for God's glory is the motive implanted by the Holy Spirit; and only the effectual working of the Spirit can implant this motive. Only the power of God can banish self-seeking and hypocrisy. This change is the sign of His working. When the faith we accept destroys selfishness and pretense, when it leads us to seek God's glory and not our own, we may know that it is of the right order. "Father, glorify Thy name" (John 12:28), was the keynote of Christ's life, and if we follow Him, this will be the keynote of our life. — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 409.

The disciples made no move toward serving one another. Jesus waited for a time to see what they would do. Then He, the divine Teacher, rose from the table. Laying aside the outer garment that would have impeded His movements, He took a towel, and girded Himself. With surprised interest the disciples looked on, and in silence waited to see what was to follow. "After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." This action opened the eyes of the disciples. Bitter shame and humiliation filled their hearts. They understood the unspoken rebuke, and saw themselves in altogether a new light.

So Christ expressed His love for His disciples. Their selfish spirit filled Him with sorrow, but He entered into no controversy with them regarding their difficulty. Instead He gave them an example they would never forget. His love for them was not easily disturbed or quenched. ... [Though] He had a full consciousness of His divinity ... He had laid aside His royal crown and kingly robes, and had taken the form of a servant. One of the last acts of His life on earth was to gird Himself as a servant, and perform a servant's part.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 644.

Jesus has said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." John 12:32. Christ must be revealed to the sinner as the Saviour dying for the sins of the world; and as we behold the Lamb of God upon the cross of Calvary, the mystery of redemption begins to unfold to our minds and the goodness of God leads us to repentance. In dying for sinners, Christ manifested a love that is incomprehensible; and as the sinner beholds this love, it softens the heart, impresses the mind, and inspires contrition in the soul.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 26.

Wednesday, July 14: Hypocrisy

The hypocrisy of the Pharisees was the product of self-seeking. The glorification of themselves was the object of their lives. It was this that led them to pervert and misapply the Scriptures, and blinded them to the purpose of Christ's mission. This subtle evil even the disciples of Christ were in danger of cherishing. Those who classed themselves with the followers of Jesus, but who had not left all in order to become His disciples, were influenced in a great degree by the reasoning of the Pharisees. They were often vacillating between faith and unbelief, and they did not discern the treasures of wisdom hidden in Christ. Even the disciples, though outwardly they had left all for Jesus' sake, had not in heart ceased to seek great things for themselves. ... It was this that came between them and Christ, making them so little in sympathy with His mission of self-sacrifice, so slow to comprehend the mystery of redemption.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 409.

Our Saviour presented before the people of that time the character of their sins. His plain words aroused the consciences of the hearers, but Satan's counter-working agencies were seeking for a place for their theories, to attract minds from the plainly spoken truth. As the great Teacher would speak impressive truth, the scribes and Pharisees, under pretense of being interested, would assemble around the disciples and Christ, and divert the minds of the disciples by starting questions to create controversy. They pretended that they wanted to know the truth. Christ was interrupted on this occasion as on many similar occasions. And He wished His disciples to listen to the words He had to say, and not allow anything to attract and hold their attention. Therefore He warned them, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." They feigned

a desire to get as close as possible to the inner circle. As the Lord Jesus presented truth in contrast to error, the Pharisees pretended to be desirous of understanding the truth, yet they were trying to lead His mind in other channels.

Hypocrisy is like leaven or yeast. Leaven may be hidden in the flour, and its presence is not known until it produces its effect. By insinuating itself, it soon pervades the whole mass. Hypocrisy works secretly, and if indulged, it will fill the mind with pride and vanity. There are deceptions practiced now similar to those practiced by the Pharisees. When the Saviour gave this caution, it was to warn all who believe in Him to be on guard. Watch against imbibing this spirit, and becoming like those who tried to ensnare the Saviour.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1121.

Thursday, July 15: Uprooting Reslessness

To live for self is to perish. Covetousness, the desire of benefit for self's sake, cuts the soul off from life. It is the spirit of Satan to get, to draw to self. It is the spirit of Christ to give, to sacrifice self for the good of others. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:11, 12.

Wherefore He says, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 259.

Praise the Lord, oh, my soul! He says He has gone to prepare mansions for me: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3).

Thank God! It is these mansions that I am looking to. It is not the earthly mansions here, for they are to be shaken down by the mighty earthquake ere long; but it is those heavenly mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for the faithful. We have no home here. We are only pilgrims and strangers here, passing to a better country, even an heavenly. May God help us to win the boon of eternal life.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 354.

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." 1 John 1:9.

God's promise is, "Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:13. ...

... When Christ dwells in the heart, the soul will be so filled with His love, with the joy of communion with Him, that it will cleave to Him; and in the contemplation of Him, self will be forgotten. Love to Christ will be the spring of action. Those who feel the constraining love of God, do not ask how little may be given to meet the requirements of God; they do not ask for the lowest standard, but aim at perfect conformity to the will of their Redeemer.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 41–44.

Friday, July 16: For Further Reading

This Day With God, "Ye All Are Brethren," p. 192;

Testimonies for the Church, "Necessity of Harmony," vol. 4, pp. 225, 226.

Lesson 4

The Cost of Rest

Sabbath Afternoon, July 17

It is impossible to estimate too largely the work that the Lord will accomplish through His proposed vessels in carrying out His mind and purpose. ...

The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in ... a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. ... A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 36.

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.

[W]hen you are weary or perplexed ... the enemy works to make you grumble and murmur, look unto Jesus, trust in your Saviour. This is the only cure If you allow your mind to be occupied with these things, the enemy will see that you are kept busy. He puts his magnifying glass before your eyes, and mole hills of difficulty are made to appear as mountains. You need to understand how to repose in God. A wise heart, molded by the Holy Spirit, it is your privilege to have; and this is the foundation of all true happiness.

God would have you trust in His love, and be constantly guarding your soul by locking the gate of your thoughts, that they shall not become unmanageable; for when you allow your mind to indulge these thoughts of self-pity, the enemy comes in to suggest the most unkind and unreasonable things in regard to those who would do you good, and only good.

Listen to Jesus, follow His counsel and you will not go astray from the wise and mighty Counsellor, the only true Guide, the only One who can give you peace, happiness, and fullness of joy. Whatever others may think of us or may do to us,

it need not disturb this oneness with Christ, this fellowship of the Spirit. You know we cannot find rest anywhere out of Christ.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 298.

Sunday, July 18: Worn and Weary

[I]t is a perilous thing to praise or exalt men; for if one comes to lose sight of his entire dependence on God, and to trust to his own strength, he is sure to fall. Man is contending with foes who are stronger than he. ... It is impossible for us in our own strength to maintain the conflict; and whatever diverts the mind from God, whatever leads to self-exaltation or to self-dependence, is surely preparing the way for our overthrow. ...

It was the spirit of self-confidence and self-exaltation that prepared the way for David's fall. Flattery and the subtle allurements of power and luxury were not without effect upon him. ... All this tended to lessen David's sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. And instead of relying in humility upon the power of Jehovah, he began to trust to his own wisdom and might. As soon as Satan can separate the soul from God, the only Source of strength, he will seek to arouse the unholy desires of man's carnal nature. The work of the enemy is not abrupt; it is not, at the outset, sudden and startling; it is a secret undermining of the strongholds of principle. It begins in apparently small things—the neglect to be true to God and to rely upon Him wholly, the disposition to follow the customs and practices of the world.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 717.

... David yielded to Satan and brought upon his soul the stain of guilt. He, the Heaven-appointed leader of the nation, chosen by God to execute His law, himself trampled upon its precepts. ...

[N]ow, guilty and unrepentant, he did not ask help and guidance from Heaven, but sought to extricate himself from the dangers in which sin had involved him. Bathsheba, whose fatal beauty had proved a snare to the king, was the wife of Uriah the Hittite, one of David's bravest and most faithful officers. None could foresee what would be the result should the crime become known. The law of God pronounced the adulterer guilty of death, and the proud-spirited soldier, so shamefully wronged, might avenge himself by taking the life of the king or by exciting the nation to revolt.

Every effort which David made to conceal his guilt proved unavailing. He had betrayed himself into the power of Satan; danger surrounded him, dishonor more bitter than death was before him. There appeared but one way of escape, and in his desperation he was hurried on to add murder to adultery. He who had compassed the destruction of Saul was seeking to lead David also to ruin.

Though the temptations were different, they were alike in leading to transgression of God's law. David reasoned that if Uriah were slain by the hand of enemies in battle, the guilt of his death could not be traced home to the king, Bathsheba would be free to become David's wife, suspicion could be averted, and the royal honor would be maintained.

Monday, July 19: Wake-Up Call

Nathan the prophet was bidden to bear a message of reproof to David. It was a message terrible in its severity. To few sovereigns could such a reproof be given but at the price of certain death to the reprover. Nathan delivered the divine sentence unflinchingly, yet with such heaven-born wisdom as to engage the sympathies of the king, to arouse his conscience, and to call from his lips the sentence of death upon himself. Appealing to David as the divinely appointed guardian of his people's rights, the prophet repeated a story of wrong and oppression that demanded redress. ...

The prophet's rebuke touched the heart of David; conscience was aroused; his guilt appeared in all its enormity. His soul was bowed in penitence before God. With trembling lips he said, "I have sinned against the Lord." All wrong done to others reaches back from the injured one to God. David had committed a grievous sin, toward both Uriah and Bathsheba, and he keenly felt this. But infinitely greater was his sin against God.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 720, 722.

It was when the Israelites were in a condition of outward ease and security that they were led into sin. They failed to keep God ever before them, they neglected prayer and cherished a spirit of self-confidence. Ease and self-indulgence left the citadel of the soul unguarded, and debasing thoughts found entrance. It was the traitors within the walls that overthrew the strongholds of principle and betrayed Israel into the power of Satan. It is thus that Satan still seeks to compass the ruin of the soul. A long preparatory process, unknown to the world, goes on in the heart before the Christian commits open sin. The mind does not come down at once from purity and holiness to depravity, corruption, and crime. It takes time to degrade those formed in the image of God to the brutal or the satanic. By beholding we become changed. By the indulgence of impure thoughts man can so educate his mind that sin which he once loathed will become pleasant to him.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 459.

[S]tore the mind with useful knowledge, committing to memory portions of Scripture, tracing out the fulfillment of the prophecies, and learning the lessons which Christ gave to His disciples. ... In this way an effectual door will be closed against a thousand temptations. Had King David been engaged in some useful

employment, he would not have been guilty of the murder of Uriah. Satan is ever ready to employ him who does not employ himself. The mind which is continually striving to rise to the height of intellectual greatness will find no time for cheap, foolish thoughts, which are the parent of evil actions.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 412.

Tuesday, July 20: Forgiven and Forgotten?

This experience was most painful to David, but it was most beneficial. But for the mirror which Nathan held up before him, in which he so clearly recognized his own likeness, he would have gone on unconvicted of his heinous sin, and would have been ruined. The conviction of his guilt was the saving of his soul. He saw himself in another light, as the Lord saw him, and as long as he lived he repented of his sin. ...

Though David repented of his sin, and was forgiven and accepted by the Lord, he reaped the baleful harvest of the seed he himself had sown. His authority in his own household, his claim to respect and obedience from his sons, was weakened. A sense of his guilt kept him silent when he should have condemned sin; it made his arm feeble to execute justice in his house.

Those who, by pointing to the example of David, try to lessen the guilt of their own sins, should learn from the Bible record that the way of transgression is hard. Though like David they should turn from their evil course, the results of sin, even in this life, will be found bitter and hard to bear.—*Conflict and Courage*, pp. 179, 180.

We should remember that all make mistakes; even men and women who have had years of experience sometimes err; but God does not cast them off because of their errors; to every erring son and daughter of Adam He gives the privilege of another trial.

Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love, and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity. ...

Put away the suspicion that God's promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that they cannot find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them

live and not die.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 134.

True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as only to be brought before God, they may be wrongs that should be confessed before individuals who have suffered injury through them, or they may be of a general kind that should be made known in the congregation of the people. But all confession should be definite and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty. ...

Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 639, 640.

Wednesday, July 21: Something New

The prayer of David after his fall, illustrates the nature of true sorrow for sin. His repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his guilt; no desire to escape the judgment threatened, inspired his prayer. David saw the enormity of his transgression; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. He longed for the joy of holiness—to be restored to harmony and communion with God. This was the language of his soul: ... “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ... Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me” Psalm 51:7, 10.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 24, 25.

God’s forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David [has] the true conception of forgiveness when he. ... says, “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.” Psalm 103:12. ...

Let Christ, the divine Life, dwell in you and through you reveal the heaven-born love that will inspire hope in the hopeless and bring heaven’s peace to the sin-stricken heart. As we come to God, this is the condition which meets us at the threshold, that, receiving mercy from Him, we yield ourselves to reveal His grace to others.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 114.

Rest yourself wholly in the hands of Jesus. Contemplate His great love, and while you meditate upon His self-denial, His infinite sacrifice made in our behalf in order that we should believe in Him, your heart will be filled with holy joy, calm peace, and indescribable love. As we talk of Jesus, as we call upon Him in prayer, our confidence that He is our personal, loving Saviour will strengthen and His

character will appear more and more lovely. ... Wait upon the Lord in faith. The Lord draws out the soul in prayer, and gives us to feel His precious love. We have a nearness to Him, and can hold sweet communion with Him. We obtain distinct views of His tenderness and compassion, and our hearts are broken and melted with contemplation of the love that is given to us. ...

... Our peace is like a river, wave after wave of glory rolls into the heart, and indeed we sup with Jesus and He with us. We have a realizing sense of the love of God, and we rest in His love. No language can describe it, it is beyond knowledge. We are one with Christ, our life is hid with Christ in God. We have the assurance that when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. With strong confidence, we can call God our Father.—Letter 52, 1894.

Thursday, July 22: Reflectors of God's Light

Thus in a sacred song, [Psalm 51], to be sung in the public assemblies of his people, in the presence of the court—priests and judges, princes and men of war—and which would preserve to the latest generation the knowledge of his fall, the king of Israel recounted his sin, his repentance, and his hope of pardon through the mercy of God. Instead of endeavoring to conceal his guilt he desired that others might be instructed by the sad history of his fall.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 725.

We are to come to God in faith, and pour out our supplications before Him, believing that He will work in our behalf, and in the behalf of those we are seeking to save. We are to devote more time to earnest prayer. With the trusting faith of a little child, we are to come to our heavenly Father, telling Him of all our needs. He is always ready to pardon and help. The supply of divine wisdom is inexhaustible, and the Lord encourages us to draw largely from it. The longing that we should have for spiritual blessings is described in the words, “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.” We need a deeper soul-hunger for the rich gifts that heaven has to bestow. We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

O that we might have a consuming desire to know God by an experimental knowledge, to come into the audience chamber of the Most High, reaching up the hand of faith, and casting our helpless souls upon the One mighty to save. His loving kindness is better than life.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, pp. 1146, 1147.

Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the

voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness and be won to love and serve Him.

Christians are set as light bearers on the way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 115.

[No] man can impart that which he himself has not received. In the work of God, humanity can originate nothing. No man can by his own effort make himself a light bearer for God. ... It is the love of God continually transferred to man that enables him to impart light. Into the hearts of all who are united to God by faith the golden oil of love flows freely, to shine out again in good works, in real, heartfelt service for God.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 418.

Friday, July 23: For Further Reading

Conflict and Courage, "One Sin Leads to Another," p. 178;

Sons and Daughters of God, "We Learn of Christ," p. 68.

Lesson 5

“Come to Me ...”

Sabbath Afternoon, July 24

It is not work but overwork, without periods of rest, that breaks people down, endangering the life-forces. Those who overwork soon reach the place where they work in a hopeless way.

The work done to the Lord is done in cheerfulness and with courage. God wants us to bring spirit and life and hopefulness into our work. Brain workers should give due attention to every part of the human machinery, equalizing the taxation. Physical and mental effort, wisely combined, will keep the whole man in a condition that makes him acceptable to God.

Bring into the day's work hopefulness, courage, and amiability. Do not overwork. Better far leave undone some of the things planned for the day's work than to undo oneself and become overtaxed, losing the courage necessary for the performance of the tasks of the next day. Do not today violate the laws of nature, lest you lose your strength for the day to follow.—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, pp. 375, 376.

Christ longs to have care-worn, weary, oppressed human beings come to Him. He longs to give them the light and joy and peace that are to be found nowhere else. The veriest sinners are the objects of His deep, earnest pity and love. He sends His Holy Spirit to yearn over them with tenderness, seeking to draw them to Himself.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 225.

“Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

These words of comfort were spoken to the multitude that followed Jesus. The Saviour had said that only through Himself could men receive a knowledge of God. He had spoken of His disciples as the ones to whom a knowledge of heavenly things had been given. But He left none to feel themselves shut out from His care and love. All who labor and are heavy-laden may come unto Him.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331.

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. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here. But what is this compared with the hereafter? There “are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” Revelation 7:15-17.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 331, 332.

Sunday, July 25: “ ‘I Will Give You Rest’ ”

I feel urged by the Spirit of the Lord to tell you that now is your day of privilege, of trust, of blessing. Will you improve it? Are you working for the glory of God, or for selfish interests? Are you keeping before your mind’s eye brilliant prospects of worldly success, whereby you may obtain self-gratification and financial gain? If so, you will be most bitterly disappointed. But if you seek to live a pure and holy life, to learn daily in the school of Christ the lessons that He has invited you to learn, to be meek and lowly in heart, then you have a peace which no worldly circumstances can change.

A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. Uneasiness, dissatisfaction, and restlessness reveal the absence of the Saviour. If Jesus is brought into the life, that life will be filled with good and noble works for the Master. You will forget to be self-serving, and will live closer and still closer to the dear Saviour; your character will become Christlike, and all around you will take knowledge that you have been with Jesus and learned of Him.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 487.

Christ is the wellspring of life. That which many need is to have a clearer knowledge of Him; they need to be patiently and kindly, yet earnestly, taught how the whole being may be thrown open to the healing agencies of heaven. When the sunlight of God’s love illuminates the darkened chambers of the soul, restless weariness and dissatisfaction will cease, and satisfying joys will give vigor to the mind and health and energy to the body. ...

We are not to let the future, with its hard problems, its unsatisfying prospects, make our hearts faint, our knees tremble, our hands hang down. “Let him take hold of My strength,” says the Mighty One, “that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.” Isaiah 27:5. Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision. Whatever our situation, if we are doers of His word, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexity, we have a sure

Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 247, 248.

Have you, have I, fully comprehended the gracious call, “Come unto me”? He says, “Abide in me,” not Abide *with* Me. “Do understand My call. Come to Me to stay with Me.” He will freely bestow all blessings connected with Himself upon all who come to Him for life. ... You are privileged with His abiding presence in the place of a short-lived privilege that is not lasting as you engage in the duties of life. Will anxiety, perplexity, and cares drive you away from Christ? Are we less dependent upon God when in the workshop, in the field, in the marketplace? ... The Lord Jesus will abide with you and you with Him in every place.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 55.

Monday, July 26: “ ‘Take My Yoke Upon You’ ”

It was to speak to all men, and draw them across the gulf that sin had made, to unite finite man with the infinite God. It is the power of the cross alone that can separate man from the strong confederacy of sin. Christ gave Himself for the saving of the sinner. Those whose sins are forgiven, who love Jesus, will be united with Him. They will bear the yoke of Christ. This yoke is not to hamper them, not to make their religious life one of unsatisfying toil. No; the yoke of Christ is to be the very means by which the Christian life is to become one of pleasure and joy. The Christian is to be joyful in contemplation of that which the Lord has done in giving His only-begotten Son to die for the world, “that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—*Messages to Young People*, p. 138.

Jesus says, “Abide in Me.” These words convey the idea of rest, stability, confidence. Again He invites, “Come unto Me, ... and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. The words of the psalmist express the same thought: “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.” And Isaiah gives the assurance, “In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.” Psalm 37:7; Isaiah 30:15. This rest is not found in inactivity; for in the Saviour’s invitation the promise of rest is united with the call to labor: “Take My yoke upon you: ... and ye shall find rest.” Matthew 11:29. The heart that rests most fully upon Christ will be most earnest and active in labor for Him.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 71.

Jesus invites the weary and heavy-laden with promises of rest if they will come to Him. He invites them to exchange the galling yoke of selfishness and covetousness, which makes them slaves to mammon, for His yoke, which He declares is easy, and His burden, which is light. ... Those who refuse to accept the relief which Christ offers them, and continue to wear the galling yoke of selfishness, tasking their souls to the utmost in plans to accumulate money for

selfish gratification, have not experienced the peace and rest found in bearing the yoke of Christ and lifting the burdens of self-denial and disinterested benevolence which Christ has borne in their behalf.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 384.

Wearing the yoke with Christ, means to work in His lines, to be a copartner with Him in His sufferings and toils for lost humanity. It means to be a wise instructor of souls. We shall be what we are willing to be made by Christ in these precious hours of probation. We shall be the sort of a vessel that we allow ourselves to be molded into. We must unite with God in the molding and fashioning work, having our wills submitted to the divine will.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1092.

Tuesday, July 27: “ ‘I Am Gentle and Lowly in Heart’ ”

“Learn of Me,” says Jesus; “for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest.” We are to enter the school of Christ, to learn from Him meekness and lowliness. Redemption is that process by which the soul is trained for heaven. This training means a knowledge of Christ. It means emancipation from ideas, habits, and practices that have been gained in the school of the prince of darkness. The soul must be delivered from all that is opposed to loyalty to God.

In the heart of Christ, where reigned perfect harmony with God, there was perfect peace. He was never elated by applause, nor dejected by censure or disappointment. Amid the greatest opposition and the most cruel treatment, He was still of good courage. But many who profess to be His followers have an anxious, troubled heart, because they are afraid to trust themselves with God. They do not make a complete surrender to Him; for they shrink from the consequences that such a surrender may involve. Unless they do make this surrender, they cannot find peace.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.

You are safe only as, in perfect submission and obedience, you connect yourselves with Christ. The yoke is easy, for Christ carries the weight. As you lift the burden of the cross, it will become light; and that cross is to you a pledge of eternal life. It is the privilege of each to follow gladly after Christ, exclaiming at every step, “Thy gentleness hath made me great.” But if we would travel heavenward, we must take the Word of God as our lesson-book. In the words of inspiration we must read our lessons day by day.

The humiliation of the man Christ Jesus is incomprehensible to the human mind; but His divinity and His existence before the world was formed can never be doubted by those who believe the Word of God. The apostle Paul speaks of our Mediator, the only begotten Son of God, who in a state of glory was in the form

of God, the Commander of all the heavenly hosts, and who, when He clothed His divinity with humanity, took upon Him the form of a servant.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 81.

In consenting to become man, Christ manifested a humility that is the marvel of the heavenly intelligences. The act of consenting to be a man would be no humiliation were it not for the fact of Christ's exalted pre-existence. We must open our understanding to realize that Christ laid aside His royal robe, His kingly crown, His high command, and clothed His divinity with humanity, that He might meet man where he was, and bring to the human family moral power to become the sons and daughters of God. To redeem man, Christ became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.—*The Youth's Instructor*, October 13, 1898.

Wednesday, July 28: “ ‘For My Yoke Is Easy’ ”

“Take My yoke upon you,” Jesus says. The yoke is an instrument of service. Cattle are yoked for labor, and the yoke is essential that they may labor effectually. By this illustration Christ teaches us that we are called to service as long as life shall last. We are to take upon us His yoke, that we may be co-workers with Him.

The yoke that binds to service is the law of God. The great law of love revealed in Eden, proclaimed upon Sinai, and in the new covenant written in the heart, is that which binds the human worker to the will of God. If we were left to follow our own inclinations, to go just where our will would lead us, we should fall into Satan's ranks and become possessors of his attributes. Therefore God confines us to His will, which is high, and noble, and elevating. He desires that we shall patiently and wisely take up the duties of service. The yoke of service Christ Himself has borne in humanity. He said, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8. “I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.” John 6:38. Love for God, zeal for His glory, and love for fallen humanity, brought Jesus to earth to suffer and to die. This was the controlling power of His life. This principle He bids us adopt.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 329.

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.**

When the gospel is received in its purity and power, it is a cure for the maladies

that originated in sin. The Sun of Righteousness arises, “with healing in His wings.” Malachi 4:2. Not all this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. Fame, genius, talent—all are powerless to gladden the sorrowful heart or to restore the wasted life. The life of God in the soul is man’s only hope.

The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy,—joy in the Holy Spirit,—health-giving, life-giving joy.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 115.

Thursday, July 29: “ ‘My Burden Is Light’ ”

There are many whose hearts are aching under a load of care because they seek to reach the world’s standard. They have chosen its service, accepted its perplexities, adopted its customs. Thus their character is marred, and their life made a weariness. In order to gratify ambition and worldly desires, they wound the conscience, and bring upon themselves an additional burden of remorse. The continual worry is wearing out the life forces. Our Lord desires them to lay aside this yoke of bondage. He invites them to accept His yoke; He says, “My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” He bids them seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and His promise is that all things needful to them for this life shall be added. Worry is blind, and cannot discern the future; but Jesus sees the end from the beginning. In every difficulty He has His way prepared to bring relief. Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service and honor of God supreme will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before their feet.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.

Jesus invites you to lay down the yoke you have been bearing, which has been galling your neck, and take His yoke, which is easy, and His burden, which is light. How wearisome is the load of self-love, covetousness, pride, passion, jealousy, and evil surmising. Yet how closely do men clasp these curses, and how loath are they to give them up. Christ understands how grievous are these self-imposed burdens, and He invites us to lay them down. The heavy-laden and weary souls He invites to come to Him, and take His burden, which is light, in exchange for the burdens which they bind upon themselves. He says: “Ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” The requirements of our Saviour are all consistent and harmonious, and if cheerfully borne will bring peace and rest to the soul.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4,

p. 240.

It was to save sinners that Christ left His home in heaven and came to earth to suffer and to die. For this He toiled and agonized and prayed, until, heartbroken and deserted by those He came to save, He poured out His life on Calvary.

Many shrink from such a life as our Saviour lived. They feel that it requires too great a sacrifice to imitate the Pattern, to bring forth fruit in good works, and then patiently endure the pruning of God that they may bring forth more fruit. But when the Christian regards himself as only a humble instrument in the hands of Christ, and endeavors to faithfully perform every duty, relying upon the help which God has promised, then he will wear the yoke of Christ and find it easy; then he will bear burdens for Christ, and pronounce them light. He can look up with courage and with confidence, and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him" (2 Timothy 1:12).—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 82.

Friday, July 30: For Further Reading

My Life Today, "Being Good and Doing Good," p. 168;

Sons and Daughters of God, "He Is Near to All That Call Upon Him," p. 19.

Finding Rest in Family Ties

Sabbath Afternoon, July 31

Man is not what he might be and what it is God's will that he should be. The strong power of Satan upon the human race keeps them upon a low level; but this need not be so, else Enoch could not have become so elevated and ennobled as to walk with God. Man need not cease to grow intellectually and spiritually during his life-time. But the minds of many are so occupied with themselves and their own selfish interests as to leave no room for higher and nobler thoughts. ... Few realize that they have a constant work before them to develop forbearance, sympathy, charity, conscientiousness, and fidelity. ...

Men cannot love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves, and be as cold as icebergs. Not only do they rob God of the love due Him, but they rob their neighbor as well. Love is a plant of heavenly growth, and it must be fostered and nourished. Affectionate hearts, truthful, loving words, will make happy families and exert an elevating influence upon all who come within the sphere of their influence.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 547, 548.

When the truth of God is an abiding principle in the heart, it will be like a living spring. Attempts may be made to repress it, but it will gush forth in another place; it is there and cannot be repressed. The truth in the heart is a wellspring of life. It refreshes the weary and restrains vile thought and utterance.

Is there not enough taking place about us to show us the dangers that beset our path? Everywhere are seen wrecks of humanity, neglected family altars, broken-up families. There is a strange abandonment of principle, a lowering of the standard of morality; the sins are fast increasing which caused the judgments of God to be poured upon the earth in the Flood and in the destruction of Sodom by fire. We are nearing the end. God has borne long with the perversity of mankind, but their punishment is no less certain. Let those who profess to be the light of the world depart from all iniquity.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 600, 601.

The home in which the members are polite, courteous Christians exerts a far-reaching influence for good. Other families will mark the results attained by such a home, and will follow the example set, in their turn guarding the home against satanic influences. The angels of God will often visit the home in which the will of God bears sway. Under the power of divine grace such a home becomes a place of refreshing to worn, weary pilgrims. By watchful guarding, self is kept

from asserting itself. Correct habits are formed. There is a careful recognition of the rights of others. The faith that works by love and purifies the soul stands at the helm, presiding over the whole household. Under the hallowed influence of such a home, the principle of brotherhood laid down in the Word of God is more widely recognized and obeyed.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 258.

Sunday, August 1: Dysfunction at Home

The sin of Jacob, and the train of events to which it led, had not failed to exert an influence for evil—an influence that revealed its bitter fruit in the character and life of his sons. As these sons arrived at manhood they developed serious faults. The results of polygamy were manifest in the household. This terrible evil tends to dry up the very springs of love, and its influence weakens the most sacred ties. The jealousy of the several mothers had embittered the family relation, the children had grown up contentious and impatient of control, and the father's life was darkened with anxiety and grief.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 208.

Joseph listened to his father's instructions, and feared the Lord. He was more obedient to his father's righteous teachings than any of his brethren. He treasured his instructions, and with integrity of heart, loved to obey God. He was grieved at the wrong conduct of some of his brethren, and meekly entreated them to pursue a righteous course, and leave off their wicked acts. This only embittered them against him. His hatred of sin was such that he could not endure to see his brethren sinning against God. He laid the matter before his father, hoping that his authority might reform them. This exposure of their wrongs enraged his brethren against him. They had observed their father's strong love for Joseph, and were envious at him. Their envy grew into hatred, and finally to murder.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 138.

His mother being dead, [Joseph's] affections clung the more closely to the father, and Jacob's heart was bound up in this child of his old age. He "loved Joseph more than all his children."

But even this affection was to become a cause of trouble and sorrow. Jacob unwisely manifested his preference for Joseph, and this excited the jealousy of his other sons. The father's injudicious gift to Joseph of a costly coat, or tunic, ... excited a suspicion that he intended to pass by his elder children, to bestow the birthright upon the son of Rachel. Their malice was still further increased as the boy one day told them of a dream that he had had.

As the lad stood before his brothers, his beautiful countenance lighted up with the Spirit of Inspiration, they could not withhold their admiration; but they did

not choose to renounce their evil ways, and they hated the purity that reproved their sins. The same spirit that actuated Cain was kindling in their hearts.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 72.

The home that is beautified by love, sympathy, and tenderness is a place that angels love to visit, and where God is glorified. The influence of a carefully guarded Christian home in the years of child-hood and youth is the surest safeguard against the corruptions of the world. In the atmosphere of such a home the children will learn to love both their earthly parents and their heavenly Father.

Every Christian family should illustrate to the world the power and excellence of Christian influence. Parents should realize their accountability to keep their homes free from every taint of moral evil.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 19.

Monday, August 2: Choosing a New Direction

Joseph regarded his being sold into Egypt as the greatest calamity that could have befallen him; but he saw the necessity of trusting in God as he had never done when protected by his father's love. ...

But, in the providence of God, even this experience was to be a blessing to him. He had learned in a few hours that which years might not otherwise have taught him. His father, strong and tender as his love had been, had done him wrong by his partiality and indulgence. This unwise preference had angered his brothers and provoked them to the cruel deed that had separated him from his home. Its effects were manifest also in his own character. Faults had been encouraged that were now to be corrected.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 73.

Arriving in Egypt, Joseph was sold to Potiphar, captain of the king's guard, in whose service he remained for ten years. He was here exposed to temptations of no ordinary character. He was in the midst of idolatry. The worship of false gods was surrounded by all the pomp of royalty, supported by the wealth and culture of the most highly civilized nation then in existence. Yet Joseph preserved his simplicity and his fidelity to God. The sights and sounds of vice were all about him, but he was as one who saw and heard not. His thoughts were not permitted to linger upon forbidden subjects. The desire to gain the favor of the Egyptians could not cause him to conceal his principles. Had he attempted to do this, he would have been overcome by temptation; but he was not ashamed of the religion of his fathers, and he made no effort to hide the fact that he was a worshiper of Jehovah. Potiphar's confidence in Joseph increased daily, and he finally promoted him to be his steward, with full control over all his possessions.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 74.

There are thousands today echoing [Satan's] rebellious complaint against God. They do not see that to deprive man of the freedom of choice would be to rob him of his prerogative as an intelligent being, and make him a mere automaton. It is not God's purpose to coerce the will. Man was created a free moral agent. Like the inhabitants of all other worlds, he must be subjected to the test of obedience; but he is never brought into such a position that yielding to evil becomes a matter of necessity. No temptation or trial is permitted to come to him which he is unable to resist. God made such ample provision that man need never have been defeated in the conflict with Satan.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 331.

Tuesday, August 3: Finding True Self-Worth

The rabbis understood Christ's parable as applying to the publicans and sinners; but it has also a wider meaning. By the lost sheep Christ represents not only the individual sinner but the one world that has apostatized and has been ruined by sin. This world is but an atom in the vast dominions over which God presides, yet this little fallen world—the one lost sheep—is more precious in His sight than are the ninety and nine that went not astray from the fold. Christ, the loved Commander in the heavenly courts, stooped from His high estate, laid aside the glory that He had with the Father, in order to save the one lost world. For this He left the sinless worlds on high, the ninety and nine that loved Him, and came to this earth, to be “wounded for our transgressions” and “bruised for our iniquities.” (Isaiah 53:5.) God gave Himself in His Son that He might have the joy of receiving back the sheep that was lost.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” 1 John 3:1.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 190, 191.

Christ and Him crucified should become the theme of our thoughts and stir the deepest emotions of our souls. The true followers of Christ will appreciate the great salvation which He has wrought for them; and wherever He leads the way, they will follow. They will consider it a privilege to bear whatever burdens Christ may lay upon them. It is through the cross alone that we can estimate the worth of the human soul. Such is the value of men for whom Christ died that the Father is satisfied with the infinite price which He pays for the salvation of man in yielding up His own Son to die for their redemption. What wisdom, mercy, and love in its fullness are here manifested! The worth of man is known only by going to Calvary. In the mystery of the cross of Christ we can place an estimate upon man.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 634.

Our God is an ever-present help in every time of need. He is perfectly

acquainted with the most secret thoughts of our heart, with all the intents and purposes of our souls. When we are in perplexity, even before we open to Him our distress, He is making arrangements for our deliverance. Our sorrow is not unnoticed. He always knows much better than we do, just what is necessary for the good of His children, and He leads us as we would choose to be led if we could discern our own hearts and see our necessities and perils, as God sees them. But finite beings seldom know themselves. They do not understand their own weakness. God knows them better than they know themselves, and He understands how to lead them.—*Our High Calling*, p. 316.

Wednesday, August 4: Doing Relationships God's Way

How fierce was the assault upon Joseph's morals. It came from one of influence, the most likely to lead astray. Yet how promptly and firmly was it resisted. He suffered for his virtue and integrity, for she who would lead him astray revenged herself upon the virtue she could not subvert, and by her influence caused him to be cast into prison, by charging him with a foul wrong. Here Joseph suffered because he would not yield his integrity. He had placed his reputation and interest in the hands of God. And although he was suffered to be afflicted for a time, to prepare him to fill an important position, yet God safely guarded that reputation that was blackened by a wicked accuser, and afterward, in His own good time, caused it to shine. God made even the prison the way to his elevation. Virtue will in time bring its own reward. The shield which covered Joseph's heart was the fear of God, which caused him to be faithful and just to his master and true to God.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 102.

Just to the degree in which the word of God is received and obeyed will it impress with its potency and touch with its life every spring of action, every phase of character. It will purify every thought, regulate every desire. Those who make God's word their trust will quit themselves like men and be strong. They will rise above all baser things into an atmosphere free from defilement.

When man is in fellowship with God, that unswerving purpose which preserved Joseph and Daniel amidst the corruption of heathen courts will make his a life of unsullied purity. His robes of character will be spotless. In his life the light of Christ will be undimmed. The bright and morning Star will appear shining steadfastly above him in changeless glory.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 136.

The Saviour's lesson, "Resist not him that is evil," was a hard saying for the revengeful Jews, and they murmured against it among themselves. But Jesus now made a still stronger declaration:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate

thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." ...

The children of God are those who are partakers of His nature. It is not earthly rank, nor birth, nor nationality, nor religious privilege, which proves that we are members of the family of God; it is love, a love that embraces all humanity. Even sinners whose hearts are not utterly closed to God's Spirit, will respond to kindness; while they may give hate for hate, they will also give love for love. But it is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of the Highest reveal their high estate.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 73, 75.

Thursday, August 5: The Great Controversy, Up Close and Personal

Joseph was one of the few who could withstand temptation. He showed that he had an eye single to the glory of God. He evidenced a lofty regard for God's will, alike when occupying the prisoner's cell and when standing next the throne. He carried his religion with him wherever he went and in whatever situation he was placed. True religion has an all-pervading power. It gives tone to everything man does. You need not go out of the world in order to be a Christian, but you may carry your religion, with all its sanctifying influences, into all you do and say. You may discharge well the duties belonging to the situation where God has placed you, by keeping the heart fixed upon heavenly things.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 124.

Life in this stormy world, where moral darkness triumphs over truth and virtue, will be to the Christian a continual conflict. He will find that he must keep the armor on, for he will have to fight against forces that never tire and foes that never sleep. We shall find ourselves beset with countless temptations, and we must find strength in Christ to overcome them or be overcome by them and lose our souls. We have a great and solemn work to do, and how terrible will be our loss if we fail.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 453.

There are many who do not understand the conflict that is going on between Christ and Satan over the souls of men. They do not realize that if they would stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel they must be willing to be partakers of His conflicts and wage a determined war against the powers of darkness.

When thinking on the conflict, Paul writes to his Ephesian brethren exhorting

them to ... "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (verses 10-13).

The gaining of eternal life will ever involve a struggle, a conflict. We are continually to be found fighting the good fight of faith. We are soldiers of Christ; and those who enlist in His army are expected to do difficult work, work which will tax their energies to the utmost. ...

Victories are not gained by ceremonies or display but by simple obedience to the highest General, the Lord God of heaven. He who trusts in this Leader will never know defeat. Obedience to God is liberty from the thralldom of sin, deliverance from human passion and impulse. Man may stand conqueror of himself, conqueror of his own inclinations, conqueror of principalities and powers, and of the "rulers of the darkness of this world," and of "spiritual wickedness in high places."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 259.

Friday, August 6: For Further Reading

The Upward Look, "Get Acquainted With God," p. 248;

In Heavenly Places, "No Exemption From Sorrow," p. 268.

Rest, Relationships, and Healing

Sabbath Afternoon, August 7

For those who are convicted of sin and weighed down with a sense of their unworthiness, there are lessons of faith and encouragement in this record. The Bible faithfully presents the result of Israel's apostasy; but it portrays also the deep humiliation and repentance, the earnest devotion and generous sacrifice, that marked their seasons of return to the Lord.

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.

The love of God is something more than a mere negation; it is a positive and active principle, a living spring, ever flowing to bless others. If the love of Christ dwells in us, we shall not only cherish no hatred toward our fellows, but we shall seek in every way to manifest love toward them.

When one who professes to serve God wrongs or injures a brother, he misrepresents the character of God to that brother, and the wrong must be confessed, he must acknowledge it to be sin, in order to be in harmony with God. Our brother may have done us a greater wrong than we have done him, but this does not lessen our responsibility. If when we come before God we remember that another has aught against us, we are to leave our gift of prayer, of thanksgiving, of freewill offering, and go to the brother with whom we are at variance, and in humility confess our own sin and ask to be forgiven.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 59.

If we have in any manner defrauded or injured our brother, we should make restitution. If we have unwittingly borne false witness, if we have misstated his words, if we have injured his influence in any way, we should go to the ones with whom we have conversed about him, and take back all our injurious misstatements.

If matters of difficulty between brethren were not laid open before others, but frankly spoken of between themselves in the spirit of Christian love, how much evil might be prevented! How many roots of bitterness whereby many are defiled would be destroyed, and how closely and tenderly might the followers of Christ be united in His love!

Sunday, August 8: Facing the Past

Hearing of the abundant provision made by the king of Egypt, ten of Jacob's sons journeyed thither to purchase grain. On their arrival they were directed to the king's deputy, and with other applicants they came to present themselves before the ruler of the land. And they "bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth." ... As Joseph saw his brothers stooping and making obeisance, his dreams came to his mind, and the scenes of the past rose vividly before him. His keen eye, surveying the group, discovered that Benjamin was not among them. Had he also fallen a victim to the treacherous cruelty of those savage men? He determined to learn the truth. ...

... He wished to learn if they possessed the same haughty spirit as when he was with them, and also to draw from them some information in regard to their home; yet he well knew how deceptive their statements might be.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 224, 225.

The servants of Christ are not to act out the dictates of the natural heart. They need to have close communion with God, lest, under provocation, self rise up, and they pour forth a torrent of words that are unbefitting, that are not as dew or the still showers that refresh the withering plants. This is what Satan wants them to do; for these are his methods. It is the dragon that is wroth; it is the spirit of Satan that is revealed in anger and accusing. But God's servants are to be representatives of Him. He desires them to deal only in the currency of heaven, the truth that bears His own image and superscription. The power by which they are to overcome evil is the power of Christ. The glory of Christ is their strength. They are to fix their eyes upon His loveliness. ... And the spirit that is kept gentle under provocation will speak more effectively in favor of the truth than will any argument, however forcible.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 353.

Christ is our only hope. We may look to Him, for He is our Saviour. We may take Him at His word, and make Him our dependence. He knows just the help we need, and we can safely put our trust in Him. If we depend on merely human wisdom to guide us, we shall find ourselves on the losing side. But we may come direct to the Lord Jesus, for He has said: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 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." It is

our privilege to be taught of Him. ...

We have a divine audience to which to present our requests. Then let nothing prevent us from offering our petitions in the name of Jesus, believing with unwavering faith that God hears us, and that He will answer us. Let us carry our difficulties to God, humbling ourselves before Him.—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 486, 487.

Monday, August 9: Setting the Stage

[Joseph's] brothers stood motionless, dumb with fear and amazement. The ruler of Egypt their brother Joseph, whom they had envied and would have murdered, and finally sold as a slave! All their ill treatment of him passed before them. They remembered how they had despised his dreams and had labored to prevent their fulfillment. ...

Seeing their confusion, he said kindly, "Come near to me, I pray you;" and as they came near, he continued, "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." Feeling that they had already suffered enough for their cruelty toward him, he nobly sought to banish their fears and lessen the bitterness of their self-reproach. ...

... "And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him." They humbly confessed their sin and entreated his forgiveness. They had long suffered anxiety and remorse, and now they rejoiced that he was still alive.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 230, 231.

Although Joseph was exalted as a ruler over all the land, yet he did not forget God. He knew that he was a stranger in a strange land, separated from his father and his brethren, which often caused him sadness, but he firmly believed that God's hand had overruled his course, to place him in an important position. And depending on God continually, he performed all the duties of his office, as ruler over the land of Egypt with faithfulness. ...

[When his brothers] humbly confessed their wrongs which they had committed against Joseph, and entreated his forgiveness, [they] greatly rejoiced to find that he was alive; for they had suffered remorse, and great distress of mind, since their cruelty toward him. And now as they knew that they were not guilty of his blood, their troubled minds were relieved.

Joseph gladly forgave his brethren, and sent them away abundantly provided

with provisions, and carriages, and everything necessary for the removal of their father's family and their own to Egypt. Joseph gave his brother Benjamin more valuable presents than to his other brethren. As he sent them away he charged them, "See that ye fall not out by the way." He was afraid that they might enter into a dispute, and charge upon one another the cause of their guilt in regard to their cruel treatment of himself. With joy they returned to their father.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 152, 167.

Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. You may say, I am sinful, very sinful. You may be; but the worse you are, the more you need Jesus. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 568.

Tuesday, August 10: Forgive and Forget?

Peter had come to Christ with the question, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" ... Christ taught that we are never to become weary of forgiving. Not "Until seven times," He said, "but, Until seventy times seven."

Then He showed the true ground upon which forgiveness is to be granted and the danger of cherishing an unforgiving spirit. In a parable He told of a king's dealing with the officers who administered the affairs of his government. Some of these officers were in receipt of vast sums of money belonging to the state. As the king investigated their administration of this trust, there was brought before him one man whose account showed a debt to his Lord for the immense sum of ten thousand talents. He had nothing to pay, and according to the custom, the king ordered him to be sold, with all that he had, that payment might be made. But the terrified man fell at his feet and besought him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. ...

The pardon granted by this king represents a divine forgiveness of all sin. Christ is represented by the king, who, moved with compassion, forgave the debt of his servant. Man was under the condemnation of the broken law. He could not save himself, and for this reason Christ came to this world, clothed His divinity with humanity, and gave His life, the just for the unjust. He gave Himself for our sins, and to every soul He freely offers the blood-bought pardon.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 243, 244.

If your brethren err, you are to forgive them. When they come to you with confession, you should not say, I do not think they are humble enough. I do not

think they feel their confession. What right have you to judge them, as if you could read the heart? The word of God says, "If he repent, forgive him. And if he trespasses against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Luke 17:3, 4. ...

Give the erring one no occasion for discouragement. Suffer not a Pharisaical hardness to come in and hurt your brother. Let no bitter sneer rise in mind or heart. Let no tinge of scorn be manifest in the voice. If you speak a word of your own, if you take an attitude of indifference, or show suspicion or distrust, it may prove the ruin of a soul. He needs a brother with the Elder Brother's heart of sympathy to touch his heart of humanity. Let him feel the strong clasp of a sympathizing hand, and hear the whisper, Let us pray. God will give a rich experience to you both. Prayer unites us with one another and with God. — *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 249, 250.

Wednesday, August 11: Making it Practical

The cross of Calvary appeals to us in power, affording a reason why we should love our Saviour, and why we should make Him first and last and best in everything. We should take our fitting place in humble penitence at the foot of the cross. Here, as we see our Saviour in agony, the Son of God dying, the just for the unjust, we may learn lessons of meekness and lowliness of mind. Behold Him who with one word could summon legions of angels to His assistance, a subject of jest and merriment, of reviling and hatred. He gives Himself a sacrifice for sin. When reviled, He threatens not; when falsely accused, He opens not His mouth. He prays on the cross for His murderers. He is dying for them; He is paying an infinite price for every one of them. He bears the penalty of man's sins without a murmur. — *Lift Him Up*, p. 233.

Heaven viewed with grief and amazement Christ hanging upon the cross, blood flowing from His wounded temples, and sweat tinged with blood standing upon His brow. From His hands and feet the blood fell, drop by drop, upon the rock drilled for the foot of the cross. The wounds made by the nails gaped as the weight of His body dragged upon His hands. His labored breath grew quick and deep, as His soul panted under the burden of the sins of the world. All heaven was filled with wonder when the prayer of Christ was offered in the midst of His terrible suffering, — "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 760.

The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship Him in spirit and in truth. Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was

spiritual in its nature. ... He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who “so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

He urged upon men the necessity of prayer, repentance, confession, and the abandonment of sin. He taught them honesty, forbearance, mercy, and compassion, enjoining upon them to love not only those who loved them, but those who hated them, who treated them despitefully. In this He was revealing to them the character of the Father, who is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and full of goodness and truth. Those who accepted His teaching were under the guardian care of angels, who were commissioned to strengthen, to enlighten, that the truth might renew and sanctify the soul. — *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 177.

Thursday, August 12: Finding Rest After Forgiveness

Called from a dungeon, a servant of captives, a prey of ingratitude and malice, Joseph proved true to his allegiance to the God of heaven. And all Egypt marveled at the wisdom of the man whom God instructed. Pharaoh made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: to bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.” Psalm 105:21, 22. Not to the people of Egypt alone, but to all the nations connected with that powerful kingdom, God manifested Himself through Joseph. He desired to make him a light bearer to all peoples, and He placed him next the throne of the world’s greatest empire, that the heavenly illumination might extend far and near. By his wisdom and justice, by the purity and benevolence of his daily life, by his devotion to the interests of the people,—and that people a nation of idolaters,—Joseph was a representative of Christ. In their benefactor, to whom all Egypt turned with gratitude and praise, that heathen people, and through them all the nations with which they were connected, were to behold the love of their Creator and Redeemer.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 219.

The heart where love reigns will be guided to a gentle, courteous, compassionate course of conduct toward others, whether they suit our fancy or not, whether they respect us or treat us ill. Love is an active principle; it keeps the good of others continually before us, thus restraining us from inconsiderate actions lest we fail of our object in winning souls to Christ. Love seeks not its own. It will not prompt men to seek their own ease and indulgence of self. It is the respect we render to I that so often hinders the growth of love. ...

Another striking point in the character of Joseph, worthy of imitation by all ... is

his deep filial reverence. As he meets his father with tears streaming from his eyes, he hangs upon his neck in an affectionate, loving embrace. He seems to feel that he cannot do enough for his parent's comfort and watches over his declining years with a love as tender as a mother's. No pains is spared to show his respect and love upon all occasions. Joseph is an example of what a [son] should be.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 123, 124.

[If] we come to God, feeling helpless and dependent, as we really are, and in humble, trusting faith make known our wants to Him whose knowledge is infinite, who sees everything in creation, and who governs everything by His will and word, He can and will attend to our cry, and will let light shine into our hearts. Through sincere prayer we are brought into connection with the mind of the Infinite. We may have no remarkable evidence at the time that the face of our Redeemer is bending over us in compassion and love, but this is even so. We may not feel His visible touch, but His hand is upon us in love and pitying tenderness.

When we come to ask mercy and blessing from God we should have a spirit of love and forgiveness in our ... hearts.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 96, 97.

Friday, August 13: For Further Reading

Gospel Workers, "How God Trains His Workers," pp. 169, 170;

Sons and Daughters of God, "In Forgiveness," p. 153.

Free to Rest

Sabbath Afternoon, August 14

We no longer mark out a way nor seek to bring the Lord to our wishes. If the life of the sick can glorify Him, we pray that they may live; nevertheless, not as we will but as He will. Our faith can be just as firm, and more reliable, by committing the desire to the all-wise God, and, without feverish anxiety, in perfect confidence, trusting all to Him. We have the promise. We know that He hears us if we ask according to His will. Our petitions must not take the form of a command, but of intercession for Him to do the things we desire of Him. When the church are united, they will have strength and power; but when part of them are united to the world, and many are given to covetousness, which God abhors, He can do but little for them. Unbelief and sin shut them away from God. We are so weak that we cannot bear much spiritual prosperity, lest we take the glory, and accredit goodness and righteousness to ourselves as the reason of the signal blessing of God, when it was all because of the great mercy and lovingkindness of our compassionate heavenly Father, and not because any good was found in us.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 149.

In praying for the sick, it should be remembered that “we know not what we should pray for as we ought.” [Romans 8:26.] We do not know whether the blessing we desire will be best or not. Therefore our prayers should include this thought: “Lord, Thou knowest every secret of the soul. Thou art acquainted with these persons. Jesus, their Advocate, gave His life for them. His love for them is greater than ours can possibly be. If, therefore, it is for Thy glory and the good of the afflicted ones, we ask, in the name of Jesus, that they may be restored to health. If it be not Thy will that they may be restored, we ask that Thy grace may comfort and Thy presence sustain them in their sufferings.”

God knows the end from the beginning. He is acquainted with the hearts of all men. He reads every secret of the soul. He knows whether those for whom prayer is offered would or would not be able to endure the trials that would come upon them should they live. He knows whether their lives would be a blessing or a curse to themselves and to the world. This is one reason why, while presenting our petitions with earnestness, we should say, “Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.” [Luke 22:42.] Jesus added these words of submission to the wisdom and will of God when in the garden of Gethsemane He pleaded, “O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.” [Matthew 26:39.] And if they were appropriate for Him, the Son of God, how much more are they becoming on the lips of finite, erring mortals!—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 217, 218.

Sunday, August 15: Healing Rest

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the unwearied servant of man's necessity. He "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," that He might minister to every need of humanity. Matthew 8:17. The burden of disease and wretchedness and sin He came to remove. It was His mission to bring to men complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character.

Varied were the circumstances and needs of those who besought His aid, and none who came to Him went away unhelped. From Him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole.

The Saviour's work was not restricted to any time or place. His compassion knew no limit. ... In every city, every town, every village, through which He passed, He laid His hands upon the afflicted ones and healed them. Wherever there were hearts ready to receive His message, He comforted them with the assurance of their heavenly Father's love.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 17.

Many of those who came to Christ for help had brought disease upon themselves, yet He did not refuse to heal them. And when virtue from Him entered into these souls, they were convicted of sin, and many were healed of their spiritual disease as well as of their physical maladies.

Among these was the paralytic at Capernaum. Like the leper, this paralytic had lost all hope of recovery. His disease was the result of a sinful life, and his sufferings were embittered by remorse. In vain he had appealed to the Pharisees and doctors for relief; they pronounced him incurable, they denounced him as a sinner and declared that he would die under the wrath of God. ...

His great desire was relief from the burden of sin. He longed to see Jesus and receive the assurance of forgiveness and peace with heaven. Then he would be content to live or to die, according to God's will.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 73, 74.

Why is it that men are so unwilling to trust Him who created man, and who can by a touch, a word, a look, heal all manner of disease? Who is more worthy of our confidence than the One who made so great a sacrifice for our redemption? Our Lord has given us definite instruction through the apostle James as to our duty in case of sickness. When human help fails, God will be the helper of His people. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the

prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.” If the professed followers of Christ would, with purity of heart, exercise ... faith in the promises of God ... they would realize in soul and body the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vo. 5, p. 196.

Monday, August 16: Root Treatment

The Saviour looked upon the mournful countenance and saw the pleading eyes fixed upon Him. Well He knew the longing of that burdened soul. It was Christ who had brought conviction to his conscience when he was yet at home. When he repented of his sins and believed in the power of Jesus to make him whole, the mercy of the Saviour had blessed his heart. Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a conviction that He was the sinner’s only helper, and had seen it grow stronger with every effort to come into His presence. It was Christ who had drawn the sufferer to Himself. Now, in words that fell like music on the listener’s ear, the Saviour said, “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.” Matthew 9:2.

The burden of guilt rolls from the sick man’s soul. He cannot doubt. Christ’s words reveal His power to read the heart. Who can deny His power to forgive sins? Hope takes the place of despair, and joy of oppressive gloom. The man’s physical pain is gone, and his whole being is transformed. Making no further request, he lay in peaceful silence, too happy for words.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 75, 76.

The paralytic found in Christ healing for both the soul and the body. The spiritual healing was followed by physical restoration. This lesson should not be overlooked. There are today thousands suffering from physical disease, who, like the paralytic, are longing for the message, “Thy sins are forgiven.” The burden of sin, with its unrest and unsatisfied desires, is the foundation of their maladies. They can find no relief until they come to the Healer of the soul. The peace which He alone can give, would impart vigor to the mind, and health to the body.

Jesus came to “destroy the works of the devil.” “In Him was life,” and He says, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” He is “a quickening spirit.” 1 John 3:8; John 1:4; 10:10; 1 Corinthians 15:45. And He still has the same life-giving power as when on earth He healed the sick, and spoke forgiveness to the sinner. He “forgiveth all thine iniquities,” He “healeth all thy diseases.” Psalm 103:3.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 270.

If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for

which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexities, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard saying, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." John 14:6. "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper." Psalm 72:12.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 173.

Tuesday, August 17: Running Away

[Elijah] had hoped that after this display of God's power, Jezebel would no longer have influence over the mind of Ahab, and that there would be a speedy reform throughout Israel. All day on Carmel's height he had toiled without food. Yet when he guided the chariot of Ahab to the gate of Jezreel, his courage was strong, despite the physical strain under which he had labored.

But a reaction such as frequently follows high faith and glorious success was pressing upon Elijah. He feared that the reformation begun on Carmel might not be lasting; and depression seized him. He had been exalted to Pisgah's top; now he was in the valley. While under the inspiration of the Almighty, he had stood the severest trial of faith; but in this time of discouragement, with Jezebel's threat sounding in his ears, and Satan still apparently prevailing through the plotting of this wicked woman, he lost his hold on God. He had been exalted above measure, and the reaction was tremendous. Forgetting God, Elijah fled on and on, until he found himself in a dreary waste, alone. ... A fugitive, far from the dwelling places of men, his spirits crushed by bitter disappointment, he desired never again to look upon the face of man. At last, utterly exhausted, he fell asleep.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 160, 161.

Keep looking unto Jesus, offering up silent prayers in faith, taking hold of His strength, whether you have any manifest feeling or not. Go right forward as if every prayer offered was lodged in the throne of God and responded to by the One whose promises never fail. Go right along, singing and making melody to God in your hearts, even when depressed by a sense of weight and sadness. I tell you as one who knows, light will come, joy will be ours, and the mists and clouds will be rolled back. ...

We should daily dedicate ourselves to God and believe He accepts the sacrifice, without examining whether we have that degree of feeling that corresponds with our faith. Feeling and faith are as distinct as the east is from the west. Faith is not dependent on feeling. We must earnestly cry to God in faith, feeling or no feeling, and then live our prayers. Our assurance and evidence is God's word, and after we have asked we must believe without doubting.—*Selected*

Messages, book 2, pp. 242, 243.

Into the experience of all there come times of keen disappointment and utter discouragement—days when sorrow is the portion, and it is hard to believe that God is still the kind benefactor of His earthborn children; days when troubles harass the soul, till death seems preferable to life. It is then that many lose their hold on God and are brought into the slavery of doubt, the bondage of unbelief. Could we at such times discern with spiritual insight the meaning of God's providences we should see angels seeking to save us from ourselves, striving to plant our feet upon a foundation more firm than the everlasting hills, and new faith, new life, would spring into being.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 162.

Wednesday, August 18: Too Tired to Run

[F]or those also who mourn in trial and sorrow there is comfort. The bitterness of grief and humiliation is better than the indulgences of sin. Through affliction God reveals to us the plague spots in our characters, that by His grace we may overcome our faults. Unknown chapters in regard to ourselves are opened to us, and the test comes, whether we will accept the reproof and the counsel of God. When brought into trial, we are not to fret and complain. We should not rebel, or worry ourselves out of the hand of Christ. We are to humble the soul before God.

The ways of the Lord are obscure to him who desires to see things in a light pleasing to himself. They appear dark and joyless to our human nature. But God's ways are ways of mercy and the end is salvation. Elijah knew not what he was doing when in the desert he said that he had had enough of life, and prayed that he might die. The Lord in His mercy did not take him at his word. There was yet a great work for Elijah to do; and when his work was done, he was not to perish in discouragement and solitude in the wilderness. Not for him the descent into the dust of death, but the ascent in glory, with the convoy of celestial chariots, to the throne on high.

God's word for the sorrowing is, "I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners." "I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow." Isaiah 57:18; Jeremiah 31:13.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 301.

Whenever one is encompassed with clouds, perplexed by circumstances, or afflicted by poverty or distress, Satan is at hand to tempt and annoy. He attacks our weak points of character. He seeks to shake our confidence in God, who suffers such a condition of things to exist. We are tempted to distrust God, to question His love. Often the tempter comes to us as he came to Christ, arraying

before us our weakness and infirmities. He hopes to discourage the soul and to break our hold upon God. Then he is sure of his prey. If we would meet him as Jesus did, we should escape many a defeat. By parleying with the enemy we give him an advantage.

Jesus gained the victory through submission and faith in God, and by the apostle He says to us, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). We cannot save ourselves from the tempter's power; he has conquered humanity, and when we try to stand in our own strength, we shall become a prey to his devices; but "the name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Satan trembles and flees before the weakest soul who finds refuge in that mighty name.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 256.

Thursday, August 19: Rest and More

Those who have not borne weighty responsibilities, or who have not been accustomed to feel very deeply, cannot understand the feelings of Elijah and are not prepared to give him the tender sympathy he deserves. God knows and can read the heart's sore anguish under temptation and sore conflict.

As Elijah sleeps under the juniper tree, a soft touch and pleasant voice arouse him. He starts at once in his terror, as if to flee, as though the enemy who was in pursuit of his life had indeed found him. But in the pitying face of love bending over him he sees, not the face of an enemy, but of a friend. An angel has been sent with food from heaven to sustain the faithful servant of God. ... Elijah was strengthened and pursued his journey to Horeb. He was in a wilderness. At night he lodged in a cave for protection from the wild beasts. ...

Elijah, although a prophet of God, was a man subject to like passions as we are. We have the frailties of mortal feelings to contend with. But if we trust in God, He will never leave nor forsake us. Under all circumstances we may have firm trust in God, that He will never leave nor forsake us while we preserve our integrity.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 291, 292.

Often prayer is solicited for the afflicted, the sorrowful, the discouraged; and this is right. We should pray that God will shed light into the darkened mind and comfort the sorrowful heart. But God answers prayer for those who place themselves in the channel of His blessings. While we offer prayer for these sorrowful ones, we should encourage them to try to help those more needy than themselves. The darkness will be dispelled from their own hearts as they try to help others. As we seek to comfort others with the comfort wherewith we are comforted, the blessing comes back to us.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 256.

You must not sink down discouraged. The fainthearted will be made strong; the desponding will be made to hope. God has a tender care for His people. His ear is open unto their cry. I have no fears for God's cause. He will take care of His own cause. Our duty is to fill our lot and place, live ... humble at the foot of the cross, and live faithful, holy lives before Him. While we do this we shall not be ashamed, but our souls will confide in God with holy boldness. ...

... We know in whom we believe. We have not run in vain, neither labored in vain. Jesus knows us. A reckoning day is coming and all will be judged according to the deeds that are done in the body.

It is true the world is dark. Opposition may wax strong. The trifler and scorner may grow bolder and harder in their iniquity. Yet, for all this, we will not be moved. We have not run as uncertain. No, no. My heart is fixed, trusting in God. ... Jesus said He would go away and prepare mansions for us, that where He is we may be also. Praise God for this. My heart leaps with joy at the cheering prospect.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 351.

Friday, August 20: For Further Reading

My Life Today, "A Merry Heart Makes a Cheerful Countenance," p. 177;

Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, "Important Lessons From Elijah," vol. 2, pp. 1034, 1035.

The Rhythms of Rest

Sabbath Afternoon, August 21

Christ sought to draw the attention of His disciples away from the artificial to the natural: "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith!" Why did not our heavenly Father carpet the earth with brown or gray? He chose the color that was most restful, the most acceptable to the senses. How it cheers the heart and refreshes the weary spirit to look upon the earth, clad in its garments of living green! Without this covering the air would be filled with dust, and the earth would appear like a desert.

Every spire of grass, every opening bud and blooming flower is a token of God's love, and should teach us a lesson of faith and trust in Him. Christ calls our attention to their natural loveliness, and assures us that the most gorgeous array of the greatest king that ever wielded an earthly scepter was not equal to that worn by the humblest flower. You who are sighing for the artificial splendor which wealth alone can purchase, for costly paintings, furniture, and dress, listen to the voice of the divine Teacher. He points you to the flower of the field, the simple design of which cannot be equaled by human skill.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 75.

Christ has linked His teaching, not only with the day of rest, but with the week of toil. He has wisdom for him who drives the plow and sows the seed. In the plowing and sowing, the tilling and reaping, He teaches us to see an illustration of His work of grace in the heart. So in every line of useful labor and every association of life, He desires us to find a lesson of divine truth. Then our daily toil will no longer absorb our attention and lead us to forget God; it will continually remind us of our Creator and Redeemer. The thought of God will run like a thread of gold through all our homely cares and occupations. For us the glory of His face will again rest upon the face of nature. We shall ever be learning new lessons of heavenly truth, and growing into the image of His purity. Thus shall we "be taught of the Lord"; and in the lot wherein we are called, we shall "abide with God." Isaiah 54:13; 1 Corinthians 7:24.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 25, 26.

All the heavenly beings are in constant activity, and the Lord Jesus, in His lifework, has given an example for everyone. He went about "doing good." God has established the law of obedient action. Silent but ceaseless, the objects of His creation do their appointed work. The ocean is in constant motion. The springing grass, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, does its

errand, clothing the fields with beauty. The leaves are stirred to motion, and yet no hand is seen to touch them. The sun, moon, and stars are useful and glorious in fulfilling their mission.—*My Life Today*, p. 130.

Sunday, August 22: Prelude to Rest

The earth came forth from the hand of the Creator exceedingly beautiful. There were mountains and hills and plains; and interspersed among them were rivers and bodies of water. The earth was not one extensive plain, but the monotony of the scenery was broken by hills and mountains, not high and ragged as they now are, but regular and beautiful in shape. The bare, high rocks were never seen upon them, but lay beneath the surface, answering as bones to the earth. The waters were regularly dispersed. The hills, mountains, and very beautiful plains were adorned with plants and flowers, and tall, majestic trees of every description, which were many times larger and much more beautiful than trees now are. The air was pure and healthful, and the earth seemed like a noble palace. Angels beheld and rejoiced at the wonderful and beautiful works of God.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 47.

Man was the crowning act of the creation of God, made in the image of God, and designed to be a counterpart of God; but Satan has labored to obliterate the image of God in man, and to imprint upon him his own image. Man is very dear to God, because he was formed in His own image. ...

In order to understand the value which God places upon man, we need to comprehend the plan of redemption, the costly sacrifice which our Saviour made to save the human race from eternal ruin. Jesus died to regain possession of the one pearl of great price. ...

The Lord gave His only begotten Son to ransom us from sin. We are His workmanship, we are His representatives in the world, and He expects that we shall reveal the true value of man by our purity of life, and the earnest efforts put forth to recover the pearl of great price. Our character is to be modeled after the divine similitude, and to be reformed by that faith that works by love and purifies the soul. The grace of God will beautify, ennoble, and sanctify the character. The servant of the Lord who works intelligently will be successful.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 48.

Jesus pointed His hearers back to the marriage institution as ordained at creation. ... He referred them to the blessed days of Eden, when God pronounced all things “very good.” Then marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity. Then, as the Creator joined the hands of the holy pair in wedlock, saying, A man shall

“leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one” (Genesis 2:24), He enunciated the law of marriage for all the children of Adam to the close of time. That which the Eternal Father Himself had pronounced good was the law of highest blessing and development for man.— *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 63.

Monday, August 23: The Command to Rest

God reserved the seventh day as a period of rest for man, for the good of man as well as for His own glory. He saw that the wants of man required a day of rest from toil and care, that his health and life would be endangered without a period of relaxation from the labor and anxiety of the six days. ...

The Sabbath bids us behold in His created works the glory of the Creator. And it is because He desired us to do this that Jesus bound up His precious lessons with the beauty of natural things. On the holy rest day, above all other days, we should study the messages that God has written for us in nature. We should study the Saviour’s parables where He spoke them, in the fields and groves, under the open sky, among the grass and flowers. As we come close to the heart of nature, Christ makes His presence real to us and speaks to our hearts of His peace and love.— *My Life Today*, p. 140.

The Sabbath was to be a sign between God and his people forever. In this manner was it to be a sign—all who should observe the Sabbath signified by such observance that they were worshipers of the living God, the Creator of the Heavens and the earth. The Sabbath was to be a sign between God and his people as long as he should have a people upon the earth to serve him.— *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 267.

As the tree of knowledge was placed in the midst of the Garden of Eden, so the Sabbath command is placed in the midst of the Decalogue. In regard to the fruit of the tree of knowledge, the restriction was made, “Ye shall not eat of it, ... lest ye die.” Genesis 3:3. Of the Sabbath God said, Ye shall not defile it, but keep it holy. “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.” Exodus 20:8. As the tree of knowledge was the test of Adam’s obedience, so the fourth command is the test that God has given to prove the loyalty of all His people.

The Sabbath is a token between God and His people. It is a holy day, given by the Creator to man as a day upon which to rest, and reflect upon sacred things. God designed it to be observed through every age as a perpetual covenant. It was to be regarded as a peculiar treasure, a trust to be carefully cherished.

As we observe the Sabbath let us remember that it is the sign which heaven has

given to man that he is accepted in the Beloved; that if he is obedient, he may enter the city of God, and partake of the fruit of the tree of life. As we refrain from labor on the seventh day, we testify to the world that we are on God's side, and are striving to live in perfect conformity to His commandments. Thus we recognize as our sovereign the God who made the world in six days and rested on the seventh.—*Our High Calling*, p. 343.

Tuesday, August 24: New Circumstances

God manifested his great care and love for his people in sending them bread from Heaven. "Man did eat angels' food." That is, food provided for them by the angels. In the three-fold miracle of the manna, a double quantity on the sixth day, and none upon the seventh, and its keeping fresh through the Sabbath, while upon other days it would become unfit for use, was designed to impress them with the sacredness of the Sabbath. After they were abundantly supplied with food, they were ashamed of their unbelief and murmurings, and promised to trust the Lord for the future. But they soon forgot their promise, and failed at the first trial of their faith.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 255.

Before entering the Promised Land, the Israelites were admonished by Moses to "keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it." Deuteronomy 5:12. The Lord designed that by a faithful observance of the Sabbath command, Israel should continually be reminded of their accountability to Him as their Creator and their Redeemer. While they should keep the Sabbath in the proper spirit, idolatry could not exist; but should the claims of this precept of the Decalogue be set aside as no longer binding, the Creator would be forgotten and men would worship other gods. "I gave them My Sabbaths," God declared, "to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Ezekiel 20:12.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 181.

Do we believe with all the heart that Christ is soon coming and that we are now having the last message of mercy that is ever to be given to a guilty world? Is our example what it should be? Do we, by our lives and holy conversation, show to those around us that we are looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body? I fear that we do not believe and realize these things as we should. Those who believe the important truths that we profess, should act out their faith.—*Early Writings*, p. 111.

Christ is coming with power and great glory. He is coming with His own glory and with the glory of the Father. He is coming with all the holy angels with Him. While all the world is plunged in darkness, there will be light in every dwelling of the saints. They will catch the first light of His second appearing. The unsullied

light will shine from His splendor, and Christ the Redeemer will be admired by all who have served Him. ... To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and familiar friend. They have lived in close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 420.

Wednesday, August 25: Another Reason to Rest

The Lord God of heaven is our Leader. He is a leader whom we can safely follow; for He never makes a mistake. Let us honor God and His Son Jesus Christ, through whom He communicates with the world. It was Christ who gave to Moses the instruction that He gave to the children of Israel. It was Christ who delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Moses and Aaron were the visible leaders of the people. To Moses instruction was given by their invisible Leader, to be repeated to them.

Had Israel obeyed the directions given them by Moses, not one of those who started on the journey from Egypt would in the wilderness have fallen a prey to disease or death. They were under a safe Guide. Christ had pledged Himself to lead them safely to the promised land if they would follow His guidance. This vast multitude, numbering more than a million people, was under His direct rule. They were His family. In every one of them He was interested.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 1117, 1118.

Redemption is an inexhaustible theme, worthy of our closest contemplation. It passes the comprehension of the deepest thought, the stretch of the most vivid imagination. Who by searching can find out God? The treasures of wisdom and knowledge are opened to all men, and were thousands of the most gifted men to devote their whole time to setting forth Jesus always before us, studying how they might portray His matchless charms, they would never exhaust the subject.

Although great and talented authors have made known wonderful truths, and have presented increased light to the people, still in our day we shall find new ideas, and ample fields in which to work, for the theme of salvation is inexhaustible. The work has gone forward from century to century, setting forth the life and character of Christ, and the love of God as manifested in the atoning sacrifice. The theme of redemption will employ the minds of the redeemed through all eternity. There will be new and rich developments made manifest in the plan of salvation throughout eternal ages.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 403.

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Christ came to teach human beings what God desires them to know. In the heavens above, in the earth, in the broad waters of the ocean, we see the handiwork of God. All created things testify to His power, His wisdom, His love. But not from the stars or the ocean or the cataract can we learn of the personality of God as it is revealed in Christ.

Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 21.

Thursday, August 26: Keeping the Sabbath

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.

The Sabbath of the Lord is to be made a blessing to us and to our children. They can be pointed to the blooming flowers and the opening buds, the lofty trees and beautiful spires of grass, and taught that God made all these in six days, and rested on the seventh day, and hallowed it. Thus the parents may bind up their lessons of instruction to their children, so that when these children look upon the things of nature, they will call to mind the great Creator of them all. Their thoughts will be carried up to nature’s God—back to the creation of our world, when the foundation of the Sabbath was laid, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

Happy is the family who can go to the place of worship on the Sabbath as Jesus and His disciples went to the synagogue—across the fields, along the shores of the lake, or through the groves.—*My Life Today*, p. 140.

The Sabbath is a sign of creative and redeeming power; it points to God as the source of life and knowledge; it recalls man’s primeval glory, and thus witnesses to God’s purpose to re-create us in His own image.

The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God's purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than on any other, it is possible for us to live the life of Eden. It was God's plan for the members of the family to be associated in work and study, in worship and recreation, the father as priest of his household, and both father and mother as teachers and companions of their children. But the results of sin, having changed the conditions of life, to a great degree prevent this association. Often the father hardly sees the faces of his children throughout the week. He is almost wholly deprived of opportunity for companionship or instruction. But God's love has set a limit to the demands of toil. Over the Sabbath He places His merciful hand. In His own day He preserves for the family opportunity for communion with Him, with nature, and with one another.—*Education*, p. 250.

Friday, August 27: For Further Reading

My Life Today, "Reverence for the Sabbath," p. 287;

Spiritual Gifts, "Disguised Infidelity," vol. 3, pp. 90–95.

Sabbath Rest

Sabbath Afternoon, August 28

God gave to men the memorial of His creative power, that they might discern Him in the works of His hand. The Sabbath bids us behold in His created works the glory of the Creator. And it was because He desired us to do this that Jesus bound up His precious lessons with the beauty of natural things. On the holy rest day, above all other days, we should study the messages that God has written for us in nature. We should study the Saviour's parables where He spoke them, in the fields and groves, under the open sky, among the grass and flowers. As we come close to the heart of nature, Christ makes His presence real to us, and speaks to our hearts of His peace and love.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 25.

God said, "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." He placed His sanctity upon this day and blessed it and hallowed it as a day of rest. It is the only commandment in the whole Decalogue that tells who God is. It places God in distinction with every other god. It says the God that made the heaven and the earth, the God that made the trees and the flowers and that created man; this is the God that you are to keep before your children, and you have only to point to the flowers and tell them that He made these and that He rested on the seventh day from all His labors. The seventh day is a God-given memorial.

Pointing to God as the maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day, signify by this act that they are worshippers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man's allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 59.

The law of God was not given to the Jews alone. It is of world-wide and perpetual obligation. "He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all." Its ten precepts are like a chain of ten links. If one link is broken, the chain becomes worthless. Not a single precept can be revoked or changed to save the transgressor. While families and nations exist; while property, life, and character must be guarded; while good and evil are antagonistic, and a blessing or a curse must follow the acts of men—so long must the divine law control us. When God no longer requires men to love Him supremely, to reverence His name, and to keep holy the Sabbath; when He permits them to disregard the rights of their fellow-men, to hate and injure one another—then, and not till then, will the moral law lose its force.—*The Signs of the Times*, January 19, 1882.

Sunday, August 29: Sabbath and Creation

The Sabbath calls our thoughts to nature, and brings us into communion with the Creator. In the song of the bird, the sighing of the trees, and the music of the sea, we still may hear His voice who talked with Adam in Eden in the cool of the day. And as we behold His power in nature we find comfort, for the word that created all things is that which speaks life to the soul. He “who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” 2 Corinthians 4:6. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 281.

God created man in His own image. Here is no mystery. There is no ground for the supposition that man was evolved by slow degrees of development from the lower forms of animal or vegetable life. Such teaching lowers the great work of the Creator to the level of man’s narrow, earthly conceptions. Men are so intent upon excluding God from the sovereignty of the universe that they degrade man and defraud him of the dignity of his origin. He who set the starry worlds on high and tinted with delicate skill the flowers of the field, who filled the earth and the heavens with the wonders of His power, when He came to crown His glorious work, to place one in the midst to stand as ruler of the fair earth, did not fail to create a being worthy of the hand that gave him life.

The genealogy of our race, as given by inspiration, traces back its origin, not to a line of developing germs, mollusks, and quadrupeds, but to the great Creator. Though formed from the dust, Adam was “the son of God.” He was placed, as God’s representative, over the lower orders of being. They cannot understand or acknowledge the sovereignty of God, yet they were made capable of loving and serving man. The psalmist says, “Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet: ... the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, ... and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.” Psalm 8:6-8. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 44, 45.

At his creation Adam was placed in dominion over the earth. But by yielding to temptation, he was brought under the power of Satan. “Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” 2 Peter 2:19. When man became Satan’s captive, the dominion which he held, passed to his conqueror. Thus Satan became “the god of this world.” 2 Corinthians 4:4. He had usurped that dominion over the earth which had been originally given to Adam. But Christ, by His sacrifice paying the penalty of sin, would not only redeem man, but recover the dominion which he had forfeited. All that was lost by the first Adam will be restored by the second. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 67.

Monday, August 30: Celebrating Freedom

All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple courts, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's influence those who have been deluded by his deceptions, and places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 369.

No other institution which was committed to the Jews tended so fully to distinguish them from surrounding nations as did the Sabbath. God designed that its observance should designate them as His worshipers. It was to be a token of their separation from idolatry, and their connection with the true God. ... When the command was given to Israel, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," the Lord said also to them, "Ye shall be holy men unto Me." Exodus 20:8; 22:31. Only thus could the Sabbath distinguish Israel as the worshipers of God.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 283.

After the war in the heavenly courts Satan and his followers were cast out. As human beings, we are subject to the crafty wiles and temptations of this fallen foe. And unless we are kept by the power of Christ, we shall certainly be led away by the satanic sophistries by which the world is flooded. Our safety is to lean not on human power, on the arm of flesh, but upon the divine arm. Those who are partakers of the divine nature will not be beguiled by Satan.

Everyone will be tested. ... We are God's property. In Jesus Christ we are to behold a pattern of what we should be. Every soul should be educated to look not to his fellow men, but unto Christ. He is the Author and the Finisher of our Faith.—*The Upward Look*, p. 149.

To be sanctified is to become a partaker of the divine nature, catching the spirit and mind of Jesus, ever learning in the school of Christ. ... [But] it is impossible for any of us by our own power or our own efforts to work this change in ourselves. It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, which Jesus said He would send into the world, that changes our character into the image of Christ; and when this is accomplished, we reflect, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. That is, the character of the one who thus beholds Christ is so like His, that one looking at him sees Christ's own character shining out as from a mirror. Imperceptibly to ourselves, we are changed day by day from our ways and will into the ways and will of Christ, into the loveliness of His character.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 20.

Tuesday, August 31: The Stranger in Your Gates

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.

The marvelous providences connected with Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage and with their occupancy of the Promised Land led many of the heathen to recognize the God of Israel as the Supreme Ruler. "The Egyptians shall know," had been the promise, "that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth Mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them." Exodus 7:5. Even proud Pharaoh was constrained to acknowledge Jehovah's power. "Go, serve the Lord," he urged Moses and Aaron, "and bless me also." Exodus 12:31, 32.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 368, 369.

The Israelites had lately been servants themselves, and now that they were to have servants under them, they were to beware of indulging the spirit of cruelty and exaction from which they had suffered under their Egyptian taskmasters. The memory of their own bitter servitude should enable them to put themselves in the servant's place, leading them to be kind and compassionate, to deal with others as they would wish to be dealt with.

The rights of widows and orphans were especially guarded, and a tender regard for their helpless condition was enjoined. "If thou afflict them in any wise," the Lord declared, "and they cry at all unto Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." Aliens who united themselves with Israel were to be protected from wrong or oppression. "Thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 310.

Great blessings are promised to those who place a high estimate upon the Sabbath and realize the obligations resting upon them in regard to its observance: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath [from trampling upon it, setting it at nought], 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. 2, p. 701.

Wednesday, September 1: Serving Others Honors God's Sabbath

Jesus stated ... that the work of relieving the afflicted was in harmony with the Sabbath law. It was in harmony with the work of God's angels, who are ever descending and ascending between heaven and earth to minister to suffering humanity. Jesus declared, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." All days are God's, in which to carry out His plans for the human race. ...

Should God forbid the sun to perform its office upon the Sabbath, cut off its genial rays from warming the earth and nourishing vegetation? Must the system of worlds stand still through that holy day? ...

Nature must continue her unvarying course. God could not for a moment stay His hand, or man would faint and die. And man also has a work to perform on this day. The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the needy must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. 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. —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 206, 207.

According to the fourth commandment the Sabbath was dedicated to rest and religious worship. All secular employment was to be suspended, but works of mercy and benevolence were in accordance with the purpose of the Lord. They were not to be limited by time or place. To relieve the afflicted, to comfort the sorrowing, is a labor of love that does honor to God's holy day.

The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the needy must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. 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....

Labor to relieve the suffering was pronounced by our Saviour a work of mercy and no violation of the Sabbath. The needs of suffering humanity are never to be neglected. The Saviour, by His example, has shown us that it is right to relieve suffering on the Sabbath.—*My Life Today*, p. 231.

Had Israel been true to her trust, all the nations of earth would have shared in her blessings. But the hearts of those to whom had been entrusted a knowledge of saving truth, were untouched by the needs of those around them. As God's purpose was lost sight of, the heathen came to be looked upon as beyond the

pale of His mercy. The light of truth was withheld, and darkness prevailed. The nations were overspread with a veil of ignorance; the love of God was little known; error and superstition flourished.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 179.

Thursday, September 2: The Sign That We Belong to God

One writer has likened the attempt to change the law of God to an ancient mischievous practice of turning in a wrong direction a signpost erected at an important junction where two roads met. The perplexity and hardship which this practice often caused was great.

A signpost was erected by God for those journeying through this world. One arm of this signpost pointed out willing obedience to the Creator as the road to felicity and life, while the other arm indicated disobedience as the path to misery and death. The way to happiness was as clearly defined as was the way to the city of refuge under the Jewish dispensation. But in an evil hour for our race, the great enemy of all good turned the signpost around, and multitudes have mistaken the way.

Through Moses the Lord instructed the Israelites: “Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: 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. ... It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:13, 17.

In these words the Lord clearly defined obedience as the way to the City of God; but the man of sin has changed the signpost, making it point in the wrong direction. He has set up a false sabbath and has caused men and women to think that by resting on it they were obeying the command of the Creator.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 179, 180.

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.

When the Lord delivered His people Israel from Egypt and committed to them His law, He taught them that by the observance of the Sabbath they were to be distinguished from idolaters. It was this that made the distinction between those who acknowledge the sovereignty of God and those who refuse to accept

Him as their Creator and King. ...

As the Sabbath was the sign that distinguished Israel when they came out of Egypt to enter the earthly Canaan, so it is the sign that now distinguishes God's people as they come out from the world to enter the heavenly rest. The Sabbath is a sign of the relationship existing between God and His people, a sign that they honor His law. It distinguishes between His loyal subjects and transgressors.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 349.

Friday, September 3: For Further Reading

The Desire of Ages, "The Sabbath," pp. 281–289;

The Sanctified Life, "No Sanctification Without Obedience," pp. 66, 67.

Longing for More

Sabbath Afternoon, September 4

For hundreds of years the Scriptures had been translated into the Greek language, then widely spoken throughout the Roman Empire. The Jews were scattered everywhere, and their expectation of the Messiah's coming was to some extent shared by the Gentiles. Among those whom the Jews styled heathen were men who had a better understanding of the Scripture prophecies concerning the Messiah than had the teachers in Israel. There were some who hoped for His coming as a deliverer from sin. Philosophers endeavored to study into the mystery of the Hebrew economy. But the bigotry of the Jews hindered the spread of the light. Intent on maintaining the separation between themselves and other nations, they were unwilling to impart the knowledge they still possessed concerning the symbolic service. The true Interpreter must come. The One whom all these types prefigured must explain their significance.

Through nature, through types and symbols, through patriarchs and prophets, God had spoken to the world. Lessons must be given to humanity in the language of humanity. The Messenger of the covenant must speak. His voice must be heard in His own temple. Christ must come to utter words which should be clearly and definitely understood. He, the author of truth, must separate truth from the chaff of man's utterance, which had made it of no effect. The principles of God's government and the plan of redemption must be clearly defined. The lessons of the Old Testament must be fully set before men.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 33, 34.

We should seek to follow more closely the example of Christ, the great Shepherd, as He worked with His little company of disciples, studying with them and with the people the Old Testament Scriptures. His active ministry consisted not merely in sermonizing but in educating the people. As He passed through villages, He came in personal contact with the people in their homes, teaching, and ministering to their necessities. As the crowds that followed Him increased, when He came to a favorable place, He would speak to them, simplifying His discourses by the use of parables and symbols.—*Evangelism*, p. 203.

Christ's manner of teaching was beautiful and attractive, and it was ever characterized by simplicity. He unfolded the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven through the use of figures and symbols with which His hearers were familiar; and the common people heard Him gladly, for they could comprehend His words. There were no high-sounding words used, to understand which it was necessary to consult a dictionary.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*,

The Jewish economy, bearing the signature of Heaven, had been instituted by Christ Himself. In types and symbols the great truths of redemption were veiled. Yet when Christ came, the Jews did not recognize Him to whom all these symbols pointed. They had the word of God in their hands; but the traditions which had been handed down from generation to generation, and the human interpretation of the Scriptures, hid from them the truth as it is in Jesus. The spiritual import of the sacred writings was lost. The treasure house of all knowledge was open to them, but they knew it not.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 104.

Sunday, September 5: Baptized Into Moses

The example of ancient Israel is given as a warning to the people of God, that they may avoid unbelief and escape His wrath. If the iniquities of the Hebrews had been omitted from the Sacred Record, and only their virtues recounted, their history would fail to teach us the lesson that it does. ...

The principles of justice required a faithful narration of facts for the benefit of all who should ever read the Sacred Record. Here we discern the evidences of divine wisdom. We are required to obey the law of God, and are not only instructed as to the penalty of disobedience, but we have narrated for our benefit and warning the history of Adam and Eve in Paradise, and the sad results of their disobedience of God's commands. ... Their example is given us as a warning against disobedience, that we may be sure that the wages of sin is death, that God's retributive justice never fails, and that He exacts from His creatures a strict regard for His commandments. ...

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, pp. 11, 12.

The Old Testament is the gospel in figures and symbols. The New Testament is the substance. One is as essential as the other. The Old Testament presents lessons from the lips of Christ, and these lessons have not lost their force in any particular.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 104.

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.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 23.

Monday, September 6: Ritual and Sacrifices

Nearly two thousand years ago, a voice of mysterious import was heard in heaven, from the throne of God, "Lo, I come." ... Christ was about to visit our world, and to become incarnate. He says, "A body hast Thou prepared Me." Had He appeared with the glory that was His with the Father before the world was, we could not have endured the light of His presence. That we might behold it and not be destroyed, the manifestation of His glory was shrouded. His divinity was veiled with humanity,—the invisible glory in the visible human form.

This great purpose had been shadowed forth in types and symbols. The burning bush, in which Christ appeared to Moses, revealed God. The symbol chosen for the representation of the Deity was a lowly shrub, that seemingly had no attractions. This enshrined the Infinite. The all-merciful God shrouded His glory in a most humble type, that Moses could look upon it and live. So in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, God communicated with Israel, revealing to men His will, and imparting to them His grace. God's glory was subdued, and His majesty veiled, that the weak vision of finite men might behold it. ... His glory was veiled, His greatness and majesty were hidden, that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted men.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 23.

Every morning and evening a lamb of a year old was burned upon the altar, with its appropriate meat offering, thus symbolizing the daily consecration of the nation to Jehovah, and their constant dependence upon the atoning blood of Christ. ... The priests were to examine all animals brought as a sacrifice, and were to reject every one in which a defect was discovered. Only an offering "without blemish" could be a symbol of His perfect purity who was to offer Himself as "a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:19.

The apostle Paul points to these sacrifices as an illustration of what the followers of Christ are to become. He says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Romans 12:1.—

Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. To many it has been a mystery why so many sacrificial offerings were required in the old dispensation, why so many bleeding victims were led to the altar. But the great truth that was to be kept before men, and imprinted upon mind and heart, was this, "Without shedding of blood is no remission." In every bleeding sacrifice was typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

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.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 932, 933.

Tuesday, September 7: The "Example" of Rest

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God [did] from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. [Hebrews 4:9–11].

The rest here spoken of is the rest of grace, obtained by following the prescription, Labor diligently. Those who learn of Jesus His meekness and lowliness find rest in the experience of practicing His lessons. It is not in indolence, in selfish ease and pleasure-seeking, that rest is obtained. Those who are unwilling to give the Lord faithful, earnest, loving service will not find spiritual rest in this life or in the life to come. Only from earnest labor comes peace and joy in the Holy Spirit—happiness on earth and glory hereafter.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 928.

Rest is found when all self-justification, all reasoning from a selfish standpoint, is put away. Entire self-surrender, an acceptance of His ways, is the secret of perfect rest in His love. Do just what He has told you to do, and be assured that God will do all that He has said He would do. Have you come to Him, renouncing all your makeshifts, all your unbelief, all your self-righteousness? Come just as you are, weak, helpless, and ready to die.

What is the "rest" promised?—It is the consciousness that God is true, that He never disappoints the one who comes to Him. His pardon is full and free, and His acceptance means rest to the soul, rest in His love.—*Our High Calling*, p. 97.

We shall be saved eternally when we enter in through the gates into the city.

Then we may rejoice that we are saved, eternally saved. But until then we need to heed the injunction of the apostle, and to “fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it” (Hebrews 4:1). Having a knowledge of Canaan, singing the songs of Canaan, rejoicing in the prospect of entering into Canaan, did not bring the children of Israel into the vineyards and olive groves of the Promised Land. They could make it theirs in truth only by occupation, by complying with the conditions, by exercising living faith in God, by appropriating His promises to themselves.

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.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 162.

Wednesday, September 8: “Harden Not Your Hearts”

God requires prompt and unquestioning obedience of His law; but men are asleep or paralyzed by the deceptions of Satan, who suggests excuses and subterfuges, and conquers their scruples, saying as he said to Eve in the garden: “Ye shall not surely die.” Disobedience not only hardens the heart and conscience of the guilty one, but it tends to corrupt the faith of others. That which looked very wrong to them at first, gradually loses this appearance by being constantly before them, till finally they question whether it is really sin and unconsciously fall into the same error. ...

Many are the hindrances that lie in the path of those who would walk in obedience to the commandments of God. There are strong and subtle influences that bind them to the ways of the world, but the power of the Lord can break these chains. He will remove every obstacle from before the feet of His faithful ones or give them strength and courage to conquer every difficulty, if they earnestly beseech His help. All hindrances will vanish before an earnest desire and persistent effort to do the will of God at any cost to self, even if life itself is sacrificed. Light from heaven will illuminate the darkness of those, who, in trial and perplexity, go forward, looking unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher of their faith.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 146, 147.

The coldness of ice, the hardness of iron, the impenetrable, unimpressible nature of rock—all these find a counterpart in the character of many a professed Christian. It was thus that the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh. God spoke to the Egyptian king by the mouth of Moses, giving him the most striking evidences of divine power; but the monarch stubbornly refused the light

which would have brought him to repentance. **God did not send a supernatural power to harden the heart of the rebellious king, but as Pharaoh resisted the truth, the Holy Spirit was withdrawn, and he was left to the darkness and unbelief which he had chosen.** By persistent rejection of the Spirit's influence, men cut themselves off from God. He has in reserve no more potent agency to enlighten their minds. No revelation of His will can reach them in their unbelief. —*Our High Calling*, p. 160.

Christ says: "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16). As Christ's ambassador, I would entreat of all who read these lines to take heed while it is called today. "If ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 3:15; 4:7). Without waiting a moment, inquire, What am I to Christ? and what is Christ to me? What is my work? What is the character of the fruit I bear?—*This Day With God*, p. 51.

Thursday, September 9: Conquering a Heavenly City

No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's circle the poor souls who have been deluded by his deceptions. It places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise.

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. All are brought nigh by His precious blood. (Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:13).

Whatever the difference in religious belief, a call from suffering humanity must be heard and answered. Where bitterness of feeling exists because of difference in religion, much good may be done by personal service. Loving ministry will break down prejudice, and win souls to God.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 386.

It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Job 14:4; Romans 8:7. Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from

above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 18.

Many make a serious mistake in their religious life by keeping the attention fixed upon their feelings and thus judging of their advancement or decline. Feelings are not a safe criterion. We are not to look within for evidence of our acceptance with God. We shall find there nothing but that which will discourage us. Our only hope is in “looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith.” There is everything in Him to inspire with hope, with faith, and with courage. He is our righteousness, our consolation and rejoicing.

Those who look within for comfort will become weary and disappointed. A sense of our weakness and unworthiness should lead us with humility of heart to plead the atoning sacrifice of Christ. As we rely upon His merits we shall find rest and peace and joy. He saves to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 199, 200.

Friday, September 10: For Further Reading

The Upward Look, “Mix Faith With Hearing,” p. 75;

Spiritual Gifts, “Facts of Faith,” vol. 3, pp. 295, 296.

The Restless Prophet

Sabbath Afternoon, September 11

Among the cities of the ancient world in the days of divided Israel one of the greatest was Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian realm. Founded on the fertile bank of the Tigris, soon after the dispersion from the tower of Babel, it had flourished through the centuries until it had become “an exceeding great city of three days’ journey.” Jonah 3:3.

In the time of its temporal prosperity Nineveh was a center of crime and wickedness. Inspiration has characterized it as “the bloody city, ... full of lies and robbery.” In figurative language the prophet Nahum compared the Ninevites to a cruel, ravenous lion. “Upon whom,” he inquired, “hath not thy wickedness passed continually?” Nahum 3:1, 19.

Yet Nineveh, wicked though it had become, was not wholly given over to evil. He who “beholdeth all the sons of men” (Psalm 33:13) and “seeth every precious thing” (Job 28:10) perceived in that city many who were reaching out after something better and higher, and who, if granted opportunity to learn of the living God, would put away their evil deeds and worship Him. And so in His wisdom God revealed Himself to them in an unmistakable manner, to lead them, if possible, to repentance.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 265.

As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, Christ was to be the same time “in the heart of the earth.” And as the preaching of Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so Christ’s preaching was a sign to His generation. But what a contrast in the reception of the word! The people of the great heathen city trembled as they heard the warning from God. Kings and nobles humbled themselves; the high and the lowly together cried to the God of heaven, and His mercy was granted unto them. “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation,” Christ had said, “and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.” Matthew 12:40, 41.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 406.

The lesson is for God’s messengers today, when the cities of the nations are as verily in need of a knowledge of the attributes and purposes of the true God as were the Ninevites of old. Christ’s ambassadors are to point men to the nobler world, which has largely been lost sight of. ... Through His ministering servants the Lord Jesus is calling upon men to strive with sanctified ambition to secure the immortal inheritance. He urges them to lay up treasure beside the throne of

God. ...

Our God is a God of mercy. With long-sufferance and tender compassion He deals with the transgressors of His law. And yet, in this our day, when men and women have so many opportunities for becoming familiar with the divine law as revealed in Holy Writ, the great Ruler of the universe cannot behold with any satisfaction the wicked cities, where reign violence and crime. The end of God's forbearance with those who persist in disobedience is approaching rapidly. — *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 274, 275.

Sunday, September 12: Running Away

Satan had been working to make the gulf deep and impassable between earth and heaven. By his falsehoods he had emboldened men in sin. It was his purpose to wear out the forbearance of God, and to extinguish His love for man, so that He would abandon the world to satanic jurisdiction.

Satan was seeking to shut out from men a knowledge of God, to turn their attention from the temple of God, and to establish his own kingdom. His strife for supremacy had seemed to be almost wholly successful. It is true that in every generation God had His agencies. Even among the heathen there were men through whom Christ was working to uplift the people from their sin and degradation. But these men were despised and hated. Many of them suffered a violent death. The dark shadow that Satan had cast over the world grew deeper and deeper.

Through heathenism, Satan had for ages turned men away from God; but he won his great triumph in perverting the faith of Israel. By contemplating and worshiping their own conceptions, the heathen had lost a knowledge of God, and had become more and more corrupt. So it was with Israel. The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion. ... Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin. — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 34, 35.

To [Jonah] came the word of the Lord, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before Me." Jonah 1:1, 2.

As the prophet thought of the difficulties and seeming impossibilities of this commission, he was tempted to question the wisdom of the call. From a human viewpoint it seemed as if nothing could be gained by proclaiming such a message in that proud city. He forgot for the moment that the God whom he served was all-wise and all-powerful. While he hesitated, still doubting, Satan overwhelmed him with discouragement. The prophet was seized with a great

dread, and he “rose up to flee unto Tarshish.” ...

In the charge given him, Jonah had been entrusted with a heavy responsibility; yet He who had bidden him go was able to sustain His servant and grant him success. Had the prophet obeyed unquestioningly, he would have been spared many bitter experiences, and would have been blessed abundantly. Yet in the hour of Jonah’s despair the Lord did not desert him. Through a series of trials and strange providences, the prophet’s confidence in God and in His infinite power to save was to be revived.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 266.

A lost sheep never finds its way back to the fold of itself. If it is not sought for and saved by the watchful shepherd, it wanders until it perishes. What a representation of the Saviour is this! Unless Jesus, the Good Shepherd, had come to seek and to save the wandering, we should have perished. The Pharisees had taught that none but the Jewish nation would be saved, and they treated all other nationalities with contempt.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 212.

Monday, September 13: A Three-Day Rest

“Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

“Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish’s belly, and said:

“I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, And He heard me; Out of the belly of hell cried I, And Thou heardest my voice.” ...

At last Jonah had learned that “salvation belongeth unto the Lord.” Psalm 3:8. With penitence and a recognition of the saving grace of God, came deliverance. Jonah was released from the perils of the mighty deep and was cast upon the dry land.

Once more the servant of God was commissioned to warn Nineveh. “The word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.” This time he did not stop to question or doubt, but obeyed unhesitatingly. He “arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord.” Jonah 3:1-3.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 268, 269.

You need not go to the ends of the earth for wisdom, for God is near. It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. We need to have far less confidence in what man can do and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing

soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him. He longs to give you understanding in temporal as well as in spiritual matters. He can sharpen the intellect. He can give tact and skill. Put your talents into the work, ask God for wisdom, and it will be given you.

Take the word of Christ as your assurance. Has He not invited you to come unto Him? Never allow yourself to talk in a hopeless, discouraged way. If you do you will lose much. By looking at appearances and complaining when difficulties and pressure come, you give evidence of a sickly, enfeebled faith. Talk and act as if your faith was invincible. The Lord is rich in resources; He owns the world. Look heavenward in faith. Look to Him who has light and power and efficiency.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 146.

All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

Tuesday, September 14: Mission Accomplished

As Jonah entered the city, he began at once to “cry against” it the message, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” Verse 4. From street to street he went, sounding the note of warning.

The message was not in vain. The cry that rang through the streets of the godless city was passed from lip to lip until all the inhabitants had heard the startling announcement. The Spirit of God pressed the message home to every heart and caused multitudes to tremble because of their sins and to repent in deep humiliation. ...

As king and nobles, with the common people, the high and the low, “repented at the preaching of Jonas” (Matthew 12:41) and united in crying to the God of heaven, His mercy was granted them. He “saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not.” Jonah 3:10. Their doom was averted, the God of Israel was exalted and honored throughout the heathen world, and His law was revered.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 270.

When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrongdoer does not discern the defects of his character nor realize the enormity of the evil he has

committed; and unless he yields to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit he remains in partial blindness to his sin. His confessions are not sincere and in earnest. To every acknowledgment of his guilt he adds an apology in excuse of his course, declaring that if it had not been for certain circumstances he would not have done this or that for which he is reproved.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 40.

We cannot afford to neglect one ray of light God has given. To be sluggish in our practice of those things which require diligence is to commit sin. The human agent is to cooperate with God, and keep under those passions which should be in subjection. To do this he must be unwearied in his prayers to God, ever obtaining grace to control his spirit, temper, and actions. Through the imparted grace of Christ, he may be enabled to overcome. To be an overcomer means more than many suppose it means.

The Spirit of God will answer the cry of every penitent heart; for repentance is the gift of God, and an evidence that Christ is drawing the soul to Himself. We can no more repent of sin without Christ, than we can be pardoned without Christ, and yet it is a humiliation to man with his human passion and pride to go to Jesus straightway, believing and trusting Him for everything which he needs.

Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming; for God does nothing for man without his cooperation. ... Man's efforts alone are nothing but worthlessness; but cooperation with Christ means a victory. Of ourselves we have no power to repent of sin. Unless we accept divine aid we cannot take the first step toward the Saviour.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 380, 381.

Wednesday, September 15: An Angry, Restless Missionary

When Jonah learned of God's purpose to spare the city that, notwithstanding its wickedness, had been led to repent in sackcloth and ashes, he should have been the first to rejoice because of God's amazing grace; but instead he allowed his mind to dwell upon the possibility of his being regarded as a false prophet. Jealous of his reputation, he lost sight of the infinitely greater value of the souls in that wretched city. The compassion shown by God toward the repentant Ninevites "displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry." ...

Once more he yielded to his inclination to question and doubt, and once more he was overwhelmed with discouragement. Losing sight of the interests of others, and feeling as if he would rather die than live to see the city spared, in his dissatisfaction he exclaimed, "Now, O Lord, take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 272.

Confused, humiliated, and unable to understand God's purpose in sparing Nineveh, Jonah nevertheless had fulfilled the commission given him to warn that great city; and though the event predicted did not come to pass, yet the message of warning was nonetheless from God. And it accomplished the purpose God designed it should. The glory of His grace was revealed among the heathen. Those who had long been sitting "in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron," "cried unto the Lord in their trouble," and "He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder." Psalm 107:10, 13, 14.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 272, 273.

[The Saviour's] steps are turned toward Jerusalem, where His foes have long plotted to take His life; now He will lay it down. He set His face steadfastly to go to persecution, denial, rejection, condemnation, and death.

And He "sent messengers before His face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for Him." But the people refused to receive Him, because He was on His way to Jerusalem. This they interpreted as meaning that Christ showed a preference for the Jews, whom they hated with intense bitterness. Had He come to restore the temple and worship upon Mount Gerizim, they would gladly have received Him; but He was going to Jerusalem, and they would show Him no hospitality. Little did they realize that they were turning from their doors the best gift of heaven. ...

It is no part of Christ's mission to compel men to receive Him. It is Satan, and men actuated by his spirit, that seek to compel the conscience. ... but Christ is ever showing mercy, ever seeking to win by the revealing of His love. He can admit no rival in the soul, nor accept of partial service; but He desires only voluntary service, the willing surrender of the heart under the constraint of love. —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 486, 487.

Thursday, September 16: A Two-Way Street

Our God is a God of mercy. With long-sufferance and tender compassion He deals with the transgressors of His law. And yet, in this our day, when men and women have so many opportunities for becoming familiar with the divine law as revealed in Holy Writ, the great Ruler of the universe cannot behold with any satisfaction the wicked cities, where reign violence and crime. The end of God's forbearance with those who persist in disobedience is approaching rapidly. ...

God's messengers in the great cities are not to become discouraged over the wickedness, the injustice, the depravity, which they are called upon to face while endeavoring to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. The Lord would

cheer every such worker with the same message that He gave to the apostle Paul in wicked Corinth: “Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.” Acts 18:9, 10. ... In every city, filled though it may be with violence and crime, there are many who with proper teaching may learn to become followers of Jesus. Thousands may thus be reached with saving truth and be led to receive Christ as a personal Saviour.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 275, 277.

The instruction given by Jude from verse twenty to the close of the chapter, will make our work a complete whole, teaching us how to conduct the warfare in the service of Christ. No one-sided extravagance is to be revealed, no indolence of shiftlessness is to be indulged. We are not to ignore any man’s individuality, or in any way to justify cold-hearted criticism or selfish practice.

This scripture brings to view the fact that there is most earnest work to be done, and we need divine intuition that we may know how to work for souls ready to perish. There are souls to be plucked out of the fire, there are souls who are to be treated with the tenderest compassion. Workers are needed who have learned in the school of Christ His method of saving souls.—Letter 7, 1895.

Christ will impart to His messengers the same yearning love that He Himself has in seeking for the lost. We are not merely to say, “Come.” There are those who hear the call, but their ears are too dull to take in its meaning. Their eyes are too blind to see anything good in store for them. Many realize their great degradation. They say, I am not fit to be helped; leave me alone. But the workers must not desist. In tender, pitying love, lay hold of the discouraged and helpless ones. Give them your courage, your hope, your strength. By kindness compel them to come. “Of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.” Jude 22, 23.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 235.

Friday, September 17: For Further Reading

The Sanctified Life, “Pride and Ambition Reproved,” pp. 57–59;

The Ministry of Healing, “Disappointments; Dangers,” pp. 177–180.

The Ultimate Rest

Sabbath Afternoon, September 18

Christ entered upon His mission of mercy, and from the manger to the cross was beset by the enemy. Satan contested every inch of ground, exerting his utmost power to overcome Him. Like a tempest temptation after temptation beat upon Him. But the more mercilessly they fell, the more firmly did the Son of God cling to the hand of His Father, and press on in the bloodstained path.

The severity of the conflict through which Christ passed was proportionate to the vastness of the interests involved in His success or failure.... Satan sought to overthrow Christ, in order that he himself might continue to reign in this world as supreme....The Father, the Son, and Lucifer have been revealed in their true relation to one another. God has given unmistakable evidence of His justice and His love.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 58.

We see [in God's Word] the great plan of human redemption, the means devised to free mankind from the power of Satan. We see Christ, the Captain of our salvation, meeting the prince of darkness in open battle, and single-handed, obtaining the victory in our behalf. We learn too that by this victory was opened to us a door of hope, a source of strength, and that we may, as faithful soldiers, fight our own battles with the wily foe, and conquer in the name of Jesus. The powers of darkness must be met by every soul. The young as well as the old will be assailed, and all should understand the nature of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, and should realize that it concerns themselves.

It is not enough to have an intellectual knowledge of the truth.... There must be an entrance of the Word into the heart. It must be set home by the power of the Holy Spirit. The will must be brought into harmony with its requirements. Not only the intellect but the heart and conscience must concur in the acceptance of the truth.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 192.

Satan is a vigilant, untiring foe, and he sleeps not. He knows that his time is short, and he will work until the end with every species of deception to draw souls into his snare and ruin them. I have a message for you—"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Give no place to the devil to stand between you and Christ, lest you savor of the things that be of men and not of God. If your faith is genuine, it must and will produce obedience. God commands us to do nothing which we cannot do. He will give strength to every believing, trusting soul.

Cherish the love of Jesus in the heart, respect each other, for Christ has given His life for you. Every soul is precious in the sight of God. It is a wonderful thing to be remembered and cared for every hour by God.—*The Upward Look*, p. 20.

Sunday, September 19: A Vision of the End

Patmos, a barren, rocky island in the Aegean Sea, had been chosen by the Roman government as a place of banishment for criminals; but to the servant of God this gloomy abode became the gate of heaven. Here, shut away from the busy scenes of life, and from the active labors of former years, he had the companionship of God and Christ and the heavenly angels, and from them he received instruction for the church for all future time. ...

Among the cliffs and rocks of Patmos, John held communion with his Maker. He reviewed his past life, and at thought of the blessings he had received, peace filled his heart. He had lived the life of a Christian, and he could say in faith, "We know that we have passed from death unto life." 1 John 3:14. Not so the emperor who had banished him. He could look back only on fields of warfare and carnage, on desolated homes, on weeping widows and orphans, the fruit of his ambitious desire for pre-eminence.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 570, 571.

John [remembers] the wonderful incidents that he has witnessed in the life of Christ. In imagination he again enjoys the precious opportunities with which he was once favored, and is greatly comforted. Suddenly his meditation is broken in upon; he is addressed in tones distinct and clear. He turns to see from whence the voice proceeds, and, lo! he beholds his Lord, whom he has loved. ... no longer "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3)....

John, who has so loved his Lord, and who has steadfastly adhered to the truth in the face of imprisonment, stripes, and threatened death, cannot endure the excellent glory of Christ's presence, and falls to the earth as one stricken dead. Jesus then lays His hand upon the prostrate form of His servant, saying, "Fear not; ... I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore" (Revelation 1:17, 18). John was strengthened to live in the presence of his glorified Lord, and then were presented before him in holy vision the purposes of God for future ages.—*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 77, 78.

"Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ... lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Here is our power, our comfort. Of ourselves we have no strength. But He says, "I am with you alway," helping you to perform your duty, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, and sustaining you, giving you success in speaking words that will draw the attention of others to Christ and awaken in their minds the desire to understand the hope and meaning of the truth, turning

them from darkness to light. ...

... The lapse of time has wrought no change in His parting promise. He is with us today as truly as He was with the disciples, and He will be with us “even unto the end.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 188.

Monday, September 20: The Countdown

The future was mercifully veiled from the disciples. Had they at that time fully comprehended the two awful facts—the Redeemer’s sufferings and death, and the destruction of their city and temple—they would have been overwhelmed with horror. Christ presented before them an outline of the prominent events to take place before the close of time. His words were not then fully understood; but their meaning was to be unfolded as His people should need the instruction therein given. The prophecy which He uttered was twofold in its meaning; while foreshadowing the destruction of Jerusalem, it prefigured also the terrors of the last great day.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 25.

Turning to the disciples, Christ said, “Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” Many false messiahs will appear, claiming to work miracles, and declaring that the time of the deliverance of the Jewish nation has come. These will mislead many. Christ’s words were fulfilled. Between His death and the siege of Jerusalem many false messiahs appeared. But this warning was given also to those who live in this age of the world. The same deceptions practiced prior to the destruction of Jerusalem have been practiced through the ages, and will be practiced again.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 628.

It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of soul-saving depends alone upon the ministry. The humble, consecrated believer upon whom the Master of the vineyard places a burden for souls is to be given encouragement by the men upon whom the Lord has laid larger responsibilities. Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour’s commission is given to all who believe in His name. God will send forth into His vineyard many who have not been dedicated to the ministry by the laying on of hands.

Hundreds, yea, thousands, who have heard the message of salvation are still idlers in the market place, when they might be engaged in some line of active service. To these Christ is saying, “Why stand ye here all the day idle?” and He adds, “Go ye also into the vineyard.” Matthew 20:6, 7. Why is it that many more do not respond to the call? Is it because they think themselves excused in that they do not stand in the pulpit? Let them understand that there is a large work to be done outside the pulpit by thousands of consecrated lay members.

Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 110, 111.

Tuesday, September 21: Marching Orders

In God's great plan for the redemption of a lost race, He has placed Himself under the necessity of using human agencies as His helping hand. He must have a helping hand, in order to reach humanity. He must have the cooperation of those who will be active, quick to see opportunities, quick to discern what must be done for their fellow men. ...

All around us are afflicted souls. Let us search out these suffering ones, and speak a word in season to comfort their hearts. Here and there—everywhere—we shall find them. Let us ever be channels through which may flow to them the refreshing waters of compassion. ...

Many are in obscurity. They have lost their bearings. They know not what course to pursue. Let the perplexed ones search out others who are in perplexity, and speak to them words of hope and encouragement. When they begin to do this work, the light of heaven will reveal to them the path that they should follow. By their words of consolation to the afflicted they themselves will be consoled. By helping others, they themselves will be helped out of their difficulties. Joy takes the place of sadness and gloom. The heart, filled with the Spirit of God, glows with warmth toward every fellow being.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1151.

The soul-saving message, the third angel's message, is the message to be given to the world. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are both important, immensely important, and must be given with equal force and power. The first part of the message has been dwelt upon mostly, the last part casually. The faith of Jesus is not comprehended. ...

Why are our lips so silent upon the subject of Christ's righteousness and His love for the world? Why do we not give to the people that which will revive and quicken them into a new life? ...

The character of Christ is an infinitely perfect character, and He must be lifted

up, He must be brought prominently into view, for He is the power, the might, the sanctification and righteousness of all who believe in Him.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 82.

John in the Revelation foretells the proclamation of the gospel message just before Christ's second coming. He beholds an angel flying "in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." Revelation 14:6, 7.

In the prophecy this warning of the judgment, with its connected messages, is followed by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. The proclamation of the judgment is an announcement of Christ's second coming as at hand. And this proclamation is called the everlasting gospel. Thus the preaching of Christ's second coming, the announcement of its nearness, is shown to be an essential part of the gospel message.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 227.

Wednesday, September 22: Rest in Peace

"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." How touching [Jesus'] words! how full of sympathy! In the thought of the peril their Master was about to incur by going to Jerusalem, the disciples had almost forgotten the bereaved family at Bethany. But not so Christ. The disciples felt rebuked. They had been disappointed because Christ did not respond more promptly to the message. They had been tempted to think that He had not the tender love for Lazarus and his sisters that they had thought He had, or He would have hastened back with the messenger. But the words, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," awakened right feelings in their minds. They were convinced that Christ had not forgotten His suffering friends.

"Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking of rest in sleep." Christ represents death as a sleep to His believing children. Their life is hid with Christ in God, and until the last trump shall sound those who die will sleep in Him.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 527.

In consequence of Adam's sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave. And through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust;" "for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:22. But a distinction is made between the two classes that are brought forth. "All that are

in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” John 5:28, 29. They who have been “accounted worthy” of the resurrection of life are “blessed and holy.” “On such the second death hath no power.” Revelation 20:6.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 544.

Christ is coming with clouds and with great glory. A multitude of shining angels will attend Him. He will come to raise the dead, and to change the living saints from glory to glory. He will come to honor those who have loved Him, and kept His commandments, and to take them to Himself. He has not forgotten them nor His promise. There will be a relinking of the family chain. When we look upon our dead, we may think of the morning when the trump of God shall sound, when “the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” 1 Corinthians 15:52. A little longer, and we shall see the King in His beauty. A little longer, and He will wipe all tears from our eyes. A little longer, and He will present us “faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” Jude 1:24. Wherefore, when He gave the signs of His coming He said, “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 632.

Thursday, September 23: Rejoice in the Lord Always

It may seem difficult to rejoice in the Lord when in trouble, but we lose a great deal by giving way to a spirit of complaint. It is our privilege to have in our hearts, at all times, the peace of Christ. We should not allow ourselves to be easily disturbed. It is to test us that God brings us through trials and difficulties, and if we are patient and trustful under His proving, He will purify us from all dross, and at last bring us forth with triumph and rejoicing. Great blessings are reserved for those who uncomplainingly submit to the yoke that God wishes them to bear. ...

“In everything give thanks” (1 Thessalonians 5:18) for the keeping power of God through Jesus Christ. ... At the moment when you are offering your prayer for help you may not feel all the joy and blessing that you would like to feel, but if you believe that Christ will hear and answer your petition, the peace of Christ will come.—*Our High Calling*, p. 326.

My head is weary this morning. Mist and clouds hang over my mind; but the suggestions of the enemy to distrust the Lord shall not be cherished. Now is my time to fight the good fight of faith. Now is the very occasion that needs the steady faith that works by love and purifies my soul. I seek the Lord more earnestly.

In 1 Chronicles 28:9 David gives his charge to Solomon.

The message was brought to Asa by the Lord's prophet: "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you" (2 Chronicles 15:2; cf. Jeremiah 29:11-13). My heart goes out in faith. Faith is not feeling; faith is not sight. ...

... I believe the promise is for me, and I appropriate the same personally. The promise itself is of no value unless I fully believe that He that has made the promise is abundantly able to fulfill, and infinite in power to do all that He has said.—*This Day With God*, p. 156.

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. ...

What a Saviour we have—a risen Saviour, One who can save all who come unto Him!—*That I May Know Him*, p. 80.

Friday, September 24: For Further Reading

This Day With God, "Complete Commitment," p. 128;

The Upward Look, "Search the Scriptures," p. 368.



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