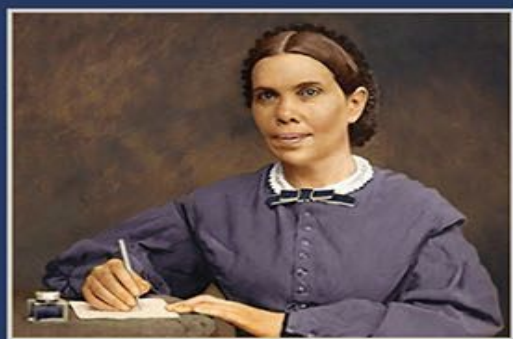


# A Companion to the Adult Bible Study Guide

## Ellen White Notes on Psalms

January | February | March 2024

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

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

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# **Psalms**

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## Lesson 1

# How to Read the Psalms

## Sabbath Afternoon, December 30

After the crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ, His disciples listened with wonder and amazement to His lessons of truth; for they seemed as new ideas to them; but He told them, “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you. . . Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures” (Luke 24:44, 45). The truth is constantly unfolding and presenting new features to different minds. All who dig in the mines of truth, will constantly discover rich and precious gems. We are anxious that all who claim to believe the truth now open before us, and especially those who take the responsibility of teaching the truth to others, should have a clearer conception themselves of the all-important significance of the themes of the Bible.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 404.

The communion with nature and with God, the care of his flocks, the perils and deliverances, the griefs and joys, of his lowly lot, were not only to mold the character of David and to influence his future life, but through the psalms of Israel’s sweet singer they were in all coming ages to kindle love and faith in the hearts of God’s people, bringing them nearer to the ever-loving heart of Him in whom all His creatures live.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 642.

The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all “given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language. . . .

God designed the Bible to be a lesson-book to all mankind, in childhood, youth, and manhood, and to be studied through all time. He gave His Word to men as a revelation of Himself. It is the medium of communication between God and man.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 10.

When reading the Bible with humble, teachable heart, we are holding [communion] with God Himself. The thoughts expressed, the precepts specified, the doctrines revealed, are a voice from the God of heaven. . . .

The psalmist prayed, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” The Lord heard him, for how full of assurance are the words, “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” (Psalm 119:18, 103; 19:10.) And as the Lord heard and answered David, so He will hear and answer us, making our hearts full of gladness and rejoicing.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 196.

## Sunday, December 31: The Psalms in Ancient Israel's Worship

The service of song was made a regular part of religious worship, and David composed psalms, not only for the use of the priests in the sanctuary service, but also to be sung by the people in their journeys to the national altar at the annual feasts. The influence thus exerted was far-reaching, and it resulted in freeing the nation from idolatry. Many of the surrounding peoples, beholding the prosperity of Israel, were led to think favorably of Israel's God, who had done such great things for His people.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 711.

When the ark of the covenant was brought into the city of David, and a psalm of joy and triumph was chanted, "all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord." This fervent response was an evidence that they understood the word spoken and joined in the worship of God.

There is too much formality in our religious services. The Lord would have His ministers who preach the word energized by His Holy Spirit; and the people who hear should not sit in drowsy indifference, or stare vacantly about, making no responses to what is said. . . . There should be wide-awake, active churches to encourage and uphold the ministers of Christ and to aid them in the work of saving souls. Where the church is walking in the light, there will ever be cheerful, hearty responses and words of joyful praise. . . .

Let us learn the song of the angels now, that we may sing it when we join their shining ranks. Let us say with the psalmist: "While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being." "Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 318.

As the children of Israel, journeying through the wilderness, cheered their way by the music of sacred song, so God bids His children today gladden their pilgrim life. There are few means more effective for fixing His words in the memory than repeating them in song. And such song has wonderful power. It has power to subdue rude and uncultivated natures; power to quicken thought and to awaken sympathy, to promote harmony of

action, and to banish the gloom and foreboding that destroy courage and weaken effort. . . .

. . . [S]inging is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer. . . .

As our Redeemer leads us to the threshold of the Infinite, flushed with the glory of God, we may catch the themes of praise and thanksgiving from the heavenly choir round about the throne; and as the echo of the angels' song is awakened in our earthly homes, hearts will be drawn closer to the heavenly singers. Heaven's communion begins on earth. We learn here the keynote of its praise.—*Education*, pp. 167, 168.

## Monday, January 1: Meet the Psalmists

David, in the beauty and vigor of his young manhood, was preparing to take a high position with the noblest of the earth. His talents, as precious gifts from God, were employed to extol the glory of the divine Giver. His opportunities of contemplation and meditation served to enrich him with that wisdom and piety that made him beloved of God and angels. As he contemplated the perfections of his Creator, clearer conceptions of God opened before his soul. Obscure themes were illuminated, difficulties were made plain, perplexities were harmonized, and each ray of new light called forth fresh bursts of rapture, and sweeter anthems of devotion, to the glory of God and the Redeemer.

The love that moved him, the sorrows that beset him, the triumphs that attended him, were all themes for his active thought; and as he beheld the love of God in all the providences of his life, his heart throbbed with more fervent adoration and gratitude, his voice rang out in a richer melody, his harp was swept with more exultant joy; and the shepherd boy proceeded from strength to strength, from knowledge to knowledge; for the Spirit of the Lord was upon him.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 642.

I must continually have my strength in God. My dependence must not waver. No human agency must come between my soul and my God. The Lord is our only hope. In Him I trust, and He will never, no never, fail me. He hath hitherto helped me when under great discouragement.

I will thank the Lord and praise His holy name. I will praise the Lord that in Him I can trust at all times. He is the health of my countenance and my strong tower into which I can run and be safe. He understands my necessities and He will give me the light of His countenance that I may reflect light upon others. I will not fail nor be discouraged. I look to Thee, my heavenly Father, to give strength and grace. I will praise the Lord at all times and not wait for a happy flight of feeling. Then praise the Lord, for He is good, and His mercies will attend me morning, noon, and night. A happy flight of feeling is not evidence; His Word is my assurance.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 266.

The Lord gave His word in just the way He wanted it to come. He gave it through different writers, each having his own individuality, though going over the same history. Their testimonies are brought together in one Book, and are like the testimonies in a social meeting. They do not represent things in just the same style. Each has an experience of his own, and this diversity broadens and deepens the knowledge that is brought out to meet the necessities of varied minds. The thoughts expressed have not a set uniformity, as if cast in an iron mold, making the very hearing monotonous. In such uniformity there would be a loss of grace and distinctive beauty.

—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 21.

## **Tuesday, January 2: A Song for Every Season**

The psalms of David pass through the whole range of experience, from the depths of conscious guilt and self-condemnation to the loftiest faith and the most exalted communing with God. His life record declares that sin can bring only shame and woe, but that God's love and mercy can reach to the deepest depths, that faith will lift up the repenting soul to share the adoption of the sons of God. Of all the assurances which His word contains, it is one of the strongest testimonies to the faithfulness, the justice, and the covenant mercy of God. . . .

Glorious are the promises made to David and his house, promises that look forward to the eternal ages, and find their complete fulfillment in Christ.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 754.

God speaks to us in His word. Here we have in clearer lines the revelation of His character, of His dealings with men, and the great work of redemption. Here is open before us the history of patriarchs and prophets and other holy men of old. They were men "subject to like passions as we are." James 5:17. We see how they struggled through discouragements like our own, how they fell under temptation as we have done, and yet took heart again and conquered through the grace of God; and, beholding, we are encouraged in our striving after righteousness. As we read of the precious experiences granted them, of the light and love and blessing it was theirs to enjoy, and of the work they wrought through the grace given them, the spirit that inspired them kindles a flame of holy emulation in our hearts and a desire to be like them in character—like them to walk with God.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 87.

Those who have communed with the poets and sages of the Bible, and whose souls have been stirred by the glorious deeds of the heroes of faith, will come from the rich fields of thought far more pure in heart and elevated in mind than if they had been occupied in studying the most celebrated secular authors, or in contemplating and glorifying the exploits of the Pharaohs and Herods and Caesars of the world. . . .

What subjects are presented in the Sacred Scriptures for the mind to

dwell upon! Where can be found higher themes for contemplation? Where are themes so intensely interesting? In what sense are all the researches of human science comparable in sublimity and mystery with the science of the Bible? Where is anything that will so call out the strength of the intellect in deep and earnest thought? . . .

“The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” Angels stand beside the searcher of the Scriptures, to impress and illuminate the mind. The command of Christ comes to us with the same force today as when addressed to the first disciples eighteen hundred years ago: “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.”

—*Messages to Young People*, pp. 255, 257.

### **Wednesday, January 3: Inspired Prayers**

There is in genuine faith a buoyancy, a steadfastness of principle, and a fixedness of purpose that neither time nor toil can weaken. “Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isaiah 40:30, 31. . . .

Present [your] petitions at the throne of grace. Plead for the Holy Spirit. God stands back of every promise He has made. With your Bible in your hands say, I have done as Thou hast said. I present Thy promise, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

We must not only pray in Christ’s name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit “maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Romans 8:26. Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer “exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Ephesians 3:20.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 147.

Jesus was often found in prayer. He resorted to the lonely groves or to the mountains to make His requests known to His Father. When the business and cares of the day were ended, and the weary were seeking rest, Jesus devoted the time to prayer. We would not discourage prayer, for there is far too little praying and watching thereunto. And there is still less praying with the Spirit and the understanding also. Fervent and effectual prayer is always in place, and will never weary. Such prayer interests and refreshes all who have a love for devotion.

Secret prayer is neglected, and this is why many offer such long, tedious, backslidden prayers when they assemble to worship God. . . . They hope to pray themselves into the favor of God. But frequently these prayers result in bringing other minds down to their own low level in spiritual darkness. If Christians would take home the teachings of Christ in regard to watching

and praying, they would become more intelligent in their worship of God.  
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 582.

It is when we come into difficult places that [the Lord] reveals His power and wisdom in answer to humble prayer. Have confidence in Him as a prayer-hearing, prayer-answering God. He will reveal Himself to you as One who can help in every emergency. He who created man, who gave him his wonderful physical, mental, and spiritual faculties, will not withhold that which is necessary to sustain the life He has given. He who has given us His word—the leaves of the tree of life—will not withhold from us a knowledge of how to provide food for His needy children.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 199.

## Thursday, January 4: The World of the Psalms

As humble and modest as before his anointing, the shepherd boy, [David], returned to the hills and watched and guarded his flocks as tenderly as ever. But with new inspiration he composed his melodies and played upon his harp. Before him spread a landscape of rich and varied beauty. The vines, with their clustering fruit, brightened in the sunshine. The forest trees, with their green foliage, swayed in the breeze. He beheld the sun flooding the heavens with light, coming forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. There were the bold summits of the hills reaching toward the sky; in the faraway distance rose the barren cliffs of the mountain wall of Moab; above all spread the tender blue of the overarching heavens. And beyond was God.

He could not see Him, but His works were full of His praise. The light of day, gilding forest and mountain, meadow and stream, carried the mind up to behold the Father of lights, the Author of every good and perfect gift. Daily revelations of the character and majesty of his Creator filled the young poet's heart with adoration and rejoicing. In contemplation of God and His works the faculties of David's mind and heart were developing and strengthening for the work of his afterlife. He was daily coming into a more intimate communion with God. His mind was constantly penetrating into new depths for fresh themes to inspire his song and to wake the music of his harp. The rich melody of his voice poured out upon the air, echoed from the hills as if responsive to the rejoicing of the angels' songs in heaven. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 641.

As we make Christ our daily companion we shall feel that the powers of an unseen world are all around us; and by looking unto Jesus we shall become assimilated to His image. By beholding we become changed. The character is softened, refined, and ennobled for the heavenly kingdom. The sure result of our intercourse and fellowship with our Lord will be to increase piety, purity, and fervor. There will be a growing intelligence in prayer. We are receiving a divine education, and this is illustrated in a life of diligence and zeal.

The soul that turns to God for its help, its support, its power, by daily,

earnest prayer, will have noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth and duty, lofty purposes of action, and a continual hungering and thirsting after righteousness. By maintaining a connection with God, we shall be enabled to diffuse to others, through our association with them, the light, the peace, the serenity, that rule in our hearts. The strength acquired in prayer to God, united with persevering effort in training the mind in thoughtfulness and care-taking, prepares one for daily duties and keeps the spirit in peace under all circumstances.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 85.

### **Friday, January 5: For Further Reading**

*That I May Know Him*, “The Model Prayer,” p. 261;  
*Messages to Young People*, “The Benefits of Music,” pp. 291, 292.

## Lesson 2

# Teach Us to Pray

### Sabbath Afternoon, January 6

Daily prayer is as essential to growth in grace, and even to spiritual life itself, as is temporal food to physical well-being. We should accustom ourselves to lift the thoughts often to God in prayer. If the mind wanders, we must bring it back; by persevering effort, habit will finally make it easy. We cannot for one moment separate ourselves from Christ with safety. We may have His presence to attend us at every step, but only by observing the conditions which He Himself has laid down.

Religion must be made the great business of life. Everything else should be held subordinate to this. All our powers, of soul, body, and spirit, must be engaged in the Christian warfare. We must look to Christ for strength and grace, and we shall gain the victory as surely as Jesus died for us.—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 93.

Christ came into the world to save it, to connect fallen man with the infinite God. Christ's followers are to be channels of light. Maintaining communion with God, they are to transmit to those in darkness and error the choice blessings which they receive of heaven. Enoch did not become polluted with the iniquities existing in his day; why need we in our day? But we may, like our Master, have compassion for suffering humanity, pity for the unfortunate, and a generous consideration for the feelings and necessities of the needy, the troubled, and the despairing.

Those who are Christians indeed will seek to do good to others and at the same time will so order their conversation and deportment as to maintain a calm, hallowed peace of mind. God's word requires that we should be like our Saviour, that we should bear His image, imitate His example, live His life. Selfishness and worldliness are not fruits of a Christian tree. No man can live for himself and yet enjoy the approbation of God.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 113.

The temptations to which we are daily exposed make prayer a necessity. In order that we may be kept by the power of God through faith, the desires of the mind should be continually ascending in silent prayer for help, for light, for strength, for knowledge. . . .

We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work. . . . The soul that turns to God for its strength, its support, its power, by daily, earnest prayer, will have noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth and duty, lofty purposes of action, and a continual hungering and thirsting after righteousness. By maintaining a connection with God we shall be enabled to diffuse to others, through our association with them, the light, the peace, the serenity, that rules in our hearts, and set before them an example of unwavering fidelity to the interests of the work in which we are engaged.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 459.

## **Sunday, January 7: Fostering the Use of the Psalms in Prayer**

In God's Word we behold the power that laid the foundation of the earth and that stretched out the heavens. Here only can we find a history of our race unsullied by human prejudice or human pride. Here are recorded the struggles, the defeats, and the victories of the greatest men this world has ever known. Here the great problems of duty and destiny are unfolded. The curtain that separates the visible from the invisible world is lifted, and we behold the conflict of the opposing forces of good and evil, from the first entrance of sin to the final triumph of righteousness and truth; and all is but a revelation of the character of God. In the reverent contemplation of the truths presented in His Word the mind is brought into communion with the infinite mind. Such a study will not only refine and ennoble the character, but it cannot fail to expand and invigorate the mental powers.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 115.

From the time when the parents of Jesus found Him in the temple, His course of action was a mystery to them. He would not enter into controversy, yet His example was a constant lesson. He seemed as one who was set apart. His hours of happiness were found when alone with nature and with God. Whenever it was His privilege, He turned aside from the scene of His labor, to go into the fields, to meditate in the green valleys, to hold communion with God on the mountainside or amid the trees of the forest. The early morning often found Him in some secluded place, meditating, searching the Scriptures, or in prayer. From these quiet hours He would return to His home to take up His duties again, and to give an example of patient toil.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 89.

We are in constant danger of becoming self-sufficient, relying upon our own wisdom, and not making God our strength. Nothing disturbs Satan so much as our not being ignorant of his devices. If we feel our dangers, we shall feel the need of prayer as did Nehemiah, and, like him, we shall obtain that sure defense that will give us security in peril. If we are careless and indifferent, we shall surely be overcome by Satan's devices. We must be vigilant. While, like Nehemiah, we resort to prayer, taking all our

perplexities and burdens to God, we should not feel that we have nothing to do. We are to watch as well as pray.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1138.

## Monday, January 8: Trust in Times of Trouble

Heaven is brought near to earth by that mystic ladder, the base of which is firmly planted on the earth, while the topmost round reaches the throne of the Infinite. Angels are constantly ascending and descending this ladder of shining brightness, bearing the prayers of the needy and distressed to the Father above, and bringing blessing and hope, courage and help, to the children of men. These angels of light create a heavenly atmosphere about the soul, lifting us toward the unseen and the eternal. We cannot behold their forms with our natural sight; only by spiritual vision can we discern heavenly things. The spiritual ear alone can hear the harmony of heavenly voices.

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7. God commissions His angels to save His chosen ones from calamity, to guard them from “the pestilence that walketh in darkness” and “the destruction that wasteth at noonday.” Psalm 91:6. Again and again have angels talked with men as a man speaketh with a friend, and led them to places of security. Again and again have the encouraging words of angels renewed the drooping spirits of the faithful and, carrying their minds above the things of earth, caused them to behold by faith the white robes, the crowns, the palm branches of victory, which overcomers will receive when they surround the great white throne.

It is the work of the angels to come close to the tried, the suffering, the tempted. They labor untiringly in behalf of those for whom Christ died. —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 153.

The faith that strengthened Habakkuk and all the holy and the just in those days of deep trial was the same faith that sustains God’s people today. In the darkest hours, under circumstances the most forbidding, the Christian believer may keep his soul stayed upon the source of all light and power. Day by day, through faith in God, his hope and courage may be renewed. “The just shall live by his faith.” In the service of God there need be no despondency, no wavering, no fear. The Lord will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. He will give them the wisdom their varied necessities demand.

Of the abundant provision made for every tempted soul, the apostle Paul bears eloquent testimony. To him was given the divine assurance, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” In gratitude and confidence the tried servant of God responded: “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.” 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 386, 387.

Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of trouble that is coming—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—God’s chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his angels cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 55.

## **Tuesday, January 9: A Psalm of Despair**

I was shown that Satan's power is especially exercised upon the people of God. Many were presented before me in a doubting, despairing condition. The infirmities of the body affect the mind. A cunning and powerful enemy attends our steps and employs his strength and skill in trying to turn us out of the right way. And it is too often the case that the people of God are not on their watch, therefore are ignorant of his devices. He works by means which will best conceal himself from view, and he often gains his object. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 304.

We must cherish and cultivate the faith of which prophets and apostles have testified—the faith that lays hold on the promises of God and waits for deliverance in His appointed time and way. The sure word of prophecy will meet its final fulfillment in the glorious advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords. The time of waiting may seem long, the soul may be oppressed by discouraging circumstances, many in whom confidence has been placed may fall by the way; but with the prophet who endeavored to encourage Judah in a time of unparalleled apostasy, let us confidently declare, “The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him.” Habakkuk 2:20. Let us ever hold in remembrance the cheering message, “The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. . . . The just shall live by his faith.” Verses 3, 4.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 387.

Genuine conversion . . . will teach us to hold fast our confidence in Him who is our only hope. By conversion we join our weakness to God's strength, our ignorance to His wisdom, our unworthiness to His merits, our poverty to His boundless riches, our helplessness to His enduring might.

We must search the Word of God, making it a part of ourselves. A spirit of humility, the spirit of Christ, will help us to know Him who has called us to glory and virtue.

If we brought the truth into the daily life as we should we would advance higher and still higher, gaining a clearer and still clearer understanding of the revelation of God. We would lift Him up in songs of praise. Through the

psalmist Christ declared, “In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee” (Psalm 22:22). His voice was the keynote of the universe. His unconfined power, His unsearchable understanding, His wonderful sacrifice for the human race, help us to comprehend the love of God. We need individually to have Christ abiding in the soul. We need to open our minds and hearts to the indwelling of the Spirit of truth. We need to appreciate our privileges as the possessors of sacred, elevating truth. Think of what this means to us—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ!—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 248.

## **Wednesday, January 10: From Despair to Hope**

The very trials that test our faith most severely, and make it seem that God has forsaken us, are designed to lead us nearer to Christ, that we may lay all our burdens at his feet, and receive the peace he will give us in exchange. . . . When you surrender yourself entirely to God, when you fall all broken upon Jesus, you will be rewarded by a victory the joy of which you have never yet realized. As you review the past with a clear vision, you will see that at the very time when life seemed to you only a perplexity and a burden, Jesus himself was near you, seeking to lead you into the light. Your Father was by your side, bending over you with unutterable love, afflicting you for your good, as the refiner purifies the precious ore. When you have thought yourself forsaken, he has been near you to comfort and sustain. We seldom view Jesus as he is, and are never so ready to receive his help as he is to help us.—*Gospel Workers* (1892), p. 372.

All the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah is applicable to the people of God, and every specification of the prophecy will be fulfilled. The Lord will not forsake His people in their time of trial. He says, “For a small moment have I forsaken you; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.” . . . [This] promise is for those who amid general apostasy, keep the commandments of God, and lift up the moral standard before the eyes of the world who have forsaken the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant [Isaiah 54:9-13 quoted].—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1148.

At times a deep sense of our unworthiness will send a thrill of terror through the soul; but this is no evidence that God has changed toward us, or we toward God. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust Him as fully in the darkness as in the light.

Satan may whisper, “You are too great a sinner for Christ to save.” While you acknowledge that you are indeed sinful and unworthy, you may meet

the tempter with the cry, "By virtue of the atonement, I claim Christ as my Saviour. I trust not to my own merits, but to the precious blood of Jesus, which cleanses me. This moment I hang my helpless soul on Christ." The Christian life must be a life of constant, living faith. An unyielding trust, a firm reliance upon Christ, will bring peace and assurance to the soul. —*Messages to Young People*, pp. 111, 112.

## **Thursday, January 11: Oh, Restore Us Again**

Christ is our only hope. We may look to Him, for He is our Saviour. We may take Him at His word, and make Him our dependence. He knows just the help we need, and we can safely put our trust in Him. If we depend on merely human wisdom to guide us, we shall find ourselves on the losing side. But we may come direct to the Lord Jesus, for He has said: “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” It is our privilege to be taught of Him. —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 486.

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

Varied were the circumstances and needs of those who besought His aid, and none who came to Him went away unhelped. From Him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 17.

Angels from the heavenly courts stand by all who do God’s service in ministering to their fellow men. And you have the co-operation of Christ Himself. He is the Restorer, and as you work under His supervision, you will see great results. . . .

Christ is seeking to uplift all who will be lifted to companionship with Himself, that we may be one with Him as He is one with the Father. He permits us to come in contact with suffering and calamity in order to call us out of our selfishness; He seeks to develop in us the attributes of His character—compassion, tenderness, and love. By accepting this work of ministry we place ourselves in His school, to be fitted for the courts of God. . . .

“If thou wilt keep My charge,” the Lord declares, “I will give thee places

to walk among these that stand by”—even among the angels that surround His throne. (Zechariah 3:7.) By co-operating with heavenly beings in their work on earth, we are preparing for their companionship in heaven. “Ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Hebrews 1:14), angels in heaven will welcome those who on earth have lived “not to be ministered unto, but to minister” (Matthew 20:28).—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 388, 389.

## **Friday, January 12: For Further Reading**

*The Sanctified Life*, “The Testing Time,” pp. 11, 12;

*This Day With God*, “Shining Christians,” p. 316.

## Lesson 3

# The Lord Reigns

### Sabbath Afternoon, January 13

God calls upon men to see Him in the wonders of the heavens. “Lift up your eyes on high,” He says, “and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might,” Isaiah 40:26. God would have us study the works of infinity, and from this study learn to love and reverence and obey Him. The heavens and the earth with their treasures are to teach the lessons of God’s love and care and power.

God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them and admire His handiwork. As we study His works, angels from heaven will be by our side to enlighten our minds and guard them from Satan’s deceptions. . . .

The psalmist declares, “When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” Psalm 27:8. . . . The eighty-first psalm explains why Israel was scattered—they forgot God, as the churches in our land are forgetting Him today. Consider also the eighty-ninth, ninetieth, ninety-first, ninety-second, and ninety-third psalms.

These things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come; and should they not be studied? . . . The word of God contains instructive lessons, given in reproof, in warning, in encouragement, and in rich promises.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 456, 457.

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

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

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

When the attention is fastened on the cross of Christ, the whole being is ennobled. The knowledge of the Saviour's love subdues the soul, and lifts the mind above the things of time and sense. Let us learn to estimate all temporal things in the light that shines from the cross. Let us strive to fathom the depths of humiliation to which our Saviour descended in order to make man the possessor of eternal riches. As we study the plan of redemption, the heart will feel the throb of the Saviour's love, and will be ravished by the charms of His character.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 248.

## Sunday, January 14: The Lord Has Made Us

The beauties in nature are a theme for contemplation. In studying the natural loveliness surrounding us, the mind is carried up through nature to the Author of all that is lovely. All the works of God are speaking to our senses, magnifying His power, exalting His wisdom. Every created thing has in it charms which interest the child of God and mold his taste to regard these precious evidences of God's love above the work of human skill.

The prophet, in words of glowing fervor, magnifies God in His created works: "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all Thy marvelous works."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 377.

God is constantly employed in upholding and using as His servants the things that He has made. He works through the laws of nature, using them as His instruments. They are not self-acting. Nature in her work testifies of the intelligent presence and active agency of a Being who moves in all things according to His will. . . .

It is not by inherent power that year by year the earth yields its bounties and continues its march around the sun. The hand of the Infinite One is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God's power continually exercised that keeps the earth in position in its rotation. It is God who causes the sun to rise in the heavens. He opens the windows of heaven and gives rain.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 416.

Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature's agencies are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the power of God. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, it is God who restores him. Sickness, suffering, and death are work of an antagonistic power. Satan

is the destroyer; God is the restorer.

A great lesson is learned when we understand our relation to God, and His relation to us.

. . . [W]e are amenable to God as deriving our life from Him. This we do not obtain from humanity, but from God only. We are His by creation and by redemption. Our very bodies are not our own, to treat as we please, to cripple by habits that lead to decay, making it impossible to render to God perfect service. Our lives and all our faculties belong to Him. He is caring for us every moment; He keeps the living machinery in action; if we were left to run it for one moment, we should die. We are absolutely dependent upon God.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 165.

## Monday, January 15: The Lord Reigns

Before Him who ruleth in the heavens the mysteries of the past and future are alike outspread, and God sees beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, the outworking of His purpose of love and blessing. Though clouds and darkness are round about Him, yet righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne. Through the plan of salvation a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ, the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and result of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated.

Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God's love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 366.

“Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?” “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” “I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.” It is impossible for the finite minds of men to fully comprehend the character or the works of the Infinite One. To the keenest intellect, to the most powerful and highly educated mind, that holy Being must ever remain clothed in mystery.

The apostle Paul exclaims: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” But though “clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne.” [Revised Version.] We can so far comprehend His dealing with us, and the motives by which He is actuated, that we may discern boundless love and mercy united to infinite power. We can understand as much of His purposes as it

is for our good to know; and beyond this we must still trust the might of the Omnipotent, the love and wisdom of the Father and Sovereign of all.  
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 698, 699.

“Ye that love the Lord, hate evil,” the psalmist exhorts . . . Psalm 97:10. . . . [T]hese words of the psalmist show that it is by serving God that this higher ground will be gained. We should now be putting away evilspeaking, selfish plans, everything that would hurt the influence or confuse the judgment. The heart must be emptied of all self-seeking; the conduct must be such that it will lead no soul into false paths.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 397.

## **Tuesday, January 16: God Is the Judge**

When Christ shall come the earth will tremble before Him, and the heavens will be rolled together as a scroll, and every mountain and every island will be moved out of its place. “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself” (Psalm 50:3-6). In view of the great day of God, we can see that our only safety will be found in departing from all sin and iniquity. Those who continue in sin will be found among the condemned and perishing.—*Faith and Works*, p. 116.

God brings men into trying places to see if they will trust in a power out of and above themselves. He sees not as man sees. He often has to break up human connections and change the order which man has mapped out, which is perfect in his estimation. What man thinks is for his spiritual and temporal interests may be altogether at variance with the experience he must have in order to be a follower of Christ. His idea of his own value may be far out of the way. . . .

Character must be tested, else there would be many spurious Christians who would keep up a fair semblance of religion until their inclinations, their desire to have their own way, their pride and ambition, were crossed. When by the Lord’s permission sharp trials come to them, their lack of genuine religion, of the meekness and lowliness of Christ, shows them to be in need of the work of the Holy Spirit. . . .

The true Christian keeps his eyes fixed on Him who searches the heart and tries the reins, who requires truth in the inward parts. His constant prayer is, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23, 24).—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 266.

In the account of the judgment scene, when the reward is given to the righteous, and sentence is passed on the wicked, the righteous are

represented as wondering what they have done that they should receive such reward. But they cherished an abiding faith in Christ. They were imbued with His Spirit, and, without conscious effort, they performed for Christ, in the person of His saints, those services that bring a sure reward. But their motive in working was not to receive compensation. They regarded it as the highest honor to be allowed to work as Christ worked. What they did was done from love to Christ and to their fellowmen, and He who has identified Himself with suffering humanity accredited these acts of compassion and love as though done to Himself.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 343.

### **Wednesday, January 17: Ever Mindful of His Covenant**

The law of love is the foundation of God's government, and the service of love the only service acceptable to Heaven. God has granted freedom of will to all, endowed men with capacity to appreciate His character, and therefore with ability to love Him and to choose His service. So long as created beings worshiped God they were in harmony throughout the universe. While love to God was supreme, love to others abounded. As there was no transgression of the law, which is the transcript of God's character, no note of discord jarred the celestial harmonies.

But known unto God are all His works, and from eternal ages the covenant of grace (unmerited favor) existed in the mind of God. It is called the everlasting covenant, for the plan of salvation was not conceived after the fall of man, but it was that which was "kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and . . . made known unto all the nations." (Romans 16:25, 26, R.V.)—*That I May Know Him*, p. 366.

The Lord of heaven is represented as raising up the fallen. He is the Friend of all who love and fear Him, and He will punish everyone who dares to lead them astray from safe paths, putting them in positions of distress as they conscientiously endeavor to keep the way of the Lord and reach the abodes of the righteous.

Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without the notice of your heavenly Father. Then let men be careful how, by word or action, they cause one of God's little ones sorrow or grief. If the little sparrow that has no soul cannot fall to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father, surely the souls of those for whom Christ has died are precious; and will not God judge those who cause pain or disappointment to the hearts of those for whom Christ has given His life?

Who can measure or anticipate the gift of God? For ages, sin [has] interrupted the divine flow of benevolence to man, but that mercy and great love purchased for the fallen race has not ceased to accumulate; it has not lost its earthward direction. God lives and reigns, and in Christ He has poured forth on the world a healing flood. Our Saviour has made every provision for man.—*The Upward Look*, p. 364.

## **Thursday, January 18: Your Testimonies Are Very Sure**

The ten holy precepts spoken by Christ upon Sinai's mount were the revelation of the character of God, and made known to the world the fact that He had jurisdiction over the whole human heritage. That law of ten precepts of the greatest love that can be presented to man is the voice of God from heaven speaking to the soul in promise, "This do, and you will not come under the dominion and control of Satan." There is not a negative in that law, although it may appear thus. . . .

The ancient Jewish church were the highly favored people of God, brought out of Egypt and acknowledged as His own peculiar treasure. The many and exceeding great and precious promises to them as a people, were the hope and confidence of the Jewish church. Herein they trusted, and believed their salvation sure. No other people professed to be governed by the commandments of God.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1105.

The psalmist declares, "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Psalm 119:165. Men cannot manufacture peace. Human plans for the purification and uplifting of individuals or of society will fail of producing peace, because they do not reach the heart. The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;" and life's desert "shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." Isaiah 55:13; 35:1.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 302.

Let the student take the Bible as his guide and stand firm for principle, and he may aspire to any height of attainment. All the philosophies of human nature have led to confusion and shame when God has not been recognized as all in all. But the precious faith inspired of God imparts strength and nobility of character. As His goodness, His mercy, and His love are dwelt upon, clearer and still clearer will be the perception of truth; higher, holier, the desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The

soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by [communion] with God through the study of His word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softened and subdued into humility, kindness, and love.

And the natural powers are enlarged because of holy obedience. From the study of the word of life, students may come forth with minds expanded, elevated, ennobled. If they are, like Daniel, hearers and doers of the word of God, they may advance as he did in all branches of learning. Being pure-minded, they will become strong-minded. Every intellectual faculty will be quickened. They may so educate and discipline themselves that all within the sphere of their influence shall see what man can be, and what he can do, when connected with the God of wisdom and power.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 465, 466.

**Friday, January 19: For Further Reading**

*Lift Him Up*, “Christ Died for Us,” p. 233;

*This Day With God*, “The Judgment Is Coming,” p. 296.

## Lesson 4

# The Lord Hears and Delivers

**Sabbath Afternoon, January 20**

While we review . . . the manifestations of God's great mercy and unfailing love, we shall praise far more than complain. We shall talk of the loving faithfulness of God as the true, tender, compassionate shepherd of His flock, which He has declared that none shall pluck out of His hand. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like clear-flowing streams, will come from God's truly believing ones. "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." Psalm 23:6; 73:24, 25.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 367.

I would call your attention to the precious promises in the Word of God. . . . I am glad indeed that our feelings are no evidence that we are not children of God. The enemy will tempt you to think that you have done things that have separated you from God and that He no longer loves you, but our Lord loves us still, and we may know [this] by the words He has placed on record . . . "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

God loves you; and the precious Saviour, who gave Himself for you, will not thrust you from Him because you are tempted and in your weakness may have been overcome. He loves you still.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 285.

We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower turns to the sun.

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His

children. . . . His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 99, 100.

## **Sunday, January 21: My Frame Was Not Hidden From You**

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.

Our substance was not hid from Him when we were made in secret; His eyes saw our substance, yet being imperfect, and in His book all our members were written when as yet there were none of them.

Above all lower orders of being, God designed that man, the crowning work of His creation, should express His thought and reveal His glory.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 415.

Our life is in the hands of God. He sees dangers threatening us that we cannot see. He is the Giver of all our blessings; the Provider of all our mercies; the Orderer of all our experiences. He sees the perils that we cannot see. He may permit to come upon His people that which fills their hearts with sadness, because He sees that they need to make straight paths for their feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. He knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust. Even the very hairs of our head are numbered. He works through natural causes to lead His people to remember that He has not forgotten them, but that He desires them to forsake the way which, if they were permitted to follow unchecked and unproved, would lead them into great peril.—*The Upward Look*, p. 65.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to die that he might redeem man from the power of Satan; and will he not care for man, formed in his image? . . . God notices the fall of even the sparrows; not one of them falls to the ground without his notice. Our heavenly Father will not leave his children who put their trust in him, and venture out upon his

promises although the outlook is dark and forbidding. He understands every circumstance of our life. He sees and knows how we are situated. He is acquainted with all our sorrows and griefs. He knows us each by name, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; for he has been tempted in all points like as we are, and knows how to succor those who are tempted. Jesus is our helper, and he will have a care for all those who trust in him. —*The Review and Herald*, August 25, 1885, “The True Standard of Righteousness,” par. 12.

## Monday, January 22: Assurance of God's Care

Could our spiritual vision be quickened, we should see souls bowed under oppression and burdened with grief, pressed as a cart beneath sheaves, and ready to die in discouragement. We should see angels flying quickly to the aid of these tempted ones, forcing back the hosts of evil that encompass them, and placing their feet on the sure foundation. . . .

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, will carry forward His work. He will thwart the purposes of wicked men and will bring to confusion the counsels of those who plot mischief against His people. He who is the King, the Lord of hosts, sitteth between the cherubim, and amidst the strife and tumult of nations He guards His children still. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 175, 176.

Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Isaiah 26:4.

What a source to which we can look in all times of trouble; the heart can have no misgivings! Man is erring, stubborn, rebellious, and defiant even against God; but the Lord is kind and patient and of tender compassion. He has heaven and earth at His command, and He knows just what we need even before we present our necessities and desires before Him.

We can see only a little way before us; “but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” He never becomes confused. He sits above the confusion and distractions of the earth, and all things are opened to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He can order that which His providence sees is best.—*My Life Today*, p. 10.

The presence of God is guaranteed to the Christian. This Rock of faith is the living presence of God. The weakest may depend upon it. Those who think themselves the strongest may become the weakest unless they depend on Christ as their efficiency, their worthiness. . . .

The strength of every soul is in God and not in man. Quietness and

confidence is to be the strength of all who give their hearts to God. Christ has not a casual interest in us but an interest stronger than a mother for her child. Our Saviour has purchased us by human suffering and sorrow, by insult, reproach, abuse, mockery, rejection, and death. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. He will make you secure under His protection. Our weakness in human nature will not bar our access to the heavenly Father, for He [Christ] died to make intercession for us.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 77.

## **Tuesday, January 23: The Lord Is a Refuge in Adversity**

Everyone will meet with trials. If you look to Jesus, if you believe in Him as your personal Saviour, you will be brought through every trial, and enduring these trials with patience, you will become stronger to endure the next test, the next trial.

It is only the narrowness of our vision that prevents us from discerning God's loving-kindness in the discipline to which He subjects His church, as well as in the great blessings which He provides. In all times of distress and confusion, God is a sure refuge to His people. In the shadow of His protection they may safely keep His way. In the affliction designed to purify them, the power of the gospel is to be their consolation. In His sure word they have a fortress.—*Our High Calling*, p. 317.

“In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” Christ did not fail, neither was He discouraged, and His followers are to manifest a faith of the same enduring nature. They are to live as He lived, and work as He worked, because they depend on Him as the great Master Worker. Courage, energy, and perseverance they must possess. Though apparent impossibilities obstruct their way, by His grace they are to go forward. Instead of deploring difficulties, they are called upon to surmount them. They are to despair of nothing, and to hope for everything. With the golden chain of His matchless love Christ has bound them to the throne of God. It is His purpose that the highest influence in the universe, emanating from the source of all power, shall be theirs. They are to have power to resist evil, power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master, power that will enable them to overcome as Christ overcame.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 679.

Divine pity marked the countenance of the Son of God as He cast one lingering look upon the Temple and then upon His hearers. In a voice choked by deep anguish of heart and bitter tears He exclaimed, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often I would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” . . .

The gems of truth that fell from Christ's lips on that eventful day were treasured in many hearts. For them new thoughts started into life, new aspirations were awakened, and a new history began. After the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, these persons came to the front, and fulfilled their divine commission with a wisdom and zeal corresponding to the greatness of the work. They bore a message that appealed to the hearts of men, weakening the old superstitions that had long dwarfed the lives of thousands. Before their testimony human theories and philosophies became as idle fables. Mighty were the results flowing from the words of the Saviour to that wondering, awestruck crowd in the Temple at Jerusalem. —*Lift Him Up*, p. 337.

## Wednesday, January 24: Defender and Deliverer

When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in perfect peace. There was no trace of fear in word or look, for no fear was in His heart. . . . He trusted in the Father's might. It was in faith—faith in God's love and care—that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the power of God.

As Jesus rested by faith in the Father's care, so we are to rest in the care of our Saviour. If the disciples had trusted in Him, they would have been kept in peace. Their fear in the time of danger revealed their unbelief. In their efforts to save themselves, they forgot Jesus; and it was only when, in despair of self-dependence, they turned to Him that He could give them help.

How often the disciples' experience is ours! When the tempests of temptation gather, and the fierce lightnings flash, and the waves sweep over us, we battle with the storm alone, forgetting that there is One who can help us. We trust to our own strength till our hope is lost, and we are ready to perish. Then we remember Jesus, and if we call upon Him to save us, we shall not cry in vain. . . . Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the sea of life, and will deliver us from danger in the way that He knows to be best. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 336.

Now do not worry yourself out of the arms of the dear Saviour, but rest trustingly in faith. He loves you; He cares for you. He is blessing you and will give you His peace and grace. He is saying to you, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." You may be depressed with bodily infirmities, but that is not evidence that the Lord is not working in your behalf every day. He will pardon you, and that abundantly. Gather to your soul the sweet promises of God. Jesus is our constant, unfailing friend, and He wants you to trust in Him. Look away from yourself to the perfection of Christ.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 285.

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. Christ in His self-denial, Christ in His humiliation, Christ in His purity and holiness, Christ in His matchless love—this is the subject for the soul's contemplation. It is by loving Him, copying Him, depending wholly upon Him, that you are to be transformed into His likeness.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 70.

## **Thursday, January 25: Help From the Sanctuary**

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. Murmuring and complaining over little disappointments and difficulties will cease. As we apply the golden eyesalve we shall see the glories beyond. Faith will cut through the heavy shadow of Satan, and we shall see our Advocate offering up the incense of His own merits in our behalf. When we see this as it is, as the Lord desires us to see it, we shall be filled with a sense of the immensity and diversity of the love of God.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 368.

Jesus knows the needs of His children, and He loves to listen to their prayers. Let the children shut out the world and everything that would attract the thoughts from God, and let them feel that they are alone with God, that His eye looks into the inmost heart, and reads the desire of the soul, and that they may talk with God. In humble faith you may claim His promises, and feel that although you have nothing in yourself whereby you may claim the favor of God, because of the merits and righteousness of Christ, you may come boldly to the throne of grace, and find help in time of need. There is nothing that can make the soul so strong to resist the temptations of Satan in the great conflict of life, as to seek God in humility, laying before Him your soul in all its helplessness, expecting that He will be your helper and your defender.

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. . . .

O that we might have a consuming desire to know God by an experimental knowledge, to come into the audience chamber of the Most High, reaching up the hand of faith, and casting our helpless souls upon the One mighty to save. His loving kindness is better than life.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 121.

### **Friday, January 26: For Further Reading**

*That I May Know Him*, “Under God’s Guardianship,” p. 143;

*That I May Know Him*, “Quiet Rest in God,” p. 268.

## Lesson 5

# Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land

**Sabbath Afternoon, January 27**

When difficulties and trials surround us, we should flee to God, and confidently expect help from Him who is mighty to save and strong to deliver. We must ask for God's blessing if we would receive it. Prayer is a duty and a necessity; but do we not neglect praise? Should we not oftener render thanksgiving to the Giver of all our blessings? We need to cultivate gratitude. We should frequently contemplate and recount the mercies of God, and laud and glorify His holy name, even when we are passing through sorrow and affliction.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 268.

“Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, . . . and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:15, 16). This was Christ's practice. He was often assailed by temptation, but in place of yielding or being provoked, He sang God's praises. With spiritual songs He stopped the fluent speech of those whom Satan was using to create strife.

When those who love God are tempted, let them sing the praises of their Creator rather than speak words of accusing or faultfinding. The Lord will bless those who thus try to make peace. Trust in God. Be careful not to give the enemy any advantage by your unguarded words. Keep looking to Jesus. He is your strength.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 185.

When we seem to doubt God's love and distrust His promises we dishonor Him and grieve His Holy Spirit. . . .

When Satan tempts you, breathe not a word of doubt or darkness. If you choose to open the door to his suggestions, your mind will be filled with distrust and rebellious questioning. If you talk out your feelings, every doubt you express not only reacts upon yourself, but it is a seed that will germinate and bear fruit in the life of others, and it may be impossible to

counteract the influence of your words. You yourself may be able to recover from the season of temptation and from the snare of Satan, but others who have been swayed by your influence may not be able to escape from the unbelief you have suggested. How important that we speak only those things that will give spiritual strength and life!

All have trials; griefs hard to bear, temptations hard to resist. Do not tell your troubles to your fellow mortals, but carry everything to God in prayer. Make it a rule never to utter one word of doubt or discouragement. You can do much to brighten the life of others and strengthen their efforts, by words of hope and holy cheer.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 118, 119.

## Sunday, January 28: The Days of Evil

To many minds the origin of sin and the reason for its existence are a source of great perplexity. They see the work of evil, with its terrible results of woe and desolation, and they question how all this can exist under the sovereignty of One who is infinite in wisdom, in power, and in love. Here is a mystery of which they find no explanation. And in their uncertainty and doubt they are blinded to truths plainly revealed in God's word and essential to salvation. There are those who, in their inquiries concerning the existence of sin, endeavor to search into that which God has never revealed; hence they find no solution of their difficulties . . . and seize upon this as an excuse for rejecting the words of Holy Writ. . . .

Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it is to defend it. . . . [I]t is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 492.

In the annals of human history the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as dependent on the will and prowess of man. The shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, behind, above, and through all the play and counterplay of human interests and power and passions, the agencies of the all-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.

Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that it might be seen whether it would fulfill the purpose of "the Watcher and the Holy One." While the nations rejected God's principles, and in this rejection wrought their own ruin, it was still manifest that the divine, overruling purpose was working through all their movements.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 50.

The Lord's merciful kindness is great toward us. He will never leave nor

forsake those who trust in Him. If we would think and talk less of our trials, and more of the mercy and goodness of God, we would find ourselves raised above much of our gloom and perplexity. My brethren and sisters, you who feel that you are entering upon a dark path, and like the captives in Babylon must hang your harps upon the willows, let us make trial of cheerful song. You may say, How can I sing, with this dark prospect before me, with this burden of sorrow and bereavement upon my soul? But have earthly sorrows deprived us of the all-powerful Friend we have in Jesus? . . . As long as our Saviour lives, we have cause for unceasing gratitude and praise.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 268.

## Monday, January 29: At Death's Door

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted," Matthew 5:4. . . .

The Saviour's words have a message of comfort to those also who are suffering affliction or bereavement. Our sorrows do not spring out of the ground. God "doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." Lamentations 3:33. When He permits trials and afflictions, it is "for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness." Hebrews 12:10. If received in faith, the trial that seems so bitter and hard to bear will prove a blessing. The cruel blow that blights the joys of earth will be the means of turning our eyes to heaven. How many there are who would never have known Jesus had not sorrow led them to seek comfort in Him!

The trials of life are God's workmen, to remove the impurities and roughness from our character. Their hewing, squaring, and chiseling, their burnishing and polishing, is a painful process; it is hard to be pressed down to the grinding wheel. But the stone is brought forth prepared to fill its place in the heavenly temple. Upon no useless material does the Master bestow such careful, thorough work. Only His precious stones are polished after the similitude of a palace.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 10.

Now the Lord of glory was dying, a ransom for the race. In yielding up His precious life, Christ was not upheld by triumphant joy. All was oppressive gloom. It was not the dread of death that weighed upon Him. It was not the pain and ignominy of the cross that caused His inexpressible agony. Christ was the prince of sufferers; but His suffering was from a sense of the malignity of sin, a knowledge that through familiarity with evil, man had become blinded to its enormity. Christ saw how deep is the hold of sin upon the human heart, how few would be willing to break from its power. He knew that without help from God, humanity must perish, and He saw multitudes perishing within reach of abundant help.

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. 752, 753.

## **Tuesday, January 30: Where Is God?**

The path that leads to eternal day is not the easiest to travel, and at times it will seem dark and thorny. But you have the assurance that God's everlasting arms encircle you, to protect you from evil. He wants you to exercise earnest faith in Him, and learn to trust Him in the shadow as well as in the sunshine.

In her endeavors to reach her home, the eagle is often beaten down by the tempest to the narrow defiles of the mountains. The clouds, in black, angry masses sweep between her and the sunny heights where she secures her nest. For a while she seems bewildered, and dashes this way and that, beating her strong wings as if to sweep back the dense clouds. At last she dashes upward into the blackness, and gives a shrill scream of triumph as she emerges, a moment later, in the calm sunshine above. The darkness and tempest are all below her, and the light of heaven is shining about her. She reaches her loved home in the lofty crag, and is satisfied. It was through darkness that she reached the light. It cost her an effort to do this, but she is rewarded in gaining the object which she sought.

This is the only course we can pursue as followers of Christ. We must exercise that living faith which will penetrate the clouds that, like a thick wall, separate us from heaven's light. We have heights of faith to reach, where all is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 323.

God is the eternal, uncreated Fountain of all good. All who trust in Him will find Him to be this. To those who serve Him, looking to Him as their heavenly Father, He gives the assurance that He will fulfil His promises. His joy will be in their hearts, and their joy will be full.

It is our privilege to open our hearts, and let the sunshine of Christ's presence in. My brother, my sister, face the light. Come into actual, personal contact with Christ, that you may exert an influence that is uplifting and reviving. Let your faith be strong and pure and steadfast. Let gratitude to God fill your hearts. When you rise in the morning, kneel at your bedside, and ask God to give you strength to fulfil the duties of the day, and to meet its temptations. Ask Him to help you to bring into your work Christ's

sweetness of character. Ask Him to help you to speak words that will inspire those around you with hope and courage, and draw you nearer to the Saviour.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 199.

### **Wednesday, January 31: Has His Promise Failed Forevermore?**

The psalmist David in his experience had many changes of mind. At times, as he obtained views of God's will and ways, he was highly exalted. Then as he caught sight of the reverse of God's mercy and changeless love, everything seemed to be shrouded in a cloud of darkness. But through the darkness he obtained a view of the attributes of God, which gave him confidence and strengthened his faith. But when he meditated upon the difficulties and danger of life, they looked so forbidding that he thought himself abandoned by God because of his sins. He viewed his sin in such a strong light that he exclaimed, "Will the Lord cast off forever? will he be favorable no more?"

But as he wept and prayed, he obtained a clearer view of the character and attributes of God. . . .

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, and he saw that the works and wonders of God are to have no confined application.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1149.

God scatters blessings all along our path to brighten our journey and lead our hearts out to love and praise Him, and He wants us to draw water from the well of salvation that our hearts may be refreshed. We may sing the songs of Zion, we may cheer our own hearts, and we may cheer the hearts of others; hope may be strengthened, darkness turned to light. God has not left us in a dark world—as pilgrims and strangers seeking a better country, even an heavenly—without giving us precious promises to lighten every burden. The borders of our path are strewn with fair flowers of promise. They blossom all around, sending forth rich fragrance.

How many blessings we lose because we slight and overlook the blessings we daily receive, yearning for that which we have not. . . . The flower in dark and humble places responds to all the rays of light it can get, and puts forth its leaves. The caged bird sings in the prison cage, in the sunless tenement, as if in the lordly, sunny dwelling. . . . God loves the thankful heart, trusting implicitly in His words of promise, gathering comfort and hope and place from them; and He will reveal to us still greater depths of His love. . . .

Let us grasp by living faith the rich promises of God, and be thankful from morning till night.—*Our High Calling*, p. 10.

## Thursday, February 1: Lest the Righteous Be Tempted

Many seek to make a heaven for themselves by obtaining riches and power. They “speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily” (Psalm 73:8), trampling upon human rights and disregarding divine authority. The proud may be for a time in great power, and may see success in all that they undertake; but in the end they will find only disappointment and wretchedness.

The time of God’s investigation is at hand. The Most High will come down to see that which the children of men have builded. His sovereign power will be revealed; the works of human pride will be laid low. “The Lord looketh from heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.” “The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations.” Psalm 33:13, 14, 10, 11.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 124.

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.—*This Day With God*, p. 58.

From the manger to the cross, the life of Jesus was a call to self-surrender, and to fellowship in suffering. It unveiled the purposes of men. Jesus came with the truth of heaven, and all who were listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit were drawn to Him. The worshipers of self belonged to Satan’s kingdom. In their attitude toward Christ, all would show on which

side they stood. And thus everyone passes judgment on himself.

In the day of final judgment, every lost soul will understand the nature of his own rejection of truth. The cross will be presented, and its real bearing will be seen by every mind that has been blinded by transgression. Before the vision of Calvary with its mysterious Victim, sinners will stand condemned. Every lying excuse will be swept away. Human apostasy will appear in its heinous character. Men will see what their choice has been. Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy will then have been made plain. In the judgment of the universe, God will stand clear of blame for the existence or continuance of evil.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 57, 58.

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

*The Desire of Ages*, “The Divine Shepherd,” pp. 480–484;  
*Testimonies for the Church*, “The Seal of God,” vol. 5, p. 209.

## Lesson 6

# I Will Arise

## Sabbath Afternoon, February 3

The Lord is soon to come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Is there not enough comprehended in the truths which cluster round this event and in the preparation essential for it, to make us think solemnly of our duty? Distinctly and clearly this subject is to be kept before the people. “The Son of man shall come in his glory . . . : and before him shall be gathered all nations” (Matthew 25:31, 32). . . .

The final judgment is a most solemn, awful event. This must take place before the universe. To the Lord Jesus the Father has committed all judgment. He will declare the reward of loyalty to the law of Jehovah. God will be honored and His government vindicated and glorified, and that in the presence of the inhabitants of the unfallen worlds. On the largest possible scale will the government of God be vindicated and exalted. It is not the judgment of one individual or of one nation, but of the whole world. Oh, what a change will then be made in the understanding of all created beings. Then all will see the value of eternal life.—*This Day With God*, p. 296.

The pure religion of Jesus is the fountain from which flow streams of charity, love, self-sacrifice.

A Christian is a Christlike man, a Christlike woman, who is active in God’s service, who is present at the social meeting, whose presence will encourage others also. Religion does not consist in works, but religion works; it is not dormant.

Many seem to feel that religion has a tendency to make its possessor narrow and cramped, but genuine religion does not have a narrowing influence; it is the lack of religion that cramps the faculties and narrows the mind. When a man is narrow, it is an evidence that he needs the grace of God, the heavenly anointing; for a Christian is one whom the Lord, the God of hosts, can work through, that he may keep the ways of the Lord of the

earth and make manifest His will to men.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 935.

There is joy and consolation for the true-hearted, faithful Christian, that the world knows not of. To them it is a mystery. The Christian's hope is big with immortality and full of glory. It reacheth to that within the veil, and is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. And when the storm of God's wrath shall come upon the ungodly, this hope will not fail them, but they are hid as in the secret of His pavilion. . . .

Though the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed like a cottage, if we have made God our trust, He will deliver us. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 354.

## Sunday, February 4: The Majestic Warrior

Fallen man is Satan's lawful captive. The mission of Christ was to rescue him from the power of his great adversary. Man is naturally inclined to follow Satan's suggestions, and he cannot successfully resist so terrible a foe unless Christ, the mighty Conqueror, dwells in him, guiding his desires, and giving him strength. God alone can limit the power of Satan. Satan knows better than God's people the power that they can have over him when their strength is in Christ. When they humbly entreat the mighty Conqueror for help, the weakest believer in the truth, relying firmly upon Christ, can successfully repulse Satan and all his host.

Satan will call to his aid legions of his angels to oppose the advance of even one soul, and, if possible, wrest it from the hand of Christ. But if the one in danger perseveres, and in his helplessness casts himself upon the merits of the blood of Christ, our Saviour listens to the earnest prayer of faith, and sends a reinforcement of those angels that excel in strength to deliver him. Satan cannot endure to have his powerful rival appealed to, for he fears and trembles before His strength and majesty. At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan's whole host trembles.—*Our Father Cares*, p. 216.

Through the power that Jesus gives, we can be "more than conquerors." But we cannot manufacture this power. Only through the Spirit of God can we receive it.

We need a deep insight into the nature of Christ and into the mystery of His love, "which passeth knowledge" (Ephesians 3:19). We are to live in the warm, genial rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Nothing but Christ's loving compassion, His divine grace, His almighty power, can enable us to baffle the relentless foe and subdue the opposition of our own hearts. What is our strength? The joy of the Lord. Let the love of Christ fill our hearts, and then we shall be prepared to receive the power that He has for us.

Let us thank God every day for the blessings that are ours. If the human agent will humble himself before God, realizing his utter inability to do the work that needs to be done in order that his soul may be purified; if he will cast away his own righteousness, Christ will abide in his heart. He will put His hand to the work of creating him anew, and will continue the work till

he is complete in Him.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 64.

## **Monday, February 5: Justice for the Oppressed**

Those who have pity for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the afflicted, the widows, the orphans, and the needy, Christ represents as commandment keepers, who shall have eternal life.

In view of what heaven is doing to save the lost, how can those who are partakers of the riches of the grace of Christ withdraw their interest and their sympathies from their fellow men? How can they indulge in pride of rank or caste and despise the unfortunate and the poor?—*Welfare Ministry*, p. 209.

When a man is struggling with honest endeavor to sustain himself and his family, and yet is unable to do this, so that they suffer for necessary food and clothing, the Lord will not pronounce our ministering brethren guiltless if they look on with indifference or prescribe conditions for this brother which are virtually impossible of fulfillment. We are to make the condition of the unfortunate brother our own.

Any neglect on the part of those who claim to be followers of Christ, a failure to relieve the necessities of a brother or a sister who is bearing the yoke of poverty and oppression, is registered in the books of heaven as shown to Christ in the person of His saints. What a reckoning the Lord will have with many, very many, who present the words of Christ to others but fail to manifest tender sympathy and regard for a brother in the faith who is less fortunate and successful than themselves.—*Welfare Ministry*, p. 210.

How great was the gift of God to man, and how like our God to make it! With a liberality that can never be exceeded He gave, that He might save the rebellious sons of men and bring them to see His purpose and discern His love. Will you, by your gifts and offerings, show that you think nothing too good for Him who “gave His only-begotten Son”?

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. The spirit of selfishness is the spirit of Satan.

God is not dependent upon men for the advancement of His cause. He might have made angels the ambassadors of His truth. He might have made known His will, as He proclaimed the law from Sinai with His own voice.

But in order to cultivate a spirit of benevolence in us, He has chosen to employ men to do this work.

Every act of self-sacrifice for the good of others will strengthen the spirit of beneficence in the giver's heart, allying him more closely to the Redeemer of the world, who "was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." And it is only as we fulfill the divine purpose in our creation that life can be a blessing to us. All the good gifts of God to man will prove only a curse, unless he employs them to bless his fellow men, and for the advancement of God's cause in the earth.  
—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 19, 20.

## **Tuesday, February 6: How Long Will You Judge Unjustly?**

David knew that God's high purpose for Israel could be met only as rulers and people should seek with unceasing vigilance to attain to the standard placed before them. He knew that in order for his son Solomon to fulfill the trust with which God was pleased to honor him, the youthful ruler must be not merely a warrior, a statesman, and a sovereign, but a strong, good man, a teacher of righteousness, an example of fidelity.

With tender earnestness David entreated Solomon to be manly and noble, to show mercy and loving-kindness to his subjects, and in all his dealings with the nations of earth to honor and glorify the name of God and to make manifest the beauty of holiness. The many trying and remarkable experiences through which David had passed during his lifetime had taught him the value of the nobler virtues and led him to declare in his dying charge to Solomon: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." 2 Samuel 23:3, 4.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 26.

In his careful safeguarding of the rights and liberties of his subjects, Jehoshaphat emphasized the consideration that every member of the human family receives from the God of justice, who rules over all. "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; He judgeth among the gods." And those who are appointed to act as judges under Him, are to "defend the poor and fatherless;" they are to "do justice to the afflicted and needy," and "rid them out of the hand of the wicked." Psalm 82:1, 3, 4.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 198.

Sometimes a man who has been placed in responsibility as a leader gains the idea that he is in a position of supreme authority, and that all his brethren, before making advance moves, must first come to him for permission to do that which they feel should be done. Such a man is in a dangerous position. He has lost sight of the work of a true leader among God's people. Instead of acting as a wise counselor, he assumes the prerogatives of an exacting ruler. God is dishonored by every such display

of authority and self-exaltation. No man standing in his own strength is ever to be mind and judgment for another man whom the Lord is using in His work. No one is to lay down man-made rules and regulations to govern arbitrarily his fellow laborers who have a living experience in the truth.

God calls upon those who have exercised undue authority to take off from His workers every dominating hand. Let everyone to whom has been entrusted sacred responsibilities seek to understand his individual duty before God, and do that duty humbly and faithfully. Let no one regard himself as a master, with controlling power to exercise over his brethren. The principles of the word of God are to be taught and practiced.  
—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 491, 492.

## Wednesday, February 7: Pour Out Your Indignation

The patience and long-suffering of God, which should soften and subdue the soul, has an altogether different influence upon the careless and sinful. It leads them to cast off restraint, and strengthens them in resistance. They think that the God who has borne so much from them will not heed their perversity. If we lived in a dispensation of immediate retribution, offenses against God would not occur so often. But though delayed, the punishment is none the less certain. There are limits even to the forbearance of God. The boundary of His long-suffering may be reached, and then He will surely punish. And when He does take up the case of the presumptuous sinner, He will not cease till He has made a full end.

Very few realize the sinfulness of sin; they flatter themselves that God is too good to punish the offender. But the cases of Miriam, Aaron, David, and many others show that it is not a safe thing to sin against God in deed, in word, or even in thought. God is a being of infinite love and compassion, but He also declares Himself to be a “consuming fire, even a jealous God.”—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1166.

As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of the sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. It is not justice alone that is to be maintained; for this would eclipse the glory of the rainbow of promise above the throne; men could see only the penalty of the law. Were there no justice, no penalty, there would be no stability to the government of God. It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation complete.

Mercy invites us to enter through the gates into the city of God, and justice is satisfied to accord to every obedient soul full privileges as a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King. If we were defective in character, we could not pass the gates that mercy has opened to the obedient; for justice stands at the entrance, and demands holiness in all who would see God.—*Maranatha*, p. 326.

Were justice extinct, and were it possible for divine mercy to open the

gates to the whole race, irrespective of character, there would be a worse condition of disaffection and rebellion in heaven than before Satan was expelled. The peace, happiness, and harmony of heaven would be broken. The change from earth to heaven will not change men's character; the happiness of the redeemed in heaven results from the character formed in this life after the image of Christ. The saints in heaven will first have been saints on earth. . . .

The law of God is not weakened by the gospel, but the power of sin is broken, and the scepter of mercy is extended to the penitent sinner. . . . God will never forget His people in their struggle against evil.—*The Review and Herald*, December 13, 1892.

## **Thursday, February 8: The Lord's Judgment and the Sanctuary**

The [sanctuary] was designed to impress the Israelites with the holiness of God and His abhorrence of sin; and, further, to show them that they could not come in contact with sin without becoming polluted. Every man was required to afflict his soul while this work of atonement was going forward. All business was to be laid aside, and the whole congregation of Israel were to spend the day in solemn humiliation before God, with prayer, fasting, and deep searching of heart.

On the Day of Atonement the high priest, having taken an offering from the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood of this offering, and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, directly over the law, to make satisfaction for its claims. Then, in his character of mediator, he took the sins upon himself and bore them from the sanctuary. Placing his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, he confessed over him all these sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the goat. The goat then bore them away, and they were regarded as forever separated from the people.—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 419, 420.

Since Satan is the originator of sin, the direct instigator of all the sins that caused the death of the Son of God, justice demands that Satan shall suffer the final punishment. Christ's work for the redemption of men and the purification of the universe from sin will be closed by the removal of sin from the heavenly sanctuary and the placing of these sins upon Satan, who will bear the final penalty. So in the typical service, the yearly round of ministration closed with the purification of the sanctuary, and the confessing of the sins on the head of the scapegoat.

Thus in the ministration of the tabernacle, and of the temple that afterward took its place, the people were taught each day the great truths relative to Christ's death and ministration, and once each year their minds were carried forward to the closing events of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 358.

Today [Jesus] is standing at the altar of mercy, presenting before God the

prayers of those who desire His help. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Whosoever will, may take hold of God's strength, and make peace with Him, and He will make peace.

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.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 90.

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

*This Day With God*, “God’s Law Is Immutable,” p. 246;  
*In Heavenly Places*, “Our Personal Intercessor,” p. 79.

## Lesson 7

# Your Mercy Reaches Unto the Heavens

**Sabbath Afternoon, February 10**

I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me; thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God. Psalm 40:17.

Do not let your great need discourage you. The Saviour of sinners, the Friend of the friendless, with compassion infinitely greater than that of a tender mother for a loved and afflicted child, is inviting, “Look unto me, and be ye saved” (Isaiah 45:22). “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).

There is danger of not making Christ’s teachings a personal matter, of not receiving them as though they were addressed to us personally. In His words of instruction Jesus means me. I may appropriate to myself His merits, His death, His cleansing blood, as fully as though there were not another sinner in the world for whom Christ died.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 280.

Be constantly learning of Jesus, constantly increasing in faith and growing in grace and the knowledge of the truth. . . . [T]he Lord is our Helper, the Lord is our Shield. He will not leave nor forsake us. Angels of God are engaged in this work of proclaiming the message of warning for the world. Of ourselves we can do nothing. We are as weak as water without the Spirit of the Lord. Our strength is in hiding in Jesus. Let Christ appear as the One altogether lovely, and the chief among ten thousand.—*This Day With God*, p. 60.

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

While we do this we shall not be ashamed, but our souls will confide in God with holy boldness. . . .

My heart is fixed, trusting in God. We have a whole Saviour. We can rejoice in His rich fullness. I long to be more devoted to God, more consecrated to Him. This world is too dark for me. Jesus said He would go away and prepare mansions for us, that where He is we may be also. Praise God for this. My heart leaps with joy at the cheering prospect.

. . . [W]hile we feel and realize the wondrous love of God, we shall not hold our peace, we shall sacrifice to God with the voice of thanksgiving and make melody to Him with our hearts and voices. Let us plant our feet upon the Rock of Ages and then we will have abiding support and consolation. Our soul will repose in God with unshaken confidence.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 351.

## Sunday, February 11: His Mercy Endures Forever

This morning my soul is filled with praise and thanksgiving to God from whom come all our mercies and blessings. The Lord is good, and His mercies endure forever. I will praise Him who is the light of my countenance and my God. He is the source of all efficiency and power. Why do we not praise Him by speaking words of hope and comfort to others? Why are our lips so silent? Speech is a gift of Heaven, and it should be used in sounding forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

O how much good would be accomplished were God honored by all who profess to be Christians! The Light of the world is shining upon men in richest blessing. Every provision has been made for the supplying of our temporal and spiritual needs. Yet how little thanksgiving the Giver receives! —*That I May Know Him*, p. 219.

God intended to show the Israelites that the conquest of Canaan was not to be ascribed to them. The Captain of the Lord's host overcame Jericho. He and His angels were engaged in the conquest. Christ commanded the armies of heaven to throw down the walls of Jericho and prepare an entrance for Joshua and the armies of Israel. God, in this wonderful miracle, not only strengthened the faith of His people in His power to subdue their enemies, but rebuked their former unbelief.

Jericho had defied the armies of Israel and the God of heaven. And as they beheld the host of Israel marching around their city once each day, they were alarmed; but they looked at their strong defenses, their firm and high walls, and felt sure that they could resist any attack. But when their firm walls suddenly tottered and fell with a stunning crash, like peals of loudest thunder, they were paralyzed with terror and could offer no resistance.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 181.

The psalmist says: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard" (Psalm 19:1-3). . . . All these wonders in the

heavens are only doing the work appointed them. They are the Lord's agencies. God is the superintendent, as well as the Creator, of all things. The Divine Being is engaged in upholding the things that He has created. The same hand that holds the mountains and balances them in position, guides the worlds in their mysterious march around the sun.

There is scarcely an operation of nature to which we may not find reference in the Word of God. The Word declares that "he maketh his sun to rise," and the rain to descend (Matthew 5:45). He "maketh grass to grow upon the mountains." "He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels" (Psalm 147:8).—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 293, 294.

## Monday, February 12: Create in Me a Clean Heart

David's repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his crime. No desire to escape the judgments threatened, inspired his prayer. But he saw the enormity of his transgression against God; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. David did not in despair give over the struggle. In the promises of God to repentant sinners he saw the evidence of his pardon and acceptance. . . .

This passage in David's history is full of significance to the repenting sinner. It is one of the most forcible illustrations given us of the struggles and temptations of humanity, and of genuine repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Through all the ages it has proved a source of encouragement to souls that, having fallen into sin, were struggling under the burden of their guilt. Thousands of the children of God, who have been betrayed into sin, when ready to give up to despair have remembered how David's sincere repentance and confession were accepted by God, notwithstanding he suffered for his transgression; and they also have taken courage to repent and try again to walk in the way of God's commandments.

Whoever under the reproof of God will humble the soul with confession and repentance, as did David, may be sure that there is hope for him. Whoever will in faith accept God's promises, will find pardon. The Lord will never cast away one truly repentant soul.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 725, 726.

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

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

Here is where thousands fail: they do not believe that Jesus pardons

them personally, individually. They do not take God at His word. It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves that pardon is freely extended for every sin. Put away the suspicion that God's promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that they cannot find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live and not die.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 134.

## **Tuesday, February 13: “If You, Lord, Should Mark Iniquities”**

If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Psalm 130:3, 4.

To those who have made strange paths for their feet, the Lord offers words of encouragement. He will accept their prayers, if they will repent and be converted. Through the infinite sacrifice of Christ, and through faith in His name, they may receive the promises of God. The sons of Adam may become sons of God. O how full of thankfulness we should be that by the act of Christ in assuming humanity, fallen men are granted a second trial! Christ places them on vantage ground. Through connection with Him they may be laborers together with God. Through the grace given daily by Christ, they may be elevated and ennobled to become the sons and daughters of God. Such love is without parallel.—*This Day With God*, p. 255.

Men may say, “I forgive all the injuries you have done to me,” but their forgiveness would not blot out one sin. But the Voice sounding from Calvary—“My son, my daughter, thy sins be forgiven thee”—is all-efficacious. That word alone has power and awakens the gratitude in the grateful heart. We have a Mediator. There is but one channel of forgiveness and that channel is ever open, and through that channel a rich flood of divine mercy and forgiveness comes pouring down to us. . . .

Many have expressed wonder that God demanded so many slain victims in sacrificial offerings of the Jews, but it was to rivet in their minds the great and solemn truth that without shedding of blood there was no remission of sins. . . .

Never shall we see and comprehend the intense anguish of the sufferings of the spotless Lamb of God until we feel how deep is the pit from which we have been delivered, how grievous the sin of which humanity is guilty, and by faith grasp the full and entire pardon.—*The Upward Look*, p. 219.

If you make a mistake, turn your defeat into victory.

The lessons that God sends will always, if well learned, bring help in due time. Put your trust in God. Pray much, and believe. Trusting, hoping, believing, holding fast the hand of Infinite Power, you will be more than

conquerors.

True workers walk and work by faith. Sometimes they grow weary with watching the slow advance of the work when the battle wages strong between the powers of good and evil. But if they refuse to fail or be discouraged they will see the clouds breaking away and the promise of deliverance fulfilling. Through the mist with which Satan has surrounded them, they will see the shining of the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

Wait, not in fretful anxiety, but in undaunted faith and unshaken trust.  
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 244, 245.

## **Wednesday, February 14: Praise to the Majestic and Merciful God**

It is not the manifestation of [God's] great and awful majesty and unparalleled power that will leave us without excuse if we refuse Him our love and obedience. It is the love, the compassion, the patience, the long-suffering that He has shown which will witness against those who do not offer Him the willing service of their lives. Those who turn to God with heart and soul and mind will find in Him peaceful security.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 19.

We need to praise God more “for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.” Psalm 107:8. . . . We are the constant recipients of God's mercies, and yet how little gratitude we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us. . . .

Our God is a tender, merciful Father. . . . God would not have His children, for whom so great salvation has been provided, act as if He were a hard, exacting taskmaster. He is their best friend; and when they worship Him, He expects to be with them, to bless and comfort them, filling their hearts with joy and love. The Lord desires His children to take comfort in His service and to find more pleasure than hardship in His work. He 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.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 102, 103.

“The hour cometh,” [Jesus] said, “and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.” . . .

Religion is not to be confined to external forms and ceremonies. The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In

order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God. Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit's working is manifest, and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking. He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and daughters.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 189.

## Thursday, February 15: Forget Not All His Benefits

“Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.” Psalm 103:1-4.

God has given us the gift of speech that we may recite to others His dealing with us, that His love and compassion may touch other hearts, and that praise may arise from other souls also to Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. The Lord has said, “Ye are My witnesses.” Isaiah 43:10. But all who are called to be witnesses for Christ must learn of Him, that they may be efficient witnesses. As children of the heavenly King, they should educate themselves to bear testimony in a clear, distinct voice and in such a manner that no one may receive the impression that they are reluctant to tell of the mercies of the Lord.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 242, 243.

For us He endured the agony of the Garden of Gethsemane. . . . Oh, why was all this suffering, this ignominy, and torturing agony? It was that by this sacrifice of Himself His love might stand revealed, that He might woo men from the ways of sin. After man has cost so much, will He leave him now? Oh no, no! He is faithful that has promised; His arms are outstretched to clasp the repentant, believing ones to His heart of love, with all the tenderness of divine affection. In Jesus we have an enduring, unchanging friend, and though all earthly prospects should fail and every earthly friend prove treacherous, yet He is faithful still.

His servants are as dear to Him as the apple of the eye. In trial, in want, in perplexity and distress, we are not alone; at every step, in tones of assurance, He bids us, “Follow Me.” “I will never leave nor forsake thee.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, p. 115.

Bible history stays the fainting heart with the hope of God’s mercy. We need not despair when we see that others have struggled through discouragements like our own, have fallen into temptations even as we have

done, and yet have recovered their ground and been blessed of God. The words of inspiration comfort and cheer the erring soul. Although the patriarchs and apostles were subject to human frailties, yet through faith they obtained a good report, fought their battles in the strength of the Lord, and conquered gloriously. Thus may we trust in the virtue of the atoning sacrifice and be overcomers in the name of Jesus. Humanity is humanity the world over from the time of Adam down to the present generation, and the love of God through all ages is without a parallel.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 15.

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

*The Upward Look*, “The Results of Inner Renewal,” p. 30;  
*Selected Messages*, “Let Christ Appear,” book 1, pp. 155, 156.

## Lesson 8

# Wisdom for Righteous Living

### Sabbath Afternoon, February 17

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Psalm 90:12.

Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time.

The value of time is beyond computation. Christ regarded every moment as precious, and it is thus that we should regard it. Life is too short to be trifled away. We have but a few days of probation in which to prepare for eternity. We have no time to waste, no time to devote to selfish pleasure, no time for the indulgence of sin. It is now that we are to form characters for the future, immortal life. It is now that we are to prepare for the searching judgment.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 158.

I believe we are on the very borders of the eternal world, and I am seeking to keep in constant communion with God. I prize eternal life and nothing shall separate me from the love of God. I want constantly to educate and train my soul to lean on Christ, to draw spiritual strength from Christ. God intends that we shall have an experimental knowledge of Christ, then we can be faithful witnesses for God, testifying of the grace of Christ in words and actions, by conscious and unconscious influence. . . .

When I think of the work that God is doing for fallen man, I am lost in wonder that God will take poor, fallen beings and bring to them moral power, that there will be the internal workings of His grace, transforming the character and making men fit for the mansions God is preparing for them—beings fitted for the presence of God, fitted to be companions with angels, and to hold communion with God. Oh, how my heart yearns to be one who shall walk with Jesus Christ in the earth made new—*This Day With God*, p. 117.

Often the Christian life is beset with dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before, and bondage and death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly, Go forward. Let us obey the command, even though our sight cannot penetrate the darkness. The obstacles that hinder our progress will never disappear before a halting, doubting spirit. Those who defer obedience till every uncertainty disappears, and there remains no risk of failure or defeat, will never obey. Faith looks beyond the difficulties, and lays hold of the unseen, even Omnipotence, therefore it cannot be baffled. Faith is the clasping of the hand of Christ in every emergency. . . .

Jesus does not call on us to follow Him, and then forsake us. If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 262, 263.

## **Sunday, February 18: Your Word I Have Hidden in My Heart**

Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.  
Psalm 119:1.

In his own strength the sinner cannot meet the demands of God. He must go for help to the One who paid the ransom for him.

Christ is our hope. Those who trust in Him are cleansed. The grace of Christ and the government of God walk together in perfect harmony. When Jesus became man's substitute, mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. The cross of Calvary bears witness to the high claims of God's law.

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side, as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.—*Our High Calling*, p. 137.

We can keep the law only through making the righteousness of Christ our own. Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing." When we receive the heavenly gift, the righteousness of Christ, we shall find that divine grace has been provided for us, and that human resources are powerless. Jesus gives the Holy Spirit in large measure for great emergencies, to help our infirmities, to give us strong consolation, to illuminate our minds, and purify and ennoble our hearts. Christ becomes unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

From the first to the last of the Christian life, not one successful step can be taken without Christ. He has sent His Spirit to be with us constantly, and by confiding in Christ to the uttermost, surrendering our will to Him, we may follow Him whithersoever He goeth.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 103.

The Saviour overcame to show man how he may overcome. All the temptations of Satan, Christ met with the word of God. By trusting in God's

promises, He received power to obey God's commandments, and the tempter could gain no advantage. To every temptation His answer was, "It is written." So God has given us His word wherewith to resist evil. Exceeding great and precious promises are ours, that by these we "might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:4.

Bid the tempted one look not to circumstances, to the weakness of self, or to the power of temptation, but to the power of God's word. All its strength is ours. "Thy word," says the psalmist, "have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Psalm 119:11.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 181.

## Monday, February 19: Teach Us to Number Our Days

The human family have scarcely begun to live when they begin to die. The man who appreciates time as his working day will fit himself for a mansion and for a life that is immortal. It is well that he was born. We are admonished to redeem the time. But time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even one moment. The only way in which we can redeem our time is by making the most of that which remains, by being co-workers with God in His great plan of redemption.

Every moment is freighted with eternal consequences. We are to stand as minute men, ready for service at a moment's notice. The opportunity that is now ours to speak to some needy soul the word of life may never offer again. God may say to that one, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," and through our neglect he may not be ready. (Luke 12:20.) In the great judgment day, how shall we render our account to God?—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 15.

Our lifework now should be to prepare for eternity. We know not how soon our lifework here may close, and how essential that our low, sinful nature should be overcome, and we conform to the image of Christ. We have not one moment's time to squander. We need to be daily preparing for eternity. Our lifetime is granted us to seek the boon of eternal life. God has granted us a probation, and, if we live our threescore years and ten, how short is this period to work out our salvation! Then compare this period with the life that measures with the life of God. The short period of our test and proving may end any time. Then how earnest should we be to secure a clear title to a home in the earth made new.

My anxiety is to do the work the Master has given me to do and let nothing divert me from this work. We must seek to be one with God. His interest must be our interest, His sentiments and designs ours. We know the love of God for sinners and the infinite sacrifice that has been made to save perishing souls; then let us unite with Christ in this great work.—*This Day With God*, p. 117.

Christ will never abandon the soul for whom He has died. The soul may

leave Him and be overwhelmed with temptation, but Christ can never turn from one for whom He has paid the ransom of His own life. . . .

Live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold you firmly by a hand that will never let go. Know and believe the love that God has to us, and you are secure; that love is a fortress impregnable to all the delusions and assaults of Satan. “The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.” Proverbs 18:10.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 119.

## **Tuesday, February 20: The Lord's Test**

To dwell upon the beauty, goodness, mercy, and love of Jesus is strengthening to the mental and moral powers, and while the mind is kept trained to do the works of Christ, to be obedient children, you will habitually inquire, Is this the way of the Lord? Will Jesus be pleased to have me do this? Will this course be to please myself or to please Jesus?

Then will every soul remember the words of the Lord: Thou hast my secret sins in the light of thy countenance. Many need to make a decided change in the tenor of their thoughts and actions, if they would please Jesus. We can seldom see our sins in the grievous light that God can. Many have habituated themselves to pursue a course of sin, and their hearts harden, under the influence of the power of Satan. And their thoughts are brought into captivity to his evil influences; but when in the strength and grace of God they place their minds against the temptations of Satan, their minds are made clear, their hearts and consciences by being influenced by the Spirit of God are made sensitive, and then sin appears as it is—exceedingly sinful. Then is the time when the secret sins are set in the light of their countenance. They confess their sins to God, and repent of them and become ashamed of sin. He casts them from the light of His countenance behind His back.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1150.

When Joseph was tempted to deviate from the path of right, to transgress the law of God and prove untrue to his master, he firmly resisted and gave evidence of the elevating power of the fear of God in his answer to his master's wife. . . .

Here is an example to all generations who should live upon the earth. Although they may be exposed to temptations, yet they should ever realize that there is a defense at hand, and it will be their own fault if they are not preserved. God will be a present help, and His Spirit a shield. Although surrounded with the severest temptations, there is a source of strength to which they can apply and resist them. . . .

Joseph suffered because he would not yield his integrity. He had placed his reputation and interest in the hands of God. And although he was suffered to be afflicted for a time, to prepare him to fill an important

position, yet God safely guarded that reputation that was blackened by a wicked accuser, and afterward, in His own good time, caused it to shine. God made even the prison the way to his elevation. Virtue will in time bring its own reward. The shield which covered Joseph's heart was the fear of God, which caused him to be faithful and just to his master and true to God. —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 102.

## **Wednesday, February 21: Deceitfulness of the Wicked Way**

Angels are engaged night and day in the service of God for the uplifting of man in accordance with the plan of salvation. Man is required to love God supremely, that is, with all his might, mind, and strength, and his neighbor as himself. This he cannot possibly do unless he shall deny himself. Said Christ: "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." . . .

Search carefully and see whether the truth which you have accepted has become a firm principle with you. Do you take Christ with you when you leave the closet of prayer? Does your religion stand guard at the door of your lips? Is your heart drawn out in sympathy and love for others outside of your own family? Are you diligently seeking a clearer understanding of Scriptural truth, that you may let your light shine forth to others? These questions you may answer to your own souls. Let your speech be seasoned with grace and your demeanor show Christian elevation.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 521.

There are those who are forever making excuses for walking in the counsels of the enemy. Some think that because they have physical infirmities, they are privileged to speak pettish words and to act in an unlovely manner. But has Jesus made no provision for such ones to overcome temptation? Because of trial and affliction, are they to be unthankful and unholy? Are not the rays of Christ's righteousness bright enough to dispel the shadow of Satan?

The grace of God is declared to be sufficient for all the ills and trials against which human beings have to contend. . . .

O how precious is Jesus to the soul who trusts in Him. But many are walking in darkness because they bury their faith in the shadow of Satan. They have not done that which it was in their power to do through the grace of Jesus. They have not talked faith and hope and courage. Never for a moment should we allow Satan to think that his power to distress and annoy is greater than the power of Christ to uphold and strengthen.—*This Day With God*, p. 177.

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures. . . .

Through conflict the spiritual life is strengthened. Trials well borne will develop steadfastness of character and precious spiritual graces. The perfect fruit of faith, meekness, and love often matures best amid storm clouds and darkness.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 60, 61.

## Thursday, February 22: Blessings of Righteous Living

Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from His obedience. In heaven His merits, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured as incense to be offered up with the prayers of His people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of His own life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears the Son.

This is the mystery of godliness. That Christ should take human nature, and by a life of humiliation elevate man in the scale of moral worth with God: that He should carry His adopted nature to the throne of God, and there present His children to the Father, to have conferred upon them an honor exceeding that conferred upon the angels,—this is the marvel of the heavenly universe, the mystery into which angels desire to look. This is love that melts the sinner's heart.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 22.

You are just as dependent upon Christ, in order to live a holy life, as is the branch upon the parent stock for growth and fruitfulness. Apart from Him you have no life. You have no power to resist temptation or to grow in grace and holiness. Abiding in Him, you may flourish. Drawing your life from Him, you will not wither nor be fruitless. You will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

Many have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,—by abiding in Him,—that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way. David says, "I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." Psalm 16:8.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 68, 69.

God desires man to be happy, and for this reason He gave him the precepts of His Law, that in obeying these he might have joy at home and abroad. While he stands in his moral integrity, true to principle, and having the control of all his powers, he cannot be miserable. With its tendrils twined about God, the heart will be full of peace and joy, and the soul will flourish amid unbelief and depravity.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 305.

**Friday, February 23: For Further Reading**

*God's Amazing Grace*, "God's Eternal Pledge," p. 157;  
*This Day With God*, "Without Spot," p. 159.

## Lesson 9

# Blessed Is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord

**Sabbath Afternoon, February 24**

In quoting the prophecy of the rejected stone, Christ referred to an actual occurrence in the history of Israel. The incident was connected with the building of the first temple. . . . For use in the foundation, one stone of unusual size and peculiar shape had been brought; but the workmen could find no place for it, and would not accept it. It was an annoyance to them as it lay unused in their way. Long it remained a rejected stone. But when the builders came to the laying of the corner, they searched for a long time to find a stone of sufficient size and strength, and of the proper shape, to take that particular place, and bear the great weight which would rest upon it. Should they make an unwise choice for this important place, the safety of the entire building would be endangered. . . .

Several stones had at different times been chosen, but under the pressure of immense weights they had crumbled to pieces. . . . But at last attention was called to the stone so long rejected. It had been exposed to the air, to sun and storm, without revealing the slightest crack. The builders examined this stone. It had borne every test but one. If it could bear the test of severe pressure, they decided to accept it for the cornerstone. The trial was made. The stone was accepted, brought to its assigned position, and found to be an exact fit. In prophetic vision, Isaiah was shown that this stone was a symbol of Christ.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 597.

For forty days Christ remained on the earth, preparing the disciples for the work before them and explaining that which heretofore they had been unable to comprehend. He spoke of the prophecies concerning His advent, His rejection by the Jews, and His death, showing that every specification of these prophecies had been fulfilled. He told them that they were to regard this fulfillment of prophecy as an assurance of the power that would attend

them in their future labors. “Then opened He their understanding,” we read, “that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” And He added, “Ye are witnesses of these things.” Luke 24:45-48.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 26, 27.

[Jesus’] anxious followers gladly listened to His teachings, eagerly feasting upon every word which fell from His holy lips. Now they certainly knew that He was the Saviour of the world. His words sank deep into their hearts, and they sorrowed that they must soon be parted from their heavenly Teacher and no longer hear comforting, gracious words from His lips. But again their hearts were warmed with love and exceeding joy, as Jesus told them that He would go and prepare mansions for them and come again and receive them, that they might be ever with Him. He promised also to send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to guide them into all truth. “And He lifted up His hands, and blessed them.”—*Early Writings*, p. 190.

## Sunday, February 25: Divine Self-Sacrificing Shepherd

Of all creatures the sheep is one of the most timid and helpless, and in the East the shepherd's care for his flock is untiring and incessant. . . .

As the shepherd leads his flock over the rocky hills, through forest and wild ravines, to grassy nooks by the riverside; as he watches them on the mountains through the lonely night, shielding from robbers, caring tenderly for the sickly and feeble, his life comes to be one with theirs. A strong and tender attachment unites him to the objects of his care. However large the flock, the shepherd knows every sheep. Every one has its name, and responds to the name at the shepherd's call.

As an earthly shepherd knows his sheep, so does the divine Shepherd know His flock that are scattered throughout the world. "Ye My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God." Jesus says, "I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine." "I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands." Ezekiel 34:31; Isaiah 43:1; 49:16.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 478, 479.

Christ, in His relation to His people, is compared to a shepherd. After the Fall He saw His sheep doomed to perish in the dark ways of sin. To save these wandering ones He left the honors and glories of His Father's house. He says, "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick." I will "save My flock, and they shall no more be a prey." "Neither shall the beast of the land devour them." Ezekiel 34:16, 22, 28. His voice is heard calling them to His fold, "a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain." Isaiah 4:6. His care for the flock is unwearied. He strengthens the weak, relieves the suffering, gathers the lambs in His arms, and carries them in His bosom. His sheep love Him.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 190.

When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together and present to

the enemy a united front. In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease; there will be no disputing as to who shall be accounted greatest. No one of the true believers will say: "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas." The testimony of one and all will be: "I cleave unto Christ; I rejoice in Him as my personal Saviour".

The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 400, 401.

## Monday, February 26: The Suffering Messiah

Through the psalmist Christ had foretold the treatment that He should receive from men: "I am . . . a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him." "I may tell all My bones: they look and stare upon Me. They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture." "I am become a stranger unto My brethren, and an alien unto My mother's children. For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon Me." "Reproach hath broken My heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." Psalm 22:6-8, 17, 18; 69:8, 9, 20.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 225.

Men whom God had created, and who were dependent upon Him for every moment of their lives, who claimed to be the children of Abraham, worked out the wrath of Satan upon the innocent Son of the infinite God. While Christ was bearing the heavy guilt incurred by transgression of the law, while in the very act of bearing our sins, of carrying our sorrows, He was mocked by the chief priests and rulers. It was there that mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace embraced each other. Here is a theme which all need to understand. Here are lengths and breadths, depths and heights, that pass any computation.

The character of Christ is an infinitely perfect character. The Word declares Him. He is lifted up and proclaimed as the One who gave His life for the life of the world. Christ gave His own life, that all the disloyal and disobedient might realize the truth of the promise given in the first chapter of John: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). Tell it over and over again. We may become the sons of God, members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. All who accept Jesus Christ and hold the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end will be heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ to "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."—*That I May Know Him*, p. 70.

When the sinner has a view of the matchless charms of Jesus, sin no longer looks attractive to him; for he beholds the Chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely. He realizes by a personal experience the power of the gospel, whose vastness of design is equaled only by its preciousness of purpose.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 76.

## **Tuesday, February 27: Forever Faithful to His Covenant**

Glorious are the promises made to David and his house, promises that look forward to the eternal ages, and find their complete fulfillment in Christ. The Lord declared:

“I have sworn unto David My servant . . . with whom My hand shall be established: Mine arm also shall strengthen him. . . . My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him: and in My name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto Me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation. Also I will make him My first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him forevermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with him.” Psalm 89:3-28.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 754, 755.

Many a wrongdoer has excused his own sin by pointing to David’s fall, but how few there are who manifest David’s penitence and humility. How few would bear reproof and retribution with the patience and fortitude that he manifested. . . .

But he saw in his own sin the cause of his trouble. The words of the prophet Micah breathe the spirit that inspired David’s heart. “When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause, and execute judgment for me.” Micah 7:8, 9. And the Lord did not forsake David. This chapter in his experience, when, under cruelest wrong and insult, he shows himself to be humble, unselfish, generous, and submissive, is one of the noblest in his whole experience. Never was the ruler of Israel more truly great in the sight of heaven than at this hour of his deepest outward humiliation.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 737, 738.

The apostle [Paul] exalted Christ before his brethren as the One by whom God had created all things and by whom He had wrought out their redemption. He declared that the hand that sustains the worlds in space, and holds in their orderly arrangements and tireless activity all things throughout the universe of God, is the hand that was nailed to the cross for them. “By Him were all things created,” Paul wrote, “that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or

dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” . . .

The Son of God stooped to uplift the fallen. For this He left the sinless worlds on high, the ninety and nine that loved Him, and came to this earth to be “wounded for our transgressions” and “bruised for our iniquities.” Isaiah 53:5. . . . Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth.” John 1:14.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 471, 472.

## **Wednesday, February 28: Eternal King of Unrivalled Power**

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Psalm 110:1.

The love of the Father toward a fallen race is unfathomable, indescribable, without a parallel. This love led Him to consent to give His only begotten Son to die, that rebellious man might be brought into harmony with the government of Heaven, and be saved from the penalty of his transgression. The Son of God stepped down from His royal throne, and for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. He became “a Man of sorrows,” that we might be made partakers of everlasting joy. God permitted His beloved Son, full of grace and truth, to come from a world of indescribable glory to a world marred and blighted with sin, shadowed with the shadow of death and the curse.

By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 79.

When Christ shall come to the earth again, not as a prisoner surrounded by a rabble will men see Him. They will see Him then as heaven’s King. Christ will come in His own glory, in the glory of His Father, and the glory of the holy angels. Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels, the beautiful and triumphant sons of God, possessing surpassing loveliness and glory, will escort Him on His way. Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. Then every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him. In the place of a crown of thorns, He will wear a crown of glory,—a crown within a crown. In place of that old purple kingly robe, He will be clothed in raiment of whitest white, “so as no fuller on earth can white them.” Mark 9:3. And on His vesture and on His thigh a name will be written, “King of kings, and Lord of lords.” Revelation 19:16.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 439.

The kingdom of God’s grace is now being established, as day by day hearts that have been full of sin and rebellion yield to the sovereignty of His love. But the full establishment of the kingdom of His glory will not take place until the second coming of Christ to this world. . . .

The heavenly gates are again to be lifted up, and with ten thousand times

ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy ones, our Saviour will come forth as King of kings and Lord of lords. Jehovah Immanuel “shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one.” “The tabernacle of God” shall be with men, “and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.” Zechariah 14:9; Revelation 21:3.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 108.

## **Thursday, February 29: Eternal Priest in the Order of Melchizedek**

It was the work of Christ to present the truth in the framework of the gospel, and to reveal the precepts and principles that He had given to fallen man. Every idea He presented was His own. He needed not to borrow thoughts from any, for He was the originator of all truth. He could present the ideas of prophets and philosophers, and preserve His originality; for all wisdom was His; He was the source, the fountain, of all truth. He was in advance of all, and by His teaching He became the spiritual leader for all ages.

It was Christ that spoke through Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Melchizedek was not Christ, but he was the voice of God in the world, the representative of the Father. And all through the generations of the past, Christ has spoken; Christ has led His people, and has been the light of the world.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 409.

In the Child of Bethlehem was veiled the glory before which angels bow. This unconscious babe was the promised seed, to whom the first altar at the gate of Eden pointed. This was Shiloh, the peace giver. It was He who declared Himself to Moses as the I AM. It was He who in the pillar of cloud and of fire had been the guide of Israel. This was He whom seers had long foretold. He was the Desire of all nations, the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star. The name of that helpless little babe, inscribed in the roll of Israel, declaring Him our brother, was the hope of fallen humanity. The child for whom the redemption money had been paid was He who was to pay the ransom for the sins of the whole world. He was the true “high priest over the house of God,” the head of “an unchangeable priesthood,” the intercessor at “the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Hebrews 10:21; 7:24; 1:3.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 52.

The rainbow round about the throne is an assurance that God is true, that in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We have sinned against Him, and are undeserving of His favor. . . . When we come to him confessing our unworthiness and sin, He has pledged Himself to give heed to our cry. The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word

unto us.

Like Aaron, who symbolized Christ, our Saviour bears the names of all His people on His heart in the holy place. Our great High Priest remembers all the words by which He has encouraged us to trust. He is ever mindful of His covenant.

All who seek of Him shall find. All who knock will have the door opened to them. The excuse will not be made, Trouble Me not; the door is closed; I do not wish to open it. Never will one be told, I cannot help you.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 148.

### **Friday, March 1: For Further Reading**

*Lift Him Up*, “A Spotless Example,” p. 33;  
*Lift Him Up*, “The Good Shepherd,” p. 201.

## Lesson 10

# Lessons of the Past

### Sabbath Afternoon, March 2

A study of the history of the children of Israel will help us to learn lessons that will keep us from repeating the mistakes that spoiled their record. The Lord wonderfully delivered this people from their bondage to an oppressive king, and Himself took charge of their vast army. He guided them by a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night—a cloud which enshrouded His own presence. He provided them with food in the wilderness; and men did eat angels' food.

Soon after Israel's encampment at Sinai, Moses was called up into the mount to meet with God. Alone he climbed the steep and rugged path, and drew near to the cloud that marked the place of Jehovah's presence. Israel was now to be taken into close and peculiar relationship to the Most High God. As a nation they were to come under the special government of God. —*This Day With God*, p. 237.

We should meditate upon the Scriptures, thinking soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. The infinite mercy and love of Jesus, the sacrifice made in our behalf, call for most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should seek to comprehend the meaning of the plan of salvation. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins.

By constantly contemplating heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger. Our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love. They will be more intelligent and fervent. There will be more constant confidence in Jesus, and you will have a daily, living experience in the willingness and power of Christ to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. —*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 732.

In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.

In words of matchless beauty and tenderness, the apostle Paul set before the sages of Athens the divine purpose in the creation and distribution of races and nations. "God that made the world and all things therein," declared the apostle, "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him." Acts 17:24-27.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 499, 500.

## **Sunday, March 3: The Lord's Unstoppable Faithfulness**

The Word of God is to be the man of our counsel, and is to guide our experience. The lessons of Old Testament history, if faithfully studied, will teach us how this can be. Christ, enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, was the guide and the light of the children of Israel in their wilderness wandering. Here was an unerring Guide.

In all their experiences, God was trying to teach them obedience to their heavenly Guide, and faith in His power to deliver them. Their deliverance from affliction in Egypt, and their passage through the Red Sea, revealed to them His power to save. When they rebelled against Him, and went contrary to His will, God punished them. When they persisted in their rebellion, and were determined to have their own way, God gave them that for which they asked, and in this way showed them that, that which He withheld from them, He withheld for their own good. Every judgment that came as a result of their murmurings was a lesson to that vast multitude, that sorrow and suffering are always the result of transgression of the laws of God.—*This Day With God*, p. 254.

Says the psalmist: "They tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust. Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, He smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can He give bread also? can He provide flesh for His people? Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth." Psalm 78:18-21. Murmuring and tumults had been frequent during the journey from the Red Sea to Sinai, but in pity for their ignorance and blindness God had not then visited the sin with judgments. But since that time He had revealed Himself to them at Horeb. They had received great light, as they had been witnesses to the majesty, the power, and the mercy of God; and their unbelief and discontent incurred the greater guilt. Furthermore, they had covenanted to accept Jehovah as their king and to obey His authority. Their murmuring was now rebellion, and as such it must receive prompt and signal punishment, if Israel was to be preserved from anarchy and ruin. "The fire of Jehovah burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp." The most guilty of the complainers were slain

by lightning from the cloud.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 379.

The repeated murmurings of the Israelites, and the visitations of God's wrath because of their transgressions, are recorded in sacred history for the benefit of God's people who should afterward live upon the earth, but more especially to prove a warning to those who should live near the close of time. Also their acts of devotion, their energy and liberality in bringing their free-will offerings to Moses are recorded for the benefit of the people of God. Their example in preparing material for the tabernacle so cheerfully is an example for all who truly love the worship of God.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 152.

## **Monday, March 4: Remembering History and the Praise of God**

The history of the Old Testament was recorded for the benefit of those who should live in the generations following. The lessons of the New Testament are as greatly needed. Here again Christ is the instructor, leading His people to seek that wisdom that cometh from above, and to gain that instruction in righteousness that will mold the character after the divine similitude. Both Old and New Testament Scriptures teach the principles of obedience to the commandments of God as the terms of securing that life which measures with the life of God, for it is through obedience that we become partakers of the divine nature, and learn to escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Therefore its maxims are to be studied, its commands obeyed, its principles, which are more precious than gold, brought into the daily life.—Letter 342, September 2, 1907, to the workers in Southern California.

The dealings of God with His people should be often repeated. How frequently were the waymarks set up by the Lord in His dealings with ancient Israel! Lest they should forget the history of the past, He commanded Moses to frame these events into song, that parents might teach them to their children. They were to gather up memorials and to lay them up in sight. Special pains were taken to preserve them, that when the children should inquire concerning these things, the whole story might be repeated. Thus the providential dealings and the marked goodness and mercy of God in His care and deliverance of His people were kept in mind. We are exhorted to “call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions” (Hebrews 10:32). For His people in this generation the Lord has wrought as a wonder-working God. We need often to recount God’s goodness and to praise Him for His wonderful works.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 364.

Men, women, and youth, God requires you to possess moral courage, steadiness of purpose, fortitude and perseverance, minds that cannot take the assertions of another, but which will investigate for themselves before receiving or rejecting, that will study and weigh evidence, and take it to the

Lord in prayer. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” Now the condition: “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” This petition for wisdom is not to be a meaningless prayer, out of mind as soon as finished. It is a prayer that expresses the strong, earnest desire of the heart, arising from a conscious lack of wisdom to determine the will of God.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 130.

## **Tuesday, March 5: Remembering History and Repentance**

All who profess to be children of God I would invite to consider the history of the Israelites, as recorded in the one hundred and fifth, the one hundred and sixth, and the one hundred and seventh psalms. By carefully studying these scriptures, we may be able to appreciate more fully the goodness, mercy, and love of our God. . . .

Why did ancient Israel so easily forget God's dealings? The people did not retain in their memory His works of greatness and power or His words of warning. Had they remembered His wondrous dealings with them they would not have received reproof. . . .

But the children of Israel forgot God, whose they were by creation and by redemption. After seeing all His wondrous works, they tempted Him. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 107–114.

Cannot we who are living in the time of the end realize the importance of the apostle's words: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God"?

Upon us is shining the accumulated light of past ages. The record of Israel's forgetfulness has been preserved for our enlightenment. In this age God has set His hand to gather unto Himself a people from every nation, kindred, and tongue. In the advent movement He has wrought for His heritage, even as He wrought for the Israelites in leading them from Egypt. In the great disappointment of 1844 the faith of His people was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had the Adventists in the early days still trusted to the guiding Hand that had been with them in their past experience, they would have seen of the salvation of God. If all who had labored unitedly in the work of 1844 had received the third angel's message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work would have been completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 115.

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.

### **Wednesday, March 6: The Parable of the Lord's Vine**

The Jews had always regarded the vine as the most noble of plants, and a type of all that was powerful, excellent, and fruitful. Israel had been represented as a vine which God had planted in the Promised Land. The Jews based their hope of salvation on the fact of their connection with Israel. But Jesus says, I am the real Vine. Think not that through a connection with Israel you may become partakers of the life of God, and inheritors of His promise. Through Me alone is spiritual life received.

On the hills of Palestine our heavenly Father had planted this goodly Vine, and He Himself was the husbandman. Many were attracted by the beauty of this Vine, and declared its heavenly origin. But to the leaders in Israel it appeared as a root out of a dry ground. They took the plant, and bruised it, and trampled it under their unholy feet. Their thought was to destroy it forever. But the heavenly Husbandman never lost sight of His plant. After men thought they had killed it, He took it, and replanted it on the other side of the wall. The vine stock was to be no longer visible. It was hidden from the rude assaults of men. But the branches of the Vine hung over the wall. They were to represent the Vine. Through them grafts might still be united to the Vine. From them fruit has been obtained. There has been a harvest which the passers-by have plucked.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 675.

Jesus Christ has given Himself as a complete offering in behalf of every fallen son and daughter of Adam. O what humiliation He bore! How He descended, step after step, lower and lower in the path of humiliation, yet He never degraded His soul with one foul blot of sin! All this He suffered, that He might lift you up, cleanse, refine, and ennoble you, and place you as a joint heir with Himself upon His throne. How shall you make your calling and election sure? What is the way of salvation? Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." However sinful, however guilty you may be, you are called, you are chosen. "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." Not one will be forced against his will to come to Jesus Christ. The Majesty of heaven, the only-begotten Son of the true and living God, opened the way for you to come to Him, by giving His life as a sacrifice on Calvary's

cross. . . . The blood of Jesus is a never-failing passport, by which all your petitions may find access to the throne of God.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 251.

## **Thursday, March 7: The Lord's Supremacy in History**

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.

By their sins the Israelites were separated from God; His strength was removed from them, and they could no longer prevail against their enemies. Thus they were brought into subjection to the very nations that through God they might have subdued.

“They forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt,” “and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.” “They provoked Him to anger with their high places, and moved Him to jealousy with their graven images.” Therefore the Lord “forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among them; and delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy’s hand.” Judges 2:12; Psalm 78:52, 58, 60, 61. Yet He did not utterly forsake His people. There was ever a remnant who were true to Jehovah; and from time to time the Lord raised up faithful and valiant men to put down idolatry and to deliver the Israelites from their enemies. But when the deliverer was dead, and the people were released from his authority, they would gradually return to their idols. And thus the story of backsliding and chastisement, of confession and deliverance, was repeated again and again.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 544, 545.

The cause of God is to hold the first place in our plans and affections. There is need of bearing a straight message concerning the indulgence of self while the cause of God is in need of means. Some are so cold and backslidden that they do not realize that they are setting their affections on earthly treasure, which is soon to be swept away forever. The love of the world is binding them about, like a thick garment; and unless they change their course, they will not know how precious it is to practice self-denial for Christ's sake. All our idols, our love of the world, must be expelled from the heart. . . .

O, that they might arouse from their spiritual lethargy, and now acquaint themselves with God! The world is blinding their eyes from seeing Him who is invisible. They are unable to discern the most precious things that are of eternal interest, but view the truth of God in so dim a light that it seems of little value to them. The merest atom concerning their temporal interests assumes magnified proportions, while the things concerning eternity are dropped out of their reckoning.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 220, 221.

**Friday, March 8: For Further Reading**

*In Heavenly Places*, “Jesus Our Advocate,” p. 264;

*The Ministry of Healing*, “Personality of God Revealed in Christ,” p. 419.

## Lesson 11

# Longing for God in Zion

## Sabbath Afternoon, March 9

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

The heart of man may be the abode of the Holy Spirit. The peace of Christ that passeth understanding may rest in your soul, and the transforming power of His grace may work in your life, and fit you for the courts of glory. . . .

If the eye is single, if it is directed heavenward, the light of heaven will fill the soul, and earthly things will appear insignificant and uninviting. The purpose of the heart will be changed, and the admonition of Jesus will be heeded. Your thoughts will be fixed upon the great rewards of eternity. All your plans will be made in reference to the future, immortal life.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 251.

The temple of God is opened in heaven, and the threshold is flushed with the glory that 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 assembly of the saints. Murmurings, complainings, and lamentations over little disappointments and difficulties will be lost sight of. As we apply the golden eyesalve we shall see the glories beyond. Faith will cut through the hellish shadow of Satan, and we shall see our Advocate offering up the incense of His own merits in our behalf.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 273.

In the sanctuary of the wilderness tabernacle and of the temple that were the earthly symbols of God's dwelling place, one apartment was sacred to

His presence. The veil inwrought with cherubim at its entrance was not to be lifted by any hand save one. To lift that veil, and intrude unbidden into the sacred mystery of the most holy place, was death. For above the mercy seat dwelt the glory of the Holiest—glory upon which no man might look and live. On the one day of the year appointed for ministry in the most holy place, the high priest with trembling entered God's presence, while clouds of incense veiled the glory from his sight. Throughout the courts of the temple every sound was hushed. No priests ministered at the altars. The host of worshipers, bowed in silent awe, offered their petitions for God's mercy.

"The Lord is in His holy temple: Let all the earth keep silence before Him."

"The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: He sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zion; And He is high above all the people. Let them praise Thy great and terrible name; For it is holy."—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 437, 438.

## **Sunday, March 10: A Day in Your Courts Is Better Than a Thousand**

My soul cries out after the living God. My very being longs after Him. Oh, for to reflect His lovely image perfectly! Oh, for to be wholly consecrated to Him! Oh, how hard it is for dear self to die. We can rejoice in a whole Saviour; one who saves us from all sin. We can be shut in with God where we can daily say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" "to will and to do of his good pleasure." Glory be to God. I know that my life is hid with Christ in God.

The curtain has been lifted. I have seen the rich reward laid up for the saints. I have had a taste of the joys of the world to come, and it has spoiled this world for me. My affections, my interests, hopes, my all is in heaven. I long to see the King in His beauty, Him whom my soul loveth. Heaven, sweet heaven. "I long to be there; and the thought that 'tis near, makes me almost impatient for Christ to appear." Praise the Lord for a good hope through Jesus Christ of immortality and eternal life.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 350.

I render thanks unto my heavenly Father for His blessing, after seeking the Lord in prayer. I go to my heavenly Father as a child in need goes to his temporal earthly father. We know that God must be interested in us, as the earthly parent is interested in his child, but to a much larger degree. I place myself as His child, and in simple faith ask for the small favors as I would ask for larger gifts, believing the Lord hears the simple, contrite prayer.

I keep saying in my heart, He loves me, He wants my love, and He wants me to be happy. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory." "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee" (Psalm 84:11, 12).—*That I May Know Him*, p. 143.

The work of redemption will [soon] be complete. In the place where sin abounded, God's grace much more abounds. The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God. Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and

suffered and died,—here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, “and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.” And through endless ages as the redeemed walk in the light of the Lord, they will praise Him for His unspeakable Gift,—Immanuel, “God with us.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 26.

## **Monday, March 11: Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem**

Throughout the land bands of pilgrims were making their way toward Jerusalem. The shepherds from their flocks, the herdsmen from the mountains, fishers from the Sea of Galilee, the husbandmen from their fields, and sons of the prophets from the sacred schools—all turned their steps toward the place where God’s presence was revealed. They journeyed by short stages, for many went on foot. The caravans were constantly receiving accessions, and often became very large before reaching the Holy City.

Nature’s gladness awakened joy in the hearts of Israel and gratitude to the Giver of all good. The grand Hebrew psalms were chanted, exalting the glory and majesty of Jehovah. At the sound of the signal trumpet, with the music of cymbals, the chorus of thanksgiving arose, swelled by hundreds of voices:

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord. Our feet are standing within thy gates, O Jerusalem. . . . Whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord, . . . to give thanks unto the name of Jehovah. . . . Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: They shall prosper that love thee.” Psalm 122:1-6, R.V.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 538.

Christ had bidden the first disciples love one another as He had loved them. Thus they were to bear testimony to the world that Christ was formed within, the hope of glory. “A new commandment I give unto you,” He had said, “That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” John 13:34. At the time when these words were spoken, the disciples could not understand them; but after they had witnessed the sufferings of Christ, after His crucifixion and resurrection, and ascension to heaven, and after the Holy Spirit had rested on them at Pentecost, they had a clearer conception of the love of God and of the nature of that love which they must have for one another. Then John could say to his fellow disciples:

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” . . .

In their daily association with one another, they revealed the love that Christ had enjoined upon them. By unselfish words and deeds they strove to

kindle this love in other hearts.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 547.

The glorious gospel, God's message of redeeming love, must be brought to the people, and that love is to be revealed in the hearts of the laborers. The theme of saving grace is an antidote for a harsh spirit. The love of Christ in the heart will be expressed in earnest work for the salvation of sinners.

Let the gospel be presented as the word of God for life and salvation. The gospel will be commended by the revelation of a spirit that works by love. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace" (Isaiah 52:7).—*This Day With God*, p. 297.

## **Tuesday, March 12: Zion—The Home of All Nations**

The nations of the saved will know no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming. “There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death.” . . .

“The Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord.” “The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.” “Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called My Delight, and thy land Beulah. . . . As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.” Isaiah 66:23; 40:5; Isaiah 61:11; 28:5; Isaiah 51:3; 35:2; Isaiah 62:4, 5, margin.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 732, 733.

The kingdom of Christ in its beginning seemed humble and insignificant. Compared with earthly kingdoms it appeared to be the least of all. By the rulers of this world Christ’s claim to be a king was ridiculed. Yet in the mighty truths committed to His followers the kingdom of the gospel possessed a divine life. And how rapid was its growth, how widespread its influence! When Christ spoke this parable, there were only a few Galilean peasants to represent the new kingdom. But the mustard seed was to grow and spread forth its branches throughout the world. When the earthly kingdoms whose glory then filled the hearts of men should perish, the kingdom of Christ would remain, a mighty and far-reaching power. . . .

In this last generation the parable of the mustard seed is to reach a signal and triumphant fulfillment. The little seed will become a tree. The last message of warning and mercy is to go to “every nation and kindred and tongue” (Revelation 14:6-14), “to take out of them a people for his name” (Acts 15:14; Revelation 18:1). And the earth shall be lightened with His glory.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 17.

The constant burden of your hearts should be, What can I do to save

souls for whom Christ died? All around me are precious souls lying in wickedness, that must perish unless someone shall work for their salvation. How can I best reach these wandering ones, that I may bring them to the glorious city of God, and present them before the throne, saying, Here am I and the children whom the Lord hath given me? . . .

Christ has appointed to every man his work. . . . [His] faithful servants will not lose their reward. They will gain eternal life, and the “Well done, good and faithful servant”, will fall as sweetest music on their ears.—*This Day With God*, p. 218.

## **Wednesday, March 13: Safety and Peace of Zion**

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee. Psalm 84:5. . . .

[Enoch's] life was what the life of every individual may be if he will live near to God. We should remember that Enoch was surrounded by unholy influences. The society around him was so depraved that God brought a flood of waters on the world to destroy its inhabitants for their corruption. . . .

Joseph preserved his integrity when surrounded by idolaters in Egypt, in the midst of sin and blasphemy and corrupting influences. When [he was] tempted to turn aside from the path of virtue, his answer was, "How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Enoch, Joseph, and Daniel depended upon a strength that was infinite; and this is the only course of safety for Christians to pursue in our day.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 307.

The time is now come when one moment we may be on solid earth, the next the earth may be heaving beneath our feet. Earthquakes will take place when least expected.

In fires, in floods, in earthquakes, in the fury of the great deep, in calamities by sea and by land, the warning is given that God's Spirit will not always strive with men.

Before the Son of man appears in the clouds of heaven everything in nature will be convulsed. Lightning from heaven uniting with the fire in the earth will cause the mountains to burn like a furnace and pour out their floods of lava over villages and cities. Molten masses of rock thrown into the water by the upheaval of things hidden in the earth will cause the water to boil and send forth rocks and earth. There will be mighty earthquakes and great destruction of human life.—*Last Day Events*, p. 26.

If today we would take time to go to Jesus and tell Him our needs, we should not be disappointed; He would be at our right hand to help us. We need more simplicity, more trust and confidence in our Saviour. . . .

In all who are under the training of God is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and everyone needs to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God.

We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10. Here alone can true rest be found. And this is the effectual preparation for all who labor for God. Amid the hurrying throng, and the strain of life's intense activities, the soul that is thus refreshed will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. The life will breathe out fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that will reach men's hearts. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 363.

## **Thursday, March 14: Immovable Like Mount Zion**

Both Sadducees and Pharisees determined that the work of the disciples should be stopped, for it was proving them guilty of the death of Jesus. Filled with indignation, the priests laid violent hands on Peter and John, and put them in the common prison.

The disciples were not intimidated or cast down by this treatment. The God of heaven, the mighty Ruler of the universe, took the matter of the imprisonment of the disciples into His own hands. By night the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and said to the disciples, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).

Shortly before His crucifixion Christ had bequeathed to His disciples a legacy of peace. "Peace I leave with you," He said, "my peace I give unto you." This peace is not the peace that comes through conformity to the world. Christ never purchased peace by compromise with evil. The peace that Christ left His disciples is internal rather than external and was ever to remain with His witnesses through strife and contention.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 228.

What was the strength of those who in the past have suffered persecution for Christ's sake? It was union with God, union with the Holy Spirit, union with Christ. Reproach and persecution have separated many from earthly friends, but never from the love of Christ. Never is the tempest-trying soul more dearly loved by his Saviour than when he is suffering reproach for the truth's sake. "I will love him," Christ said, "and will manifest Myself to him." John 14:21. When for the truth's sake the believer stands at the bar of earthly tribunals, Christ stands by his side. When he is confined within prison walls, Christ manifests Himself to him and cheers his heart with His love. When he suffers death for Christ's sake, the Saviour says to him, They may kill the body, but they cannot hurt the soul. . . .

"They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever." Psalm 125:1-3.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 85, 86.

In the midst of prosperity lurks danger. Throughout the ages, riches and honor have ever been attended with peril to humility and spirituality. It is not the empty cup that we have difficulty in carrying; it is the cup full to the brim that must be carefully balanced. Affliction and adversity may cause sorrow, but it is prosperity that is most dangerous to spiritual life. Unless the human subject is in constant submission to the will of God, unless he is sanctified by the truth, prosperity will surely arouse the natural inclination to presumption.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 59.

**Friday, March 15: For Further Reading**

*The Faith I Live By*, “Sanctified for Worship,” p. 35;

*This Day With God*, “Our Refuge and Strength,” p. 329.

## Lesson 12

# Worship That Never Ends

## Sabbath Afternoon, March 16

“Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can show forth all His praise?”

“Call upon His name; Make known among the peoples His doings. Sing unto Him, sing praises unto Him.” “Talk ye of all His wondrous works. Glory ye in His holy name: Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.” Psalm 106:2; 105:1, 2 A.R.V., 2, 3. . . .

The gospel invitation is not to be narrowed down and presented only to a select few, who, we suppose, will do us honor if they accept it. The message is to be given to all. When God blesses His children, it is not alone for their own sake, but for the world’s sake. As He bestows His gifts on us, it is that we may multiply them by imparting.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 101, 102.

My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord. Psalm 104:34.

Why not keep your minds fixed on the unsearchable riches of Christ, that you may present to others the gems of truth? In the Word of God there are rich mines of truth that we may spend our whole lifetime in exploring, and yet we shall find that we have only begun to view their precious stores. Sink the shaft deep, and bring up the hidden treasures. . . .

We need to be constantly filling the mind with Christ, and emptying it of selfishness and sin. Just as surely as you empty your mind of vanity and frivolity, the vacuum will be supplied with that which God is waiting to give you—His Holy Spirit. Then out of the good treasure of the heart you will bring forth good things, rich gems of thought, and others will catch the words. Your thoughts and affections will dwell upon Christ, and you will reflect upon others that which has shone upon you from the Sun of Righteousness.—*Our High Calling*, p. 115.

It is for our own benefit to keep every gift of God fresh in our memory. Thus faith is strengthened to claim and to receive more and more. . . . The soul that responds to the grace of God shall be like a watered garden. His health shall spring forth speedily; his light shall rise in obscurity, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon him. Let us then remember the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the multitude of His tender mercies. Like the people of Israel, let us set up our stones of witness, and inscribe upon them the precious story of what God has wrought for us. And as we review His dealings with us in our pilgrimage, let us, out of hearts melted with gratitude, declare, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people." Psalm 116:12-14.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 348.

## **Sunday, March 17: Lift Up Your Hands in the Sanctuary**

God's claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. Thus it is presented in the Bible. Says the prophet Jeremiah: "The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King. . . . The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion." Jeremiah 10:10-12. The Sabbath, as a memorial of God's creative power, points to Him as the maker of the heavens and the earth. Hence it is a constant witness to His existence and a reminder of His greatness, His wisdom, and His love. Had the Sabbath always been sacredly observed, there could never have been an atheist or an idolater.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 336.

[The] church is the sanctuary for the congregation. . . . Nothing that is sacred, nothing that pertains to the worship of God, should be treated with carelessness or indifference. In order that men may do their best work in showing forth the praises of God, their associations must be such as will keep the sacred distinct from the common, in their minds. Those who have broad ideas, noble thoughts and aspirations, are those who have associations that strengthen all thoughts of divine things. Happy are those who have a sanctuary, be it high or low, in the city or among the rugged mountain caves, in the lowly cabin or in the wilderness. If it is the best they can secure for the Master, He will hallow the place with His presence, and it will be holy unto the Lord of hosts.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 491.

[Here is] the same truth that Jesus had revealed to Nicodemus when He said, "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3, margin. . . . The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve [God] aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a

willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God. Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit's working is manifest, and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking. He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and daughters.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 189.

## **Monday, March 18: Sing to the Lord a New Song**

The Lord desires us to make mention of His goodness and tell of His power. He is honored by the expression of praise and thanksgiving. He says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." Psalm 50:23. The people of Israel, as they journeyed through the wilderness, praised God in sacred song. The commandments and promises of the Lord were set to music, and all along the journey these were sung by the pilgrim travelers. And in Canaan as they met at their sacred feasts God's wonderful works were to be recounted, and grateful thanksgiving was to be offered to His name. God desired that the whole life of His people should be a life of praise. Thus His way was to be made "known upon earth," His "saving health among all nations." Psalm 67:2.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 298.

As the sinner is pardoned for his transgression through the merits of Christ, as he is clothed with the righteousness of Christ through faith in him, he declares with the psalmist, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." This is conversion. When the Spirit of God controls the mind and heart, it turns the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. The law of Jehovah will then be regarded as a transcript of the divine character, and a new song bursts forth from the heart that has been touched by divine grace; for he realizes that the promise of God has been fulfilled in his experience, that his transgression is forgiven, his sin covered. He has exercised repentance toward God for the violation of his law, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ who has died for his justification.—*The Review and Herald*, June 21, 1892, par. 6.

There is a day just about to burst upon us when God's mysteries will be seen, and all His ways vindicated; when justice, mercy, and love will be the attributes of His throne. When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of

grace and redemption. This song will be louder, loftier, and in sublimer strains, echoing and re-echoing through the heavenly courts. . . .

This is the theme, this is the song—Christ all and in all—in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and of the Lamb. It is a new song, for it was never before sung in heaven.—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 433.

## **Tuesday, March 19: Lord, Who May Abide in Your Tabernacle?**

Always kind, courteous, ever taking the part of the oppressed, whether Jew or Gentile, Christ was beloved by all. By His perfect life and character, He answered the question asked in the fifteenth Psalm: "Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." In childhood and youth His course was such that when engaged in work as a teacher, He could say to His disciples, "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love: even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

As Christ grew older, the work begun in His childhood went on, and He continued to increase in wisdom, and in favor with God and man. He did not take the part of His own family merely because they were related to Him by natural ties; He would not vindicate their case in a single instance where they had been guilty of injustice or wrong; but He ever vindicated that which He knew to be truth.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 402.

What is it to be a Christian? It is to be Christlike; it is to do the works of Christ. Some fail on one point, some on another. Some are naturally impatient. Satan understands their weakness, and manages to overcome them again and again. But let none be discouraged by this. Whenever little annoyances and trials arise, ask God in silent prayer to give you strength and grace to bear them patiently. There is a power in silence; do not speak a word until you have sent up your petition to the God of heaven. If you will always do this, you will soon overcome your hasty temper, and you will have a little heaven here to go to heaven in.

God wants His people to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts. Will it make them unhappy to do this? Will it bring unhappiness into their families if they are kind and patient, courteous and forbearing? Far from it. The kindness they manifest toward their families will be reflected upon themselves. This is the work that should be carried forward in the home. If the members of the family are not prepared to dwell in peace here, they are not prepared to dwell in the family that shall gather around the great white

throne. Sin always brings darkness and bondage; but right-doing will bring peace and holy joy.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 341.

My dear brethren and sisters, let the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ be in your minds continually and let them crowd out worldly thoughts and cares. When you lie down and when you rise up, let them be your meditation. Live and act wholly in reference to the coming of the Son of man. The sealing time is very short, and will soon be over. Now is the time, while the four angels are holding the four winds, to make our calling and election sure.—*Early Writings*, p. 58.

## **Wednesday, March 20: Declare His Glory Among the Nations**

Christ commissioned His disciples to do the work He had left in their hands, beginning at Jerusalem. Jerusalem had been the scene of His amazing condescension for the human race. There He had suffered, been rejected and condemned. The land of Judea was His birthplace. There, clad in the garb of humanity, He had walked with men, and few had discerned how near heaven came to the earth when Jesus was among them. At Jerusalem the work of the disciples must begin. . . .

But the work was not to stop here. It was to be extended to the earth's remotest bounds. To His disciples Christ said, You have been witnesses of My life of self-sacrifice in behalf of the world. You have witnessed My labors for Israel. Although they would not come unto Me that they might have life, although priests and rulers have done to Me as they listed, although they have rejected Me as the Scriptures foretold, they shall have still another opportunity of accepting the Son of God. You have seen that all who come to Me, confessing their sins, I freely receive. Him that cometh to Me I will in nowise cast out. All who will, may be reconciled to God, and receive everlasting life. To you, My disciples, I commit this message of mercy. It is to be given to Israel first, and then to all nations, tongues, and peoples. It is to be given to Jews and Gentiles. All who believe are to be gathered into one church.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 820, 821.

“The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God”—because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. “The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.”—J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27. It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and

memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, "Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 437, 438.

## **Thursday, March 21: When God Does Not Delight in Sacrifices**

The Pharisees sought distinction by their scrupulous ceremonialism, and the ostentation of their worship and charities. They proved their zeal for religion by making it the theme of discussion. Disputes between opposing sects were loud and long, and it was not unusual to hear on the streets the voice of angry controversy from learned doctors of the law.

In marked contrast to all this was the life of Jesus. In that life no noisy disputation, no ostentatious worship, no act to gain applause, was ever witnessed. Christ was hid in God, and God was revealed in the character of His Son. To this revelation Jesus desired the minds of the people to be directed, and their homage to be given.

The Sun of Righteousness did not burst upon the world in splendor, to dazzle the senses with His glory. It is written of Christ, "His going forth is prepared as the morning." Hosea 6:3. Quietly and gently the daylight breaks upon the earth, dispelling the shadow of darkness, and waking the world to life. So did the Sun of Righteousness arise, "with healing in His wings." Malachi 4:2.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 261.

God proves His people in this world. This is the fitting-up place to appear in His presence. Here, in this world, in these last days, persons will show what power affects their hearts and controls their actions. If it is the power of divine truth, it will lead to good works. It will elevate the receiver, and make him noblehearted and generous, like his divine Lord. But if evil angels control the heart, it will be seen in various ways. The fruit will be selfishness, covetousness, pride, and evil passions.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Professors of religion are not willing to closely examine themselves to see whether they are in the faith; and it is a fearful fact that many are leaning on a false hope. Some lean upon an old experience which they had years ago; but when brought down to this heart-searching time, when all should have a daily experience, they have nothing to relate. They seem to think that a profession of the truth will save them. When they subdue those sins which God hates, Jesus will come in and sup with them and they with Him. They will then draw divine strength from Jesus, and will grow up in Him,

and be able with holy triumph to say: “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” It would be more pleasing to the Lord if lukewarm professors of religion had never named His name. They are a continual weight to those who would be faithful followers of Jesus. They are a stumbling block to unbelievers, and evil angels exult over them, and taunt the angels of God with their crooked course. Such are a curse to the cause at home or abroad. They draw nigh to God with their lips, while their heart is far from Him.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 188.

**Friday, March 22: For Further Reading**

*Sons and Daughters of God*, “We Shall Have No Other Gods,” p. 56;  
*Our High Calling*, “The Privilege of Assurance,” p. 76.

## Lesson 13

# Wait on the Lord

## Sabbath Afternoon, March 23

Remember that prayer is the source of your strength. A worker cannot gain success while he hurries through his prayers and rushes away to look after something that he fears may be neglected or forgotten. He gives only a few hurried thoughts to God; he does not take time to think, to pray, to wait upon the Lord for a renewal of physical and spiritual strength. He soon becomes weary. He does not feel the uplifting, inspiring influence of God's Spirit. He is not quickened by fresh life. His jaded frame and tired brain are not soothed by personal contact with Christ.

"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Psalm 27:14; Lamentations 3:26. There are those who work all day and far into the night to do what seems to them must be done. The Lord looks pityingly upon these weary, heavy-laden burden bearers and says to them: "Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 243.

Let us each wait on the Lord, and He will teach us how to labor. He will reveal to us the work that we are best adapted to perform. This will not lead men to start out in an independent spirit, to promulgate new theories. In this time when Satan is seeking to make void the law of God through the exaltation of false science, we need to guard most carefully against everything that would tend to lessen our faith and scatter our forces. As laborers together with God, we should be in harmony with the truth, and with our brethren. There should be counsel and cooperation.

Even in the midst of the great deceptions of the last days, when delusive miracles will be performed in the sight of men in behalf of satanic theories, it is our privilege to hide ourselves in Christ Jesus. It is possible for us to seek and to obtain salvation. And in this time of unusual peril, we must

learn to stand alone, our faith fixed, not on the word of man, but on the sure promises of God.—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 490.

Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to remain with the divine Teacher. With their burdens they return to their work.

Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him—this is our need.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 225.

## Sunday, March 24: The Call of Waiting

Wait on the Lord, and again I say, Wait on the Lord. We may ask of the human agents and not receive. We may ask of God and He says, Ye shall receive. Therefore you know to whom to look; you know in whom to trust. You must not trust in man or make flesh your arm. Lean as heavily as you please upon the Mighty One who hath said, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." Then wait and watch and pray and work, keeping your face constantly turned to the Sun of Righteousness.

Let the bright beams from the face of Jesus shine into your hearts, to shine upon others through you. "Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16). We must lift up Jesus before the people.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 119.

We may bring Him our little cares and perplexities as well as our greater troubles. Whatever arises to disturb or distress us, we should take it to the Lord in prayer.

Calmly, yet fervently, the soul is to reach out after God; and sweet and abiding will be the influence emanating from Him who sees in secret, whose ear is open to the prayer arising from the heart. He who in simple faith holds communion with God will gather to himself divine rays of light to strengthen and sustain him in the conflict with Satan.

If we keep the Lord ever before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him, we shall have a continual freshness in our religious life. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Often there will come to us a sweet, joyful sense of the presence of Jesus. Prayer turns aside the attacks of Satan.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 225.

After the prayer is made, if the answer is not realized immediately, do not weary of waiting and become unstable. Waver not. Cling to the promise, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." Like the importunate widow, urge your case, being firm in your purpose. Is the

object important and of great consequence to you? It certainly is. Then waver not, for your faith may be tried. If the thing you desire is valuable, it is worthy of a strong, earnest effort. You have the promise; watch and pray. Be steadfast and the prayer will be answered; for is it not God who has promised? If it costs you something to obtain it you will prize it the more when obtained. You are plainly told that if you waver you need not think that you shall receive anything of the Lord. A caution is here given not to become weary, but to rest firmly upon the promise. If you ask, He will give you liberally and upbraid not.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 131.

## Monday, March 25: Peace of a Weaned Child

We are not always to remain children in our knowledge and experience in spiritual things. We are not always to express ourselves in the language of one who has just received Christ; but our prayers and exhortations are to grow in intelligence as we advance in experience in the truth. . . .

. . . [W]hen the last great day shall be ushered in, and we shall see what we might have attained, had we taken advantage of the helps that Heaven vouchsafed to us; when we see how we might have grown in grace, and look upon these things as God looks upon them, seeing what we have lost by failing to grow up into the full stature of men and women in Christ, we shall wish that we had been more in earnest. . . .

The Lord desires you to understand the position you occupy as sons and daughters of the Most High, children of the heavenly King.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 330.

The germination of the seed represents the beginning of spiritual life, and the development of the plant is a beautiful figure of Christian growth. As in nature, so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the development of the Christian life. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God's purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime. As our opportunities multiply, our experience will enlarge, and our knowledge increase. We shall become strong to bear responsibility, and our maturity will be in proportion to our privileges.

The plant grows by receiving that which God has provided to sustain its life. It sends down its roots into the earth. It drinks in the sunshine, the dew, and the rain. It receives the life-giving properties from the air. So the Christian is to grow by co-operating with the divine agencies. Feeling our helplessness, we are to improve all the opportunities granted us to gain a fuller experience. As the plant takes root in the soil, so we are to take deep root in Christ.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 65, 66.

God brings His people near Him by close, testing trials, by showing them

their own weakness and inability, and by teaching them to lean upon Him as their only help and safeguard. Then His object is accomplished. They are prepared to be used in every emergency, to fill important positions of trust, and to accomplish the grand purposes for which their powers were given them. God takes men upon trial; He proves them on the right hand and on the left, and thus they are educated, trained, disciplined. Jesus, our Redeemer, man's representative and head, endured this testing process. He suffered more than we can be called upon to suffer. . . . and now, relying on the merits of our Overcomer, we may become victors in His name. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 86.

## **Tuesday, March 26: Bringing in the Sheaves**

If the chosen messengers of the Lord should wait for every obstacle to be moved out of their way, many never would go to search for the scattered sheep. Satan will present many objections in order to keep them from duty. But they will have to go out by faith, trusting in Him who has called them to His work, and He will open the way before them, as far as it will be for their good and His glory. Jesus, the great teacher and pattern, had not where to lay His head. His life was one of toil, sorrow, and suffering; He then gave Himself for us.

Those who, in Christ's stead, beseech souls to be reconciled to God, and who hope to reign with Christ in glory, must expect to be partakers of His sufferings here. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Psalm 126:5, 6.—*Early Writings*, p. 63.

Many times we [James and Ellen White] are disappointed in our expectations, but, then when we see the Lord working with our efforts, and souls coming to Christ, we forget the weariness, disappointments, and trials which we meet in connection with this work and feel honored of God to be permitted to have a part in it. We have had some very precious seasons of prayer with some who were discouraged and almost in despair. We rejoiced with them as light shone into the darkened chambers of the soul. The Lord has indeed encouraged our hearts and strengthened us for our great work. We do believe fruit will abound to the glory of God as the result of this meeting.

Let your prayers . . . that God would bring souls who are in the darkness of error to the knowledge of the truth. Light, precious light is shining on every page of the Word of God. It is the man of our counsel. When we study its pages with a heartfelt desire to learn our duty, angels are close beside us to impress the mind and strengthen the imagination to discern the sacred things revealed in the Word of God.—*This Day With God*, p. 174.

It is God in whom we must trust. God has the world in His hand. We

have God on our side. All heaven is waiting and longing for our cooperation. The Lord is supreme. Why then should we fear? The Lord is almighty; why should we tremble? In the past God has delivered His people, and He will be our helper if we will arise in His strength and go forward. . . .

Let us work as we have never done before. Let us put self aside and lay hold of Jesus Christ by faith. Let us reveal Him to the world as the One altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousand.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 342.

## **Wednesday, March 27: Waiting in God's Sabbath Rest**

Since the Sabbath is the memorial of creative power, it is the day above all others when we should acquaint ourselves with God through His works. In the minds of the children the very thought of the Sabbath should be bound up with the beauty of natural things. Happy is the family who can go to the place of worship on the Sabbath as Jesus and His disciples went to the synagogue—across the fields, along the shores of the lake, or through the groves. Happy the father and mother who can teach their children God's written word with illustrations from the open pages of the book of nature; who can gather under the green trees, in the fresh, pure air, to study the word and to sing the praise of the Father above.—*Education*, p. 251.

Heaven's work never ceases, and men should never rest from doing good. The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular labor on the rest day of the Lord; the toil that gains a livelihood must cease; no labor for worldly pleasure or profit is lawful upon that day; but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds. The work of Christ in healing the sick was in perfect accord with the law. It honored the Sabbath.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207.

The sanctification set forth in the Scriptures embraces the entire being—spirit, soul, and body. Paul prayed for the Thessalonians that their “whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Again he writes to believers: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” Romans 12:1.

In the time of ancient Israel every offering brought as a sacrifice to God was carefully examined. If any defect was discovered in the animal presented, it was refused; for God had commanded that the offering be “without blemish.” So Christians are bidden to present their bodies, “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” In order to do this, all their powers must be preserved in the best possible condition. Every practice that

weakens physical or mental strength unfits man for the service of his Creator. And will God be pleased with anything less than the best we can offer? Said Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." Those who do love God with all the heart will desire to give Him the best service of their life, and they will be constantly seeking to bring every power of their being into harmony with the laws that will promote their ability to do His will.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 473.

## Thursday, March 28: Joy Comes in the Morning

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

Faith in God's love and overruling providence lightens the burdens of anxiety and care. It fills the heart with joy and contentment in the highest or the lowliest lot. Religion tends directly to promote health, to lengthen life, and to heighten our enjoyment of all its blessings. It opens to the soul a never-failing fountain of happiness. Would that all who have not chosen Christ might realize that He has something vastly better to offer them that they are seeking for themselves. . . . The path of transgression leads to misery and destruction; but wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Proverbs 3:17.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 600.

What a change was wrought in the hearts of the disciples as they looked once more on the loved countenance of their Master! Luke 24:32. . . . They had been witness to the wisdom and power of God, and they were "persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature," would be able to separate them from "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38, 39. . . .

Saith the Lord . . . "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Psalm 30:5. When on His resurrection day these disciples met the Saviour, and their hearts burned within them as they listened to His words; when they looked upon the head and hands and feet that had been bruised for them; when, before His ascension, Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands in blessing, bade them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel," adding, "Lo, I am with you alway" (Mark

16:15; Matthew 28:20) . . . —then, even though, like His, their pathway led through sacrifice and martyrdom, would they have exchanged the ministry of the gospel of His grace, with the “crown of righteousness?” . . . He who is “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,” had granted them, with the fellowship of His sufferings, the communion of His joy—the joy of “bringing many sons unto glory,” joy unspeakable, an “eternal weight of glory.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 349, 350.

**Friday, March 29: For Further Reading**

*The Ministry of Healing*, “The Discipline of Trial,” pp. 470–473;  
*Gospel Workers*, “Personal Ministry,” pp. 185–187.