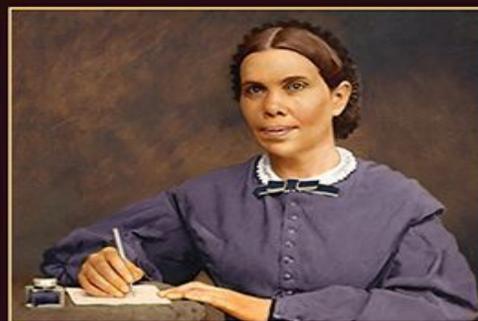


Ellen G. White
NOTES
for the Sabbath School Lessons



PRESENT TRUTH IN
Deuteronomy

Oct | Nov | Dec 2021

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

Ellen G. White
Notes for the
Adult Bible Study Guide

Ellen G. White Notes for the Sabbath School Lessons (ISSN 1076-2434) is published quarterly by Pacific Press® Publishing Association, 1350 N. Kings Road, Nampa, ID 83687-3193, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Nampa, Idaho. One-year subscription in the USA, \$17.80; single copy, \$4.99. One-year subscription to countries outside USA, \$25.80. All prices at USA exchange. When a change of address is desired, please send both old and new addresses. Vol. 29, no. 4.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **Ellen G. White Notes for the Sabbath School Lessons**, PO Box 5353, Nampa, ID 83653-5353.

Copyright © 2021 by Pacific Press® Publishing Association.
Printed in the United States of America.

Present Truth in Deuteronomy

Contents

1. **Preamble to Deuteronomy** (September 25–October 1)
2. **Moses' History Lesson** (October 2–8)
3. **The Everlasting Covenant** (October 9–15)
4. **To Love the Lord Your God** (October 16–22)
5. **The Stranger in Your Gates** (October 23–29)
6. **For What Nation Is There so Great?** (October 30–November 5)
7. **Law and Grace** (November 6–12)
8. **Choose Life** (November 13–19)
9. **Turn Their Hearts** (November 20–26)
10. **Remember, Do Not Forget** (November 27–December 3)
11. **Deuteronomy in the Later Writings** (December 4–10)
12. **Deuteronomy in the New Testament** (December 11–17)
13. **The Resurrection of Moses** (December 18–24)

Lesson 1

Preamble to Deuteronomy

Sabbath Afternoon, September 25

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

During ages of spiritual darkness the church of God has been as a city set on a hill. From age to age, through successive generations, the pure doctrines of heaven have been unfolding within its borders. Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 11, 12.

The weight of the grief of ages was upon [Christ]. He saw the terrible effects of the transgression of God's law. He saw that in the history of the world, beginning with the death of Abel, the conflict between good and evil had been unceasing. Looking down the years to come, He saw the suffering and sorrow, tears and death, that were to be the lot of men. His heart was pierced with the pain of the human family of all ages and in all lands. The woes of the sinful race were heavy upon His soul, and the fountain of His tears was broken up as He longed to relieve all their distress.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 534.

Divine love makes its most touching appeals to the heart when it calls upon us to manifest the same tender compassion that Christ manifested. That man only who has unselfish love for his brother has

true love for God. The true Christian will not willingly permit the soul in peril and need to go unwarned, uncared for. He will not hold himself aloof from the erring, leaving them to plunge farther into unhappiness and discouragement or to fall on Satan's battleground.

Those who have never experienced the tender, winning love of Christ cannot lead others to the fountain of life. His love in the heart is a constraining power, which leads men to reveal Him in the conversation, in the tender, pitiful spirit, in the uplifting of the lives of those with whom they associate. Christian workers who succeed in their efforts must know Christ; and in order to know Him, they must know His love. In heaven their fitness as workers is measured by their ability to love as Christ loved and to work as He worked.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 550.

Sunday, September 26: Love, to Be Loved

The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God's unchanging love.

The gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart.

God made to our world the wonderful gift of His only-begotten Son. In the light of this act, it could never be said by the inhabitants of other worlds that God could have done more than He did to show His love for the children of men. He made a sacrifice that defies all computation.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 59.

Christ has shown His great love for us by giving His life that we should not perish in our sins, that He might clothe us with His salvation. If this divine love is cherished in our hearts, it cements and strengthens our union with those of like faith. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." The strengthening of our love for our brethren and sisters strengthens our love for Christ. This principle of love for God and for those for whom Christ died, needs to be quickened by the Holy Spirit and cemented with brotherly kindness, tenderness; it needs to be strengthened by acts which

testify that God is love. This union, which joins heart with heart, is not the result of sentimentalism, but the working of a healthful principle. Faith works by love, and purifies the soul from all selfishness. Thus the soul is perfected in love. And having found grace and mercy through Christ's precious blood, how can we fail to be tender and merciful?—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 110.

It was a being of wonderful power and glory that had set himself against God. Of Lucifer the Lord says, "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty." Lucifer had been the covering cherub. He had stood in the light of God's presence. He had been the highest of all created beings, and had been foremost in revealing God's purposes to the universe. After he had sinned, his power to deceive was the more deceptive, and the unveiling of his character was the more difficult, because of the exalted position he had held with the Father.

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 758, 759.

Monday, September 27: The Fall and the Flood

Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. God made them free moral agents, capable of appreciating the wisdom and benevolence of His character and the justice of His requirements, and with full liberty to yield or to withhold obedience. They were to enjoy communion with God and with holy angels; but before they could be rendered eternally secure, their loyalty must be tested. At the very beginning of man's existence a check was placed upon the desire for self-indulgence, the fatal passion that lay at the foundation of Satan's fall. The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the

midst of the garden, was to be a test of the obedience, faith, and love of our parents. While permitted to eat freely of every other tree, they were forbidden to taste of this, on pain of death. They were also to be exposed to the temptations of Satan; but if they endured the trial, they would finally be placed beyond his power, to enjoy perpetual favor with God.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.

Of the antediluvians we read, “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ... And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”

God warned the inhabitants of the old world of what He purposed to do in cleansing the earth of its impurity. But they laughed to scorn what they regarded as a superstitious prediction. They mocked at Noah’s warning of a coming flood. When Christ was upon the earth He gave warning of what was coming upon Jerusalem because the people had rejected truth, despising the messages that God had sent. But His warning was unheeded.

The Lord has sent us, by His ambassadors, messages of warning, declaring that the end of all things is at hand. Some will listen to these warnings, but by the vast majority they will be disregarded.

—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 343.

The heart in its natural state is a habitation for unholy thoughts and sinful passions. When brought into subjection to Christ, it must be cleansed by the Spirit from all defilement. This cannot be done without the consent of the individual. ...

... Only in His strength can [we] keep guard over the words and actions. In the work of heart-keeping we must be instant in prayer, unwearied in petitioning the throne of grace for assistance. Those who take the name of Christian should come to God in earnestness and humility, pleading for help. The Saviour has told us to pray without ceasing. The Christian cannot always be in the position of

prayer, but his thoughts and desires can always be upward. Our self-confidence would vanish, did we talk less and pray more.

The affections should center upon God. Contemplate His greatness, His mercy and excellences. Let His goodness and love and perfection of character captivate your heart.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 99.

Tuesday, September 28: The Call of Abram

For more than a thousand years the Jewish people had awaited the Saviour's coming. Upon this event they had rested their brightest hopes. In song and prophecy, in temple rite and household prayer, they had enshrined His name. And yet at His coming they knew Him not. The Beloved of heaven was to them "as a root out of a dry ground;" He had "no form nor comeliness;" and they saw in Him no beauty that they should desire Him. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

Yet God had chosen Israel. He had called them to preserve among men the knowledge of His law, and of the symbols and prophecies that pointed to the Saviour. He desired them to be as wells of salvation to the world.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 27.

Abraham was bidden, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." "And he went out, not knowing whither he went." So to the apostle Paul, praying in the temple at Jerusalem, came the message from God, "Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." So those who are called to unite with Christ must leave all, in order to follow Him. Old associations must be broken up, plans of life relinquished, earthly hopes surrendered. In toil and tears, in solitude, and through sacrifice, must the seed be sown.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 36.

Laboring for the salvation of the soul is employment worthy of the highest honor. It matters not what may be the form of our labor, or among what class, whether high or low. In God's sight these distinctions will not affect its true worth. The sincere, earnest, contrite

soul, however ignorant, is precious in the sight of the Lord. He places His own signet upon men, judging, not by their rank, not by their wealth, not by their intellectual greatness, but by their oneness with Christ.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 332.

The object of God in choosing a people before all the world was not only that He might adopt them as His sons and daughters, but that through them the world might receive the grace that bringeth salvation. When the Lord chose Abraham, it was not simply to be the special friend of God, but to be a medium of the peculiar privileges the Lord desired to bestow upon the nations. Jesus, in that last prayer with His disciples before His crucifixion, said, “For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” In like manner Christians who are purified through the truth will possess saving qualities that preserve the world from utter moral corruption.

Salt must be mingled with the substance to which it is added; it must penetrate and infuse in order to preserve. So it is through personal contact and association that men are reached by the saving power of the gospel. They are not saved in masses, but as individuals. Personal influence is a power. We must come close to those whom we desire to benefit.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 35, 36.

Wednesday, September 29: The Covenant at Sinai

The covenant that God made with His people at Sinai is to be our refuge and defense. The Lord said to Moses:—

“Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, than ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” ...

This covenant is of just as much force today as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel.

This is the pledge that God's people are to make in these last days. Their acceptance with God depends on a faithful fulfilment of the terms of their agreement with Him. God includes in His covenant all who will obey Him. To all who will do justice and judgment, keeping their hand from doing any evil, the promise is, "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off."—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1103.

If the Israelites had obeyed God's requirements, they would have been practical Christians. They would have been happy; for they would have been keeping God's ways, and not following the inclinations of their own natural hearts. Moses did not leave them to misconstrue the words of the Lord or to misapply His requirements. He wrote all the words of the Lord in a book, that they might be referred to afterward. In the mount he had written them as Christ Himself dictated them.

Bravely did the Israelites speak the words promising obedience to the Lord, after hearing His covenant read in the audience of the people. They said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Then the people were set apart and sealed to God. A sacrifice was offered to the Lord. A portion of the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled upon the altar. This signified that the people had consecrated themselves—body, mind, and soul—to God. A portion was sprinkled upon the people. This signified that through the sprinkled blood of Christ, God graciously accepted them as His special treasure. Thus the Israelites entered into a solemn covenant with God.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1107.

Thursday, September 30: Apostasy and Punishment

Aaron died at Mount Hor, for the Lord had said that he should not enter the Promised Land, because, with Moses, he had sinned at the time of bringing water from the rock at Meribah. Moses and the sons of Aaron buried him in the mount, that the people might not be tempted to make too great ceremony over his body, and be guilty of the sin of idolatry.

Moses was soon to die, and he was commanded to gather the children of Israel together before his death and relate to them all the journeyings of the Hebrew host since their departure from Egypt, and all the great transgressions of their fathers, which brought His judgments upon them, and compelled Him to say that they should not enter the Promised Land. Their fathers had died in the wilderness, according to the word of the Lord. Their children had grown up, and to them the promise was to be fulfilled of possessing the land of Canaan. Many of these were small children when the law was given, and they had no remembrance of the grandeur of the event. Others were born in the wilderness, and lest they should not realize the necessity of their obeying the Ten Commandments and all the laws and judgments given to Moses, he was instructed of God to recapitulate the Ten Commandments, and all the circumstances connected with the giving of the law.—*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 168, 170.

We cannot overestimate the value of simple faith and unquestioning obedience. It is by following in the path of obedience in simple faith that the character obtains perfection. Adam was required to render strict obedience to God's commandments, and no lower standard is presented to those who desire salvation [today]. ... [Christ] says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive." ...

... The world is leagued against the truth, because it does not desire to obey the truth. Shall I who perceive the truth close my eyes

and heart to its saving power because the world chooses darkness rather than light?—Letter 119, February 18, 1895.

God desires His people to prepare for the soon-coming crisis. Prepared or unprepared, they must all meet it; and those only who have brought their lives into conformity to the divine standard, will stand firm at that time of test and trial. When secular rulers unite with ministers of religion to dictate in matters of conscience, then it will be seen who really fear and serve God. When the darkness is deepest, the light of a godlike character will shine the brightest. When every other trust fails, then it will be seen who have an abiding trust in Jehovah. And while the enemies of truth are on every side, watching the Lord's servants for evil, God will watch over them for good. He will be to them as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 431.

Friday, October 1: For Further Reading

Lift Him Up, "He Represents the Father," p. 36;
That I May Know Him, "The Mystery of Sin," p. 15.

Lesson 2

Moses' History Lesson

Sabbath Afternoon, October 2

The Lord directed Moses to recount to the children of Israel His dealings with them in their deliverance from Egypt and their wonderful preservation in the wilderness. He was to call to mind their unbelief and murmuring when brought into trial, and the Lord's great mercy and loving-kindness, which had never forsaken them. This would stimulate their faith and strengthen their courage. While they would be led to realize their own sin and weakness, they would realize also that God was their righteousness and strength.

It is just as essential that the people of God in this day should bear in mind how and when they have been tested, and where their faith has failed; where they have imperiled His cause by their unbelief and also by their self-confidence. God's mercy, His sustaining providence, His never-to-be-forgotten deliverances, are to be recounted, step by step. As God's people thus review the past, they should see that the Lord is ever repeating His dealings. They should understand the warnings given, and should beware not to repeat their mistakes. Renouncing all self-dependence, they are to trust in Him to save them from again dishonoring His name.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 210.

The book of Deuteronomy should be carefully studied by those living on the earth today. It contains a record of the instruction given to Moses to give to the children of Israel. In it the law is repeated.

The law of God was often to be repeated to Israel. That its precepts might not be forgotten, it was to be kept before the people, and was ever to be exalted and honored. Parents were to read the law to their children, teaching it to them line upon line, precept upon precept. And on public occasions the law was to be read in the hearing of all the people.

Upon obedience to this law depended the prosperity of Israel. If they were obedient, it would bring them life; if disobedient, death.—

Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1117.

Satan is ever at work endeavoring to pervert what God has spoken, to blind the mind and darken the understanding, and thus lead men into sin. This is why the Lord is so explicit, making His requirements so very plain that none need err. God is constantly seeking to draw men close under His protection, that Satan may not practice his cruel, deceptive power upon them. He has condescended to speak to them with His own voice, to write with His own hand the living oracles. And these blessed words, all instinct with life and luminous with truth, are committed to men as a perfect guide. Because Satan is so ready to catch away the mind and divert the affections from the Lord's promises and requirements, the greater diligence is needed to fix them in the mind and impress them upon the heart.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 503, 504.

Sunday, October 3: The Ministry of Moses

The Lord through Moses delivered the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. Moses was a mediator for his people, often standing between them and the wrath of God. When the anger of the Lord was greatly kindled against Israel for their unbelief, their murmurings, and their grievous sins, Moses' love for them was tested. God proposed to destroy them and to make of him a mighty nation. Moses showed his love for Israel by his earnest pleading in their behalf. In his distress he prayed God to turn from His fierce anger and forgive Israel, or blot his name out of His book.—*Early Writings*, p. 162.

The life of Christ was one of unselfish service, and His life is our lesson book. The work that He began we are to carry forward. With His life of toil and sacrifice before them, can those who profess His name hesitate to deny self, to lift the cross and follow Him? He humbled Himself to the lowest depths that we might be lifted to the heights of purity and holiness and completeness. He became poor that He might pour into our poverty-stricken souls the fullness of His

riches. He endured the cross of shame, that He might give us peace and rest and joy and make us partakers of the glories of His throne.

Should we not give back to God all that He has redeemed, the affections He has purified, and the body that He has purchased, to be kept unto sanctification and holiness?

True Christianity diffuses love through the whole being. It touches every vital part—the brain, the heart, the helping hands, the feet—enabling men to stand firmly where God requires them to stand. We can, *we can*, reveal the likeness of our divine Lord. We can know the science of spiritual life. We can glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are His.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 43.

Pure love is simple in its operations, and is distinct from any other principle of action. Love should be cherished and cultivated, for its influence is divine.

In Jesus you may love with fervor, with earnestness. This love may increase in depth and expand without limit. Love to God will ensure love to your neighbor, and you will engage in the duties of life with a deep, unselfish interest. Pure principles should underlie your actions. Inward peace will bring even your thoughts into a healthful channel. ...

... The serenity of mind which you may possess will bless all with whom you associate. This peace and calmness will, in time, become natural, and will reflect its precious rays upon all around you, to be again reflected upon you.

The more you taste this heavenly peace and quietude of mind, the more it will increase. It is an animated, living pleasure which does not throw all the moral energies into a stupor, but awakens them to increased activity. Perfect peace is an attitude of heaven which angels possess.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 94.

Monday, October 4: Fulfilled Prophecy

God cannot display the knowledge of His will and the wonders of His grace among the unbelieving world unless He has witnesses scattered all over the earth. It is His plan that those who are partakers of this great salvation through Jesus Christ should be His

missionaries, bodies of light throughout the world, to be as signs to the people, living epistles, known and read of all men, their faith and works testifying to the near approach of the coming Saviour and showing that they have not received the grace of God in vain. The people must be warned to prepare for the coming judgment. To those who have been listening only to fables, God will give an opportunity to hear the sure word of prophecy, whereunto they do well that they take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. He will present the sure word of truth to the understanding of all who will take heed; all may contrast truth with the fables presented to them by men who claim to understand the word of God and to be qualified to instruct those in darkness.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 631.

When the Christian is looking forward to duties and severe trials that he anticipates are to be brought upon him, because of his Christian profession of faith, it is human nature to contemplate the consequences, and shrink from the prospects, and this will be decidedly so as we near the close of this earth's history. We may be encouraged by the truthfulness of God's word, that Christ never failed His children as their safe Leader in the hour of their trial; for we have the truthful record of those who have been under the oppressive powers of Satan, that His grace is according to their day. God is faithful who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able.—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 398.

More than eighteen hundred years have passed since the Saviour gave the promise of His coming. Throughout the centuries His words have filled with courage the hearts of His faithful ones. The promise has not yet been fulfilled; but none the less sure is the word that has been spoken.

Christ will come in His own glory, in the glory of His Father, and in the glory of the holy angels. Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels, the beautiful, triumphant sons of God, possessing surpassing loveliness and glory, will escort Him on His way. In the place of a crown of thorns, He will wear a crown of glory—a crown within a crown. In the place of that old purple robe, He will be clothed in a garment of whitest white, “so as no fuller on

earth can white” it. And on His vesture and on His thigh a name will be written, “King of kings, and Lord of lords.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 367.

Tuesday, October 5: A Thousand Times More Numerous

The government of Israel was characterized by the most thorough organization, wonderful alike for its completeness and its simplicity. The order so strikingly displayed in the perfection and arrangement of all God’s created works was manifest in the Hebrew economy. God was the center of authority and government, the sovereign of Israel. Moses stood as their visible leader, by God’s appointment, to administer the laws in His name. From the elders of the tribes a council of seventy was afterward chosen to assist Moses in the general affairs of the nation. Next came the priests, who consulted the Lord in the sanctuary. Chiefs, or princes, ruled over the tribes. Under these were “captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens,” and, lastly, officers who might be employed for special duties. Deuteronomy 1:15.

The Hebrew camp was arranged in exact order. It was separated into three great divisions, each having its appointed position in the encampment. In the center was the tabernacle, the abiding place of the invisible King. Around it were stationed the priests and Levites. Beyond these were encamped all the other tribes.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 374.

The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God’s people in the time of Moses and of David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly organized church of God in the gospel dispensation. ...

The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one

body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 95.

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” 1 Corinthians 14:33. He requires that order and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old. He desires His work to be carried forward with thoroughness and exactness so that He may place upon it the seal of His approval. Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church, the human instrumentality co-operating with the divine, every agency subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 96.

Wednesday, October 6: Kadesh Barnea

After [the spies] had spoken of the fertility of the land, all but two spoke very discouragingly of their ability to possess it. They said that the people were very strong that dwelt in the land, and the cities were surrounded with great and high walls, and, more than all this, they saw the children of the giant Anak there. They then described how the people were situated around Canaan and expressed the fear that it would be impossible for them ever to possess this land.

As the people listened to this report, they gave vent to their disappointment in bitter reproaches and wailing. They did not wait to reflect and reason that God, who had brought them out thus far, would certainly give them the land. They left God out of the question. They acted as though in taking the city of Jericho, the key to the land

of Canaan, they must depend solely on the power of arms. God had declared that He would give them the country, and they should have fully trusted Him to fulfill His word. But their unsubdued hearts were not in harmony with His plans. They did not reflect how wonderfully He had wrought in their behalf, bringing them out of their Egyptian bondage, cutting a path for them through the waters of the sea, and destroying the pursuing host of Pharaoh. In their unbelief they were limiting the work of God and distrusting the hand that had hitherto safely guided them.

In this instance they repeated their former error of murmuring against Moses and Aaron. "This, then, is the end of all our high hopes," said they. "This is the land we have traveled all the way from Egypt to possess." They blamed their leaders for bringing trouble upon Israel and again charged them with deceiving the people and leading them astray.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 148.

God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in "because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19). Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfill His covenant with them.

For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.

—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 68, 69.

The purpose which God seeks to accomplish through His people today is the same that He desired to accomplish through Israel when He brought them forth out of Egypt. By beholding the goodness, the mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in the church, the world is to have a representation of His character. ...

... Not to this world only but to the universe are we to make manifest the principles of His kingdom.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 12, 13.

Thursday, October 7: The Iniquity of the Amorite

[God told the Israelites] that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full, and their expulsion and extermination could not be justified until they had filled up the cup of their iniquity. Idolatry and sin marked their course, but the measure of their guilt was not such that they could be devoted to destruction. In His love and pity God would let light shine upon them in more distinct rays; He would give them opportunity to behold the working of His wondrous power, that there might be no excuse for their course of evil. It is thus that God deals with the nations. Through a certain period of probation He exercises long-suffering toward nations, cities, and individuals. But when it is evident that they will not come unto Him that they might have life, judgments are visited upon them. The time came when judgment was inflicted upon the Amorites, and the time will come when all the transgressors of His law will know that God will by no means clear the guilty.—*The Review and Herald*, May 2, 1893.

The Lord is regarded as cruel by many in requiring His people to make war with other nations. They say that it is contrary to His benevolent character. But He who made the world, and formed man to dwell upon the earth, has unlimited control over all the works of His hands, and it is His right to do as He pleases, and what He pleases with the work of His hands. Man has no right to say to his Maker, Why doest Thou thus? There is no injustice in His character. He is the Ruler of the world, and a large portion of His subjects have rebelled against His authority, and have trampled upon His law. He has used His people as instruments of His wrath, to punish wicked nations, who have vexed them, and seduced them into idolatry.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1117.

[Every] follower of Christ will find opportunity to show Christian kindness and love; and in so doing he will prove that he is a possessor of the religion of Jesus Christ.

This religion teaches us to exercise patience and long-suffering when brought into places where we receive treatment that is harsh and unjust. “Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that we should inherit a blessing” (1 Peter 3:9). When Christ was reviled, He reviled not again. His religion brings with it a meek and quiet spirit.

There is constant need of patience, gentleness, self-denial, and self-sacrifice in the exercise of Bible religion. But if the word of God is made an abiding principle in our lives, everything with which we have to do, each word, each trivial act, will reveal that we are subject to Jesus Christ. ... If the word of God is received into the heart, it will empty the soul of self-sufficiency and self-dependence. Our lives will be a power for good, because the Holy Spirit will fill our minds with the things of God.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 248.

Friday, October 8: For Further Reading

That I May Know Him, “Christ’s Blessings Universal,” p. 98;
Our High Calling, “The Highest Exercise of Our Powers,” p. 61.

Lesson 3

The Everlasting Covenant

Sabbath Afternoon, October 9

Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, [the Israelites] had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught.

God brought them to Sinai; He manifested His glory; He gave them His law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience: "If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ... ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." Exodus 19:5, 6. ... They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 371, 372.

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

The plans of the enemies of His work may seem to be firm and well established, but He can overthrow the strongest of these plans,

and in His own time and way He will do this, when He sees that our faith has been sufficiently tested and that we are drawing near to Him and making Him our counselor.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 10.

God will not break His covenant, nor alter the thing that has gone out of His lips. His word will stand fast forever as unalterable as His throne. At the judgment this covenant will be brought forth, plainly written with the finger of God, and the world will be arraigned before the bar of Infinite Justice to receive sentence.

Today, as in the days of Elijah, the line of demarcation between God's commandment-keeping people and the worshipers of false gods is clearly drawn. ... And the message for today is: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. ... Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Revelation 18:2, 4, 5.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 187.

Sunday, October 10: The Covenant and the Gospel

Abraham ... to whom the covenant promise was first given, had been called to go forth from his kindred, to the regions beyond, that he might be a light bearer to the heathen. Although the promise to him included a posterity as numerous as the sand by the sea, yet it was for no selfish purpose that he was to become the founder of a great nation in the land of Canaan. God's covenant with him embraced all the nations of earth. "I will bless thee," Jehovah declared, "and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:2, 3.

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

heavenly visitant once more declared, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Genesis 22:18.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 367, 368.

The promises made to Abraham and confirmed to his son were held by Isaac and Rebekah as the great object of their desires and hopes. With these promises Esau and Jacob were familiar. They were taught to regard the birthright as a matter of great importance, for it included not only an inheritance of worldly wealth but spiritual pre-eminence. He who received it was to be the priest of his family, and in the line of his posterity the Redeemer of the world would come. On the other hand, there were obligations resting upon the possessor of the birthright. He who should inherit its blessings must devote his life to the service of God. Like Abraham, he must be obedient to the divine requirements. In marriage, in his family relations, in public life, he must consult the will of God.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 177.

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

Monday, October 11: The Covenant and Israel

The Lord brought his people out of Egypt in a victorious manner. He led them through the wilderness to prove them, and try them. He repeatedly manifested his miraculous power in their deliverances from their enemies. He promised to take them to himself, as his peculiar treasure, if they would obey his voice, and keep his commandments. He did not forbid them to eat the flesh of animals, but withheld it from them in a great measure. He provided them food which was the most healthful. He rained their bread from heaven, and gave them purest water from the flinty rock. He made a covenant with them, if they would obey him in all things, he would preserve them from disease.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 412.

A nominal faith in Christ, which accepts Him merely as the Saviour of the world, can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. He who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith, cannot receive blessing from God. It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

Of special value to God's church on earth today ... are the messages of counsel and admonition given through the prophets who have made plain His eternal purpose in behalf of mankind. In the teachings of the prophets, His love for the lost race and His plan for their salvation are clearly revealed. The story of Israel's call, of their successes and failures, of their restoration to divine favor, of their rejection of the Master of the vineyard, and of the carrying out of the plan of the ages by a goodly remnant to whom are to be fulfilled all the covenant promises—this has been the theme of God's messengers to His church throughout the centuries that have passed. And today God's message to His church—to those who are

occupying His vineyard as faithful husbandmen—is none other than that spoken through the prophets of old. ...

Let Israel hope in God. The Master of the vineyard is even now gathering from among men of all nations and peoples the precious fruits for which He has long been waiting. Soon He will come unto His own; and in that glad day His eternal purpose for the house of Israel will finally be fulfilled. “He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 22.

Tuesday, October 12: The Book of the Covenant

Upon descending from the mountain, “Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do.” This pledge, together with the words of the Lord which it bound them to obey, was written by Moses in a book.

Then followed the ratification of the covenant. ...

Having sprinkled the altar with the blood of the offerings, Moses “took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people.” Thus the conditions of the covenant were solemnly repeated, and all were at liberty to choose whether or not they would comply with them. They had at the first promised to obey the voice of God; but they had since heard His law proclaimed; and its principles had been particularized, that they might know how much this covenant involved. Again the people answered with one accord, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” “When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood, ... and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.” Hebrews 9:19, 20.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 311, 312.

By proclaiming the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel with His own voice, God demonstrated their importance. In awful grandeur He made known His majesty and authority as Ruler of the

world. This He did to impress the people with the sacredness of His law and the importance of obeying it. The power and glory with which the law was given reveal its importance. It is the faith once delivered to the saints by Christ our Redeemer speaking from Sinai. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 198.

From a race of slaves the Israelites had been exalted above all peoples to be the peculiar treasure of the King of kings. God had separated them from the world, that He might commit to them a sacred trust. He had made them the depositaries of His law, and He purposed, through them, to preserve among men the knowledge of Himself. Thus the light of heaven was to shine out to a world enshrouded in darkness, and a voice was to be heard appealing to all peoples to turn from their idolatry to serve the living God. If the Israelites would be true to their trust, they would become a power in the world. God would be their defense, and He would exalt them above all other nations. His light and truth would be revealed through them, and they would stand forth under His wise and holy rule as an example of the superiority of His worship over every form of idolatry. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 314.

Wednesday, October 13: His Special People

The most licentious and abominable rites were ... part of the heathen worship. The gods themselves were represented as impure, and their worshipers gave the rein to the baser passions. Unnatural vices prevailed and the religious festivals were characterized by universal and open impurity. ...

From the opening of the great controversy it has been Satan's purpose to misrepresent God's character and to excite rebellion against His law, and this work appears to be crowned with success. The multitudes give ear to Satan's deceptions and set themselves against God. But amid the working of evil, God's purposes move steadily forward to their accomplishment; to all created intelligences He is making manifest His justice and benevolence. Through Satan's temptations the whole human race have become transgressors of God's law, but by the sacrifice of His Son a way is opened whereby

they may return to God. Through the grace of Christ they may be enabled to render obedience to the Father's law. Thus in every age, from the midst of apostasy and rebellion, God gathers out a people that are true to Him—a people "in whose heart is His law." Isaiah 51:7.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 337, 338.

The purpose of all God's commandments is to reveal man's duty not only to God, but to his fellow man. In this late age of the world's history, we are not, because of the selfishness of our hearts, to question or dispute the right of God to make these requirements, or we will deceive ourselves, and rob our souls of the richest blessings of the grace of God. Heart and mind and soul are to be merged in the will of God. Then the covenant, framed from the dictates of infinite wisdom, and made binding by the power and authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords, will be our pleasure. It is enough that He has said that obedience to His statutes and laws is the life and prosperity of His people.

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

Every day we are making our history. Yesterday is beyond our amendment or control; today only is ours. Then let us not grieve the Spirit of God today, for tomorrow we shall not be able to recall what we have done. Today will then be yesterday.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 149.

Thursday, October 14: Other Images

The wilderness wandering was not only ordained as a judgment upon the rebels and murmurers, but it was to serve as a discipline for the rising generation, preparatory to their entrance into the Promised Land. Moses declared to them, "As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee," "to humble thee, and to

prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no. And He ... suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.” Deuteronomy 8:5, 2, 3.

“He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye.” “In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” Deuteronomy 32:10; Isaiah 63:9.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 407.

One well-ordered, well-disciplined family tells more in behalf of Christianity than all the sermons that can be preached.

A lamp, however small, if kept steadily burning, may be the means of lighting many other lamps. Our sphere of influence may seem narrow, our ability small, our opportunities few, our acquirements limited; yet wonderful possibilities are ours through a faithful use of the opportunities of our own homes. If we will open our hearts and home to the divine principles of life, we shall become channels for currents of life-giving power. From our homes will flow streams of healing, bringing life, and beauty, and fruitfulness.—*My Life Today*, p. 124.

Those who have genuine love for God will manifest an earnest desire to know His will and to do it. Says the apostle John, whose epistles treat so fully upon love, “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments” (1 John 5:3). The child who loves his parents will show that love by willing obedience; but the selfish, ungrateful child seeks to do as little as possible for his parents, while he at the same time desires to enjoy all the privileges granted to the obedient and faithful. The same difference is seen among those who profess to be children of God. Many who know that they are the objects of His love and care, and who desire to receive His blessing, take no delight in doing His will. They regard God’s claims upon

them as an unpleasant restraint, His commandments as a grievous yoke. But he who is truly seeking for holiness of heart and life delights in the law of God, and mourns only that he falls so far short of meeting its requirements. ...

It is not only the privilege but the duty of every Christian to maintain a close union with Christ and to have a rich experience in the things of God. Then his life will be fruitful in good works. Said Christ, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit" (John 15:8).—*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 81, 83.

Friday, October 15: For Further Reading

In Heavenly Places, "A Work of Preparation," p. 347;
Prophets and Kings, "The Book of the Law," pp. 392–396.

Lesson 4

To Love the Lord Your God

Sabbath Afternoon, October 16

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

The love of Christ is a golden chain that binds finite, human beings who believe in Jesus Christ to the Infinite God. The love that the Lord has for His children passeth knowledge. No science can define or explain it. No human wisdom can fathom it.

Selfishness and pride hinder the pure love that unites us in spirit with Jesus Christ. If this love is truly cultivated, finite will blend with finite, and all will center in the Infinite. Humanity will unite with humanity, and all will be bound up with the heart of Infinite Love. Sanctified love for one another is sacred. In this great work Christian love for one another—far higher, more constant, more courteous, more unselfish, than has been seen—preserves Christian tenderness, Christian benevolence, and politeness, and enfolds the human brotherhood in the embrace of God, acknowledging the dignity with which God has invested the rights of man.—*Our High Calling*, p. 73.

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. “We love Him, because He first loved us.” In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.

[The apostle] John strove to lead the believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the exercise of the spirit of love. This redeeming power, filling the heart, would control every other motive and raise its possessors above the corrupting influences of the world. And as this love was allowed full sway and became the motive power in the life, their trust and confidence in God and His dealing with them would be complete. They could then come to Him in full confidence of faith, knowing that they would receive from Him everything needful for their present and eternal good.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 551.

Sunday, October 17: To Love God

All should learn ... that they are individually amenable to God. When they love God with all their hearts, they will be wise unto salvation. They will do His will, and their light will ever be their glory, and be undiminished because they recognize and fear and serve their Lord. The solemn work rests upon every soul to consider that he is a servant of Jesus Christ. ...

The one all-important matter is to serve the Lord with full purpose of heart, and seek to become the Lord's, heart and mind. All who come to the Saviour for counsel will receive the very help they need, if they will come in humility, and with assurance cling to that promise, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7).

Lift up the standard, beginning with full surrender and continuing in the simplicity of obedience to all the Lord's commandments,

according to His special directions. None of the important things specified in His Word are to be neglected.—*This Day With God*, p. 128.

God claims the whole of the affections of man, the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole mind, the whole strength. He lays claim to all that there is of man, because He has poured out the whole treasure of heaven by giving us His all at once, reserving nothing greater that heaven can do.

When I commence writing on this subject, I go on and on, and try to get beyond the outer edge, but I fail. When we shall reach the mansions above, Jesus will Himself lead the white-robed ones, made white in the blood of the Lamb, to the Father. “Therefore 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.” Revelation 7:15.—*Our High Calling*, p. 12.

The atmosphere of the church is so frigid, its spirit is of such an order, that men and women cannot sustain or endure the example of primitive and heaven-born piety. The warmth of their first love is frozen up, and unless they are watered over by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, their candlestick will be removed out of its place, except they repent and do their first works. The first works of the church were seen when the believers sought out friends, relatives, and acquaintances, and with hearts overflowing with love told the story of what Jesus was to them and what they were to Jesus.
—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 167.

Our Redeemer says: “If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.” “Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.” If we know God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, unspeakable gladness will come to the soul. Oh, how we need the divine presence!—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 169.

Monday, October 18: To Fear God

Humility and reverence should characterize the deportment of all who come into the presence of God. In the name of Jesus we may come before Him with confidence, but we must not approach Him with the boldness of presumption, as though He were on a level with ourselves. There are those who address the great and all-powerful and holy God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable, as they would address an equal, or even an inferior. There are those who conduct themselves in His house as they would not presume to do in the audience chamber of an earthly ruler. These should remember that they are in His sight whom seraphim adore, before whom angels veil their faces. God is greatly to be revered; all who truly realize His presence will bow in humility before Him, and, like Jacob beholding the vision of God, they will cry out, "... This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 252.

The heart that has once tasted the love of Christ, cries out continually for a deeper draft, and as you impart you will receive in richer and more abundant measure. Every revelation of God to the soul increases the capacity to know and to love. The continual cry of the heart is, "More of Thee," and ever the Spirit's answer is, "Much more." Romans 5:9, 10. For our God delights to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Ephesians 3:20. ...

God has poured out His love unstintedly, as the showers that refresh the earth. He says, "Let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together." ... Isaiah 45:8.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 20, 21.

The first angel of Revelation 14 calls upon men to "fear God, and give glory to him," and to worship Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey His law. Without obedience to His commandments, no worship can be pleasing to God; for "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments" (1 John 5:3).

Many religious teachers say that Christ, by His death, freed us from the law; but not all take this view. The law of God, from its very nature, is unchangeable. It is a revelation of the will and character of its Author. God is love, and His law is love. Its two great principles are love to God and man. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The character of God is righteousness and truth, and such is the nature of His law. The psalmist says, "Thy law is the truth"; "all thy commandments are righteousness." And the apostle Paul declares, "The law is holy, and the commandments holy, and just, and good." Such a law, an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 62.

Tuesday, October 19: He First Loved Us

God desired to make of His people Israel a praise and a glory. Every spiritual advantage was given them. God withheld from them nothing favorable to the formation of character that would make them representatives of Himself.

Their obedience to the law of God would make them marvels of prosperity before the nations of the world. He who could give them wisdom and skill in all cunning work would continue to be their teacher, and would ennoble and elevate them through obedience to His laws. If obedient, they would be preserved from the diseases that afflicted other nations, and would be blessed with vigor of intellect. The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their prosperity. They were to be a kingdom of priests and princes. God furnished them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth.

In the most definite manner Christ through Moses had set before them God's purpose, and had made plain the terms of their prosperity. "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God," He said; "the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. ... Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations." Deuteronomy

7:6, 7.

—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 288.

[God] does not ask if we are worthy of His love, but He pours upon us the riches of His love, to make us worthy. He is not vindictive. He seeks not to punish, but to redeem. Even the severity which He manifests through His providences is manifested for the salvation of the wayward. He yearns with intense desire to relieve the woes of men and to apply His balsam to their wounds. It is true that God “will by no means clear the guilty” (Exodus 34:7), but He would take away the guilt.

The merciful are “partakers of the divine nature,” and in them the compassionate love of God finds expression. All whose hearts are in sympathy with the heart of Infinite Love will seek to reclaim and not to condemn. Christ dwelling in the soul is a spring that never runs dry. Where He abides, there will be an overflowing of beneficence.

—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 22.

The loveliness of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. It was His delight to do the will of God. Love to God, zeal for His glory, was the controlling power in our Saviour's life. Love beautified and ennobled all His actions. Love is of God. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. It is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns. “We love, because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:19, R.V. In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and ennoble the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 59.

Wednesday, October 20: If You Love Me, Keep My Commandments

Keep Jesus uplifted. We are laborers together with God. We are provided with spiritual weapons, mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of the enemy. We must in no case misrepresent our faith

by weaving unChristlike attributes into the work. We must exalt the law of God, as binding us up with Jesus Christ and all who love Him and keep His commandments. We are also to reveal a love for the souls for whom Christ has died. Our faith is to be demonstrated as a power of which Christ is the Author. And the Bible, His word, is to make us wise unto salvation.—*This Day With God*, p. 99.

We are to reflect the character of Jesus. Everywhere ... we should let the lovely image of Jesus appear. This we cannot do unless we are filled with His fullness. If we would become better acquainted with Jesus, we should love Him for His goodness and excellence and we should desire to become so assimilated to His divine character that all would know that we had been with Jesus, and learned of Him. ...

... Sinners will be constrained to confess that we are not the children of darkness, but the children of light. How shall they know this? By the fruits we bear. ... There must be a deep work of grace—the love of God in the heart, and this love is expressed by obedience. ...

Our hearts may be filled with all the fullness of God; but there is something for us to do. We must not pet our faults and sins, but put them away, and make haste to set our hearts in order. When this is done, let us take the key of faith, and unlock the storehouse of God's rich blessings.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 266.

Christ attaches a weight of importance to the obedience of His people to the commandments of God. They are to have an intelligent knowledge of them, and bring them into their daily life. Man cannot keep the commandments of God, only as he is in Christ, and Christ in him. And it is not possible for him to be in Christ, having light on His commandments, while disregarding the least of them. By steadfast, willing obedience to His word, they evidence their love for the Sent of God.

Not to keep the commandments of God is not to love Him. None will keep the law of God unless they love Him who is the only begotten of the Father. And nonetheless surely; if they love Him, they will express that love by obedience to Him. All who love Christ will be loved of the Father, and He will manifest Himself to them. In

all their emergencies and perplexities they will have a helper in Jesus Christ.—*This Day With God*, p. 142.

Thursday, October 21: The First Commandment

Let us individually consider what is the record made in the books of heaven concerning our life and character, and our attitude toward God. Has our love for God been increasing during the past year? If Christ is indeed abiding in our hearts, we shall love God, we shall love to obey all His commandments, and this love will continually deepen and strengthen. If we represent Christ to the world, we shall be pure in heart, in life, in character; we shall be holy in conversation; there will be no guile in our hearts or upon our lips. Let us examine our past life and see if we have given evidence of our love for Jesus by seeking to be like Him, and by working, as He worked, to save those for whom He died.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 325.

Christ's death and resurrection completed His covenant. Before this time, it was revealed through types and shadows, which pointed to the great offering to be made by the world's Redeemer, offered in promise for the sins of the world. Anciently believers were saved by the same Saviour as now, but it was a God veiled. They saw God's mercy in figures. The promise given to Adam and Eve in Eden was the gospel to a fallen race. The promise was made that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and it should bruise His heel. Christ's sacrifice is the glorious fulfillment of the whole Jewish economy. The Sun of Righteousness has risen. Christ our righteousness is shining in brightness upon us.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 932.

The reason why we are not more joyful is that we have lost our first love. Let us then be zealous and repent, lest the candlestick be moved out of its place.

The temple of God is opened in heaven, and the threshold is flushed with the glory which is for every church that will love God and keep His commandments. We need to study, to meditate, and to

pray. Then we shall have spiritual eyesight to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple. We shall catch the themes of song and thanksgiving of the heavenly choir round about the throne. When Zion shall arise and shine, her light will be most penetrating, and precious songs of praise and thanksgiving will be heard in the assemblies of the saints. ...

God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love Him. There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 368.

Friday, October 22: For Further Reading

Lift Him Up, “The Principle of Love in the Law,” p. 151;
That I May Know Him, “Rich Depths of Knowledge,” p. 205.

Lesson 5

The Stranger in Your Gates

Sabbath Afternoon, October 23

The Saviour was the One who had instructed the Hebrews in the wilderness; from the pillar of cloud and of fire He had taught a very different lesson from that which the people were now receiving from their priests and teachers. The merciful provisions of the law extended even to the lower animals, which cannot express in words their want and suffering. Directions had been given to Moses for the children of Israel to this effect. ... But in the [Samaritan] wounded by robbers, Jesus presented the case of a brother in suffering. How much more should their hearts have been moved with pity for him than for a beast of burden! The message had been given them through Moses that the Lord their God, “a great God, a mighty, and a terrible,” “doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger.” Wherefore He commanded, “Love ye therefore the stranger.” “Thou shalt love him as thyself.” Deuteronomy 10:17–19; Leviticus 19:34.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 500.

The commandments of God are comprehensive and far reaching; in a few words they unfold the whole duty of man. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. ... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Mark 12:30, 31). In these words the length and breadth, the depth and height, of the law of God is comprehended; for Paul declares, “Love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10). The only definition we find in the Bible for sin is that “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). The Word of God declares, ... “There is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Romans 3:12). Many are deceived concerning the condition of their hearts. They do not realize that the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. They wrap themselves about with their own righteousness, and are satisfied in reaching their own human standard of character; but how fatally they fail when they do not

reach the divine standard, and of themselves they cannot meet the requirements of God.

We may measure ourselves by ourselves, we may compare ourselves among ourselves, we may say we do as well as this one or that one, but the question to which the judgment will call for an answer is, Do we meet the claims of high heaven? Do we reach the divine standard? Are our hearts in harmony with the God of heaven?—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 320, 321.

I saw that whatever divides the affections, or takes away from the heart supreme love for God, or prevents unlimited confidence and entire trust in Him, assumes the character and takes the form of an idol. I was pointed to the first great commandment: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” There is allowed no separation of our affections from God. Nothing is to divide our supreme love for Him or our delight in Him. Your will, wishes, plans, desires, and pleasures must all be in subjection.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 142.

Sunday, October 24: Circumcise Your Hearts

He then required of Abraham and his seed, circumcision, which was a circle cut in the flesh, as a token that God had cut them out and separated them from all nations as His peculiar treasure. By this sign they solemnly pledged themselves that they would not intermarry with other nations, for by so doing they would lose their reverence for God and His holy law, and would become like the idolatrous nations around them.

By the act of circumcision they solemnly agreed to fulfill on their part the conditions of the covenant made with Abraham, to be separate from all nations and to be perfect. If the descendants of Abraham had kept separate from other nations, they would not have been seduced into idolatry. By keeping separate from other nations, a great temptation to engage in their sinful practices and rebel against God would be removed from them. They lost in a great measure their peculiar, holy character by mingling with the nations around them. To punish them, the Lord brought a famine upon their

land, which compelled them to go down into Egypt to preserve their lives. But God did not forsake them while they were in Egypt, because of His covenant with Abraham.—*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 146, 147.

It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. The perishing sinner may say: "I am a lost sinner; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He says, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance' (Mark 2:17). I am a sinner, and He died upon Calvary's cross to save me. I need not remain a moment longer unsaved. He died and rose again for my justification, and He will save me now. I accept the forgiveness He has promised."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 392.

When we bring our lives to complete obedience to the law of God, regarding God as our supreme Guide, the clinging to Christ as our hope of righteousness, God will work in our behalf. This is a righteousness of faith. The commandments of God diligently studied and practiced, open to us communication with heaven, and distinguish for us the true from the false. This obedience works out for us the divine will, bringing into our lives the righteousness and perfection that was seen in the life of Christ.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 66.

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*, p. 668.

Monday, October 25: Love the Stranger

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were set in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the faculties of the mind, all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Christ the Word, a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power. ...

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

That God who marks the fall of a sparrow, marks your deportment and your feelings; He marks your envy, your prejudice, your attempt to justify your action in the least matter of injustice. When you misconceive the words and acts of another, and your own feelings are stirred, so that you make incorrect statements, and it is known that you are at variance with your brother, you lead others, through their confidence in you, to regard him just as you do; and by the root of bitterness springing up, many are defiled. ...

Now God requires that you who have thus done the least injustice to another shall confess your fault, not only to the one you have injured, but to those who through your influence have been led to regard their brother in a false light, and to make of none effect the work God has given him to do. ...

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

—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 309.

Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of the gifts of heaven and to exclude the rest of God's family

in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth.

The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 25.

Tuesday, October 26: For You Were Strangers in Egypt

While God's chosen people were to stand forth distinct and holy, separate from the nations that knew Him not, they were to treat the stranger kindly. He was not to be looked down upon because he was not of Israel. The Israelites were to love the stranger because Christ died as verily to save him as He did to save Israel. At their feasts of thanksgiving, when they recounted the mercies of God, the stranger was to be made welcome. At the time of harvest they were to leave in the field a portion for the stranger and the poor. So the strangers were to share also in God's spiritual blessings. The Lord God of Israel commanded that they should be received if they chose the society of those who knew and acknowledged Him. In this way they would learn the law of Jehovah and glorify Him by their obedience.

So today God desires His children, both in spiritual and in temporal things, to impart blessings to the world. For every disciple of Christ in every age were spoken those precious words of the Saviour: Out of him "shall flow rivers of living water."

But instead of imparting the gifts of God, many who profess to be Christians are wrapped up in their own narrow interests, and they selfishly withhold God's blessings from their fellow men.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 273, 274.

God will not vindicate any device whereby man shall in the slightest degree rule or oppress his fellow man. The only hope for fallen man is to look to Jesus, and receive Him as the only Saviour. As soon as man begins to make an iron rule for other men, as soon as he begins to harness up and drive men according to his own mind, he dishonors God, and imperils his own soul and the souls of his brethren.

He [God] expects His workers to be tenderhearted. How merciful are the ways of God! (See Deuteronomy 10:17–20; 2 Chronicles 20:5–7, 9; 1 Peter 1:17.) But the rules God has given have been disregarded, and strange fire has been offered before the Lord.—*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 139.

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”—Matthew 7:12.

On the assurance of the love of God toward us, Jesus enjoins love to one another, in one comprehensive principle covering all the relations of human fellowship. ...

In your association with others, put yourself in their place. Enter into their feelings, their difficulties, their disappointments, their joys, and their sorrows. Identify yourself with them, and then do to them as, were you to exchange places with them, you would wish them to deal with you. This is the true rule of honesty. It is another expression of the law. “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Matthew 22:39. And it is the substance of the teaching of the prophets. It is a principle of heaven, and will be developed in all who are fitted for its holy companionship.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 134.

Wednesday, October 27: Judge Righteously

Moses repeated to the congregation the words of the Lord, and announced the appointment of the seventy elders. The great leader’s charge to these chosen men might well serve as a model of judicial integrity for the judges and legislators of modern times: “Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not

respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's." Deuteronomy 1:16, 17.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 381.

It is strange that professed Christian men should disregard the plain, positive teachings of the word of God and feel no compunctions of conscience. God places upon them the responsibility of caring for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the widow, and the fatherless; but many make no effort to regard it. In order to save such, God frequently brings them under the rod of affliction and places them in positions similar to those occupied by the persons who were in need of their help and sympathy, but who did not receive it at their hands.

God will hold the church ... responsible, as a body, for the wrong course of its members. If a selfish and unsympathizing spirit is allowed to exist in any of its members toward the unfortunate ..., He will hide His face from His people until they do their duty and remove the wrong from among them. If any professing the name of Christ so far misrepresent their Saviour as to be unmindful of their duty to the afflicted, or if they in any way seek to advantage themselves to the injury of the unfortunate and thus rob them of means, the Lord holds the church accountable for the sin of its members until they have done all they can to remedy the existing evil. He will not hearken to the prayer of His people while the orphan, the fatherless, the lame, the blind, and the sick are neglected among them.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 517.

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.

No man receives holiness as a birthright, or as a gift from any other human being. Holiness is the gift of God through Christ. Those who receive the Saviour become sons of God. They are His spiritual children, born again, renewed in righteousness and true holiness. Their minds are changed. With clearer vision they behold eternal realities. They are adopted into God's family, and they become

conformed to His likeness, changed by His Spirit from glory to glory. From cherishing supreme love for self, they come to cherish supreme love for God and for Christ. Accepting Christ as a personal Saviour, and following His example of self-denial—this is the secret of holiness.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 120.

Thursday, October 28: Pure Religion Before God

The law, as given through Moses, enjoined a very tender regard for the poor. When a poor man gave his garment as a pledge, or as security for a debt, the creditor was not permitted to enter the dwelling to obtain it; he must wait in the street for the pledge to be brought to him. And whatever the circumstances the pledge must be returned to its owner at nightfall. Deuteronomy 24:10–13. In the days of Christ these merciful provisions were little regarded; but Jesus taught His disciples to submit to the decision of the court, even though this should demand more than the law of Moses authorized.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 72.

Christ has shown that our neighbor does not mean merely one of the church or faith to which we belong. It has no reference to race, color, or class distinction. Our neighbor is every person who needs our help. Our neighbor is every soul who is wounded and bruised by the adversary. Our neighbor is everyone who is the property of God.

In the story of the good Samaritan, Jesus gave a picture of Himself and His mission. Man had been deceived, bruised, robbed, and ruined by Satan, and left to perish; but the Saviour had compassion on our helpless condition. He left His glory, to come to our rescue. He found us ready to die, and He undertook our case. He healed our wounds. He covered us with His robe of righteousness. He opened to us a refuge of safety, and made complete provision for us at His own charges. He died to redeem us. Pointing to His own example, He says to His followers, "These things I command you, that ye love one another." "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 15:17; 13:34.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 503.

Divine truth exerts little influence upon the world, when it should exert much influence through our practice. The mere profession of religion abounds, but it has little weight. We may claim to be followers of Christ, we may claim to believe every truth in the word of God; but this will do our neighbor no good unless our belief is carried into our daily life. Our profession may be as high as heaven, but it will save neither ourselves nor our fellow men unless we are Christians. A right example will do more to benefit the world than all our profession.

By no selfish practices can the cause of Christ be served. His cause is the cause of the oppressed and the poor. In the hearts of His professed followers there is need of the tender sympathy of Christ—a deeper love for those whom He has so valued as to give His own life for their salvation. These souls are precious, infinitely more precious than any other offering we can bring to God. To bend every energy toward some apparently great work, while we neglect the needy or turn the stranger from his right, is not a service that will meet His approval.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 383.

Friday, October 29: For Further Reading

This Day With God, “Imitating the Pattern,” p. 291;
Patriarchs and Prophets, “God’s Care for the Poor,” pp. 532–536.

Lesson 6

For What Nation Is There so Great?

Sabbath Afternoon, October 30

If they would keep His commandments, God promised to give them the finest of the wheat, and bring them honey out of the rock. With long life would He satisfy them, and show them His salvation.

Through disobedience to God, Adam and Eve had lost Eden, and because of sin the whole earth was cursed. But if God's people followed His instruction, their land would be restored to fertility and beauty. God Himself gave them directions in regard to the culture of the soil, and they were to co-operate with Him in its restoration. Thus the whole land, under God's control, would become an object lesson of spiritual truth. As in obedience to His natural laws the earth should produce its treasures, so in obedience to His moral law the hearts of the people were to reflect the attributes of His character. Even the heathen would recognize the superiority of those who served and worshiped the living God.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 289.

Where shall we find laws more noble, pure, and just than are exhibited on the statute books wherein is recorded the instruction given to Moses for the children of Israel? From what other source can we gather such strength or learn such noble science? What other book will teach men so well how to love, fear, and obey God? What other book presents to students more ennobling science, more wonderful history? It clearly portrays righteousness and foretells the consequence of disloyalty to the law of Jehovah.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 428.

The Lord has given great light and privileges to His people. "Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments," He says; "keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these

statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. ...”

As a people we are to stand under the banner of Jesus Christ. We are to consecrate ourselves to God as a distinct, separate, and peculiar people. He speaks to us, saying, “Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.”

—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 478.

There should be an intelligent knowledge of how to come to God in reverence and godly fear with devotional love. There is a growing lack of reverence for our Maker, a growing disregard of His greatness and His majesty. But God is speaking to us in these last days. ...

In these perilous times, those who profess to be God’s commandment-keeping people should guard against the tendency to lose the spirit of reverence and godly fear. The Scriptures teach men how to approach their Maker—with humility and awe, through faith in a divine Mediator. Let man come on bended knee, as a subject of grace, a suppliant at the footstool of mercy. Thus he is to testify that the whole soul, body, and spirit are in subjection to his Creator.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 91.

Sunday, October 31: Do Not Add or Take Away

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,” are the words of our Saviour. Errors in doctrine are multiplying and twining themselves with serpentlike subtlety around the affections of the people. There is not a doctrine of the Bible that has not been denied. The great truths of prophecy, showing our position in the history of the world, have been shorn of their beauty and power by the clergy, who seek to make these all-important truths dark and incomprehensible. In many cases the children are drifting away from the old landmarks. ...

... Those who have seen the truth and felt its importance, and have had an experience in the things of God, are to teach sound doctrine to their children. They should make them acquainted with the great pillars of our faith, the reasons why we are Seventh-day

Adventists,—why we are called, as were the children of Israel, to be a peculiar people, a holy nation, separate and distinct from all other people on the face of the earth. These things should be explained to the children in simple language, easy to be understood; and as they grow in years, the lessons imparted should be suited to their increasing capacity, until the foundations of truth have been laid broad and deep.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 330.

The religious life of the Jewish nation had become a pretense. When the law was proclaimed on Mount Sinai by the voice of God, all the people pledged themselves to obey. They said, “I go, sir,” but they went not. When Christ came in person to set before them the principles of the law, they rejected Him. Christ had given the Jewish leaders of His day abundant evidence of His authority and divine power, but although they were convinced, they would not accept the evidence. Christ had shown them that they continued to disbelieve because they had not the spirit which leads to obedience. He had declared to them, “Ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. ... In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:6, 9.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 276.

[Christ] was loyal to God’s commandments, setting aside the human traditions and requirements which had been exalted in their place. Because of this He was hated and persecuted. This history is repeated. The laws and traditions of men are exalted above the law of God, and those who are true to God’s commandments suffer reproach and persecution. Christ, because of His faithfulness to God, was accused as a Sabbathbreaker and blasphemer. He was declared to be possessed of a devil, and was denounced as Beelzebub. In like manner His followers are accused and misrepresented. Thus Satan hopes to lead them to sin, and cast dishonor upon God.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 170.

Monday, November 1: Baal Peor

Near the close of the wilderness wandering the conditions of the covenant had been repeated. At Baalpeor, on the very borders of the Promised Land, where many fell a prey to subtle temptation, those who remained faithful renewed their vows of allegiance. Through Moses they were warned against the temptations that would assail them in the future; and they were earnestly exhorted to remain separate from the surrounding nations and to worship God alone. ...

Moses traced the evils that would result from a departure from the statutes of Jehovah. Calling heaven and earth to witness, he declared that if, after having dwelt long in the Land of Promise, the people should introduce corrupt forms of worship and bow down to graven images and should refuse to return to the worship of the true God, the anger of the Lord would be aroused, and they would be carried away captive and scattered among the heathen.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 293–295.

[Satan] at once laid a snare whereby Israel should be enchanted with the beautiful Moabitish women, who would lead them to transgress God's law. Thus iniquity would be found in them, and God's blessing would not rest upon them. Their forces would be greatly weakened, and their enemies would no longer fear their power, because the presence of the Lord of hosts was not with their armies.

This is intended as a warning to the people of God living in the last days. If they follow after righteousness and true holiness, if they keep all the commandments of God, Satan and his agents will not be permitted to overcome them. All the opposition of their bitterest foes will prove powerless to destroy or uproot the vine of God's own planting. Satan understands what [Israel] learned by sad experience, that there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither divination against Israel, while iniquity is not cherished among them; therefore his power and influence will ever be employed to mar their unity and defile the purity of their characters. His snares are laid in a thousand ways to weaken their power for good.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 598, 599.

It is a perilous thing to allow an unchristian trait to live in the heart. One cherished sin will, little by little, debase the character, bringing all its nobler powers into subjection to the evil desire. The removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the indulgence of one evil habit, one neglect of the high claims of duty, breaks down the defenses of the soul and opens the way for Satan to come in and lead us astray. The only safe course is to let our prayers go forth daily from a sincere heart, as did David, "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Psalm 17:5.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 452.

Tuesday, November 2: Cleave to the Lord Your God

Ancient Israel were especially directed by God to be and remain a people separate from all nations. They were not to be subjected to witnessing the idolatry of those about them, lest their own hearts should be corrupted, lest familiarity with ungodly practices should make them appear less wicked in their eyes. Few realize their own weakness and that the natural sinfulness of the human heart too often paralyzes their noblest endeavors.

The baleful influence of sin poisons the life of the soul. Our only safety is in separation from those who live in its darkness. The Lord has enjoined upon us to come out from among them and be separate, and to touch not the unclean thing, and He will receive us and will be a Father unto us, and we shall be His sons and daughters. If we wish to be adopted into the family of God, to become children of the heavenly King, we must comply with His conditions; we must come out from the world and stand as a peculiar people before the Lord, obeying His precepts and serving Him.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 109.

The true followers of Christ will have sacrifices to make. They will shun places of worldly amusement because they find no Jesus there—no influence which will make them heavenly-minded and increase

their growth in grace. Obedience to the word of God will lead them to come out from all these things and be separate.

“By their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20), the Saviour declared. All the true followers of Christ bear fruit to His glory. Their lives testify that a good work has been wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and their fruit is unto holiness. Their lives are elevated and pure. Right actions are the unmistakable fruit of true godliness, and those who bear no fruit of this kind reveal that they have no experience in the things of God. They are not in the Vine. Said Jesus, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.” John 15:4, 5.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 328, 329.

While we should realize our sinful condition, we are to rely upon Christ as our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption. We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but on His own. ...

... We are to exert every energy of the soul in the work of overcoming, and to look to Jesus for strength to do what we cannot do of ourselves. No sin can be tolerated in those who shall walk with Christ in white. ... Their attention is fixed upon Him, their hopes, their faith, are centered on Him.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 472.

Wednesday, November 3: For What Nation Is There so Great?

The purpose which God seeks to accomplish through His people today is the same that He desired to accomplish through Israel when He brought them forth out of Egypt. By beholding the goodness, the

mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in the church, the world is to have a representation of His character. And when the law of God is thus exemplified in the life, even the world will recognize the superiority of those who love and fear and serve God above every other people on the earth. The Lord has His eye upon every one of His people; He has His plans concerning each. It is His purpose that those who practice His holy precepts shall be a distinguished people. ... “For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” Deuteronomy 4:8.

Even these words fail of expressing the greatness and the glory of God’s purpose to be accomplished through His people. Not to this world only but to the universe are we to make manifest the principles of His kingdom.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 12, 13.

Our duty will only be discerned and appreciated when viewed in the light which shines from the life of Christ. As the sun rises in the east and passes toward the west, filling the world with light, so the true follower of Christ will be a light unto the world. He will go forth into the world as a bright and shining light, that those who are in darkness may be lightened and warmed by the rays shining forth from him. Christ says of His followers, “Ye are the light of the world.”

...

When the grace of Christ is expressed in the words and works of the believers, light will shine forth to those who are in darkness; for while the lips are speaking to the praise of God, the hand will be stretched out in beneficence for the help of the perishing.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 276.

We need more sunshiny ... Christians. We are too much shut up within ourselves. Too often the kindly, encouraging word, the cheery smile, are withheld from our children and from the oppressed and discouraged. ...

From every Christian home a holy light should shine forth. Love should be revealed in action. It should flow out in all home

intercourse, showing itself in thoughtful kindness, in gentle, unselfish courtesy. There are homes where this principle is carried out—homes where God is worshiped and truest love reigns. From these homes morning and evening prayer ascends to God as sweet incense, and His mercies and blessings descend upon the suppliants like the morning dew.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 37.

Thursday, November 4: Your Wisdom and Your Understanding

Those today to whom the Lord has given great light will find their only safety in walking in the way of the Lord, placing themselves where He can carry out His will through them. God will do large things for those who will learn of Him, not taking counsel of themselves, but of Him who never makes a mistake. Our safety, our wisdom, is in recognizing and heeding God's instructions. The most valuable knowledge that we can obtain is the knowledge of God. Those who walk humbly before Him, loving Him supremely and obeying His Word, will be blessed with wisdom. They will be given the knowledge of heaven to impart to others. Wisdom is God's gift, to be kept pure from all contamination. Its possession lays upon everyone on whom it is bestowed a peculiar obligation to glorify God by blessing his fellow men. He is ever to keep before him the fear of God, enquiring at every step, "Is this the way of the Lord?"
—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1032.

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.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1146.

Salt is valued for its preservative properties; and when God calls His children salt, He would teach them that His purpose in making them the subjects of His grace is that they may become agents in saving others. The object of God in choosing a people before all the world was not only that He might adopt them as His sons and daughters, but that through them the world might receive the grace that bringeth salvation. Titus 2:11. ...

The savor of the salt represents the vital power of the Christian—the love of Jesus in the heart, the righteousness of Christ pervading the life. The love of Christ is diffusive and aggressive. If it is dwelling in us, it will flow out to others. We shall come close to them till their hearts are warmed by our unselfish interest and love. The sincere believers diffuse vital energy, which is penetrating and imparts new moral power to the souls for whom they labor. It is not the power of the man himself, but the power of the Holy Spirit that does the transforming work.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 35, 36.

Friday, November 5: For Further Reading

Spiritual Gifts, “The Law of God,” vol. 3, pp. 261–304;
Reflecting Christ, “Wait, Watch, and Pray,” p. 119.

Lesson 7

Law and Grace

Sabbath Afternoon, November 6

The sons and daughters of God are led to persevere in the work of overcoming by the daily realization that they need to be taught by the Holy Spirit the good and righteous way. No sham work enters into their service. Every day they realize that they must hold fast the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end. When one deviates from the right way, the Holy Spirit, working on his mind, leads him to confess his error so that others will be warned against the same mistake. ...

Never should a man be too proud to make the acknowledgment, "I have erred." The least he can do, after he has sinned, is to show his sorrow and repentance. Men who do this will be honored by God, even though they make mistakes.—*The Upward Look*, p. 248.

The Law of God reaches to those secret purposes, which, though they may be sinful, are often passed over lightly, but which are in reality the basis and the test of character. It is the mirror into which the sinner is to look if he would have a correct knowledge of his moral character. And when he sees himself condemned by that great standard of righteousness, his next move must be to repent of his sins, and seek forgiveness through Christ. Failing to do this, many try to break the mirror which reveals their defects, to make void the law which points out the blemishes in their life and character.

We are living in an age of great wickedness. Multitudes are enslaved by sinful customs and evil habits, and the fetters that bind them are difficult to break. Iniquity, like a flood, is deluging the earth. ... And yet men professing to be watchmen on the walls of Zion will teach that the law was designed for the Jews only, and passed away with the glorious privileges that ushered in the gospel age. Is there not a relation between the prevailing lawlessness and crime, and the fact that ministers and people hold and teach that the law is no longer of binding force?—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 219.

The sinner cannot depend upon his own good works as a means of justification. He must come to the point where he will renounce all his sin, and embrace one degree of light after another as it shines upon his pathway. He simply grasps by faith the free and ample provision made in the blood of Christ. He believes the promises of God, which through Christ are made unto him sanctification and righteousness and redemption. ... Being justified by faith, he carries cheerfulness with him in his obedience in all his life. Peace with God is the result of what Christ is to him. The souls who are in subordination to God, who honor Him, and are doers of His Word, will receive divine enlightenment. In the precious Word of God there is purity and loftiness as well as beauty that, unless assisted by God, the highest powers of man cannot attain to.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1071.

Sunday, November 7: Law in Heaven

Sin appeared in a perfect universe. The reason of its inception or development was never explained and never can be, even at the last great day when the judgment shall sit and the books be opened. At that day it will be evident to all that there is not, and never was, any cause for sin. At the final condemnation of Satan and his angels and of all men who have finally identified themselves with him as transgressors of God's law, every mouth will be stopped. When the hosts of rebellion, from the first great rebel to the last transgressor, are asked why they have broken the law of God, they will be speechless. There will be no answer to give.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 15.

It is the Creator of men, the Giver of the law, who declares that it is not His purpose to set aside its precepts. Everything in nature, from the mote in the sunbeam to the worlds on high, is under law. And upon obedience to these laws the order and harmony of the natural world depend. So there are great principles of righteousness to control the life of all intelligent beings, and upon conformity to these principles the well-being of the universe depends. Before this

earth was called into being, God's law existed. Angels are governed by its principles, and in order for earth to be in harmony with heaven, man also must obey the divine statutes. To man in Eden Christ made known the precepts of the law "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38:7. The mission of Christ on earth was not to destroy the law, but by His grace to bring man back to obedience to its precepts.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 48.

It is no light matter to sin against God, to set the perverse will of man in opposition to the will of his Maker. It is for the best interest of men, even in this world, to obey God's commandments. And it is surely for their eternal interest to submit to God, and be at peace with Him. The beasts of the field obey their Creator's law in the instinct which governs them. He speaks to the proud ocean, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further" (Job 38:11); and the waters are prompt to obey His word. The planets are marshaled in perfect order, obeying the laws which God has established. Of all the creatures that God has made upon the earth, man alone is rebellious. Yet he possesses reasoning powers to understand the claims of the divine law and a conscience to feel the guilt of transgression and the peace and joy of obedience. God made him a free moral agent, to obey or disobey. The reward of everlasting life—an eternal weight of glory—is promised to those who do God's will, while the threatenings of His wrath hang over all who defy His law.—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 76.

Monday, November 8: Law in Deuteronomy

Are good works of no real value? ... The Scripture answers, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." In His divine arrangement, through His unmerited favor, the Lord has ordained that good works shall be rewarded. We are accepted through Christ's merit alone; and the acts of mercy, the deeds of charity, which we perform, are the fruits of faith; and they become a blessing to us; for men are to be rewarded according to their works.

It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us. Our works in and of themselves have no merit. When we have done all that it is possible for us to do, we are to count ourselves as unprofitable servants. We deserve no thanks from God. We have only done what it was our duty to do, and our works could not have been performed in the strength of our own sinful natures.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1122.

A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an abomination in the sight of God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposing sacrifice, proclaim that the doer of these things regards himself as righteous, and as entitled to heaven; but it is all a deception. Our own works can never purchase salvation. ...

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.” Psalm 51:17. Man must be emptied of self before he can be, in the fullest sense, a believer in Jesus. When self is renounced, then the Lord can make man a new creature. New bottles can contain the new wine. The love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. In him who looks unto the Author and Finisher of our faith the character of Christ will be manifest.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 280.

Christ has given us no promise of help in bearing today the burdens of tomorrow. He has said, “My grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Corinthians 12:9); but, like the manna given in the wilderness, His grace is bestowed daily, for the day’s need. Like the hosts of Israel in their pilgrim life, we may find morning by morning the bread of heaven for the day’s supply. ...

If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God; if with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ,—the yoke of obedience and service,—all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing

problems that now confront you will be solved.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 101.

Tuesday, November 9: L^e tov Lak

Obedience to the law is essential, not only to our salvation, but to our own happiness and the happiness of all with whom we are connected. “Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them” (Psalm 119:165), says the Inspired Word. Yet finite man will present to the people this holy, just, and good law, this law of liberty, which the Creator Himself has adapted to the wants of man, as a yoke of bondage, a yoke which no man can bear. But it is the sinner who regards the law as a grievous yoke; it is the transgressor that can see no beauty in its precepts. ...

... It is through the law that men are convicted of sin; and they must feel themselves sinners, exposed to the wrath of God, before they will realize their need of a Saviour. Satan is continually at work to lessen man’s estimate of the grievous character of sin. And those who trample the law of God under their feet are doing the work of the great deceiver; for they are rejecting the only rule by which they can define sin, and bring it home to the conscience of the transgressor.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 218, 219.

The law given upon Sinai was the enunciation of the principle of love, a revelation to earth of the law of heaven. It was ordained in the hand of a Mediator—spoken by Him through whose power the hearts of men could be brought into harmony with its principles. God had revealed the purpose of the law when He declared to Israel, “Ye shall be holy men unto Me.” Exodus 22:31.

But Israel had not perceived the spiritual nature of the law, and too often their professed obedience was but an observance of forms and ceremonies, rather than a surrender of the heart to the sovereignty of love. As Jesus in His character and work represented to men the holy, benevolent, and paternal attributes of God, and presented the worthlessness of mere ceremonial obedience, the Jewish leaders did not receive or understand His words. They thought that He dwelt too lightly upon the requirements of the law;

and when He set before them the very truths that were the soul of their divinely appointed service, they, looking only at the external, accused Him of seeking to overthrow it.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 46.

Christ's favorite theme was the paternal tenderness and abundant grace of God; He dwelt much upon the holiness of His character and His law; He presented Himself to the people as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Let these be the themes of Christ's ministers. Present the truth as it is in Jesus. Make plain the requirements of the law and the gospel. Tell the people of Christ's life of self-denial and sacrifice; of His humiliation and death; of His resurrection and ascension; of His intercession for them in the courts of God; of His promise, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:3.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 40.

Wednesday, November 10: A Slave in Egypt

The Lord desired to guard the interests of servants. He commanded the Israelites to be merciful, and to bear in mind that they themselves had been servants. They were directed to be mindful of the rights of their servants. In no case were they to abuse them. In dealing with them they were not to be exacting, as the Egyptian taskmasters had been with them. They were to exercise tenderness and compassion in the treatment of their servants. God desired them to put themselves in the place of the servants, and deal with them as they would wish others to deal with them under the same circumstances.

—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1106.

The religion of Jesus Christ works a reformation in life and character. The true Christian seeks constantly for the grace that changes the objectionable features of the natural character. Instead of speaking sharp, dictatorial words, he speaks the words of encouragement that Christ would speak were He in his place. He shows benevolence to all, not only to the few who may flatter him

and exalt his wisdom. The purity and holiness revealed in Christ's life radiates from the life of the true Christian.—*The Upward Look*, p. 75.

The pardon granted by this king represents a divine forgiveness of all sin [Matthew 18:21–35]. 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. “With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption.” Psalm 130:7.

Here is the ground upon which we should exercise compassion toward our fellow sinners. “If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” 1 John 4:11. “Freely ye have received,” Christ says, “freely give.” Matthew 10:8.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 244, 245.

We ourselves owe everything to God's free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others. ...

... Nothing can justify an unforgiving spirit. He who is unmerciful toward others shows that he himself is not a partaker of God's pardoning grace. In God's forgiveness the heart of the erring one is drawn close to the great heart of Infinite Love. The tide of divine compassion flows into the sinner's soul, and from him to the souls of others. The tenderness and mercy that Christ has revealed in His own precious life will be seen in those who become sharers of His grace. But “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” Romans 8:9. He is alienated from God, fitted only for eternal separation from Him.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 250, 251.

Thursday, November 11: Not for Your Righteousness

There are two errors against which the children of God—particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace—especially need to guard. The first ... is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy.

The opposite and no less dangerous error is that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption.

But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 59, 60.

Not in our learning, not in our position, not in our numbers or entrusted talents, not in the will of man, is to be found the secret of success. Feeling our inefficiency we are to contemplate Christ, and through Him who is the strength of all strength, the thought of all thought, the willing and obedient will gain victory after victory.

And however short our service or humble our work, if in simple faith we follow Christ, we shall not be disappointed of the reward. That which even the greatest and wisest cannot earn, the weakest and most humble may receive. Heaven's golden gate opens not to the self-exalted. It is not lifted up to the proud in spirit. But the everlasting portals will open wide to the trembling touch of a little child. Blessed will be the recompense of grace to those who have wrought for God in the simplicity of faith and love.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 404.

We would never have learned the meaning of this word "grace" had we not fallen. God loves the sinless angels who do His service and are obedient to all His commands, but He does not give them grace. These heavenly beings know naught of grace; they have never needed it, for they have never sinned. Grace is an attribute of God shown to undeserving human beings. We did not seek after it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow this grace on

everyone who hungers for it, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we will receive this gift.

But God does not use this grace to make His law of none effect or to take the place of His law. “The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honorable.” His law is truth.—*My Life Today*, p. 100.

Friday, November 12: For Further Reading

Steps to Christ, “The Test of Discipleship,” pp. 57–65;
That I May Know Him, “Reaching the Stature of Christ,” p. 162.

Lesson 8

Choose Life

Sabbath Afternoon, November 13

The history of nations speaks to us today. To every nation and to every individual God has assigned a place in His great plan. Today men and nations are being tested by the plummet in the hand of Him who makes no mistake. All are by their own choice deciding their destiny, and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes.

The prophecies which the great I AM has given in His word, uniting link after link in the chain of events, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tell us where we are today in the procession of the ages and what may be expected in the time to come. All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order. ...

The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place—that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 536, 537.

The great Captain of our salvation has conquered in our behalf, that through Him we might conquer, if we would, in our own behalf. But Christ saves none against their choice; He compels none to obedience. He made the infinite sacrifice that they might overcome in His name and His righteousness be imputed unto them. ...

... The soul that trusts fully and entirely in God will never be confounded.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 457.

Every soul has a heaven to win, and a hell to shun. And the angelic agencies are all ready to come to the help of the tried and tempted soul. He, the Son of the infinite God, endured the test and trial in our behalf. The cross of Calvary stands vividly before every soul. When the cases of all are judged, and they [the lost] are delivered to suffer for their contempt for God and their disregard of His honor in their disobedience, not one will have an excuse, not one will need to have perished. It was left to their own choice who should be their prince, Christ or Satan. All the help Christ received, every man may receive in the great trial. The cross stands as a pledge that not one need be lost, that abundant help is provided for every soul. We can conquer the satanic agencies, or we can join ourselves with the powers that seek to counterwork the work of God in our world.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 96.

Sunday, November 14: The Tree of Life

Though created innocent and holy, our first parents were not placed beyond the possibility of wrong-doing. God might have created them without the power to transgress His requirements, but in that case there could have been no development of character; their service would not have been voluntary, but forced. Therefore He gave them the power of choice—the power to yield or to withhold obedience. And before they could receive in fullness the blessings He desired to impart, their love and loyalty must be tested.

It was the will of God that Adam and Eve should not know evil. The knowledge of good had been freely given them; but the knowledge of evil,—of sin and its results, of wearing toil, of anxious care, of disappointment and grief, of pain and death,—this was in love withheld.—*Education*, p. 23.

The fruit of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death. Its leaves were for the sustaining of life and immortality. But through man's disobedience, death entered the world. Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the

fruit of which he had been forbidden to touch. His transgression opened the floodgates of woe upon our race.

After the entrance of sin, the heavenly Husbandman transplanted the tree of life to the Paradise above; but its branches hang over the wall to the lower world. Through the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ, we may still eat of its life-giving fruit.

Of Christ it is written, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." He is the fountain of life. Obedience to Him is the life-giving power that gladdens the soul.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 988, 989.

You need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.

Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 47.

Monday, November 15: No Middle Ground

The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.

Man was originally endowed with noble powers and a well-balanced mind. He was perfect in his being, and in harmony with God. His thoughts were pure, his aims holy. But through disobedience, his powers were perverted, and selfishness took the place of love. His nature became so weakened through transgression that it was impossible for him, in his own strength, to

resist the power of evil. He was made captive by Satan, and would have remained so forever had not God specially interposed. It was the tempter's purpose to thwart the divine plan in man's creation, and fill the earth with woe and desolation. ...

God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. ... He desires that man, the crowning work of His creative power, shall reach the highest possible development. He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 313.

Each human being is given the freedom of choice. It is his to decide whether he will stand under the black banner of rebellion or under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. With deep solicitude Heaven watches the conflict between good and evil. None but the obedient can enter the gates of the city of God. Upon those who choose to continue in transgression the death sentence must at last be pronounced. The earth will be purified from their misdoings, their defiance of God. ...

... The rules of life that the Lord has given will make men pure and happy and holy. Those only who obey these rules can hear from the lips of Christ the words, "Come up higher."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 361.

Satan told his angels to make a special effort to spread the lie first repeated to Eve in Eden, "Ye shall not surely die." And as the error was received by the people, and they were led to believe that man was immortal, Satan led them on to believe that the sinner would live in eternal misery. Then the way was prepared for Satan to work through his representatives and hold up God before the people as a revengeful tyrant—one who plunges all those into hell who do not please Him, and causes them ever to feel His wrath; and while they suffer unutterable anguish, and writhe in the eternal flames, He is represented as looking down upon them with satisfaction. Satan knew that if this error should be received, God would be hated by

many, instead of being loved and adored; and that many would be led to believe that the threatenings of God's Word would not be literally fulfilled, for it would be against His character of benevolence and love to plunge into eternal torments the beings whom He had created.—*Early Writings*, pp. 218, 219.

Tuesday, November 16: Life and Good, Death and Evil, Blessings and Curses

While life is the inheritance of the righteous, death is the portion of the wicked. Moses declared to Israel: "I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." Deuteronomy 30:15. The death referred to in these scriptures is not that pronounced upon Adam, for all mankind suffer the penalty of his transgression. It is "the second death" that is placed in contrast with everlasting life.

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.

In all the dealings of God with His people there is, mingled with His love and mercy, the most striking evidence of His strict and impartial justice. This is exemplified in the history of the Hebrew people. God had bestowed great blessings upon Israel. His loving-kindness toward them is touchingly portrayed. ... And yet what swift and severe retribution was visited upon them for their transgressions!

The infinite love of God has been manifested in the gift of His only-begotten Son to redeem a lost race. Christ came to the earth to reveal to men the character of His Father, and His life was filled with deeds of divine tenderness and compassion. And yet Christ Himself declares, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." Matthew 5:18. The same voice that with patient, loving entreaty invites the sinner to come to Him and find pardon and peace, will in the judgment bid the rejecters of His mercy, "Depart from Me, ye cursed." Matthew 25:41. In all the Bible, God is represented not only as a tender father but as a righteous judge. Though He delights in showing mercy, and "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," yet He "will by no means clear the guilty." Exodus 34:7.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 469.

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

Wednesday, November 17: Not Too Hard for You

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.

God does not deal with us as finite men deal with one another. His thoughts are thoughts of mercy, love, and tenderest compassion. He says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." Isaiah 55:7; 44:22.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 52, 53.

The faith that is unto salvation is not a casual faith, it is not the mere consent of the intellect, it is belief rooted in the heart, that embraces Christ as a personal Saviour, assured that He can save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. To believe that He will save others, but will not save you is not genuine faith; but when the soul lays hold upon Christ as the only hope of salvation, then genuine faith is manifested. This faith leads its possessor to place all the affections of the soul upon Christ; his understanding is under the control of the Holy Spirit, and his character is molded after the divine likeness. His faith is not a dead faith, but a faith that works by love, and leads him to behold the beauty of Christ, and to become assimilated to the divine character. [Deuteronomy 30:11–14 quoted.] —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 391.

Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him. Put away all doubt; dismiss your fears. Say with the apostle Paul, “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you.

When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to choose another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 71, 72.

Thursday, November 18: A Question of Worship

There are many who come to the Saviour in a feeble way. They receive baptism and yet there is no apparent change in their character. We would invite all to come, all to abide in Christ, to

advance daily in the perfection of character by abiding in Christ. As they do this, they find that rest that can come only through perfect obedience.

But I warn you, be careful how you settle down in the middle walk between spirituality and worldliness. “Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). You will be wholly on one side or the other. Christ draws to His side; Satan hangs out every attraction to draw on his side. Whom will you choose? Under whose banner will you stand?—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 277.

The first four commandments enjoined upon man his duty to serve the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength. This takes the whole man. This requires a love so fervent, so intense, that man can cherish nothing in his mind or affections in rivalry with God; and his works will bear the signature of heaven. Everything is secondary to the glory of God. Our heavenly Father is to be ever cherished as the first, the joy and prosperity, the light and sufficiency of our life, and our portion forever.

Let men worship and serve the Lord God, and Him only. Let not selfish pride be lifted up and served as a god. Let not money be made a god. If sensuality is not kept under the control of the higher powers of the mind, base passion will rule the being. Anything that is made the subject of undue thought and admiration, absorbing the mind, is a God chosen before the Lord.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 56.

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

[The Lord] desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love, that

they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things.

We must gather about the cross. Christ and Him crucified should be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. We should keep in our thoughts every blessing we receive from God, and when we realize His great love we should be willing to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us.

The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of praise. God is worshiped with song and music in the courts above, and as we express our gratitude we are approximating to the worship of the heavenly hosts. ... Let us with reverent joy come before our Creator, with "thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Isaiah 51:3.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 103, 104.

Friday, November 19: For Further Reading

The Upward Look, "Right or Wrong Side—Which?" p. 140;
The Faith I Live By, "Life or Death?" p. 71.

Lesson 9

Turn Their Hearts

Sabbath Afternoon, November 20

We need an abiding, heartfelt dependence upon the Son of God for salvation and for all wisdom and spiritual influences. Unless there is much more love to God and to man, and a continual dependence upon the renewing, sanctifying grace of Christ to work a transformation of character by a divine change in the heart, which will be manifestly seen in word, spirit, and action, we shall fail in our work.

We need increased faith, far less confidence and assurance in what we can do, and far greater confidence in what the Lord is longing to do for us individually, if we will prepare the way for Him. We need, O so much more than we now have, the longing of soul for communion with God. We need to plead most earnestly with Him. If thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, when thou shalt seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.—*The Upward Look*, p. 333.

There needs to be a reaching out after God, not now and then, but a continual earnest, heartbreaking confessing and humbling of the soul before God. God's people must come into the audience chamber of the Most High. God understands that you need Him, and if you ask, you will receive help when tempted and tried. Your petitions, made known only to God who searcheth the heart, He will hear and answer.—Letter 45, November 15, 1897, to A. G. Daniells and "My Ministering Brethren, and the Church in Melbourne."

Those who receive the Saviour become sons of God. They are His spiritual children, born again, renewed in righteousness and true holiness. Their minds are changed. With clearer vision they behold eternal realities. They are adopted into God's family, and they become conformed to His likeness, changed by His Spirit from glory to glory. From cherishing supreme love for self, they come to cherish supreme love for God and for Christ. ...

The sanctification of the soul is accomplished through steadfastly beholding Him [Christ] by faith as the only-begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth. The power of truth is to transform heart and character. Its effect is not like a dash of color here and there upon the canvas; the whole character is to be transformed, the image of Christ is to be revealed in words and actions. A new nature is imparted. Man is renewed after the image of Christ in righteousness and true holiness. The grace of Christ is essential every day, every hour. Unless it is with us continually, the inconsistencies of the natural heart will appear and the life will present a divided service. The character is to be full of grace and truth. Wherever the religion of Christ works, it will brighten and sweeten every detail of life with more than an earthly joy and a higher than earthly peace.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1117.

Sunday, November 21: *Mi-Yitten*

Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire, persistently cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel. Every sinful indulgence strengthens the soul's aversion to God. The man who manifests an infidel hardihood, or a stolid indifference to divine truth, is but reaping the harvest of that which he has himself sown. In all the Bible there is not a more fearful warning against trifling with evil than the words of the wise man that the sinner "shall be holden with the cords of his sins." Proverbs 5:22.

Christ is ready to set us free from sin, but He does not force the will; and if by persistent transgression the will itself is wholly bent on evil, and we do not desire to be set free, if we will not accept His grace, what more can He do? We have destroyed ourselves by our determined rejection of His love. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." 2 Corinthians 6:2; Hebrews 3:7, 8.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 34.

The principles set forth in Deuteronomy for the instruction of Israel are to be followed by God's people to the end of time. True

prosperity is dependent on the continuance of our covenant relationship with God. Never can we afford to compromise principle by entering into alliance with those who do not fear Him.

There is constant danger that professing Christians will come to think that in order to have influence with worldlings, they must to a certain extent conform to the world. But though such a course may appear to afford great advantages, it always ends in spiritual loss. Against every subtle influence that seeks entrance by means of flattering inducements from the enemies of truth, God's people must strictly guard. They are pilgrims and strangers in this world, traveling a path beset with danger. To the ingenious subterfuges and alluring inducements held out to tempt from allegiance, they must give no heed.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 570.

To create the soul anew, to bring light out of darkness, love out of enmity, holiness out of impurity, is the work of Omnipotence alone. The work of the Infinite, as He engages, by the consent of the human being, to make the life complete in Christ, to bring perfection to the character, is the science of eternity.

What is the honor conferred upon Christ? Without employing any compulsion, without using any violence, He blends the will of the human subject to the will of God. This is the science of all true science; for by it a mighty change is wrought in mind and character—the change that must be wrought in the life of every one who passes through the gates of the city of God.—*My Life Today*, p. 340.

Monday, November 22: Seek Me and Find Me

The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. ...

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal." Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal

ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

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 souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand beside the great Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Romans 8:33, 34.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 568.

The prayer that comes from an earnest heart, when the simple wants of the soul are expressed, as we would ask an earthly friend for a favor, expecting it to be granted—this is the prayer of faith. God does not desire our ceremonial compliments, but the unspoken cry of the heart broken and subdued with a sense of its sin and utter weakness finds its way to the Father of all mercy. ...

... [God's] command to Israel was, "Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God." Joel 2:13. ...

... Repentance is turning from self to Christ; and when we receive Christ so that through faith He can live His life in us, good works will be manifest.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 86, 87.

Tuesday, November 23: *Teshuvah*

Satan is constantly working to lead men to deny the light. It is but a step from the straightforward path to a diverging one, in which Satan leads the way, and where light is all darkness, and darkness light. It is a dangerous thing to open the heart to unbelief, for it drives the Spirit of God away from the heart, and Satan's suggestions come in. We must avoid the first admission of doubt and unbelief.

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Galatians 6:7. God destroys no man. Every man who is destroyed will destroy himself. When a man stifles the admonitions of conscience, he sows the seeds of unbelief and these produce a sure harvest.—*Our High Calling*, p. 26.

All who study the Word with full purpose to cleanse away from the life all sin, and who search the Scriptures to learn what is truth, will welcome the truth of the Word as a Thus saith the Lord. They will repent under the sharp reproofs of Bible truth. If a man sow true repentance he will reap the reward of sound good works. If he continues in the faith he reaps peace. If he becomes sanctified and cleansed from his appetite for cheapness and folly he shall reap righteousness and perfect love. A continuance in the well doing in overcoming makes him a daily victor because he keeps the mark of Christ's perfection ever before him.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 281.

God will not be mocked. A departure from Him has been and always will be followed by its sure results. The commission of acts that displease God will, unless decidedly repented of and forsaken, instead of seeking to justify them, lead the evildoer on step by step in deception, till many sins are committed with impunity. All who would possess a character that would make them laborers together with God and receive the commendation of God must separate themselves from the enemies of God, and maintain the truth which Christ gave to John [the revelator] to give to the world.—*The Upward Look*, p. 310.

After Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, they were filled with a sense of shame and terror. At first their only thought was how to excuse their sin and escape the dreaded sentence of death. ... The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit and will not be acceptable to God. True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt himself and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy. Like the poor publican, not lifting up so much as his eyes unto heaven, he will cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and those who do acknowledge their guilt will be justified, for Jesus will plead His blood in behalf of the repentant soul.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 40.

Wednesday, November 24: With All Your Heart

For a momentary gratification of appetite that had never been restrained, Esau sold his inheritance; but when he saw his folly, it was too late to recover the blessing. "He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Hebrews 12:16, 17. Esau was not shut out from the privilege of seeking God's favor by repentance, but he could find no means of recovering the birthright. His grief did not spring from conviction of sin; he did not desire to be reconciled to God. He sorrowed because of the results of his sin, but not for the sin itself.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 181.

Like Nicodemus, we must be willing to enter into life in the same way as the chief of sinners. ... [But] we cannot even repent without the aid of the Spirit of God. The Scripture says of Christ, "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31. Repentance comes from Christ as truly as does pardon.

How, then, are we to be saved? ... The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ.

The heart, the mind, are created anew in the image of Him who works in us to subdue all things to Himself.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 175, 176.

The Bible does not teach that the sinner must repent before he can heed the invitation of Christ, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. It is the virtue that goes forth from Christ, that leads to genuine repentance. ... We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ.

Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts.

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.

Thursday, November 25: Repent and Be Converted

In coming to John [the Baptist], the [Pharisees and Sadducees] were not actuated by right motives. They were corrupt in principles and practice; yet they had no sense of their true condition. Filled with pride and ambition, they would not hesitate at any means which would enable them to exalt self and strengthen their influence with the people. And baptism at the hands of this popular young teacher might, they thought, aid them in carrying out these designs more successfully.

Their motives were not hidden from John, and he met them with the searching inquiry, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Had they heard the voice of God speaking to their hearts, they would have given evidence of the fact by bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. No such fruit was seen. They had heard the warning as merely the voice of man. They were charmed with the power and boldness with which John spoke; but the Spirit of God did not send conviction to their hearts, and as a sure result the word spoken did not bring forth fruit unto life eternal.—*This Day With God*, p. 197.

None are farther from the kingdom of heaven than self-righteous formalists, who are perhaps filled with pride at their own attainments, while they are wholly destitute of the Spirit of Christ, and are controlled by envy, jealousy, and love of praise and popularity. They belong to the class that John addressed as a generation of vipers, children of the wicked one. They serve the cause of Satan more effectively than the vilest profligate; for the latter does not disguise his true character; he appears what he really is.

Nothing short of an amended life—fruits meet for repentance—will meet the requirements of God. Without such fruit, our profession of faith is of no value.—*The Signs of the Times*, July 7, 1887.

Many are asking the same question as did the multitude on the Day of Pentecost, when, convicted of sin, they cried out, "What shall we do?" The first word of Peter's answer was, "Repent," "... and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts 2:37, 38, 3:19.

Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life.

There are many who fail to understand the true nature of repentance. Multitudes sorrow that they have sinned and even make an outward reformation because they fear that their wrongdoing will bring suffering upon themselves. But this is not repentance in the Bible sense. They lament the suffering rather than the sin. ...

But when the heart yields to the influence of the Spirit of God, the conscience will be quickened. ... Conviction takes hold upon the

mind and heart. The sinner has a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah and feels the terror of appearing, in his own guilt and uncleanness, before the Searcher of hearts. He sees the love of God, the beauty of holiness, the joy of purity; he longs to be cleansed and to be restored to communion with Heaven.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 23, 24.

Friday, November 26: For Further Reading

Selected Messages, “The Significance of Christ’s Birth,” book 1, pp. 250, 251;

The Faith I Live By, “The Sowing Time of Life,” p. 155.

Lesson 10

Remember, Do Not Forget

Sabbath Afternoon, November 27

Most earnestly [David] studied the ways of God, expressed by Christ when enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, and given to Moses to be faithfully repeated to all Israel. He called to mind what God had wrought to secure for Himself a people to whom He could entrust sacred and vital truth for future ages. God wrought most wondrously to free more than a million people; and as David considered His pledges and promises to them, knowing they were for all who need them as much as for Israel, he appropriated them to himself, saying, "I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doing."

His faith laid hold of God, and he was strengthened and encouraged; although he recognized God's ways as mysterious, yet he knew they were merciful and good; for this was His character as revealed to Moses. ...

As David appropriated these promises and privileges to himself he decided that he would no longer be hasty in judgment, becoming discouraged, and casting himself down in helpless despair. His soul took courage as he contemplated the general character of God as displayed in His teaching, His forbearance, His surpassing greatness and mercy.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1149.

Great things are before us, and we want to call the people from their indifference, to get ready for that day. We are not now to cast away our confidence, but to have firm assurance, firmer than ever before. Hitherto hath the Lord helped us, and He will help us to the end. We will look to the monumental pillars, reminders of what the Lord hath done for us, to comfort and to save us from the hand of the destroyer. We want to have fresh in our memory every tear the Lord has wiped from our eyes, every pain He has soothed, every anxiety removed, every fear dispelled, every want supplied, every mercy

bestowed, and strengthen ourselves for all that is before us through the remainder of our pilgrimage.

We can but look onward to new perplexities in the coming conflict, but we may well look on what is past as well as what is to come, and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12). ... The trial will not exceed the strength which shall be given us to bear it.—*This Day With God*, p. 58.

The things we ourselves have experienced of the blessings of God through His gracious promises we may hang in memory's halls, and whether rich or poor, learned or illiterate, we may look and may consider these tokens of God's love. Every token of God's care and goodness and mercy should be hung as imperishable mementos in memory's halls. God would have His love, His promises, written upon the tablets of the mind. Guard the precious revealings of God that not a letter shall become obliterated or dimmed.—*Our High Calling*, p. 135.

Sunday, November 28: Remembering the Rainbow

What compassion for erring man, to place the beautiful, variegated rainbow in the clouds, a token of the covenant of the great God with man! This rainbow was to evidence the fact to all generations that God destroyed the inhabitants of the earth by a flood, because of their great wickedness. It was His design that as the children of aftergenerations should see the bow in the cloud and should inquire the reason of this glorious arch that spanned the heavens, their parents could explain to them the destruction of the old world by a flood, because the people gave themselves up to all manner of wickedness, and that the hands of the Most High had bent the bow and placed it in the clouds as a token that He would never again bring a flood of waters on the earth.

This symbol in the clouds is to confirm the belief of all, and establish their confidence in God, for it is a token of divine mercy and goodness to man.—*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 70, 71.

God Himself looks upon the bow in the clouds, and remembers His everlasting covenant between Himself and man. As we gaze upon the beautiful sight, we may be joyful in God, assured that He Himself is looking upon this token of His covenant, and that as He looks upon it He remembers the children of earth, to whom it was given. Their afflictions, perils, and trials are not hidden from Him. We may rejoice in hope, for the bow of God's covenant is over us. He never will forget the children of His care.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 159.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught His disciples precious lessons in regard to the necessity of trusting in God. These lessons were designed to encourage the children of God through all ages, and they have come down to our time full of instruction and comfort. The Saviour pointed His followers to the birds of the air as they warbled their carols of praise, unencumbered with thoughts of care, for “they sow not, neither do they reap.” And yet the great Father provides for their needs. The Saviour asks, “Are ye not much better than they?” Matthew 6:26. ... Are not you, as intelligent, spiritual worshipers, of more value than the birds of the air? Will not the Author of our being, the Preserver of our life, the One who formed us in His own divine image, provide for our necessities if we but trust in Him? ...

The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Jesus says, “My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” “These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” John 14:27; 15:11.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 123, 124.

Monday, November 29: Concerning the Days That Are Past

It was no light test that was thus brought upon Abraham, no small sacrifice that was required of him. There were strong ties to bind him

to his country, his kindred, and his home. But he did not hesitate to obey the call. ...

Many are still tested as was Abraham. They do not hear the voice of God speaking directly from the heavens, but He calls them by the teachings of His word and the events of His providence. ... He calls them away from human influences and aid, and leads them to feel the need of His help, and to depend upon Him alone, that He may reveal Himself to them. Who is ready at the call of Providence to renounce cherished plans and familiar associations? Who will accept new duties and enter untried fields, doing God's work with firm and willing heart, for Christ's sake counting his losses gain? He who will do this has the faith of Abraham, and will share with him that "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," with which "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared." 2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 8:18.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 126, 127.

Could God give us any greater proof of His love than in thus giving His Son to pass through this scene of suffering [on Calvary]? And as the gift of God to man was a free gift, His love infinite, so His claims upon our confidence, our obedience, our whole heart, and the wealth of our affections are correspondingly infinite. He requires all that it is possible for man to give. The submission on our part must be proportionate to the gift of God; it must be complete and wanting in nothing. We are all debtors to God. He has claims upon us that we cannot meet without giving ourselves a full and willing sacrifice. He claims prompt and willing obedience, and nothing short of this will He accept. We have opportunity now to secure the love and favor of God. This year may be the last year in the lives of some who read this. Are there any among [you] who read this appeal who would choose the pleasures of the world before that peace which Christ gives the earnest seeker and the cheerful doer of His will?—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 369.

By communion with God we become refined, broadened, and elevated. To him who desires the knowledge of divine things, God

will open hidden wonders that are beyond the comprehension of those who are unenlightened by the Spirit of God.

The greatness, the breadth, of the plan of salvation invests it with incomparable grandeur, but it can only be spiritually discerned, and it increases in greatness as we contemplate it. Looking to Jesus dying upon the cross, and knowing that it was our sin that placed the innocent Sufferer there, we are bowed down before Him in wonder and love.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 205.

Tuesday, November 30: Take Heed ... Lest You Forget

Next to Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu had stood highest in Israel. They had been especially honored by the Lord, having been permitted with the seventy elders to behold His glory in the mount. But their transgression was not therefore to be excused or lightly regarded. All this rendered their sin more grievous. Because men have received great light, because they have, like the princes of Israel, ascended to the mount, and been privileged to have communion with God, and to dwell in the light of His glory, let them not flatter themselves that they can afterward sin with impunity, that because they have been thus honored, God will not be strict to punish their iniquity. This is a fatal deception. The great light and privileges bestowed require returns of virtue and holiness corresponding to the light given. Anything short of this, God cannot accept.

Great blessings or privileges should never lull to security or carelessness. They should never give license to sin or cause the recipients to feel that God will not be exact with them. All the advantages which God has given are His means to throw ardor into the spirit, zeal into effort, and vigor into the carrying out of His holy will.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 359.

Since the Israelites were to be, in a special sense, the guardians and keepers of God's law, the significance of its precepts and the importance of obedience were especially to be impressed upon

them, and through them, upon their children and children's children. The Lord commanded concerning His statutes: "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

When their children should ask in time to come, "What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you?" then the parents were to repeat the history of God's gracious dealings with them—how the Lord had wrought for their deliverance that they might obey His Law—and to declare to them, "The Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God as He hath commanded us."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 468.

Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked by our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christ-like life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

Wednesday, December 1: Eaten and Full

Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth. Deuteronomy 8:18.

It is God who gives man the breath of life. We cannot originate; we can only collect that which God has originated. ... All you possess is His gift, for you had nothing with which to create or

purchase it. It is given you, not to become a wedge to separate you from Him, but to help you in doing His service.

God calls upon those to whom He has entrusted His goods to handle them faithfully, to show to the world that they are laboring for the salvation of sinners. He calls upon those who profess to be under His supervision not to misrepresent Him in character. He daily loadeth us with benefits. Let us glorify Him by imparting to others the abundance He has bestowed upon us.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 302.

All we possess is the Lord's, and we are accountable to Him for the use we make of it. In the use of every penny, it will be seen whether we love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves.

Money has great value, because it can do great good. In the hands of God's children it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked. It is a defense for the oppressed, and a means of help to the sick. But money is of no more value than sand, only as it is put to use in providing for the necessities of life, in blessing others, and advancing the cause of Christ.

Hoarded wealth is not merely useless, it is a curse. In this life it is a snare to the soul, drawing the affections away from the heavenly treasure.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 351, 352.

Some love this world so much that it swallows up their love for the truth. As their treasures here increase, their interest in the heavenly treasure decreases. The more they possess of this world, the more closely do they hug it to them, as if fearful their coveted treasure would be taken from them. The more they possess, the less do they have to bestow upon others, for the more they have, the poorer they feel. O, the deceitfulness of riches! They will not see and feel the wants of the cause of God.

I saw that God could rain means from heaven to carry on his work, but he never would do this. It is contrary to his plan. He has entrusted men on earth with sufficient means to carry forward his work, and if all do their duty there will be no lack. But some will not heed the call for their means. They are willing to see the work of God go forward. They are anxious to see the cause prosper, provided they can keep their riches, and make no sacrifice, only bestow a trifle

now and then, which should cause them shame for its being so little, and so grudgingly bestowed. Said the angel, "God loveth a cheerful giver."—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 267.

Thursday, December 2: Remember That You Were a Slave

[Christ and His disciples] had gathered to celebrate the Passover. The Saviour desired to keep this feast alone with the twelve. He knew that His hour was come; He Himself was the true paschal lamb, and on the day the Passover was eaten He was to be sacrificed. He was about to drink the cup of wrath; He must soon receive the final baptism of suffering. But a few quiet hours yet remained to Him, and these were to be spent for the benefit of His beloved disciples. ...

... He was now in the shadow of the cross, and the pain was torturing His heart. ... He knew how great the sacrifice that He must make, and for how many it would be in vain. Knowing all that was before Him, He might naturally have been overwhelmed with the thought of His own humiliation and suffering. But He looked upon the twelve, who had been with Him as His own, and who, after His shame and sorrow and painful usage were over, would be left to struggle in the world. His thoughts of what He Himself must suffer were ever connected with His disciples. He did not think of Himself. His care for them was uppermost in His mind.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 642, 643.

God could not express greater love than He has expressed in giving the Son of His bosom to this world. This gift was given to man to convince him that God had left nothing undone that He could do, that there is nothing held in reserve, but that all heaven has been poured out in one vast gift. The present and eternal happiness of man consists in receiving God's love, and in keeping God's commandments.

Christ is our redeemer. He is the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us. He is the fountain in which we may be washed and

cleansed from all impurity. He is the costly sacrifice that has been given for the reconciliation of man. The universe of heaven, the worlds unfallen, the fallen world, and the confederacy of evil cannot say that God could do more for the salvation of man than He has done. Never can His gift be surpassed, never can He display a richer depth of love. Calvary represents His crowning work. The Lord would have His followers enraptured with God through the knowledge of His paternal character.—*Our High Calling*, p. 13.

In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.

We are debtors to God to use every advantage He has entrusted to us to beautify the truth by holiness of character, and to send the messages of warning, and of comfort, of hope and love, to those who are in the darkness of error and sin.—*Life Sketches*, p. 196.

Friday, December 3: For Further Reading

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

This Day With God, “Heavenly Invitation,” p. 132.

Lesson 11

Deuteronomy in the Later Writings

Sabbath Afternoon, December 4

The Bible is of the highest value because it is the word of the living God. Of all the books in the world it is the most deserving of study and attention, for it is eternal wisdom. The Bible is a history that tells us of the creation of the world and opens to us past centuries. Without it we should have been left to conjecture and fable in regard to the occurrences of the remote past. It reveals to us the Creator of the heavens and the earth, with the universe that He has brought into being, and it sheds a glorious light over the world to come.

The Bible is a field where are concealed heavenly treasures, and they will remain hidden until, by diligent mining, they are discovered and brought to light. The Bible is a casket containing jewels of inestimable value, which should be so presented as to be seen in their intrinsic luster.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 421.

The Psalmist says: “The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple.” As an educating power the Bible is without a rival. No scientific works are so well adapted to develop the mind as a contemplation of the great and vital truths and practical lessons of the Bible. No other book has ever been printed which is so well calculated to give mental power. Men of the greatest intellects, if not guided by the word of God in their research, become bewildered; they cannot comprehend the Creator or His works. But set the mind to grasp and measure eternal truth, summon it to effort by delving for the jewels of truth in the rich mine of the word of God, and it will never become dwarfed and enfeebled, as when left to dwell upon commonplace subjects.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 84.

[Christ’s] teachings were designed to direct their minds to the Old Testament and to bring into clearer light the great themes there

presented. For ages the people of Israel had been separating themselves from God, and they had lost sight of precious truths which He had committed to them. These truths were covered up with superstitious forms and ceremonies that concealed their true significance.

Christ came to remove the rubbish which had obscured their luster. He placed them, as precious gems, in a new setting. He showed that so far from disdaining the repetition of old, familiar truths, He came to make them appear in their true force and beauty, the glory of which had never been discerned by the men of His time. Himself the Author of these revealed truths, He could open to the people their true meaning, freeing them from the misinterpretations and false theories adopted by the leaders to suit their own unconsecrated condition, their destitution of spirituality and the love of God. He cast aside that which had robbed these truths of life and vital power, and gave them back to the world in all their original freshness and force.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 709.

Sunday, December 5: The Book of the Law

Josiah ... proposed that those highest in authority unite with the people in solemnly covenanting before God to co-operate with one another in an effort to institute decided changes. “The king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book.” The response was more hearty than the king had dared hope for: “All the people stood to the covenant.”

In the reformation that followed, the king turned his attention to the destruction of every vestige of idolatry that remained. So long had the inhabitants of the land followed the customs of the surrounding nations in bowing down to images of wood and stone, that it seemed almost beyond the power of man to remove every trace of these evils. But Josiah persevered in his effort to cleanse the land. Sternly he met idolatry by slaying “all the priests of the high places;” “moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards,

and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiyah the priest found in the house of the Lord.”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 400, 401.

God requires that we confess our sins and humble our hearts before Him; but at the same time we should have confidence in Him as a tender Father, who will not forsake those who put their trust in Him. ...

God does not give us up because of our sins. We may make mistakes and grieve His Spirit, but when we repent and come to Him with contrite hearts, He will not turn us away. There are hindrances to be removed. Wrong feelings have been cherished, and there have been pride, self-sufficiency, impatience, and murmurings. All these separate us from God. Sins must be confessed; there must be a deeper work of grace in the heart. Those who feel weak and discouraged may become strong men of God and do noble work for the Master.—*Faith and Works*, p. 35.

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. The work that we have to do on our part is plainly set before us: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” Isaiah 1:16, 17.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 39.

Monday, December 6: The Heaven of Heavens

When Satan declared to Christ, The kingdom and glory of the world are delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it, he stated what was true only in part, and he declared it to serve his own purpose of deception. Satan’s dominion was that wrested from Adam, but Adam was the vicegerent of the Creator. His was not an

independent rule. The earth is God's, and He has committed all things to His Son. Adam was to reign subject to Christ. When Adam betrayed his sovereignty into Satan's hands, Christ still remained the rightful King. ... Satan can exercise his usurped authority only as God permits.

When the tempter offered to Christ the kingdom and glory of the world, he was proposing that Christ should yield up the real kingship of the world, and hold dominion subject to Satan. ... Christ declared to the tempter, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 129, 130.

The Levites, in their hymn recorded by Nehemiah, sang, "Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things therein, ... and Thou preservest them all." Nehemiah 9:6. ... The hand of God guides the planets and keeps them in position in their orderly march through the heavens. He "bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." Isaiah 40:26. ...

God is the foundation of everything. All true science is in harmony with His works; all true education leads to obedience to His government. Science opens new wonders to our view; she soars high, and explores new depths; but she brings nothing from her research that conflicts with divine revelation. Ignorance may seek to support false views of God by appeals to science, but the book of nature and the written word shed light upon each other. We are thus led to adore the Creator and to have an intelligent trust in His word.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 115, 116.

We are all under one or the other of two great captains. One, the Creator of man and of the world, is the greatest of all. All owe Him the allegiance of their whole being, the devotion of their entire affection. If the mind is given to His control, and if God has the molding and developing of the powers of the mind, new moral power will be received daily from the Source of all wisdom and all strength. Moral blessings and divine beauties will reward the efforts of

everyone whose mind is heaven bent. We may grasp revelations— heavenly beauties—that lie beyond the short vision of the worldling, that outshine the imagination of the greatest mind.—*Our High Calling*, p. 80.

Tuesday, December 7: Deuteronomy in Jeremiah

God will be to us everything we will let Him be. Our languid, half-hearted prayers will not bring us returns from heaven. Oh, we need to press our petitions! Ask in faith, wait in faith, receive in faith, rejoice in hope, for everyone that seeketh findeth. Be in earnest in the matter. Seek God with all the heart. People put soul and earnestness into everything they undertake in temporal things, until their efforts are crowned with success. With intense earnestness learn the trade of seeking the rich blessings that God has promised, and with persevering, determined effort you shall have His light and His truth and His rich grace.

In sincerity, in soul hunger, cry after God. Wrestle with the heavenly agencies until you have the victory. Put your whole being into the Lord's hands, soul, body, and spirit, and resolve to be His loving, consecrated agency, moved by His will, controlled by His mind, infused by His Spirit.

Tell Jesus your wants in the sincerity of your soul. You are not required to hold a long controversy with, or preach a sermon to, God, but with a heart of sorrow for your sins, say, "Save me, Lord, or I perish." There is hope for such souls. They will seek, they will ask, they will knock, and they will find. When Jesus has taken away the burden of sin that is crushing the soul, you will experience the blessedness of the peace of Christ.—*Our High Calling*, p. 131.

Our first and highest duty is to know that we are abiding in Christ. He must do the work. We are to seek to know "What saith the Lord," yielding our lives to His guidance. When we have the Spirit of an abiding Christ, everything will take on a changed aspect. The Saviour alone can give us the rest and peace we so much need. And, in every invitation He gives us to seek the Lord that He may be found of us, He is calling us to abide in Him. This is an invitation, not

merely to come to Him, but to remain in Him. It is the Spirit of God that moves us to come. When we have this rest and peace, our daily worries will not lead us to be coarse and rough and uncourteous. We shall no longer follow our own way and will. We will want to do the will of God, abiding in Christ as the branches in the vine.—*This Day With God*, p. 140.

There is nothing, after their recognition of the claims of God, that more distinguishes the laws given by Moses than the liberal, tender, and hospitable spirit enjoined toward the poor. Although God had promised greatly to bless His people, it was not His design that poverty should be wholly unknown among them. He declared that the poor should never cease out of the land. There would ever be those among His people who would call into exercise their sympathy, tenderness, and benevolence. Then, as now, persons were subject to misfortune, sickness, and loss of property; yet so long as they followed the instruction given by God, there were no beggars among them, neither any who suffered for food.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 530.

Wednesday, December 8: What Does the Lord Require?

“For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.” [Hosea 6:6, 7.] The many sacrifices of the Jews and the flowing of blood to atone for sins for which they felt no true repentance was ever repugnant to God. ...

Costly gifts and a semblance of holiness cannot win the favor of God. He requires for His mercies a contrite spirit, a heart open to the light of truth, love and compassion for our fellow men, and a spirit refusing to be bribed through avarice or self-love. The priests and rulers were destitute of these essentials to God’s favor, and their most precious gifts and gorgeous ceremonies were an abomination

in His eyes.—“The Sins of the Pharisees,” *Signs of the Times*, March 21, 1878, 1.

Through Moses, as they were about to enter the Promised Land, the word of the Lord had been: “And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” Deuteronomy 10:12, 13. From age to age these counsels were repeated by the servants of Jehovah to those who were in danger of falling into habits of formalism and of forgetting to show mercy. When Christ Himself, during His earthly ministry, was approached by a lawyer with the question, “Master, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Matthew 22:36–40.

These plain utterances of the prophets and of the Master Himself, should be received by us as the voice of God to every soul. We should lose no opportunity of performing deeds of mercy, of tender forethought and Christian courtesy, for the burdened and the oppressed. If we can do no more, we may speak words of courage and hope to those who are unacquainted with God, and who can be approached most easily by the avenue of sympathy and love.

Rich and abundant are the promises made to those who are watchful of opportunities to bring joy and blessing into the lives of others. “If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” Isaiah 58:10, 11.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 326, 327.

Thursday, December 9: Daniel’s Prayer

The wisdom which God had imparted to [Daniel] was as far superior to the wisdom of the great men of the world as the light of the sun shining in the heavens at noonday is brighter than the feeblest star. Yet ponder the prayer from the lips of this man so highly favored of Heaven. With deep humiliation, with tears and rending of heart, he pleads for himself and for his people. He lays his soul open before God, confessing his own unworthiness and acknowledging the Lord's greatness and majesty.

What earnestness and fervor characterize his supplications! The hand of faith is reached upward to grasp the never-failing promises of the Most High. His soul is wrestling in agony. And he has the evidence that his prayer is heard. He knows that victory is his. If we as a people would pray as Daniel prayed, and wrestle as he wrestled, humbling our souls before God, we should realize as marked answers to our petitions as were granted to Daniel.—*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 46, 47.

Move forward courageously, assured that the Lord will be with those who love and serve Him. He will work in behalf of His covenant-keeping people. He will not suffer them to become a reproach. He will purify all who yield themselves to Him, and will make them a praise in the earth. Nothing else in this world is so dear to God as His church. He will work with mighty power through humble, faithful men. Christ is saying to you today: "I am with you, co-operating with your faithful, trusting efforts, and giving you precious victories. I will strengthen you as you sanctify yourselves to My service. I will give you success in your efforts to arouse souls dead in trespasses and sins."

Unswerving faith and unselfish love will overcome the difficulties that arise in the path of duty to hinder aggressive warfare. As those inspired by this faith go forward in the work of saving souls, they will run and not be weary, will walk and not faint.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 242, 243.

Let this be our language, from hearts that respond to the great goodness and love of God to us as a people and to us individually, "Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and forever." "Ye that

stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, praise the Lord; for the Lord is good: sing praises unto His name; for it is pleasant. For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure. For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.” Consider, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord has a people, a chosen people, His church, to be His own, His own fortress, which He holds in a sin-stricken, revolted world; and He intended that no authority should be known in it, no laws be acknowledged by it, but His own.—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 15.

Friday, December 10: For Further Reading

God’s Amazing Grace, “With All Your Heart,” p. 318;
Gospel Workers, “The Outlook,” pp. 38, 39.

Lesson 12

Deuteronomy in the New Testament

Sabbath Afternoon, December 11

It was the privilege of the Jewish people to understand these prophecies, and to recognize their fulfillment in the mission of Jesus. Christ urged upon His disciples the importance of prophetic study. Referring to the prophecy given to Daniel in regard to their time, He said, "Whoso readeth, let him understand." Matthew 24:15. After His resurrection He explained to the disciples in "all the prophets" "the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:27. The Saviour had spoken through all the prophets. "The Spirit of Christ which was in them" "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:11.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 234.

The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the Word as a whole and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme—of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for the supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found. ...

The Old Testament sheds light upon the New, and the New upon the Old. Each is a revelation of the glory of God in Christ. Christ as manifested to the patriarchs, as symbolized in the sacrificial service, as portrayed in the law, and as revealed by the prophets is the riches of the Old Testament. Christ in His life, His death, and His resurrection; Christ as He is manifested by the Holy Spirit, is the

treasure of the New. Both Old and New present truths that will continually reveal new depths of meaning to the earnest seeker.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 115.

Men of ability have devoted a lifetime of study and prayer to the searching of the Scriptures, and yet there are many portions of the Bible that have not been fully explored. Some passages of Scripture will never be perfectly comprehended until in the future life Christ shall explain them. There are mysteries to be unraveled, statements that human minds cannot harmonize. And the enemy will seek to arouse argument upon these points, which might better remain undiscussed.

A devoted, spiritual worker will avoid bringing up minor theoretical differences, and will devote his energies to the proclamation of the great testing truths to be given to the world. He will point the people to the work of redemption, the commandments of God, the near coming of Christ; and it will be found that in these subjects there is food enough for thought.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 313.

Sunday, December 12: “It Is Written”

In meeting the enemy in the wilderness, Christ’s response to his wicked insinuations was, “It is written.” When Satan presumed to claim the ownership of the whole world, and asked Christ to worship him as God, He who with a word might have called to His assistance legions of angels, merely said, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10). The intensity of this conflict we but partly understand. It seemed as though the Saviour would die on the field of battle, but He withstood the wily foe. His words so carefully chosen, were as sharp as a two-edged sword. Satan was thoroughly repulsed. He realized that the Prince of Life could not be deceived by any sophistry. ...

Let the Word of God be our study. ...

To as many as believe in Him, Christ gives power to become the sons of God. ... As they follow on to know the truth, their feet are planted on the sure foundation. Neither flood nor storm can sweep

away their foundation.—Letter 289, September 13, 1905, to “My Brethren in the Ministry.”

In the warfare, the enemy takes advantage of the weakest points in the defence of those he is attacking. Here he makes his fiercest assaults. The Christian should have no weak points in his defence. He should be barricaded by the support that the Scriptures give to the one who is doing God’s will. The tempted soul will bear away the victory, if he follows the example of Him who met the tempter with the word, “It is written.” He can stand securely in the protection of a “Thus saith the Lord.”—*This Day With God*, p. 295.

Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, “Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.” This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.

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. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection, of His character.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 70.

Monday, December 13: Lifting Up Faces

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 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.

Never are we to be cold and unsympathetic, especially when dealing with the poor. Courtesy, sympathy, and compassion are to be shown to all. Partiality for the wealthy is displeasing to God. Jesus is slighted when His needy children are slighted. They are not rich in this world's goods, but they are dear to His heart of love. God recognizes no distinction of rank. With Him there is no caste. In His sight, men are simply men, good or bad. In the day of final reckoning, position, rank, or wealth will not alter by a hairsbreadth the case of anyone. By the all-seeing God, men will be judged by what they are in purity, in nobility, in love for Christ.

Christ declared that the gospel is to be preached to the poor. Never does God's truth put on an aspect of greater loveliness than when brought to the needy and destitute. Then it is that the light of the gospel shines forth in its most radiant clearness, lighting up the hut of the peasant and the rude cottage of the laborer. Angels of God are there, and their presence makes the crust of bread and the cup of water a banquet. Those who have been neglected and abandoned by the world are raised to be sons and daughters of the Most High. Lifted above any position that earth can give, they sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. They may have no earthly treasure, but they have found the pearl of great price.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 162.

That which Satan plants in the heart—envy, jealousy, evil surmising, evil speaking, impatience, prejudice, selfishness, covetousness, and vanity—must be uprooted. If these evil things are allowed to remain in the soul, they will bear fruit by which many shall be defiled. Oh, how many cultivate the poisonous plants, that kill out the precious fruits of love and defile the soul! ...

Love's agencies have wonderful power, for they are divine. The soft answer that "turneth away wrath," the love that "suffereth long,

and is kind,” the charity that “covereth a multitude of sins”—would we learn the lesson, with what power for healing would our lives be gifted! How life would be transformed, and the earth become a very likeness and foretaste of heaven!—*My Life Today*, p. 179.

Tuesday, December 14: Cursed on a Tree

We have transgressed the law of God, and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. The best efforts that man in his own strength can make, are valueless to meet the holy and just law that he has transgressed; but through faith in Christ he may claim the righteousness of the Son of God as all-sufficient. Christ satisfied the demands of the law in His human nature. He bore the curse of the law for the sinner, made an atonement for him, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Genuine faith appropriates the righteousness of Christ, and the sinner is made an overcomer with Christ. ...

He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure. ... When we seek to gain heaven through the merits of Christ, the soul makes progress. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we may go on from strength to strength, from victory to victory; for through Christ the grace of God has worked out our complete salvation.

—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 363, 364.

“That He might sanctify the people with His own blood,” Christ “suffered without the gate.” Hebrews 13:12. For transgression of the law of God, Adam and Eve were banished from Eden. Christ, our substitute, was to suffer without the boundaries of Jerusalem. He died outside the gate, where felons and murderers were executed. Full of significance are the words, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” Galatians 3:13. ...

... God suffered His wrath against transgression to fall on His beloved Son. Jesus was to be crucified for the sins of men. What

suffering, then, would the sinner bear who continued in sin? All the impenitent and unbelieving would know a sorrow and misery that language would fail to express. ...

Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father's mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 741, 743, 753.

Wednesday, December 15: A Prophet Like Unto Thee

In the closing events of the crucifixion day, fresh evidence was given of the fulfillment of prophecy, and new witness borne to Christ's divinity. When the darkness had lifted from the cross, and the Saviour's dying cry had been uttered, immediately another voice was heard, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God." Matthew 27:54.

These words were said in no whispered tones. All eyes were turned to see whence they came. Who had spoken? It was the centurion, the Roman soldier. The divine patience of the Saviour, and His sudden death, with the cry of victory upon His lips, had impressed this heathen. In the bruised, broken body hanging upon the cross, the centurion recognized the form of the Son of God. He could not refrain from confessing his faith. Thus again evidence was given that our Redeemer was to see of the travail of His soul. Upon the very day of His death, three men, differing widely from one another, had declared their faith,—he who commanded the Roman

guard, he who bore the cross of the Saviour, and he who died upon the cross at His side.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 770.

God requires moral perfection in all. Those who have been given light and opportunities should, as God's stewards, aim for perfection, and never, never lower the standard of righteousness to accommodate inherited and cultivated tendencies to wrong. Christ took upon Him our human nature, and lived our life, to show us that we may be like Him by partaking of the divine nature. We may be holy, as Christ was holy in human nature. Why then are there so many disagreeable characters in the world? It is because they do not suspect that their disagreeable ways and rough, impolite speech is the result of an unholy heart.

It is the fragrance of our love to our fellow men that reveals our love for God. It is patience in service that brings rest to the soul. It is through humble, diligent, faithful toilers that the welfare of Israel is promoted. God upholds and strengthens the one who is willing to learn Christ's way.—*This Day With God*, p. 32.

While the claims of the law of God are to be presented to the world, we should never forget that love—the love of Christ—is the only power that can soften the heart and lead to obedience.

All the great truths of the Scriptures center in Christ; rightly understood, all lead to Him. Let Christ be presented as the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, of the great plan of redemption. Present to the people such subjects as will strengthen their confidence in God and in His Word, and lead them to investigate its teachings for themselves. And as they go forward, step by step, in the study of the Bible, they will be better prepared to appreciate the beauty and harmony of its precious truths.—*Evangelism*, pp. 484, 485.

Thursday, December 16: A Fearful Thing

It will not be long until the gathering storm will burst upon the world that is so asleep in sin. When the earth is reeling to and fro like

a drunkard, when the heavens are shaking, and the great day of the Lord has come, who shall be able to stand? ...

That Lamb whose wrath will be so terrible to the scorers of His grace will be grace and righteousness and love and blessing to all who have received Him. The pillar of cloud that was dark with terror and avenging wrath to the Egyptians, was to the people of God a pillar of fire for brightness. So will it be to the Lord's people in these last days. The light and glory of God to His commandment-keeping people are darkness to the unbelieving. They see that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. The arm, long stretched, strong to save all who come unto Him, is strong to execute His judgment upon all who would not come unto Him that they might have life. ... The sure provision has been made to shelter every soul and shield those who have kept His commandments until the indignation be overpast.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 356.

It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1.

Henceforth you are not your own; you are bought with a price. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18, 19. Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 51, 52.

If sinners can be led to give one earnest look at the cross, if they can obtain a full view of the crucified Saviour, they will realize the depth of God's compassion and the sinfulness of sin. ...

When at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain. ...

As you read the promises, remember they are the expression of unutterable love and pity. Yes, only believe that God is your helper. He wants to restore His moral image in man. As you draw near to Him with confession and repentance, He will draw near to you with mercy and forgiveness.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 103.

Friday, December 17: For Further Reading

Sons and Daughters of God, “He Knows How to Help Us When We Are Tempted,” p. 24;

Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, “This Is Justification By Faith,” vol. 6, p. 1070.

Lesson 13

The Resurrection of Moses

Sabbath Afternoon, December 18

Many years Moses and Aaron had stood side by side in their cares and labors. Together they had breasted unnumbered dangers, and had shared together the signal blessing of God; but the time was at hand when they must be separated. ... Somewhere beyond the mountains of Edom was the path leading to the Promised Land—that land whose blessings Moses and Aaron were not to enjoy. No rebellious feelings found a place in their hearts, no expression of murmuring escaped their lips; yet a solemn sadness rested upon their countenances as they remembered what had debarred them from the inheritance of their fathers. ...

... For his sin at Kadesh, Aaron was denied the privilege of officiating as God's high priest in Canaan—of offering the first sacrifice in the goodly land, and thus consecrating the inheritance of Israel. Moses was to continue to bear his burden in leading the people to the very borders of Canaan. He was to come within sight of the Promised Land, but was not to enter it. Had these servants of God, when they stood before the rock at Kadesh, borne uncomplainingly the test there brought upon them, how different would have been their future! A wrong act can never be undone. It may be that the work of a lifetime will not recover what has been lost in a single moment of temptation or even thoughtlessness.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 425, 426.

The present is a season of solemn privilege and sacred trust. If the servants of God keep faithfully the trust given to them, great will be their reward when the Master shall say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." [Luke 16:2.] The earnest toil, the unselfish work, the patient, persevering effort, will be abundantly rewarded. Jesus will say, Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends. [See John 15:15.] The approval of the Master is not given because of the greatness of the work performed, but because of fidelity in all that has been done. It is not the results we attain, but the motives from which we act, that

weigh with God. He prizes goodness and faithfulness above all else. —*Gospel Workers*, p. 267.

I entreat you to move with an eye single to the glory of God. Let His power be your dependence, His grace your strength. By study of the Scriptures and earnest prayer seek to obtain clear conceptions of your duty, and then faithfully perform it. It is essential that you cultivate faithfulness in little things, and in so doing you will acquire habits of integrity in greater responsibilities. The little incidents of everyday life often pass without our notice, but it is these things that shape the character. Every event of life is great for good or for evil. The mind needs to be trained by daily tests, that it may acquire power to stand in any difficult position. In the days of trial and of peril you will need to be fortified to stand firmly for the right, independent of every opposing influence.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 561.

Sunday, December 19: The Sin of Moses—Part 1

In all their wanderings, the children of Israel were tempted to attribute to Moses the special work of God, the mighty miracles that had been wrought to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. They charged Moses with bringing them out of the land of Egypt. It was true that God had manifested Himself wonderfully to Moses. He had specially favored him with His presence. To him God had revealed His exceeding glory. Upon the mount He had taken him into a sacred nearness to Himself, and had talked with him as a man speaks to a friend. But the Lord had given evidence after evidence that it was He Himself who was working for their deliverance.

By saying, “Must we fetch you water out of this rock?” Moses virtually said to the people that they were correct in believing that he himself was doing the mighty works that had been done in their behalf. This made it necessary for God to prove to Israel that his admission was not founded on fact. To dispel forever from the minds of the Israelites the idea that a man was leading them, God found it necessary to allow their leader to die before they entered the land of

Canaan.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 1115, 1116.

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 unbecoming, 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. Then they can present the gospel with divine tact and gentleness.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 353.

Through the help that Christ can give, we shall be able to learn to bridle the tongue. Sorely as He was tried on the point of hasty and angry speech, He never once sinned with His lips. With patient calmness He met the sneers, the taunts, and the ridicule of His fellow workers at the carpenter's bench. Instead of retorting angrily, He would begin to sing one of David's beautiful psalms; and His companions, before realizing what they were doing, would unite with Him in the hymn. What a transformation would be wrought in this world if men and women today would follow Christ's example in the use of words!—*Our High Calling*, p. 291.

Monday, December 20: The Sin of Moses—Part 2

Some would regard [Moses'] sin as one that should be lightly passed over; but God sees not as man sees. When within sight of the hills of Canaan, the Israelites murmured because the stream that had flowed wherever they encamped ceased. The cries of the people were directed against Moses and Aaron, whom they accused of bringing them into the wilderness to perish. The leaders went to the door of the tabernacle and fell on their faces. ... Moses was

directed, "Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock" (Numbers 20:8).

The two brothers went on before the multitude, Moses with the rod of God in his hand. They were now aged men. Long had they borne with the rebellion and obstinacy of Israel; but now, at last, even the patience of Moses gave way. ... And instead of speaking to the rock, as God had commanded him, he smote it twice with the rod.

The water gushed forth in abundance to satisfy the host. But a great wrong had been done. Moses had spoken from irritated feeling. "Shall we bring water?" he questioned, as if the Lord would not do what He promised. "Ye believed me not," the Lord declared to the two brothers, "to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel" (Verse 12).—*The Upward Look*, p. 299.

The very time to exercise faith is when we feel destitute of the Spirit. When thick clouds of darkness seem to hover over the mind, then is the time to let living faith pierce the darkness and scatter the clouds. True faith rests on the promises contained in the Word of God, and those only who obey that Word can claim its glorious promises. "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7. "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." 1 John 3:22. ...

I asked the angel why there was no more faith and power in Israel. He said, "Ye let go of the arm of the Lord too soon. Press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith. The promises are sure. Believe ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them."—*Early Writings*, pp. 72, 73.

Tuesday, December 21: The Death of Moses

The Lord announced to Moses that the appointed time for the possession of Canaan was at hand; and as the aged prophet stood upon the heights overlooking the river Jordan and the Promised

Land, he gazed with deep interest upon the inheritance of his people. Would it be possible that the sentence pronounced against him for his sin at Kadesh might be revoked? With deep earnestness he pleaded, "O Lord God, Thou hast begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness, and Thy mighty hand; for what god is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to Thy works, and according to Thy might? I pray Thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon." Deuteronomy 3:24–27.

The answer was, "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto Me of this matter. Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes; for thou shalt not go over this Jordan."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 462.

It was not the will of God that anyone should go up with Moses to the top of Pisgah. There he stood, upon a high prominence on Pisgah's top, in the presence of God and heavenly angels. After he had viewed Canaan to his satisfaction, he lay down, like a tired warrior, to rest. Sleep came upon him, but it was the sleep of death. Angels took his body and buried it in the valley. The Israelites could never find the place where he was buried. His secret burial was to prevent the people from sinning against the Lord by committing idolatry over his body.

Satan exulted that he had succeeded in causing Moses to sin against God. For this transgression Moses came under the dominion of death. If he had continued faithful, and his life had not been marred with that one transgression, in failing to give God the glory of bringing water from the rock, he would have entered the Promised Land, and would have been translated to heaven without seeing death.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 173.

Christ became one with humanity, that humanity might become one in Spirit and life with Him. By virtue of this union in obedience to the Word of God, His life becomes their life. He says to the penitent, "I am the resurrection, and the life." Death is looked upon by Christ as sleep—silence, darkness, sleep. He speaks of it as if it were of little moment. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me," He says,

“shall never die.” And to the believing one, death is but a small matter. With him to die is but to sleep.

The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Christ, as His bride, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the heavenly courts, the world above. The victory of the sleeping saints will be glorious on the morning of the resurrection.—*My Life Today*, p. 295.

Wednesday, December 22: The Resurrection of Moses

Christ, with the angels that buried Moses, came down from heaven, after he had remained in the grave a short time, and resurrected him and took him to heaven.

As Christ and the angels approached the grave, Satan and his angels appeared at the grave and were guarding the body of Moses, lest it should be removed. As Christ and His angels drew nigh, Satan resisted their approach, but was compelled, by the glory and power of Christ and His angels, to fall back. Satan claimed the body of Moses, because of his one transgression; but Christ meekly referred him to His Father, saying, “The Lord rebuke thee.” Jude 1:9. Christ told Satan that He knew Moses had humbly repented of this one wrong, that no stain rested upon his character, and that his name in the heavenly book of records stood untarnished. Then Christ resurrected the body of Moses, which Satan had claimed.—*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 173, 174.

God did not create evil, He only made the good, which was like Himself. But Satan would not be content to know the will of God and do it. His curiosity was on the stretch to know that which God had not designed he should know. Evil, sin, and death were not created by God; they are the result of disobedience, which originated in Satan. But the knowledge of evil now in the world was brought in through the cunning of Satan. These are very hard and expensive lessons; but men will learn them, and many will never be convinced that it is

bliss to be ignorant of a certain kind of knowledge, which arises from unsatisfied desires and unholy aims.

The sons and daughters of Adam are fully as inquisitive and presumptuous as was Eve in seeking forbidden knowledge. They gain an experience, a knowledge, which God never designed they should have, and the result will be, as it was to our first parents, the loss of their Eden home. When will human beings learn that which is demonstrated so thoroughly before them?—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 503.

The same merciful Saviour who appointed those temporal cities of refuge has by the shedding of His own blood provided for the transgressors of God's law a sure retreat, into which they may flee for safety from the second death. No power can take out of His hands the souls that go to Him for pardon. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;" that "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Romans 8:1, 34; Hebrews 6:18.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 516.

Thursday, December 23: The Resurrection of Us All

The apostle [Paul] carried the minds of the Corinthian brethren forward to the triumphs of the resurrection morn, when all the sleeping saints are to be raised, henceforth to live forever with their Lord. "Behold," the apostle declared, "I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ... Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? ..."

Glorious is the triumph awaiting the faithful. The apostle, realizing the possibilities before the Corinthian believers, sought to set before them that which uplifts from the selfish and the sensual, and glorifies life with the hope of immortality. Earnestly he exhorted them to be true to their high calling in Christ. “My beloved brethren,” he pleaded, “be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 320, 321.

To the believer, death is but a small matter. Christ speaks of it as if it were of little moment. “If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death,” “he shall never taste of death.” To the Christian, death is but a sleep, a moment of silence and darkness. The life is hid with Christ in God, and “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” John 8:51, 52; Colossians 3:4.

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

In the very day when the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken (Ecclesiastes 12:6), man’s thoughts perish. They that go down to the grave are in silence. They know no more of anything that is done under the sun. Job 14:21. Blessed rest for the weary righteous! Time, be it long or short, is but a moment to them. They sleep; they are awakened by the trump of God to a glorious

immortality.

—*The Great Controversy*, p. 549.

Friday, December 24: For Further Reading

Reflecting Christ, “God’s Children to be Light Bearers,” p. 319;
In Heavenly Places, “Only One Redeemer,” p. 13.