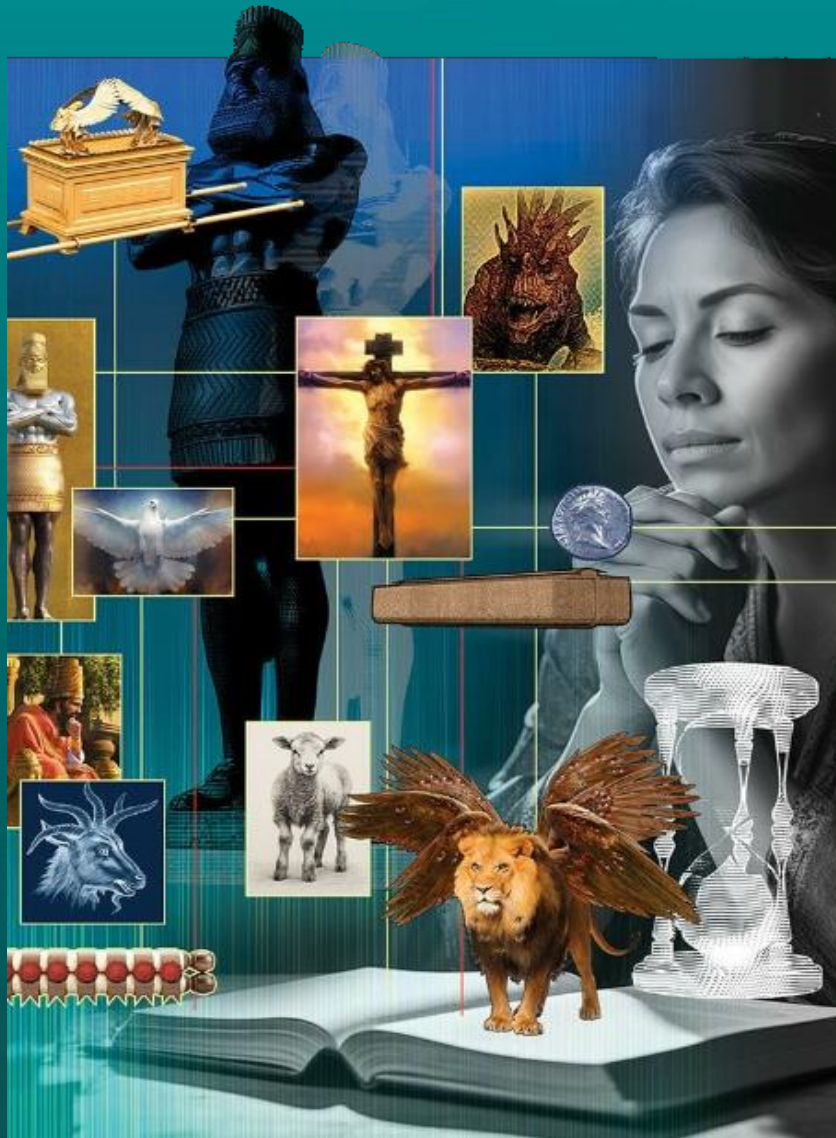


ALLUSIONS, IMAGES, SYMBOLS: HOW TO STUDY BIBLE PROPHECY



LESSON STUDY HELPS

OVERVIEW

Precursors for Prophecy

During the First Gulf War (1991), a well-known Protestant writer and speaker was convinced that the book of Revelation predicted this conflict. His argument was based on the fact that some of the helicopters in the war looked like the locusts depicted in Revelation 9. “And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power” (*Rev. 9:2-3, NKJV*).

Not exactly the best way to interpret biblical prophecy, is it? Yet, interpretations like this are fairly common. In fact, over the decades a stream of books, articles, videos, and now websites, all dedicated to prophecy, have made many predictions, including date setting, about final events—usually centered on wars or turmoil in the Middle East.

And, surprise of surprises, in every case those predictions have not come true. As Seventh-day Adventists, we take a different approach, a Christ-centered approach, in which the focus of prophecy is no longer on a single geographic location in the Middle East and whatever military conflicts unfold there. Instead, we view the prophecies through the lens of the great controversy between Christ and Satan—a worldwide spiritual struggle that will climax when God’s people, Jew and Gentile (*see Rev. 12:17, Rev. 14:12*), face the final crisis, which centres on worshipping the Creator (*see Rev. 14:7*), as opposed to the beast and his image.

A key element in understanding these last-day prophecies is Daniel 2, which contains not only the historical outline of the prophecies but the interpretive key to unlocking their meanings, as well. Daniel 2 depicts four world empires—Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome— followed by God’s establishing His eternal kingdom, “‘which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever’ ” (*Dan. 2:44, NKJV*). The parallel prophecies in Daniel 7 and 8 contain this same basic outline, that of these worldly empires arising and vanishing until God’s kingdom is forever established.

We can find images, symbols, and metaphors that, when studied prayerfully and with a humble, submissive spirit, ... will help make end-time prophecies, specifically in Revelation, come alive.

In Daniel 7, the angel interpreter sets it all out for us: “ ‘ “Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever” ’ ” (*Dan. 7:17, 18, NKJV*). Four worldly empires (Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome) move in an unbroken succession through history until, after the second coming of Jesus, God establishes His eternal one. Of course, we are still here, in the time of the division of Rome, the fourth and final earthly kingdom before Christ returns.

With this historical perspective as the foundation for understanding prophecy, we are going to study this quarter the theme of how to interpret Bible prophecy, specifically some of the allusions, stories, images, and metaphors that unlock prophetic truth and final events. We go from the Genesis creation account—important for understanding not only prophecy but for what follows, especially the cross and the atoning death of Jesus—to the tower of Babel, to the sanctuary service, to the Psalms, even to some Old Testament marriages. In all these, and more, we can find images, symbols, and metaphors that, when studied prayerfully and with a humble, submissive spirit (if you go to the Bible with a rebellious heart, you are wasting your time), will help make end-time prophecies, specifically in Revelation, come alive.

One quarter is certainly not enough even to begin to study all the stories and images that help unlock prophetic truth. Who knows—we might need eternity for that. Until then, by God’s grace, we will study what we can.

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NOTES :


LESSON 1

“SOME PRINCIPLES OF PROPHECY”

March 29 - April 4

 **MEMORY VERSE :** But let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I *am* The LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, says The LORD. [Jeremiah 9:24]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Psalm 139:1–6; Jeremiah 29:23-24; Daniel 12:4; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 22:10;

 **INTRODUCTION :** As with most everything else in Scripture, Christians disagree about prophecy, which often convinces others that Bible prophecy is a waste of time. After all, if Christians fight over every prophetic jot and tittle, how valid could it be? Unfortunately, many believers also begin to think that some books of the Bible, such as Revelation, are simply incomprehensible. Instead of reading them, they avoid them, sometimes with the encouragement of a well-meaning pastor who thinks that studying prophecy causes more problems than it solves.

It was not always so. For the first eighteen centuries of Christian history, most Christians were very comfortable with biblical prophecy, and there was a surprising level of agreement on what the key messages of the prophecies were. This is how God intended for it to be: “Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10, NKJV)

This week, we will explore some principles that yield a consistent and reliable understanding of prophecy

Further Thought***Preparation Day, April 4th, 2025*****The Great Controversy
Chapter 18, p. 319-324****“An American Reformer”**

“I saw that the Bible did bring to view just such a Saviour as I needed; and I was perplexed to find how an uninspired book should develop principles so perfectly adapted to the wants of a fallen world. I was constrained to admit that the Scriptures must be a revelation from God. They became my delight; and in Jesus I found a friend. The Saviour became to me the chiefest among ten thousand; and the Scriptures, which before were dark and contradictory, now became a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. My mind became settled and satisfied. I found the Lord God to be a Rock in the midst of the ocean of life. The Bible now became my chief study, and I can truly say, I searched it with great delight. I found the half was never told me. I wondered why I had not seen its beauty and glory before, and marvelled that I could ever have rejected it. I found everything revealed that my heart could desire, and a remedy for every disease of the soul. I lost all taste for other reading, and applied my heart to get wisdom from God.”

He now publicly professed his faith in the religion which he had despised. But his infidel associates were not slow to bring forward all those arguments which he himself had often urged against the divine authority of the Scriptures. He was not then prepared to answer them; but he reasoned, that if the Bible is a revelation from God, it must be consistent with itself; and that as it was given for man's instruction, it must be adapted to his understanding. He determined to study the Scriptures for himself, and ascertain if every apparent contradiction could not be harmonized.

Endeavouring to lay aside all preconceived opinions, and dispensing with commentaries, he compared scripture with scripture by the aid of the marginal references and the concordance. He pursued his study in a regular and methodical manner; beginning with Genesis, and reading verse by verse, he proceeded no faster than the meaning of the several passages so unfolded as to leave him free from all embarrassment. When he found anything obscure, it was his custom to compare it with every other text which seemed to have any reference to the matter under consideration. Every word was permitted to have its proper bearing upon the subject of the text, and if his view of it harmonized with every collateral passage, it ceased to be a difficulty. Thus whenever he met with a passage hard to be understood, he found an explanation in some other portion of the Scriptures. As he studied with earnest prayer for divine enlightenment, that which had before appeared dark to his understanding was made clear. He experienced the truth of the psalmist's words, “The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” [Psalm 119:130.]

With intense interest he studied the book of Daniel and the Revelation, employing the same principles of interpretation as in the other scriptures, and found, to his great joy, that the prophetic symbols could be understood. He saw that the prophecies, so far as they had been fulfilled, had been fulfilled literally; that all the various figures, metaphors, parables, similitudes, etc., were either explained in their immediate connection, or the terms in which they were expressed were defined in other scriptures; and when thus explained were to be literally understood. “Thus I was satisfied,” he says, “that the Bible was a system of revealed truth so clearly and simply given that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.” Link after link of the chain of truth rewarded his efforts, as step by step he traced down the great lines of prophecy. Angels of Heaven were guiding his mind and opening the Scriptures to his understanding.

Taking the manner in which the prophecies had been fulfilled in the past, as a criterion by which to judge of the fulfillment of those which were still future, he became satisfied that the popular view of the spiritual reign of Christ—a temporal millennium before the end of the world—was not sustained by the Word of God. This doctrine, pointing to a thousand years of righteousness and peace before the personal coming of the Lord, put far off the terrors of the day of God. But, pleasing though it may be, it is contrary to the teachings of Christ and his apostles, who declared that the wheat and the tares are to grow together until the harvest, the end of the world; [Matthew 13:30, 38-41.] that “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse;” [2 Timothy 3:13, 1.] that “in the last days

perilous times shall come;" [2 Timothy 3:13, 1.] and that the kingdom of darkness shall continue until the advent of the Lord, and shall be consumed with the spirit of his mouth, and be destroyed with the brightness of his coming. [2 Thessalonians 2:8.] The doctrine of the world's conversion and the spiritual reign of Christ was not held by the apostolic church. It was not generally accepted by Christians until about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Like every other error, its results were evil. It taught men to look far in the future for the coming of the Lord, and prevented them from giving heed to the signs heralding his approach. It induced a feeling of confidence and security that was not well founded, and led many to neglect the preparation necessary in order to meet their Lord.

Miller found the literal, personal coming of Christ to be plainly taught in the Scriptures. Says Paul, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." [1 Thessalonians 4:16.] And the Saviour declares: "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." [Matthew 24:30, 27.] He is to be accompanied by all the hosts of Heaven. "The Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him." "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect." [Matthew 25:31; 24:31.]

At his coming the righteous dead will be raised, and the righteous living will be changed. "We shall not all sleep," says Paul, "but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." [1 Corinthians 15:51-53.] And in his letter to the Thessalonians, after describing the coming of the Lord, he says: "The dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." [1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.]

Not until the personal advent of Christ can his people receive the kingdom. The Saviour said: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." [Matthew 25:31-34.] We have seen by the scriptures just given that when the Son of man comes, the dead are raised incorruptible, and the living are changed. By this great change they are prepared to receive the kingdom; for Paul says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." [1 Corinthians 15:50.] Man in his present state is mortal, corruptible; but the kingdom of God will be incorruptible, enduring forever. Therefore man in his present state cannot enter into the kingdom of God. But when Jesus comes, he confers immortality upon his people; and then he calls them to inherit the kingdom, of which they have hitherto been only heirs.

These and other scriptures clearly proved to Miller's mind, that the events which were generally expected to take place before the coming of Christ, such as the universal reign of peace, and the setting up of the kingdom of God upon the earth, were to be subsequent to the second advent. Furthermore, all the signs of the times and the condition of the world corresponded to the prophetic description of the last days. He was forced to the conclusion, from the study of Scripture alone, that the period allotted for the continuance of the earth in its present state was about to close.

"Another evidence that vitally affected my mind," he says, "was the chronology of the Scriptures. I found that predicted events, which had been fulfilled in the past, often occurred within a given time. The one hundred and twenty years to the flood, Genesis 6:3; the seven days that were to precede it, with forty days of predicted rain, Genesis 7:4; the four hundred years of the sojourn of Abraham's seed, Genesis 15:13; the three days of the butler's and baker's dreams, Genesis 40:12-20; the seven years of Pharaoh's, Genesis 41:28-54; the forty years in the wilderness, Numbers 14:34; the three and a half years of famine, 1 Kings 17:1; [See Luke 4:25.] the seventy years' captivity, Jeremiah 25:11; Nebuchadnezzar's seven times, Daniel 4:13-16; and the seven weeks, threescore and two weeks, and the one week, making seventy weeks, determined upon the Jews, Daniel 9:24-27; the events limited by these times were all once only a matter of prophecy, and were fulfilled in accordance with the predictions."

When, therefore, he found in his study of the Bible, various chronological periods that, according to his understanding of them, extended to the second coming of Christ, he could not but regard them as the "times before appointed," which God had revealed unto his servants. "The secret things," says Moses, "belong unto the Lord our

God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever,” [Deuteronomy 29:29.] and the Lord declares by the prophet Amos, that he “will do nothing, but he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets.” [Amos 3:7.] The students of God's Word may then confidently expect to find the most stupendous event to take place in human history clearly pointed out in the Scriptures of truth.

“As I was fully convinced,” says Miller, “that all Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable; [2 Timothy 3:16.] that it came not at any time by the will of man, but was written as holy men were moved by the Holy Ghost, [2 Peter 1:21.] and was written ‘for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, [Romans 15:4.] I could not but regard the chronological portions of the Bible as being as much entitled to our serious consideration as any other portion of the Scriptures. I felt therefore that in endeavouring to comprehend what God in his mercy had seen fit to reveal to us, I had no right to pass over the prophetic periods.”

The prophecy which seemed most clearly to reveal the time of the second advent was that of Daniel 8:14: “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Following his rule of making Scripture its own interpreter, Miller learned that a day in symbolic prophecy represents a year; [Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6.] he saw that the period of 2300 prophetic days, or literal years, would extend far beyond the close of the Jewish dispensation, hence it could not refer to the sanctuary of that dispensation. Miller accepted the generally received view, that in the Christian age the earth is the sanctuary, and he therefore understood that the cleansing of the sanctuary foretold in Daniel 8:14, represented the purification of the earth by fire at the second coming of Christ. If, then, the correct starting-point could be found for the 2300 days, he concluded that the time of the second advent could be readily ascertained. Thus would be revealed the time of that great consummation, “the time when the present state, with all its pride and power, its pomp and vanity, wickedness and oppression, would come to an end; . . . when the curse would be removed from off the earth, when death would be destroyed, reward be given to the servants of God, to the prophets and saints, and all them that fear his name, and those be destroyed who destroy the earth.”

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, April 4th, 2025****The Spirit of Prophecy
Volume 3, Chapter 15, p. 208-209****“Jesus at Emmaus”**

On this same day Jesus met several of his disciples, and greeted them with "All hail," upon which they approached him and held him by the feet and worshiped him. He permitted this homage, for he had then ascended to his Father, and had received his approval, and the worship of the holy angels. Late in the afternoon of the same day, two of the disciples were on their way to Emmaus, eight miles from Jerusalem. They had come to the city to keep the Passover, and the news of the morning in regard to the removal of the body of Jesus from the sepulchre had greatly perplexed them. This perplexity had been increased by the reports of the women concerning the heavenly messengers, and the appearance of Jesus himself. They were now returning to their home to meditate and pray, in hope of gaining some light in reference to these matters which so confused their understanding.

These two disciples had not held a prominent position beside Jesus in his ministry, but they were earnest believers in him. Soon after they began their journey, they observed a stranger coming up behind them, who presently joined their company; but they were so busy with perplexing thoughts, which they were communicating to each other, that they scarcely noticed they were not alone. Those strong men were so burdened with grief that they wept as they travelled on. Christ's pitying heart of love saw here a sorrow which he could relieve. The disciples were reasoning with each other concerning the events of the past few days, and marvelling how the fact of Jesus yielding himself up to a shameful death could be reconciled with his claims as the Son of God.

One maintained that he could be no pretender, but had been himself deceived in regard to his mission and his future glory. They both feared that what his enemies had flung in his teeth was too true--"He saved others; himself he cannot save." Yet they wondered how he could be so mistaken in himself, when he had given them such repeated evidence that he could read the hearts of others. And the strange reports of the women threw them into still greater uncertainty.

Long might these disciples have perplexed themselves over the mysteries of the past few days, if they had not received enlightenment from Jesus. He, disguised as a stranger, entered into conversation with them. "But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people."

They then recounted to him the facts of the trial and crucifixion of their Master, together with the testimony of the women in regard to the removal of his body, the vision of angels which they had seen, the news of the resurrection, and the report of those disciples who had gone to the sepulchre. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

The disciples were silent from amazement and delight. They did not venture to ask the stranger who he was. They listened to him intently, charmed by his intelligence, and drawn toward him by his gracious words and manner, as he opened the Scriptures to their understanding, showing them from prophecy how Christ must suffer, and after suffering enter into his glory.

Jesus began with the first book written by Moses, and traced down through all the prophets the inspired proof in regard to his life, his mission, his suffering, death, and resurrection. He did not deem it necessary to work a miracle to evidence that he was the risen Redeemer of the world; but he went back to the prophecies, and gave a full and

clear explanation of them to settle the question of his identity, and the fact that all which had occurred to him was foretold by the inspired writers. Jesus ever carried the minds of his hearers back to the precious mine of truth found in the Old-Testament Scriptures. The esteem in which he held those sacred records is exemplified in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, where he says, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." The apostles also all testify to the importance of the Old-Testament Scriptures. Peter says: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Luke thus speaks of the prophets who predicted the coming of Christ: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people; and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began."

It is the voice of Christ that speaks through the prophets and patriarchs, from the days of Adam even down to the closing scenes of time. This truth was not discerned by the Jews who rejected Jesus, and it is not discerned by many professing Christians today. A beautiful harmony runs through the Old and New Testaments; passages which may seem dark at a first reading, present clear interpretations when diligently studied, and compared with other scripture referring to the same subject. A careful search of the prophecies would have so enlightened the understanding of the Jews that they would have recognized Jesus as the predicted Messiah. But they had interpreted those predictions to meet their own perverted ideas and ambitious aspirations.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, April 4th, 2025****Early Writings
Chapter 11, p. 229-232
“Spiritual Gifts, Volume 1”****“William Miller”**

God sent His angel to move upon the heart of a farmer who had not believed the Bible, to lead him to search the prophecies. Angels of God repeatedly visited that chosen one, to guide his mind and open to his understanding prophecies which had ever been dark to God's people. The commencement of the chain of truth was given to him, and he was led on to search for link after link, until he looked with wonder and admiration upon the Word of God. He saw there a perfect chain of truth. That Word which he had regarded as uninspired now opened before his vision in its beauty and glory. He saw that one portion of Scripture explains another, and when one passage was closed to his understanding, he found in another part of the Word that which explained it. He regarded the sacred Word of God with joy and with the deepest respect and awe.

As he followed down the prophecies, he saw that the inhabitants of the earth were living in the closing scenes of this world's history, yet they knew it not. He looked at the churches and saw that they were corrupt; they had taken their affections from Jesus and placed them on the world; they were seeking for worldly honour, instead of that honour which cometh from above; grasping for worldly riches, instead of laying up their treasure in heaven. He could see hypocrisy, darkness, and death everywhere. His spirit was stirred within him. God called him to leave his farm, as He called Elisha to leave his oxen and the field of his labour to follow Elijah. With trembling, William Miller began to unfold to the people the mysteries of the kingdom of God, carrying his hearers down through the prophecies to the second advent of Christ. With every effort he gained strength. As John the Baptist heralded the first advent of Jesus and prepared the way for His coming, so William Miller and those who joined with him proclaimed the second advent of the Son of God.

I was carried back to the days of the disciples and was shown that God had a special work for the beloved John to accomplish. Satan was determined to hinder this work, and he led on his servants to destroy John. But God sent His angel and wonderfully preserved him. All who witnessed the great power of God manifested in the deliverance of John were astonished, and many were convinced that God was with him, and that the testimony which he bore concerning Jesus was correct. Those who sought to destroy him were afraid to attempt again to take his life, and he was permitted to suffer on for Jesus. He was falsely accused by his enemies and was shortly banished to a lonely island, where the Lord sent His angel to reveal to him events which were to take place upon the earth and the state of the church down to the end --her backslidings and the position which she should occupy if she would please God and finally overcome.

The angel from heaven came to John in majesty, his countenance beaming with the excellent glory of God. He revealed to John scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the history of the church of God and brought before him the perilous conflicts which Christ's followers were to endure. John saw them passing through fiery trials, made white and tried, and, finally, victorious overcomers, gloriously saved in the kingdom of God. The countenance of the angel grew radiant with joy and was exceeding glorious, as he showed John the final triumph of the church of God. As the apostle beheld the final deliverance of the church, he was carried away with the glory of the scene and with deep reverence and awe fell at the feet of the angel to worship him. The heavenly messenger instantly raised him up and gently reproved him, saying, "See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The angel then showed John the heavenly city with all its splendour and dazzling glory, and he, enraptured and overwhelmed, and forgetful of the former reproof of the angel, again fell to worship at his feet. Again the gentle reproof was given, "See thou do it not for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."

Preachers and people have looked upon the book of Revelation as mysterious and of less importance than other portions of the Sacred Scriptures. But I saw that this book is indeed a revelation given for the especial benefit of those who should live in the last days, to guide them in ascertaining their true position and their duty. God directed the mind of William Miller to the prophecies and gave him great light upon the book of Revelation.

If Daniel's visions had been understood, the people could better have understood the visions of John. But at the right time, God moved upon His chosen servant, who, with clearness and in the power of the Holy Spirit, opened the prophecies and showed the harmony of the visions of Daniel and John and other portions of the Bible, and pressed home upon the hearts of the people the sacred, fearful warnings of the Word to prepare for the coming of the Son of man. Deep and solemn conviction rested upon the minds of those who heard him, and ministers and people, sinners and infidels, turned to the Lord and sought a preparation to stand in the judgment.

Angels of God accompanied William Miller in his mission. He was firm and undaunted, fearlessly proclaiming the message committed to his trust. A world lying in wickedness and a cold, worldly church were enough to call into action all his energies and lead him willingly to endure toil, privation, and suffering. Although opposed by professed Christians and the world, and buffeted by Satan and his angels, he ceased not to preach the everlasting gospel to crowds wherever he was invited, sounding far and near the cry, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come."


I saw that God was in the proclamation of the time in 1843. It was His design to arouse the people and bring them to a testing point, where they should decide for or against the truth. Ministers were convinced of the correctness of the positions taken on the prophetic periods, and some renounced their pride, and left their salaries and their churches to go forth from place to place to give the message. But as the message from heaven could find a place in the hearts of but few of the professed ministers of Christ, the work was laid upon many who were not preachers. Some left their fields to sound the message, while others were called from their shops and their merchandise. And even some professional men were compelled to leave their professions to engage in the unpopular work of giving the first angel's message.


Ministers laid aside their sectarian views and feelings and united in proclaiming the coming of Jesus. Wherever the message was given, it moved the people. Sinners repented, wept, and prayed for forgiveness, and those whose lives had been marked with dishonesty were anxious to make restitution. Parents felt the deepest solicitude for their children. Those who received the message laboured with their unconverted friends and relatives, and with their souls bowed with the weight of the solemn message, warned and entreated them to prepare for the coming of the Son of man. Those cases were most hardened that would not yield to such a weight of evidence set home by heartfelt warnings. This soul-purifying work led the affections away from worldly things to a consecration never before experienced.


LESSON 2

“THE GENESIS FOUNDATION”

April 5 - April 11

 **MEMORY VERSE :** *“The next day John sees Jesus coming to him, and says, Behold The Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.” [John 1:29]*

 **SCRIPTURE :** Genesis 22:1–13; Isaiah 40:7-8; John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:15–19; Revelation 5:5–10; Revelation 12:1–9

 **INTRODUCTION :** One of the key problems with modern interpretations of Bible prophecy, such as in Revelation, is that they fail to recognize the ancient roots of Revelation. The author assumes a knowledge of the Old Testament and uses concepts that would have been well-known to his audience. While searching the entire Bible for passages that resemble the text you are studying in Revelation is useful, there are also core texts that set the stage for understanding the book better than other texts do. This is particularly true of Genesis, which lays out the path by which our world descended into sinful chaos. Nearly every key concept mentioned in Revelation appears—in some form—in the opening chapters of the Bible.

This week, we are going to study a handful of big concepts at the core of Revelation. There are many, and so we will choose a few to illustrate the all-important point that understanding the ancient foundations behind Revelation enables the student to see countless nuances in the text, each of which can yield important lessons about the nature of humanity, of God, and of the conflict being waged in our universe and, thus, in our lives, as well.

Further Thought***Preparation Day, April 11th, 2025*****The Acts of the Apostles
Chapter 57, p. 578-581****“The Revelation”**

In the days of the apostles the Christian believers were filled with earnestness and enthusiasm. So untiringly did they labour for their Master that in a comparatively short time, notwithstanding fierce opposition, the gospel of the kingdom was sounded to all the inhabited parts of the earth. The zeal manifested at this time by the followers of Jesus has been recorded by the pen of inspiration for the encouragement of believers in every age. Of the church at Ephesus, which the Lord Jesus used as a symbol of the entire Christian church in the apostolic age, the faithful and true Witness declared:

"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted." Revelation 2:2, 3.

At the first the experience of the church at Ephesus was marked with childlike simplicity and fervour. The believers sought earnestly to obey every word of God, and their lives revealed an earnest, sincere love for Christ. They rejoiced to do the will of God because the Saviour was in their hearts as an abiding presence. Filled with love for their Redeemer, their highest aim was to win souls to Him. They did not think of hoarding the precious treasure of the grace of Christ. They felt the importance of their calling; and, weighted with the message, "On earth peace, good will toward men," they burned with desire to carry the glad tidings of salvation to earth's remotest bounds. And the world took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Sinful men, repentant, pardoned, cleansed, and sanctified, were brought into partnership with God through His Son.

The members of the church were united in sentiment and action. Love for Christ was the golden chain that bound them together. They followed on to know the Lord more and still more perfectly, and in their lives were revealed the joy and peace of Christ. They visited the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and kept themselves unspotted from the world, realizing that a failure to do this would be a contradiction of their profession and a denial of their Redeemer.

In every city the work was carried forward. Souls were converted, who in their turn felt that they must tell of the inestimable treasure they had received. They could not rest till the light which had illumined their minds was shining upon others. Multitudes of unbelievers were made acquainted with the reasons of the Christian's hope. Warm, inspired personal appeals were made to the erring, to the outcast, and to those who, while professing to know the truth, were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

But after a time the zeal of the believers began to wane, and their love for God and for one another grew less. Coldness crept into the church. Some forgot the wonderful manner in which they had received the truth. One by one the old standard-bearers fell at their post. Some of the younger workers, who might have shared the burdens of these pioneers, and thus have been prepared for wise leadership, had become weary of oft-repeated truths. In their desire for something novel and startling they attempted to introduce new phases of doctrine, more pleasing to many minds, but not in harmony with the fundamental principles of the gospel. In their self-confidence and spiritual blindness they failed to discern that these sophistries would cause many to question the experiences of the past, and would thus lead to confusion and unbelief.

As these false doctrines were urged, differences sprang up, and the eyes of many were turned from beholding Jesus as the Author and Finisher of their faith. The discussion of unimportant points of doctrine, and the contemplation of pleasing fables of man's invention, occupied time that should have been spent in proclaiming the gospel. The masses that might have been convicted and converted by a faithful presentation of the truth were left unwarned. Piety was rapidly waning, and Satan seemed about to gain the ascendancy over those who claimed to be followers of Christ.

It was at this critical time in the history of the church that John was sentenced to banishment. Never had his voice been needed by the church as now. Nearly all his former associates in the ministry had suffered martyrdom. The remnant of believers was facing fierce opposition. To all outward appearance the day was not far distant when the enemies of the church of Christ would triumph.

But the Lord's hand was moving unseen in the darkness. In the providence of God, John was placed where Christ could give him a wonderful revelation of Himself and of divine truth for the enlightenment of the churches.

In exiling John, the enemies of truth had hoped to silence forever the voice of God's faithful witness; but on Patmos the disciple received a message, the influence of which was to continue to strengthen the church till the end of time. Though not released from the responsibility of their wrong act, those who banished John became instruments in the hands of God to carry out Heaven's purpose; and the very effort to extinguish the light placed the truth in bold relief.

It was on the Sabbath that the Lord of glory appeared to the exiled apostle. The Sabbath was as sacredly observed by John on Patmos as when he was preaching to the people in the towns and cities of Judea. He claimed as his own the precious promises that had been given regarding that day. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," John writes, "and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. . . . And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks One like unto the Son of man." Revelation 1:10-13.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, April 11th, 2025****Steps to Christ
Chapter 1, p. 9-15****“God’s Love for Man”**

Nature and revelation alike testify of God's love. Our Father in heaven is the source of life, of wisdom, and of joy. Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvellous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refresh the earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator's love. It is God who supplies the daily needs of all His creatures. In the beautiful words of the psalmist—

“The eyes of all wait upon You; And You give them their meat in due season. You open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.” [Psalm 145:15-16]

God made man perfectly holy and happy; and the fair earth, as it came from the Creator's hand, bore no blight of decay or shadow of the curse. It is transgression of God's law--the law of love--that has brought woe and death. Yet even amid the suffering that results from sin, God's love is revealed. It is written that God cursed the ground for man's sake. Genesis 3:17. The thorn and the thistle--the difficulties and trials that make his life one of toil and care--were appointed for his good as a part of the training needful in God's plan for his uplifting from the ruin and degradation that sin has wrought. The world, though fallen, is not all sorrow and misery. In nature itself are messages of hope and comfort. There are flowers upon the thistles, and the thorns are covered with roses.

"God is love" is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green -- all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy.

The word of God reveals His character. He Himself has declared His infinite love and pity. When Moses prayed, "Show me Thy glory," the Lord answered, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee." Exodus 33:18, 19. This is His glory. The Lord passed before Moses, and proclaimed, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Exodus 34:6, 7. He is "slow to anger, and of great kindness," "because He delights in mercy." Jonah 4:2; Micah 7:18.

God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice,--one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men.

The Son of God came from heaven to make manifest the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John 1:18. "Neither knows any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Matthew 11:27. When one of the disciples made the request, "Show us the Father," Jesus answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how say you then, Show us the Father?" John 14:8, 9.

In describing His earthly mission, Jesus said, The Lord "hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. This was His work. He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for He had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were revealed in every act of His life; His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. He took man's nature, that He might reach man's wants. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. Even little children were attracted to Him. They loved to climb upon His knees and gaze into the pensive face, benignant with love.

Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, which refused to receive Him, the way, the truth, and the life. They had rejected Him, the Saviour, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness. His life was one of self-denial and thoughtful care for others. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.

Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life. This is the character of God. It is from the Father's heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Saviour, was God "manifest in the flesh." 1 Timothy 3:16.

It was to redeem us that Jesus lived and suffered and died. 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, darkened with the shadow of death and the curse. He permitted Him to leave the bosom of His love, the adoration of the angels, to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred, and death. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5. Behold Him in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, upon the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and man. This wrung from His lips the anguished cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:46. It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God--it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God.

But this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption.

Jesus said, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again." John 10:17. That is, "My Father has so loved you that He even loves Me more for giving My life to redeem you. In becoming your Substitute and Surety, by surrendering My life, by taking your liabilities, your transgressions, I am endeared to My Father; for by My sacrifice, God can be just, and yet the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the Father's love to lost humanity.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." He gave Him not only to live among men, to bear their sins, and die their sacrifice. He gave Him to the fallen race. Christ was to identify Himself with the interests and needs of humanity. He who was one with God has linked Himself with the children of men by ties that are never to be broken. Jesus is "not ashamed to call them brethren" (Hebrews 2:11); He is our Sacrifice, our Advocate, our Brother, bearing our human form before the Father's throne, and through eternal ages one with the

race He has redeemed--the Son of man. And all this that man might be uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin that he might reflect the love of God and share the joy of holiness.

The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ. As the inspired apostle John beheld the height, the depth, the breadth of the Father's love toward the perishing race, he was filled with adoration and reverence; and, failing to find suitable language in which to express the greatness and tenderness of this love, he called upon the world to behold it. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name "sons of God."

Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Precious promise! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God. The more we study the divine character in the light of the cross, the more we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice, and the more clearly we discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite and a tender pity surpassing a mother's yearning sympathy for her wayward child.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, April 11th, 2025****Patriarchs and Prophets
Chapter 4, p. 69-70****“The Plan of Redemption”**

From the first the great controversy had been upon the law of God. Satan had sought to prove that God was unjust, that His law was faulty, and that the good of the universe required it to be changed. In attacking the law he aimed to overthrow the authority of its Author. In the controversy it was to be shown whether the divine statutes were defective and subject to change, or perfect and immutable.

When Satan was thrust out of heaven, he determined to make the earth his kingdom. When he tempted and overcame Adam and Eve, he thought that he had gained possession of this world; "because," said he, "they have chosen me as their ruler." He claimed that it was impossible that forgiveness should be granted to the sinner, and therefore the fallen race were his rightful subjects, and the world was his. But God gave His own dear Son—one equal with Himself—to bear the penalty of transgression, and thus He provided a way by which they might be restored to His favour, and brought back to their Eden home. Christ undertook to redeem man and to rescue the world from the grasp of Satan. The great controversy begun in heaven was to be decided in the very world, on the very same field, that Satan claimed as his.


It was the marvel of all the universe that Christ should humble Himself to save fallen man. That He who had passed from star to star, from world to world, superintending all, by His providence supplying the needs of every order of being in His vast creation—that He should consent to leave His glory and take upon Himself human nature, was a mystery which the sinless intelligences of other worlds desired to understand. When Christ came to our world in the form of humanity, all were intensely interested in following Him as He traversed, step by step, the bloodstained path from the manger to Calvary. Heaven marked the insult and mockery that He received, and knew that it was at Satan's instigation. They marked the work of counter-agencies going forward; Satan constantly pressing darkness, sorrow, and suffering upon the race, and Christ counteracting it. They watched the battle between light and darkness as it waxed stronger. And as Christ in His expiring agony upon the cross cried out, "It is finished" (John 19:30), a shout of triumph rang through every world and through heaven itself. The great contest that had been so long in progress in this world was now decided, and Christ was conqueror. His death had answered the question whether the Father and the Son had sufficient love for man to exercise self-denial and a spirit of sacrifice. Satan had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit with which he had ruled the children of men who were under his power, he would have manifested if permitted to control the intelligences of heaven. With one voice the loyal universe united in extolling the divine administration.


If the law could be changed, man might have been saved without the sacrifice of Christ; but the fact that it was necessary for Christ to give His life for the fallen race, proves that the law of God will not release the sinner from its claims upon him. It is demonstrated that the wages of sin is death. When Christ died, the destruction of Satan was made certain. But if the law was abolished at the cross, as many claim, then the agony and death of God's dear Son were endured only to give to Satan just what he asked; then the prince of evil triumphed, his charges against the divine government were sustained. The very fact that Christ bore the penalty of man's transgression is a mighty argument to all created intelligences that the law is changeless; that God is righteous, merciful, and self-denying; and that infinite justice and mercy unite in the administration of His government.


LESSON 3

“IMAGES FROM MARRIAGE”

April 12 - April 18

 **MEMORY VERSE :** *“And He said to me, Write, **Blessed** are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He said to me, These are the true sayings of God.”*
[Revelation 19:9]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Genesis 2:23–25; Genesis 24:1–4; Ezekiel 16:4–14; Ephesians 5:29–32; Revelation 18:1–4; Revelation 19:1–9;

 **INTRODUCTION :** The Bible is replete with love stories that powerfully reveal aspects of salvation and of God’s love for His people. The most intimate of relationships, marriage, proves to be a school in which, if we allow ourselves to experience it the way that God had intended, we can discover deep lessons about His love for us, about our relationship to Him, and about the lengths to which He has gone to redeem us.

Modern conceptions of love and marriage have skewed our ability to appreciate what God is trying to teach us through the marital covenant. Though human sinfulness has greatly perverted marriage (and just about everything else), marriage can still be a powerful way of revealing truth, even prophetic truth. More than just to make us happy, marriage should be a school in which we learn deep lessons about ourselves and our relationship to God.

This week we will explore different ways the Word of God talks about marriages, good and bad. We can then draw lessons from these examples to understand better how God relates to His people, even when they fall short, and we can learn some truths about His love that can help us better grasp last day events.

Further Thought**Preparation Day, April 18th, 2025****Matthew 25:1–13; Matthew 22:1–14; John 2:1–11; 2 Corinthians 11:1–5;****[Matthew 22:1-14]**

- ☞ ¹ And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,
² The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,
³ And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.
⁴ Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage.
⁵ But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:
⁶ And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.
⁷ But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.
⁸ Then said he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.
⁹ Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.
¹⁰ So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.
¹¹ And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:
¹² And he said unto him, Friend, how came thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.
¹³ Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
¹⁴ For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

[Matthew 25:1-13]

- ☞ ¹ Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
² And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.
³ They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
⁴ But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
⁵ While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
⁶ And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
⁷ Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
⁸ And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.
⁹ But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.
¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.
¹¹ Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.
¹² But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
¹³ Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

[John 2:1-12]

- ☞ ¹ And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:
² And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.
³ And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus said unto him, They have no wine.
⁴ Jesus said unto her, **Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.**
⁵ His mother said unto the servants, Whatsoever he said unto you, do *it*.
⁶ And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.
⁷ Jesus said unto them, **Fill the waterpots with water.** And they filled them up to the brim.

⁸ And he said unto them, **Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast.** And they bare *it*.

⁹ When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

¹⁰ And said unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

¹¹ This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

¹² After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

[2 Corinthians 11:1-5]

✠ ¹ Would to God ye could bear with me a little in *my* folly: and indeed bear with me.

² For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.

³ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

⁴ For if he that cometh preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.

⁵ For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

EGW Study Notes 1

Preparation Day, April 18th, 2025

Radiant Religion

Chapter 6, p. 176

“Social Enjoyment”

“Marriage, Only the Beginning of Love”

June 23rd

Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

Proverbs 5:18

Let the husband aid his wife by his sympathy and unfailing affection. If he wishes to keep her fresh and gladsome, so that she will be as sunshine in the home, let him help her bear her burdens. His kindness and loving courtesy will be to her a precious encouragement, and the happiness he imparts will bring joy and peace to his own heart.—*The Ministry of Healing*, 374.

Let the husband and wife study each other's happiness, never failing in the small courtesies and little kindly acts that cheer and brighten the life.—*The Ministry of Healing*, 393.

Though difficulties, perplexities, and discouragements may arise, let neither husband nor wife harbor the thought that their union is a mistake or a disappointment. Determine to be all that it is possible to be to each other. Continue the early attentions. In every way encourage each other in fighting the battles of life.... Let there be mutual love, mutual forbearance. Then marriage, instead of being the end of love, will be as it were the very beginning of love.—*The Ministry of Healing*, 360.

EGW Study Notes 2***Preparation Day, April 18th, 2025*****The Great Controversy
Chapter 40, p. 651-652****“God’s People Delivered”**

In this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance. The length and the breadth, the depth and the height of redeeming love are but dimly comprehended. The plan of redemption will not be fully understood, even when the ransomed see as they are seen and know as they are known; but through the eternal ages, new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind. Though the griefs and pains and temptations of earth are ended, and the cause removed, the people of God will ever have a distinct, intelligent knowledge of what their salvation has cost.

The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. Never will it be forgotten that He whose power created and upheld the unnumbered worlds through the vast realms of space, the Beloved of God, the Majesty of Heaven, He whom cherub and shining seraph delighted to adore,—humbled himself to uplift fallen man; that he bore the guilt and shame of sin, and the hiding of his Father's face, till the woes of a lost world broke his heart, and crushed out his life on Calvary's cross. That the Maker of all worlds, the Arbiter of all destinies, should lay aside his glory, and humiliate himself from love to man, will ever excite the wonder and adoration of the universe. As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer, and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in his countenance; as they behold his throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that his kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in rapturous song, “Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his own most precious blood!”


The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries. In the light that streams from Calvary, the attributes of God which had filled us with fear and awe appear beautiful and attractive. Mercy, tenderness, and parental love are seen to blend with holiness, justice, and power. While we behold the majesty of his throne, high and lifted up, we see his character in its gracious manifestations, and comprehend, as never before, the significance of that endearing title, our Father.


It will be seen that He who is infinite in wisdom could devise no plan for our salvation except the sacrifice of his Son. The compensation for this sacrifice is the joy of peopling the earth with ransomed beings, holy, happy, and immortal. The result of the Saviour's conflict with the powers of darkness is joy to the redeemed, redounding to the glory of God, throughout eternity. And such is the value of the soul that the Father is satisfied with the price paid; and Christ himself, beholding the fruits of his great sacrifice, is satisfied.


LESSON 4

“THE NATIONS - PART 1”

April 19 - April 25

 **MEMORY VERSE :** *“And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”*
[Daniel 7:14]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Genesis 10:1–12; Genesis 12:1–9; 1 Samuel 8:4–18; Daniel 7:27; Matthew 20:25–28; Revelation 18:1–4;

 **INTRODUCTION :** The book of Revelation shows us God’s solutions for our fallen world. In the final chapters, access to the tree of life is restored, the curse is lifted, and we are readmitted into the presence of God. Revelation, in some ways, is the book of Genesis in reverse, which is why Genesis remains an important key to understanding how the world’s problems developed in the first place. One of the key issues in both Daniel and Revelation is worldly government, a succession of human attempts to control a planet that rightfully belongs to God, who will—once this horrible episode of sin and rebellion is forever ended—ultimately rule in righteousness.

It is a very long process that leads to this moment, covering thousands of years of human experiments in self-government. They have never worked; even those expressing the highest ideals have always fallen short, often terribly short, of those ideals. So much of the sad history of humanity through the millennia is nothing but accounts of the tragedy that these failed systems have brought upon us. And it only will get worse until God’s “everlasting kingdom” (Daniel 7:27) finally is established.

Further Thought**Preparation Day, April 25th, 2025****Isaiah 44:24 to Isaiah 45:13****[Isaiah 44:24-28]**

- ☞ ²⁴ This said The LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I *am* the LORD that makes all *things*; that stretches forth the heavens alone; that spreads abroad the earth by myself;
- ²⁵ That frustrates the tokens of the liars, and makes diviners mad; that turneth wise *men* backward, and makes their knowledge foolish;
- ²⁶ That confirms the word of his servant, and performs the counsel of his messengers; that said to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof:
- ²⁷ That says to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:
- ²⁸ That said of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

[Isaiah 45:1-13]

- ☞ ¹ Thus said The LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;
- ² I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:
- ³ And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou may know that I, the LORD, which call *thee* by thy name, *am* the God of Israel.
- ⁴ For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.
- ⁵ I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:
- ⁶ That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none beside me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else.
- ⁷ I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.
- ⁸ Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.
- ⁹ Woe unto him that strives with his Maker! *Let* the potsherd *strive* with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashions it, What makes thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?
- ¹⁰ Woe unto him that says unto *his* father, What begets thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?
- ¹¹ Thus said The LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.
- ¹² I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, *even* my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.
- ¹³ I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, said The LORD of hosts.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, April 25th, 2025****Letters & Manuscripts
Volume 10, August 1, 1895, par. 1-11
Manuscript No. 1335****“God to Control His Heritage”**

(Written August 1, 1895, at Granville, N.S.W., Australia.)

I am unable to put away the anxious thoughts that fill my mind in regard to the work of God. I feel that to weep would be a relief. I am sure that a work must be done for those in positions of trust in Battle Creek. They will never be safe, trustworthy men until they are labourers together with God. The question often comes to me, "Has God chosen these men to devise and plan and execute in behalf of His work, when they have not a vital connection with Him?" The men God chooses to bear burdens in His work are to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn from Him how to repress their unChristlike desires and inclinations. God has not given men power to interfere between a human being and his conscience.

The question of religious liberty needs to be clearly comprehended by our people in more ways than one. With outstretched arms men are seeking to steady the ark, and the anger of the Lord is kindled against them because they think that their position entitles them to say what the Lord's servants shall do and what they shall not do. They think themselves competent to decide what shall be brought before God's people, and what shall be repressed. The Lord inquires of them, "Who has required this at your hand? Who has given you the burden of being conscience for My people? By what spirit are you guided and controlled when you seek to restrict their liberty? I have not chosen you as I chose Moses--as men through whom I can communicate divine instruction to My people. I have not placed the lines of control in your hands. The responsibility that rested on Moses--of voicing the words of God to the people--has never been delegated to you."

Moses was specially chosen to be the visible leader of the children of Israel. Through long years of discipline he learned the lesson of humility, and he became a man whom God could teach and guide. He endured as seeing Him who is invisible. God trusted him--a daily learner in the school of Christ --with the leadership of the host of Israel. God talked with him face to face, as a man talks with his friend. He was the meekest of all men. He did not seek to control the Holy Spirit, but was himself controlled by the Spirit.

Do the men who are today swaying and moulding the work of God give evidence that they are swayed and moulded by divine power? Do they give evidence that they have received the Spirit of God? Is truth enthroned in their hearts? Is Christ revealed in their daily experience? Is the law of kindness on their lips?

There is an evil, a great evil, that is to be rooted out of all council meetings and board meetings. We are living in perilous times. Men are striving for the control over their fellow men. God is displeased and dishonoured. Man is led to fear man rather than God. My brethren, has not the word of God been dismissed from your councils? Have not the words of men had too much power? Has not religious freedom been excluded from your assemblies? Have you not censured your fellow men, when you yourselves were standing under the censure of God? Take your hands off your brethren. They are not to be under the control of any man or set of men. Men are not to league together to bind their fellow men by rules and restrictions. God knows the characters of men. He sees their weakness, and He has not put into their hands the power that belongs alone to Him. He has not given them the right to say what their fellow men shall do and what they shall not do.

It is the greatest presumption for man to assume the right of dictation and control over his fellow men. God is the owner of man. To his Maker, man stands or falls. To God he is responsible, not to his fellow men. Every man has an individuality of his own, which is not to be submerged in any other human being. The life of each one must be hid with Christ in God. Men are under God's control, not under the control of weak, erring human beings. They are to be left free to be guided by the Holy Spirit, not by the fitful, perverse spirit of unsanctified men.

The encroachments made by men on the liberty of their fellow men are condemned by God. These encroachments, which are not seen in their true bearing, are inspired by the enemy of God, to cut off the opportunity for God to work on minds by His Spirit. Those who do not know God, who refuse to hear His voice or to be ruled by Him, will stand with cord in hand, ready to bind the Lord's workers and trammel them in their efforts.

Let God be recognized as the supreme Ruler of His heritage. Let every man place himself under His control. Let Him be recognized in all our assemblies, in every business meeting, every council, every committee. He sees all that is done, and hears all that is said. "Thou God see me." Let these words be kept ever in mind. They will be a safeguard against imprudent, passionate speeches, against all desire to domineer. They will repress words that should never be spoken, and resolutions that men have no right to make --resolutions that restrict the liberty of human beings.

Let God place restrictions on His workers, but let man beware how he places restrictions where God places none. If men are permitted to control the judgment of their fellow men, oppression will result. The cause of God will be bound about. Scheme after scheme that is unjust will be planned. Let not men take on themselves the responsibility of controlling the words and actions of their fellow men. Let our institutions give place to the working of God on human minds. Let God have opportunity to control. Should the principle obtain sway that in speaking and writing, men are to be under the control of human beings, deadly evils would be the result.

God calls upon men to act under His supervision, to accept His standard, to take all their decisions and plans to Him for approval. His holiness, His justice, is to keep them from unprincipled actions.

"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isaiah 2:22). [Psalms 146:3-10, quoted.]—Ms. 51, 1895.

Ellen G. White Estate Washington, D.C. Dec. 17, 1987. Entire Ms.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, April 25th, 2025****Prophets and Kings
Chapter 22, p. 277-278****“Nineveh, That Great City”**

The time is at hand when there will be sorrow in the world that no human balm can heal. The Spirit of God is being withdrawn. Disasters by sea and by land follow one another in quick succession. How frequently we hear of earthquakes and tornadoes, of destruction by fire and flood, with great loss of life and property! Apparently these calamities are capricious outbreaks of disorganized, unregulated forces of nature, wholly beyond the control of man; but in them all, God's purpose may be read. They are among the agencies by which He seeks to arouse men and women to a sense of their danger.

God's messengers in the great cities are not to become discouraged over the wickedness, the injustice, the depravity, which they are called upon to face while endeavouring to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. The Lord would cheer every such worker with the same message that He gave to the apostle Paul in wicked Corinth: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." Acts 18:9, 10. Let those engaged in soul-saving ministry remember that while there are many who will not heed the counsel of God in His word, the whole world will not turn from light and truth, from the invitations of a patient, forbearing Saviour. In every city, filled though it may be with violence and crime, there are many who with proper teaching may learn to become followers of Jesus. Thousands may thus be reached with saving truth and be led to receive Christ as a personal Saviour.

God's message for the inhabitants of earth today is, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matthew 24:44. The conditions prevailing in society, and especially in the great cities of the nations, proclaim in thunder tones that the hour of God's judgment is come and that the end of all things earthly is at hand. We are standing on the threshold of the crisis of the ages. In quick succession the judgments of God will follow one another--fire, and flood, and earthquake, with war and bloodshed. We are not to be surprised at this time by events both great and decisive; for the angel of mercy cannot remain much longer to shelter the impenitent.

"Behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isaiah 26:21. The storm of God's wrath is gathering; and those only will stand who respond to the invitations of mercy, as did the inhabitants of Nineveh under the preaching of Jonah, and become sanctified through obedience to the laws of the divine Ruler. The righteous alone shall be hid with Christ in God till the desolation be overpast.

Let the language of the soul be:

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, O, leave me not alone!
Still support and comfort me.


"Hide me, O my Saviour, hide!
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!"


{from the hymn Jesus, Lover of My Soul verse 1 & 2 ... not in order.}


LESSON 5

“THE NATIONS – PART 2”

April 26 - May 2

 **MEMORY VERSE :** *“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.”*
[Psalms 46:10]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Genesis 2:9–17; Isaiah 17:12-13; Daniel 2:31–35; Daniel 7:1–3;
Romans 3:10–19; Revelation 12:15-16; Revelation 10:1–11;

 **INTRODUCTION :** Through the centuries, some people have argued that God wanted the Fall, that it was His intention for humans to descend into sin and death and thus lead Him—in the person of Jesus—to the cross. After all, how else could He have so powerfully and graphically displayed the depth of His love for humanity than by dying on the cross for them? In short, the thinking goes, God needed humanity to fall.

That is a horrible and wretched position to take. It was never God’s intention for either Satan or humanity to fall. The rebellion of Satan, and then of humanity, was a tragedy of immense consequence, and our joy in Him would have remained complete had our first parents not fallen.

This week, we will continue looking at the problems caused by the Fall and the desire for human government as opposed to God’s governance. These truths are powerfully revealed in the book of Daniel, which shows that God was right when He warned His people about what would happen when they turned away from Him and chose earthly monarchs instead. This is exactly what they got: earthly monarchs and sinners lording it over sinners—never a good combination.

Further Thought***Preparation Day, May 2nd, 2025*****Patriarchs and Prophets
Chapter 10, p. 117-124****“The Tower of Babel”**

To repopulate the desolate earth, which the Flood had so lately swept from its moral corruption, God had preserved but one family, the household of Noah, to whom He had declared, "Thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation." Genesis 7:1. Yet in the three sons of Noah was speedily developed the same great distinction seen in the world before the Flood. In Shem, Ham, and Japheth, who were to be the founders of the human race, was foreshadowed the character of their posterity.

Noah, speaking by divine inspiration, foretold the history of the three great races to spring from these fathers of mankind. Tracing the descendants of Ham, through the son rather than the father, he declared, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." The unnatural crime of Ham declared that filial reverence had long before been cast from his soul, and it revealed the impiety and vileness of his character. These evil characteristics were perpetuated in Canaan and his posterity, whose continued guilt called upon them the judgments of God.

On the other hand, the reverence manifested by Shem and Japheth for their father, and thus for the divine statutes, promised a brighter future for their descendants. Concerning these sons it was declared: "Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." The line of Shem was to be that of the chosen people, of God's covenant, of the promised Redeemer. Jehovah was the God of Shem. From him would descend Abraham, and the people of Israel, through whom Christ was to come. "Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord." Psalm 144:15. And Japheth "shall dwell in the tents of Shem." In the blessings of the gospel the descendants of Japheth were especially to share.

The posterity of Canaan descended to the most degrading forms of heathenism. Though the prophetic curse had doomed them to slavery, the doom was withheld for centuries. God bore with their impiety and corruption until they passed the limits of divine forbearance. Then they were dispossessed, and became bondmen to the descendants of Shem and Japheth.

The prophecy of Noah was no arbitrary denunciation of wrath or declaration of favour. It did not fix the character and destiny of his sons. But it showed what would be the result of the course of life they had severally chosen and the character they had developed. It was an expression of God's purpose toward them and their posterity in view of their own character and conduct. As a rule, children inherit the dispositions and tendencies of their parents, and imitate their example; so that the sins of the parents are practiced by the children from generation to generation. Thus the vileness and irreverence of Ham were reproduced in his posterity, bringing a curse upon them for many generations. "One sinner destroys much good." Ecclesiastes 9:18.

On the other hand, how richly rewarded was Shem's respect for his father; and what an illustrious line of holy men appears in his posterity! "The Lord knows the days of the upright," "and his seed is blessed." Psalm 37:18, 26. "Know therefore that the Lord thy God He is God, the faithful God, which keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations." Deuteronomy 7:9.

For a time the descendants of Noah continued to dwell among the mountains where the ark had rested. As their numbers increased, apostasy soon led to division. Those who desired to forget their Creator and to cast off the restraint of His law felt a constant annoyance from the teaching and example of their God-fearing associates, and after a time they decided to separate from the worshipers of God. Accordingly they journeyed to the plain of Shinar, on the banks of the river Euphrates. They were attracted by the beauty of the situation and the fertility of the soil, and upon this plain they determined to make their home.

Here they decided to build a city, and in it a tower of such stupendous height as should render it the wonder of the world. These enterprises were designed to prevent the people from scattering abroad in colonies. God had directed men to disperse throughout the earth, to replenish and subdue it; but these Babel builders determined to keep their community united in one body, and to found a monarchy that should eventually embrace the whole earth. Thus their city would become the metropolis of a universal empire; its glory would command the admiration and homage of the world and render the founders illustrious. The magnificent tower, reaching to the heavens, was intended to stand as a monument of the power and wisdom of its builders, perpetuating their fame to the latest generations.

The dwellers on the plain of Shinar disbelieved God's covenant that He would not again bring a flood upon the earth. Many of them denied the existence of God and attributed the Flood to the operation of natural causes. Others believed in a Supreme Being, and that it was He who had destroyed the antediluvian world; and their hearts, like that of Cain, rose up in rebellion against Him. One object before them in the erection of the tower was to secure their own safety in case of another deluge. By carrying the structure to a much greater height than was reached by the waters of the Flood, they thought to place themselves beyond all possibility of danger. And as they would be able to ascend to the region of the clouds, they hoped to ascertain the cause of the Flood. The whole undertaking was designed to exalt still further the pride of its projectors and to turn the minds of future generations away from God and lead them into idolatry.

When the tower had been partially completed, a portion of it was occupied as a dwelling place for the builders; other apartments, splendidly furnished and adorned, were devoted to their idols. The people rejoiced in their success, and praised the gods of silver and gold, and set themselves against the Ruler of heaven and earth. Suddenly the work that had been advancing so prosperously was checked. Angels were sent to bring to naught the purpose of the builders. The tower had reached a lofty height, and it was impossible for the workmen at the top to communicate directly with those at the base; therefore men were stationed at different points, each to receive and report to the one next below him the orders for needed material or other directions concerning the work. As messages were thus passing from one to another the language was confounded, so that material was called for which was not needed, and the directions delivered were often the reverse of those that had been given. Confusion and dismay followed. All work came to a standstill. There could be no further harmony or co-operation. The builders were wholly unable to account for the strange misunderstandings among them, and in their rage and disappointment they reproached one another. Their confederacy ended in strife and bloodshed. Lightnings from heaven, as an evidence of God's displeasure, broke off the upper portion of the tower and cast it to the ground. Men were made to feel that there is a God who rules in the heavens.

Up to this time all men had spoken the same language; now those that could understand one another's speech united in companies; some went one way, and some another. "The Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth." This dispersion was the means of peopling the earth, and thus the Lord's purpose was accomplished through the very means that men had employed to prevent its fulfillment.

But at what a loss to those who had set themselves against God! It was His purpose that as men should go forth to found nations in different parts of the earth they should carry with them a knowledge of His will, that the light of truth might shine undimmed to succeeding generations. Noah, the faithful preacher of righteousness, lived for three hundred and fifty years after the Flood, Shem for five hundred years, and thus their descendants had an opportunity to become acquainted with the requirements of God and the history of His dealings with their fathers. But they were unwilling to listen to these unpalatable truths; they had no desire to retain God in their knowledge; and by the confusion of tongues they were, in a great measure, shut out from intercourse with those who might have given them light.

The Babel builders had indulged the spirit of murmuring against God. Instead of gratefully remembering His mercy to Adam and His gracious covenant with Noah, they had complained of His severity in expelling the first pair from Eden and destroying the world by a flood. But while they murmured against God as arbitrary and severe, they were accepting the rule of the cruelest of tyrants. Satan was seeking to bring contempt upon the sacrificial offerings that prefigured the death of Christ; and as the minds of the people were darkened by idolatry, he led them to counterfeit these offerings and sacrifice their own children upon the altars of their gods. As men turned away from God, the divine attributes--justice, purity, and love--were supplanted by oppression, violence, and brutality.

The men of Babel had determined to establish a government that should be independent of God. There were some among them, however, who feared the Lord, but who had been deceived by the pretensions of the ungodly and drawn into their schemes. For the sake of these faithful ones the Lord delayed His judgments and gave the people time to reveal their true character. As this was developed, the sons of God laboured to turn them from their purpose; but the people were fully united in their Heaven-daring undertaking. Had they gone on unchecked, they would have demoralized the world in its infancy. Their confederacy was founded in rebellion; a kingdom established for self-exaltation, but in which God was to have no rule or honour. Had this confederacy been permitted, a mighty power would have borne sway to banish righteousness--and with it peace, happiness, and security--from the earth. For the divine statutes, which are "holy and just and good" (Romans 7:12), men were endeavouring to substitute laws to suit the purpose of their own selfish and cruel hearts.

Those that feared the Lord cried unto Him to interpose. "And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded." In mercy to the world He defeated the purpose of the tower builders and overthrew the memorial of their daring. In mercy He confounded their speech, thus putting a check on their purposes of rebellion. God bears long with the perversity of men, giving them ample opportunity for repentance; but He marks all their devices to resist the authority of His just and holy law. From time to time the unseen hand that holds the sceptre of government is stretched out to restrain iniquity. Unmistakable evidence is given that the Creator of the universe, the One infinite in wisdom and love and truth, is the Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, and that none can with impunity defy His power.

The schemes of the Babel builders ended in shame and defeat. The monument to their pride became the memorial of their folly. Yet men are continually pursuing the same course--depending upon self, and rejecting God's law. It is the principle that Satan tried to carry out in heaven; the same that governed Cain in presenting his offering.

There are tower builders in our time. Infidels construct their theories from the supposed deductions of sciences, and reject the revealed word of God. They presume to pass sentence upon God's moral government; they despise His law and boast of the sufficiency of human reason. Then, "because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Ecclesiastes 8:11.

In the professedly Christian world many turn away from the plain teachings of the Bible and build up a creed from human speculations and pleasing fables, and they point to their tower as a way to climb up to heaven. Men hang with admiration upon the lips of eloquence while it teaches that the transgressor shall not die, that salvation may be secured without obedience to the law of God. If the professed followers of Christ would accept God's standard, it would bring them into unity; but so long as human wisdom is exalted above His Holy Word, there will be divisions and dissension. The existing confusion of conflicting creeds and sects is fitly represented by the term "Babylon," which prophecy (Revelation 14:8; 18:2) applies to the world-loving churches of the last days.

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 looked from heaven; He beholds all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looked upon all the inhabitants of the earth." "The Lord brings the counsel of the heathen to nought: He makes the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations." Psalm 33:13, 14, 10, 11.

EGW Study Notes 1***Preparation Day, May 2nd, 2025*****The Great Controversy
Chapter 26, p. 453****“A Work of Reform”**

Hallowed by the Creator's rest and blessing, the Sabbath was kept by Adam in his innocence in holy Eden; by Adam, fallen yet repentant, when he was driven from his happy estate. It was kept by all the patriarchs, from Abel to righteous Noah, to Abraham, to Jacob. When the chosen people were in bondage in Egypt, many, in the midst of prevailing idolatry, lost their knowledge of God's law; but when the Lord delivered Israel, he proclaimed his law in awful grandeur to the assembled multitude, that they might know his will, and fear and obey him forever.

From that day to the present, the knowledge of God's law has been preserved in the earth, and the Sabbath of the fourth commandment has been kept. Though the “man of sin” succeeded in trampling under foot God's holy day, yet even in the period of his supremacy there were, hidden in secret places, faithful souls who paid it honour. Since the Reformation, there have been some in every generation to maintain its observance. Though often in the midst of reproach and persecution, a constant testimony has been borne to the perpetuity of the law of God, and the sacred obligation of the creation Sabbath.

These truths, as presented in Revelation 14, in connection with the “everlasting gospel,” will distinguish the church of Christ at the time of his appearing. For as the result of the threefold message it is announced, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” And this message is the last to be given before the coming of the Lord. Immediately following its proclamation, the Son of man is seen by the prophet, coming in glory to reap the harvest of the earth.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, May 2nd, 2025****Maranatha, The Lord is Coming**
Chapter 6, p. 173
“Events Preceding the Second Coming”**“Symbolism of The Three Angels’ Messages”****June 14th****Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.****Malachi 4:5**

To prepare a people to stand in the day of God, a great work of reform was to be accomplished [by the Advent Movement]. God saw that many of His professed people were not building for eternity, and in His mercy He was about to send a message of warning to arouse them from their stupor and lead them to make ready for the coming of the Lord.

This warning is brought to view in Revelation 14. Here is a threefold message represented as proclaimed by heavenly beings and immediately followed by the coming of the Son of man to reap "the harvest of the earth."

The angels are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, proclaiming to the world a message of warning, and having a direct bearing upon the people living in the last days of this earth's history. No one hears the voice of these angels, for they are a symbol to represent the people of God who are working in harmony with the universe of heaven.


The three angels' messages are to be combined, giving their threefold light to the world. In the Revelation, John says, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." ... This represents the giving of the last and threefold message of warning to the world.


Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Revelation 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work. When those that "believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:12), shall be left to receive strong delusion and to believe a lie, then the light of truth will shine upon all whose hearts are open to receive it, and all the children of the Lord that remain in Babylon will heed the call: "Come out of her, my people" (Revelation 18:4).


LESSON 6

“UNDERSTANDING SACRIFICE”

May 3 - May 9

 **MEMORY VERSE :** “*And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;*”
[Revelation 5:9]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Exodus 12:1–11; Isaiah 1:2–15; Isaiah 6:1–5; Haggai 2:7–9; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 10:3–10; Revelation 4:1–11; Revelation 5:1–14;

 **INTRODUCTION :** When Jesus came toward him, John the Baptist declared: “ ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’ ” (*John 1:29, NKJV*). This was an unmistakable reference to the idea of animal sacrifice, all of which pointed to Christ’s substitutionary death in behalf of all humanity.

In the Bible, we cannot escape the theme of animal sacrifice; it runs like a scarlet thread throughout its pages and plays a central role in the grand scene in Revelation, where John is escorted into God’s throne room (*Revelation 4 and 5*). The fact that Jesus appears in this pivotal scene, looking like a slain lamb (*Rev. 5:6*), is an important key to understanding the entire prophetic episode.

This week we will look at some of the themes of sacrifice that inform our understanding of Jesus, the slain Lamb, the clear protagonist of the throne room scene. He is accepted as worthy, where no one else is, and His unique worthiness speaks volumes about what the Lord was doing through the sacrificial system. It reveals Him as a God of infinite love who made the ultimate sacrifice, an act that we, and the other intelligences in the universe, will marvel at for eternity.

Further Thought***Preparation Day, May 9th, 2025*****Patriarchs and Prophets
Chapter 4, p. 63****“The Plan of Redemption”**

The fall of man filled all heaven with sorrow. The world that God had made was blighted with the curse of sin and inhabited by beings doomed to misery and death. There appeared no escape for those who had transgressed the law. Angels ceased their songs of praise. Throughout the heavenly courts there was mourning for the ruin that sin had wrought.

The Son of God, heaven's glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. His heart was moved with infinite compassion as the woes of the lost world rose up before Him. But divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed. The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin—sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son. Christ would reach to the depths of misery to rescue the ruined race.

Before the Father He pleaded in the sinner's behalf, while the host of heaven awaited the result with an intensity of interest that words cannot express. Long continued was that mysterious communing—"the counsel of peace" (Zechariah 6:13) for the fallen sons of men. The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth; for Christ is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8); yet it was a struggle, even with the King of the universe, to yield up His Son to die for the guilty race. But "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. Oh, the mystery of redemption! the love of God for a world that did not love Him! Who can know the depths of that love which "passes knowledge"? Through endless ages immortal minds, seeking to comprehend the mystery of that incomprehensible love, will wonder and adore.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, May 9th, 2025****Patriarchs and Prophets
Chapter 24, p. 273-279****"The Passover"**

When the demand for Israel's release had been first presented to the king of Egypt, the warning of the most terrible of the plagues had been given. Moses was directed to say to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, Israel is My son, even My first-born: and I say unto thee, Let My son go, that he may serve Me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy first-born." Exodus 4:22, 23. Though despised by the Egyptians, the Israelites had been honoured by God, in that they were singled out to be the depositaries of His law. In the special blessings and privileges accorded them, they had pre-eminence among the nations, as the first-born son had among brothers. {PP 273.1}

The judgment of which Egypt had first been warned, was to be the last visited. God is long-suffering and plenteous in mercy. He has a tender care for the beings formed in His image. If the loss of their harvests and their flocks and herds had brought Egypt to repentance, the children would not have been smitten; but the nation had stubbornly resisted the divine command, and now the final blow was about to fall.

Moses had been forbidden, on pain of death, to appear again in Pharaoh's presence; but a last message from God was to be delivered to the rebellious monarch, and again Moses came before him, with the terrible announcement: "Thus says the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sits upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the first-born of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out."

Before the execution of this sentence the Lord through Moses gave direction to the children of Israel concerning their departure from Egypt, and especially for their preservation from the coming judgment. Each family, alone or in connection with others, was to slay a lamb or a kid "without blemish," and with a bunch of hyssop sprinkle its blood on "the two side posts and on the upper doorpost" of the house, that the destroying angel, coming at midnight, might not enter that dwelling. They were to eat the flesh roasted, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, at night, as Moses said, "with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's Passover."

The Lord declared: "I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment. . . . And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

In commemoration of this great deliverance a feast was to be observed yearly by the people of Israel in all future generations. "This day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations: ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever." As they should keep the feast in future years, they were to repeat to their children the story of this great deliverance, as Moses bade them: "Ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."

Furthermore, the first-born of both man and beast were to be the Lord's, to be bought back only by a ransom, in acknowledgment that when the first-born in Egypt perished, that of Israel, though graciously preserved, had been justly exposed to the same doom but for the atoning sacrifice. "All the first-born are Mine," the Lord declared; "for on the day that I smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto Me all the first-born in Israel, both man and beast: Mine they shall be," Numbers 3:13. After the institution of the tabernacle service the Lord chose

unto Himself the tribe of Levi for the work of the sanctuary, instead of the first-born of the people. "They are wholly given unto Me from among the children of Israel," He said. "Instead of the first-born of all the children of Israel, have I taken them unto Me." Numbers 8:16. All the people were, however, still required, in acknowledgment of God's mercy, to pay a redemption price for the first-born son. Numbers 18:15, 16.

The Passover was to be both commemorative and typical, not only pointing back to the deliverance from Egypt, but forward to the greater deliverance which Christ was to accomplish in freeing His people from the bondage of sin. The sacrificial lamb represents "the Lamb of God," in whom is our only hope of salvation. Says the apostle, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Corinthians 5:7. It was not enough that the paschal lamb be slain; its blood must be sprinkled upon the doorposts; so the merits of Christ's blood must be applied to the soul. We must believe, not only that He died for the world, but that He died for us individually. We must appropriate to ourselves the virtue of the atoning sacrifice.

The hyssop used in sprinkling the blood was the symbol of purification, being thus employed in the cleansing of the leper and of those defiled by contact with the dead. In the psalmist's prayer also its significance is seen: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalm 51:7.

The lamb was to be prepared whole, not a bone of it being broken: so not a bone was to be broken of the Lamb of God, who was to die for us. John 19:36. Thus was also represented the completeness of Christ's sacrifice.

The flesh was to be eaten. It is not enough even that we believe on Christ for the forgiveness of sin; we must by faith be constantly receiving spiritual strength and nourishment from Him through His word. Said Christ, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, hath eternal life." John 6:53, 54. And to explain His meaning He said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Verse 63. Jesus accepted His Father's law, wrought out its principles in His life, manifested its spirit, and showed its beneficent power in the heart. Says John, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14. The followers of Christ must be partakers of His experience. They must receive and assimilate the word of God so that it shall become the motive power of life and action. By the power of Christ they must be changed into His likeness, and reflect the divine attributes. They must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, or there is no life in them. The spirit and work of Christ must become the spirit and work of His disciples.

The lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs, as pointing back to the bitterness of the bondage in Egypt. So when we feed upon Christ, it should be with contrition of heart, because of our sins. The use of unleavened bread also was significant. It was expressly enjoined in the law of the Passover, and as strictly observed by the Jews in their practice, that no leaven should be found in their houses during the feast. In like manner the leaven of sin must be put away from all who would receive life and nourishment from Christ. So Paul writes to the Corinthian church, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump. . . . For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8.

Before obtaining freedom, the bondmen must show their faith in the great deliverance about to be accomplished. The token of blood must be placed upon their houses, and they must separate themselves and their families from the Egyptians, and gather within their own dwellings. Had the Israelites disregarded in any particular the directions given them, had they neglected to separate their children from the Egyptians, had they slain the lamb, but failed to strike the doorpost with blood, or had any gone out of their houses, they would not have been secure. They might have honestly believed that they had done all that was necessary, but their sincerity would not have saved them. All who failed to heed the Lord's directions would lose their first-born by the hand of the destroyer.

By obedience the people were to give evidence of their faith. So all who hope to be saved by the merits of the blood of Christ should realize that they themselves have something to do in securing their salvation. While it is Christ only that can redeem us from the penalty of transgression, we are to turn from sin to obedience. Man is to be saved by faith, not by works; yet his faith must be shown by his works. God has given His Son to die as a propitiation for sin, He has manifested the light of truth, the way of life, He has given facilities, ordinances, and privileges; and now man must co-operate with these saving agencies; he must appreciate and use the helps that God has provided--believe and obey all the divine requirements.

As Moses rehearsed to Israel the provisions of God for their deliverance, "the people bowed the head and worshiped." The glad hope of freedom, the awful knowledge of the impending judgment upon their oppressors, the cares and labours incident to their speedy departure--all were for the time swallowed up in gratitude to their gracious Deliverer. Many of the Egyptians had been led to acknowledge the God of the Hebrews as the only true God, and these now begged to be permitted to find shelter in the homes of Israel when the destroying angel should pass through the land. They were gladly welcomed, and they pledged themselves henceforth to serve the God of Jacob and to go forth from Egypt with His people.

The Israelites obeyed the directions that God had given. Swiftly and secretly they made their preparations for departure. Their families were gathered, the paschal lamb slain, the flesh roasted with fire, the unleavened bread and bitter herbs prepared. The father and priest of the household sprinkled the blood upon the doorpost, and joined his family within the dwelling. In haste and silence the paschal lamb was eaten. In awe the people prayed and watched, the heart of the eldest born, from the strong man down to the little child, throbbing with indefinable dread. Fathers and mothers clasped in their arms their loved first-born as they thought of the fearful stroke that was to fall that night. But no dwelling of Israel was visited by the death-dealing angel. The sign of blood--the sign of a Saviour's protection--was on their doors, and the destroyer entered not.

At midnight "there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead." All the first-born in the land, "from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle" had been smitten by the destroyer. Throughout the vast realm of Egypt the pride of every household had been laid low. The shrieks and wails of the mourners filled the air. King and courtiers, with blanched faces and trembling limbs, stood aghast at the overmastering horror. Pharaoh remembered how he had once exclaimed, "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go." Now, his heaven-daring pride humbled in the dust, he "called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said. . . . And be gone; and bless me also." The royal counsellors also and the people entreated the Israelites to depart "out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men."

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, May 9th, 2025****Signs of the Times
June 9, 1890, par. 1-13****“he That Hath Seen Me Has Seen The Father”**

Through Jesus, the Son of God, the Father is more fully revealed to the world. Jesus said to his disciples: "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip says unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it suffices us. Jesus says unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The souls of thousands are crying out today, "Show us the Father, and we will be satisfied. We cannot claim God as our Father until we see him." Jesus says to every such soul, as he said to Philip: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" Have you seen my works, have you listened to my teachings, have you witnessed the miracles that I have wrought in my Father's name, and yet have you not understood the nature of God? I have prayed with you and for you, and yet can you not comprehend that I am the way, the truth, and the life, and that in my life I have unfolded to you the character of my Father? I am the brightness of my Father's glory, I am the express image of his person. 'Believe thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwells in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.'"

The time had come for Jesus to stand in contradiction to the work of Satan, to rebuke and oppose his power. At the beginning of his ministry, John was baptizing in the Jordan, and Christ came to him to receive the baptismal rite. As man's example he took the step in conversion requisite for the repenting, believing sinner; and the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him, and lo, a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He was consecrated to his office by God himself. He was anointed by the Spirit, invested with the authority, and endowed with the attributes, of God; and his mission was to reveal the Father to the world.

As Christ was to reveal the Father, so those who believe in Jesus are to reveal Christ to the world in spirit and character; they are to be good, and to do good. Wherever Jesus went, he taught his disciples concerning the kingdom of God; he turned every event into an occasion of usefulness, and his followers are to do the same.

After the ascension of Christ, his disciples were left to carry forward the work which he had been doing. They were to be the instruments through which the Lord should speak, and many were to believe on their word, and engage in the work that Jesus had done when he was upon earth. God's appointed agents are to study carefully the lessons which Christ taught his disciples. They are to contemplate his precious instruction, and to imitate the holy characteristics of his teachings; if they fail to do this, they fail to represent Christ as he represented the Father. There is need of fervent and frequent prayer that we may understand the import of his instruction, and carry forward the work he has given us to do. We are to bear in mind that it is only a small proportion of what Jesus taught and did that has been recorded.

That the disciples of Christ might be prepared for the great work which they were to do, Jesus had instructed them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high. On the day of Pentecost, as they were assembled together, and with one accord were seeking for the fulfillment of his promise, the Spirit of God descended, and the hearts of those who believed were filled with the Holy Ghost. The most signal evidence of the power of God was manifested, and thousands were converted in a day. Our Saviour has provided that those who go forth to fulfill his commission of preaching the gospel to the world, shall not go without the divine unction. He has said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." If men would come to God and make an entire surrender to him in full assurance of faith, they would have grace to do the great work committed to them.

When Moses was called out to lead the children of Israel, he prayed earnestly to the Lord, and said: "See, thou say unto me, Bring up this people; and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight; and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give you rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou go with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."

The Lord did not rebuke Moses as presumptuous because he asked greater and greater favours at his hand. Every labourer in the cause of God should have firm, earnest faith and determined purpose, that he may know that he has the favour and presence of God with him. Co-workers with God may obtain all that they ask for if they will but seek the Lord with faith. In the time of Christ, many of his disciples remained ignorant of the very thing that it was their privilege to know. Jesus sought to teach them of spiritual things. He reproached his disciples because of their dullness of comprehension. If it had been impossible for them to comprehend the things he uttered, he would not thus have reproved them. They might have exerted their mental powers to a greater extent, and stimulated their souls, by prayer and faith, and so have been enabled to understand the mysteries of godliness. Jesus saw that they did not lay hold of the real meaning of the great truths that he presented, and he compassionately promised that the Holy Spirit should recall these sayings to their minds, and revive in their remembrance many of the truths which they had lost. He tried to impress upon them the fact that he had opened before them great truths, the value of which they had failed to comprehend. After his resurrection, when he opened to them the scriptures concerning himself, he said unto 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." Although Christ had been with them, and they had heard his exposition of the prophecies, they had failed to comprehend the great plan of the atonement, and they needed the power of the Spirit of God to make plain to their minds its deep significance.

When the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples of Christ, they saw their Saviour in a light in which they had never seen him before. Gladness and peace came to their souls. Jesus had told them what would be the result of the operation of the Holy Spirit. He had said, "He shall glorify me." Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the soul is sanctified by obedience to the truth, and Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He unfolded to man the important lesson that the sum of all science is to be found in the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. This knowledge can be incorporated into everyone's experience. The Scriptures declare, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

The knowledge of God and Christ lies at the foundation of all knowledge. Through the study of the Bible, moral power is developed; and while the mind is put to the task of comprehending its truths, the intellect expands; as the image of Christ, the Author of all truth, brightens to the vision, the understanding becomes enlarged to comprehend more fully the elevated character of the standard of perfection. Those who study the Bible in the right manner, drink from a fountain which is inexhaustible. The teaching of Christ is simple, and yet the greatest and best disciplined minds are charmed with his profound and comprehensive utterances. In all his lessons, Jesus presented to men the worthlessness of ceremonial obedience. He sought to impress men with the spirituality of the law, unveiling its vital principles, and making plain its eternal obligations. The righteousness of the law was presented to the world in the character of Christ, and the holy, benevolent, and paternal attributes of God were revealed in his dealings with mankind. He explained the solemn relation which existed between man and God, between man and his fellow-man. He taught the necessity of prayer, repentance, faith, virtue, and perfection of character.

Through Christ, moral power is brought to man that will change the entire affections, and enable man to work with a will for the cause of God. Where all the power of mind and body was before concentrated to work the works of evil, by the Spirit of God a revolution is brought about. The Holy Spirit enlightens, renews, and sanctifies the soul. Angels behold with inexpressible rapture the results of the working of the Holy Spirit in man. By the revelation of the attractive loveliness of Christ, by the knowledge of his love expressed to us while we were yet sinners, the stubborn heart is melted and subdued, and the sinner is transformed and becomes a child of God. Love is the agency which God uses to expel sin from the human soul. By it he changes pride into humility, enmity and

unbelief into love and faith. He does not employ compulsory measures; Jesus is revealed to the soul, and if man will look in faith to the Lamb of God, he will live.

Jesus has given this invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." In coming to Jesus, we reveal our faith. The law condemns the sinner, and by this condemnation he is led to see the necessity of a Saviour. He seeks refuge in Jesus, and the Son is glorified and exalted as the Redeemer of the world; he is the sinner's substitute and surety.


No man can keep the law of God apart from Christ, and God will not accept his unaided efforts. The nature of man is in opposition to the divine will, depraved, deformed, and wholly unlike the character of God expressed in his law. Man is accepted through the righteousness of Christ, through obedience to God's law. God imputes beauty, excellence, and perfection to man through the merits of his Son, and thus places the highest honour upon Christ by making him the pattern by which he works to fashion the character of all believers. Christ is presented to men that they may catch his temper, his perfection; and as the model is complete and perfect in every part, so, as man is conformed to the image of Christ, he is made complete in him; for aside from Christ there never can be righteousness in the human heart.


When the Spirit was poured out from on high, the church was flooded with light, but Christ was that light; the church was filled with joy, but Christ was the subject of that joy. When the Spirit is poured upon his people in this day, Christ's name will be upon every tongue, his love will fill every soul; and when the heart embraces Jesus, it will embrace God; for all the fullness of God dwells in Christ. When the beams of Christ's righteousness shine upon the soul, joy, adoration, and glory will be woven with the experience.


LESSON 7

“FOUNDATIONS OF PROPHECY”

May 10 - May 16

 **MEMORY VERSE :** “*Also I heard the voice of The Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.*” [Isaiah 6:8]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Genesis 3:21–24; Numbers 2:3–25; Isaiah. 6:6–8; Isaiah 14:12–14; Ezekiel 1:4–14; Romans 3:23; Revelation 4:1–11;

 **INTRODUCTION :** God's right to rule the universe is founded upon His position as The Creator of all things (*Revelation 4:11*) and also upon His character. It is in discovering God's righteous character that we begin to understand how and why sinful human beings fall short of the glory of God. (*Romans 3:23*)

This week, we move further into the vision of the throne room and consider how the human race relates to a holy God and how the sacrifice of Christ restores us and brings us close to the throne. God plans to restore us, not just as individuals but also as a race, so that we once again reveal His glory to the rest of creation. By searching through the rest of the Bible, we can find important clues that help us understand and begin to appreciate the high calling that God has extended to us, a race of forgiven and redeemed sinners.

Human rebellion, ultimately and forever, will be ended. And, more than that, God's loving character, His self-denying and self-sacrificing character, will shine even brighter than it did in His original design for humanity. Though God never intended for humanity to fall, through the Cross, God's loving character has been put on display in a remarkable way.

Further Thought***Preparation Day, May 16th, 2025*****The Great Controversy
Chapter 42, p. 669-671 & 676-678****“The Controversy Ended”**

----- pages 669-671 -----

Satan seems paralysed as he beholds the glory and majesty of Christ. He who was once a covering cherub remembers whence he has fallen. A shining seraph, “son of the morning;” how changed, how degraded! From the council where once he was honoured, he is forever excluded. He sees another now standing near to the Father, veiling his glory. He has seen the crown placed upon the head of Christ by an angel of lofty stature and majestic presence, and he knows that the exalted position of this angel might have been his.

Memory recalls the home of his innocence and purity, the peace and content that were his until he indulged in murmuring against God, and envy of Christ. His accusations, his rebellion, his deceptions to gain the sympathy and support of the angels, his stubborn persistence in making no effort for self-recovery when God would have granted him forgiveness,—all come vividly before him. He reviews his work among men and its results,—the enmity of man toward his fellow-man, the terrible destruction of life, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the overturning of thrones, the long succession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions. He recalls his constant efforts to oppose the work of Christ and to sink man lower and lower. He sees that his hellish plots have been powerless to destroy those who have put their trust in Jesus. As Satan looks upon his kingdom, the fruit of his toil, he sees only failure and ruin. He has led the multitudes to believe that the city of God would be an easy prey; but he knows that this is false. Again and again, in the progress of the great controversy, he has been defeated, and compelled to yield. He knows too well the power and majesty of the Eternal.

The aim of the great rebel has ever been to justify himself, and to prove the divine government responsible for the rebellion. To this end he has bent all the power of his giant intellect. He has worked deliberately and systematically, and with marvellous success, leading vast multitudes to accept his version of the great controversy which has been so long in progress. For thousands of years this chief of conspiracy has palmed off falsehood for truth. But the time has now come when the rebellion is to be finally defeated, and the history and character of Satan disclosed. In his last great effort to dethrone Christ, destroy his people, and take possession of the city of God, the arch-deceiver has been fully unmasked. Those who have united with him see the total failure of his cause. Christ's followers and the loyal angels behold the full extent of his machinations against the government of God. He is the object of universal abhorrence.

Satan sees that his voluntary rebellion has unfitted him for Heaven. He has trained his powers to war against God; the purity, peace, and harmony of Heaven would be to him supreme torture. His accusations against the mercy and justice of God are now silenced. The reproach which he has endeavoured to cast upon Jehovah rests wholly upon himself. And now Satan bows down, and confesses the justice of his sentence.

“Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.” [Revelation 15:4.] Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy has now been made plain. The results of rebellion, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, have been laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The working out of Satan's rule in contrast with the government of God, has been presented to the whole universe. Satan's own works have condemned him. God's wisdom, his justice, and his goodness stand fully vindicated. It is seen that all his dealings in the great controversy have been conducted with respect to the eternal good of his people, and the good of all the worlds that he has created. “All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.” [Psalm 145:10.] The history of sin will stand to all eternity as a witness that with the existence of God's law is bound up the happiness of all the beings he has created. With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare, “Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.”

Before the universe has been clearly presented the great sacrifice made by the Father and the Son in man's behalf. The hour has come when Christ occupies his rightful position, and is glorified above principalities and powers and every name that is named. It was for the joy that was set before him,—that he might bring many sons unto glory,— that he endured the cross and despised the shame. And inconceivably great as was the sorrow and the shame, yet greater is the joy and the glory. He looks upon the redeemed, renewed in his own image, every heart bearing the perfect impress of the divine, every face reflecting the likeness of their King. He beholds in them the result of the travail of his soul, and he is satisfied. Then, in a voice that reaches the assembled multitudes of the righteous and the wicked, he declares, “Behold the purchase of my blood! For these I suffered;

for these I died; that they might dwell in my presence throughout eternal ages.” And the song of praise ascends from the white-robed ones about the throne, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” [Revelation 5:12.]

Notwithstanding that Satan has been constrained to acknowledge God's justice, and to bow to the supremacy of Christ, his character remains unchanged. The spirit of rebellion, like a mighty torrent, again bursts forth. Filled with frenzy, he determines not to yield the great controversy. The time has come for a last desperate struggle against the King of Heaven. He rushes into the midst of his subjects, and endeavours to inspire them with his own fury, and arouse them to instant battle. But of all the countless millions whom he has allured into rebellion, there are none now to acknowledge his supremacy. His power is at an end. The wicked are filled with the same hatred of God that inspires Satan; but they see that their case is hopeless, that they cannot prevail against Jehovah. Their rage is kindled against Satan and those who have been his agents in deception, and with the fury of demons they turn upon them.

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Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of Heaven. There will be no more tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, . . . for the former things are passed away.” [Revelation 21:4, 11, 24, 3.] “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” [Isaiah 11:6, 9; 33:24; 62:3; 65:19.]

There is the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of the glorified new earth, “a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” [Isaiah 11:6, 9; 33:24; 62:3; 65:19.] “Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” “The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.” [Revelation 21:4, 11, 24, 3.] Said the Lord, “I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people.” [Isaiah 11:6, 9; 33:24; 62:3; 65:19.] “The tabernacle of God is 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.” [Revelation 21:4, 11, 24, 3.]

In the city of God “there shall be no night.” None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to his name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning, and shall ever be far from its close. “And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light.” [Revelation 22:5; 21:22.] The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the holy city with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.

“I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” [Revelation 22:5; 21:22.] The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. Now we “see through a glass, darkly.” [1 Corinthians 13:12.] We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in his dealings with men; but then we shall see him face to face, without a dimming veil between. We shall stand in his presence, and behold the glory of his countenance.

There the redeemed shall “know, even as also they are known.” The loves and sympathies which God himself has planted in the soul, shall there find truest and sweetest exercise. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the sacred ties that bind together “the whole family in Heaven and earth,” [Ephesians 3:15.]—these help to constitute the happiness of the redeemed.

There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There is no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body.

All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God's redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar,—worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe, and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God's handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation,—suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator's name is written, and in all are the riches of his power displayed.

And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their

admiration of his character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.

“And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.” [Revelation 5:13.]

The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, May 16th, 2025****The Truth About Angels**
Chapter 4, p. 30-31**“The Origin of Evil”**

The angels had been created full of goodness and love. They loved one another impartially and their God supremely, and they were prompted by this love to do His pleasure. The law of God was not a grievous yoke to them, but it was their delight to do His commandments, to hearken unto the voice of His Word. But in this state of peace and purity, sin originated with him who had been perfect in all his ways. The prophet writes of him: “Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.” Sin is a mysterious, unexplainable thing. There was no reason for its existence; to seek to explain it is to seek to give a reason for it, and that would be to justify it. Sin appeared in a perfect universe, a thing that was shown to be inexcusable.—*The Signs of the Times*, April 28, 1890.

God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world. He did not make His purposes to fit circumstances, but He allowed matters to develop and work out. He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but He knew that such a condition would exist. The plan that should be carried out upon the defection of any of the high intelligences of heaven—this is the secret, the mystery which has been hid from ages. And an offering was prepared in the eternal purposes to do the very work which God has done for fallen humanity.—*The Signs of the Times*, March 25, 1897.

The entrance of sin into heaven cannot be explained. If it were explainable, it would show that there was some reason for sin. But as there was not the least excuse for it, its origin will ever remain shrouded in mystery.—*The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1886.

God did not create evil. He only made the good, which was like Himself.... Evil, sin, and death ... are the result of disobedience, which originated in Satan.—*The Review and Herald*, August 4, 1910.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, May 16th, 2025****The Great Controversy
Chapter 42, p. 676-678****“The Controversy Ended”**

Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of Heaven. There will be no more tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, . . . for the former things are passed away.” [Revelation 21:4, 11, 24, 3.] “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” [Isaiah 11:6, 9; 33:24; 62:3; 65:19.]

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LESSON 8

“IN THE PSALMS – PART 1”

May 17 - May 23

 **MEMORY VERSE :** *“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.”*
[Revelation 14:1]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Exodus 33:18–23; Psalm 5; Psalm 15; Psalm 24; Psalm 51:7–15; Psalm 122; Hebrews 9:11–15;
{See also Revelation 14;}

 **INTRODUCTION :** As Seventh-day Adventists, we are used to searching for the symbols of Revelation in the stories of the Old Testament to help us understand those symbols. These narratives, though far from the only good source, are found all through the Old Testament.

One particularly rich source of information is the book of Psalms, a collection of sacred poetry that explores many human experiences and possible interactions with God—ranging from despondency over sin and suffering to unbridled joy in His presence and His repeated promises for forgiveness and salvation.

A careful reading of the Psalms yields details that make the book of Revelation come alive, especially Revelation 14, which describes the final work of God’s remnant church on earth. God’s last-day people have been given the same assignment as Israel of old: we are to be a light to the nations, a final merciful call to all people to worship and obey their Maker.

Some details provided in God’s songbook can give us new ways to understand and appreciate our role in the final moments of earth’s history.

Further Thought**Preparation Day, May 23rd, 2025****Patriarchs and Prophets
Chapter 73, p. 754-755****“The Last Years of David”**

David's "last words," as recorded, are a song--a song of trust, of loftiest principle, and undying faith:

¹ Now these *be* the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man *who was* raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, ² The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and his word *was* in my tongue. ³ The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that rules over men *must be* just, ruling in the fear of God. ⁴ And *he shall be* as the light of the morning, *when* the sun rises, *even* a morning without clouds; *as* the tender grass *springing* out of the earth by clear shining after rain. ⁵ Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, although he make *it* not to grow.” [2 Samuel 23:1-5]

Great had been David's fall, but deep was his repentance, ardent was his love, and strong his faith. He had been forgiven much, and therefore he loved much. [Luke 7:47]

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.

Man "flees also as a shadow, and continues not," "but the word of our God shall stand forever." "The mercy of Jehovah is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them." [Job 14:2; Isaiah 40:8; Psalm 103:17, 18]

"Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever." [Ecclesiastes 3:14]

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:

³ I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, ⁴ Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah. ⁵ And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints. ⁶ For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD? ⁷ God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him. ⁸ O LORD God of hosts, *who is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? ⁹ Thou rules the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them. ¹⁰ Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm. ¹¹ The heavens *are* thine, the earth also *is* thine: *as for* the world and the fullness thereof, thou hast founded them. ¹² The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name. ¹³ Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, *and* high is thy right hand. ¹⁴ Justice and judgment *are* the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face. ¹⁵ Blessed *is* the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. ¹⁶ In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. ¹⁷ For thou *art* the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted. ¹⁸ For the LORD *is* our defence; and the Holy One of Israel *is* our king. ¹⁹ Then thou spoke in vision to thy holy one, and said, I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty; I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people. ²⁰ I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: ²¹ With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him. ²² The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the

son of wickedness afflict him. ²³ And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. ²⁴ But my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted. ²⁵ I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. ²⁶ He shall cry unto me, Thou *art* my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. ²⁷ Also I will make him *my* firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. ²⁸ My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him." [Psalm 89:3-28]

"His seed also will I make to endure forever, And his throne as the days of heaven." [Psalm 89:29]

"⁴ He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. ⁵ They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. ⁶ He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers *that* water the earth. ⁷ In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures. ⁸ He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." [Psalm 72:4-8]

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." [Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:32, 33]

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, May 23rd, 2025****Signs of the Times
December 12, 1895, par. 5-10****“Character of the Law Revealed in Christ’s Life”**

In Christ Jesus is a revelation of the glory of the Godhead. All that the human agent can know of God to the saving of the soul, is the measure of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, to which he can attain; for Christ is he who represents the Father. The most wonderful truth to be grasped by men is the truth, "Immanuel, God with us." Christ is the wisdom of God. He is the great "I AM" to the world. As we contemplate the glory of the divine character as revealed in Christ, we are led to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" This wisdom is displayed in the love that reaches out for the recovery of lost and ruined man.

The work of God in the creation of man needed no undoing. There was nothing imperfect, nothing incomplete. He spake and it was done. The very dust of the ground from which man was formed was pure, and the breath of life which God breathed into his nostrils was holy. He was placed in Eden, the garden of God, and its atmosphere was undefiled, and from the beams of the sun in the heavens which blessed and cheered the earth, to the fountains and streams that watered the garden, all was holy, all was clothed with spotless purity and unexcelled loveliness, and was in harmony with the character of the Father and the Son, by whom the worlds were made, and in whom was life, and the life is the light of men.

But in the transgression of man both the Father and the Son were dishonoured. Man committed sin, and sin is the transgression of the law, which is holy, just, and good. Through sin the temple of God which he had builded for his own indwelling and glory, was reduced to ruin, was fallen and in decay. Satan beguiled the holy pair to their own destruction, and introduced an element of character that was antagonistic to God and to their fellow-creatures. Before the entrance of sin, the hearts of God's children had been filled with love toward their Creator, and they were in harmony with his will; but upon yielding to the tempter a warring element began to work in the human agent. Even the earth itself shows the curse of transgression, and signs of enmity appear. Darkness covers the earth like the pall of death, and will continue to shroud the glory of God until death is swallowed up in victory.

In the creation of God before the entrance of sin, every part of nature was in perfection; God had nothing to take down as unnecessary to his plan. He needed to set into operation no power by which to dispossess; he needed to inaugurate no opposing force. But through the calamity of sin, the work of disintegration was begun, and the beautiful temple of God's building was defiled and laid in ruins. God no longer was a dweller in the heart of man. To oppose and bring to naught the work of the enemy, the promise was given, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

In the councils of heaven, hope was furnished for the fallen race. Jesus Christ offered his life as a ransom for the lost, as the price by which he might purchase the right to re-create the sinner, and form again the image of God in the soul. Fallen man was to be renewed in the divine likeness. He was to be uplifted, to be pardoned and redeemed, not by the law, but by Jesus Christ, our Righteousness. Angels fly through the midst of heaven, proclaiming the glad tidings that a ransom has been found, and that the treasures that have been hidden from ages and generations in Christ, are to be displayed before a wondering universe.

In Christ is found a resource that has never before been called out. Clothing his divinity with humanity, with the wealth of the treasures of heaven at his command, he was to come to our world to counteract the ruin that Satan has wrought. What a scene was that when angels, cherubim, and a seraphim rejoiced as they hastened through the heavenly courts, proclaiming that a ransom had been found, and that God could be just, and yet be the justifier of him who believes in the ransom that had been provided! The law could be magnified and made honourable, and yet fallen man could be restored to more than his former dignity and glory, and exalted as an overcomer of the Satanic hosts. Everyone who should believe in Jesus, should be recreated to walk in newness of life, and from the ruins that Satan had wrought through sin, should arise in purity and holiness the fallen temple of the Lord. Man was to be

reconstructed, to be formed after the image of Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God. "Unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, May 23rd, 2025****The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald
November 22, 1892, par. 7-8****“The Perils and Privileges of the Last Days”**

The days in which we live are eventful and full of peril. The signs of the coming of the end are thickening around us, and events are to come to pass that will be of a more terrible character than any the world has yet witnessed. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." But to those who have the light of truth, it has been written, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping."

There is great need that our weakening faith should be quickened, and that we should ever keep before the mind the evidences that our Lord is soon coming, that we may ever be found not only waiting, but watching and working. We are not to be found in idle expectancy; for this leads to carelessness of life, and deficiency of character. We are to realize that the judgments of God are about to fall upon the earth, and we should most earnestly present before the people the warning that the Lord has commissioned us to give: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws nigh."


Let everyone who claims to believe that the Lord is soon coming, search the Scriptures as never before; for Satan is determined to try every device possible to keep souls in darkness, and blind the mind to the perils of the times in which we are living. Let every believer take up his Bible with earnest prayer, that he may be enlightened by the holy Spirit as to what is truth, that he may know more of God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Search for the truth as for hidden treasures, and disappoint the enemy. The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of every one to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to his disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of him.


If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ, and appropriate the gift of his righteousness, which he imputes to the repentant sinner. Human wisdom will not avail to devise a plan of salvation. Human philosophy is vain, the fruits of the loftiest powers of man are worthless, aside from the great plan of the divine Teacher. No glory is to redound to man; all human help and glory lies in the dust; for the truth as it is in Jesus is the only available agent by which man may be saved. Man is privileged to connect with Christ, and then the divine and the human combine; and in this union the hope of man must rest alone; for it is as the Spirit of God touches the soul that the powers of the soul are quickened, and man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. He was manifested to bring life and immortality to light. He says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The psalmist declares, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."


LESSON 9

“IN THE PSALMS – PART 2”

May 24 - May 30

 **MEMORY VERSE :** *“Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.” [Psalm 67:3-4]*

 **SCRIPTURE :** Psalm 46; Psalm 47:1–4; Psalm 75; Jeremiah 4:23–26; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17; Revelation 1:3; Revelation 14:6–12;

 **INTRODUCTION :** When thinking of final events, we tend to focus on the beasts and the powers of Revelation. And, of course, they have a big role—an important one, too. Otherwise, God would not have put them in the Bible for us to understand them (see Revelation 1:3)

Prophecy, however, also deals with key issues associated with sin and suffering, judgment, the battle between good and evil, the nature of justice and injustice, persecution, and more.

The Psalms also deal with these issues in great depth, exploring nearly every possible human emotion—from dark despondency to unbridled joy. We see Israel preparing for battle against the forces of darkness. We read about individuals wrestling with the question of why doesn’t God address evil more directly and immediately, a question that no doubt we all have asked. We are directed to the sanctuary for answers, and there also are repeated appeals to God’s status as Creator. Are these not issues and questions that we, in our context today, wrestle with, as well?

Of course, this is why we will continue unpacking the book of Psalms in order to learn more about these crucial truths.

Further Thought**Preparation Day, May 30th, 2025****Psalm 133; Acts 1:4–9; and Revelation 5:4–7;****[Psalms 133:1-3]**

- ☞ ¹ **A Song of degrees of David.** Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!
- ² *It is* like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;
- ³ As the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

[Acts 1:4-9]

- ☞ ⁴ And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but **wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye have heard of me.**
- ⁵ **For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.**
- ⁶ When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?
- ⁷ And he said unto them, **It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.**
- ⁸ **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**
- ⁹ And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

[Revelation 5:4-7]

- ☞ ⁴ And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.
- ⁵ And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.
- ⁶ And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
- ⁷ And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, May 30th, 2025****The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald
July 16, 1901, par. 1-12****“A Present Help in Every Kind of Trouble”**

In the world there are false theories which deny the existence of Satan, or make him so hideous as to encourage doubt of his existence. The world has no just conception of Satan. He is not thought of as the prince of the world, the general of a vast rebellion, a being logical and philosophical, possessing a powerful intellect. But thus it is. The adversary of God and leader in the great controversy waged against the world's Redeemer, his deceptive powers have been sharpened by constant practice; and in the final crisis he will deceive to their own ruin those who do not now seek to understand his methods of working.

Satan resolved to bend all his energies to defeat the plan of redemption. When the Redeemer came to this world, His path from the manger to the cross was marked with pain and sorrow. At every step He encountered the enemy, who sought in every way to turn Him from His purpose of love. And Satan works against Christians today as he worked against their Leader. He who in Eden used Eve to tempt Adam, uses men in this age to tempt their fellow men.

The great master of evil conceals himself, working behind the scenes. He lays his plans with wonderful ingenuity, so arranging matters that men will not have time to think of the things of eternity. As his instruments do the work assigned them, he directs and controls. He gives all who will serve him plenty to do. He can keep mind and hand employed. He fills those under his guidance with ambitious hopes for worldly greatness.

Thus Satan is playing the game of life for the souls of men, and he is succeeding in a way surprising even to himself. Men are straining every nerve to gain earthly treasure, but when eternal riches are offered them, they turn carelessly away. Very easily the enemy persuades them to renounce their supreme good. Satan hides Christ and heaven from their view, because they choose to have it so. Led by him, they worship the world and the things of the world. Too late they will find that they must stand before God without a fit preparation, to hear the words, "Depart from me," and to be forever banished from the divine presence.

In his work Satan pretends to be very religious. He finds this the most effective way of carrying on the work he began in heaven. Under his guidance the Christian world has made void the law of God by tearing down the seventh-day Sabbath, and exalting in its stead a common working day. As men depart further and further from God, Satan is permitted to have power over the children of disobedience. He hurls destruction among men. There is calamity by land and sea. Property and life are destroyed by fire and flood. Satan resolves to charge this upon those who refuse to bow to the idol which he has set up. His agents point to Seventh-day Adventists as the cause of the trouble. "These people stand out in defiance of law," they say. "They desecrate Sunday. Were they compelled to obey the law for Sunday observance, there would be a cessation of these terrible judgments."

The civil power is called to the aid of the Church in persecuting those who keep holy the seventh day. The Church and the world are united in trampling upon God's commandments, and those who obey these commandments they threaten with death. John declares, "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." The decree goes forth that no man shall be allowed to buy or sell save he that has the mark or the number of the Beast.

As God's people approach the final crisis, they must with increasing power proclaim the message He has given them. The warning must be given to the churches. God's requirements must be laid before those who are transgressing His law. They must be made to understand that this is a life and death question. God's remnant people are to fill the earth with the cry of the third angel.

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." These are they who are repairing the breach in the law of God. In the face of bitter opposition, they take their stand under the banner of Prince Immanuel, proclaiming, bravely and fearlessly, the message He has given them.

God watches over these faithful witnesses, and abundantly rewards their confidence. The way to His throne is always open to them. He sees and supplies their wants. They find their safety in looking to Him. When Jehovah gives them His protection, and says of them, Ye are labourers together with me, they are safe in the midst of the greatest danger. Satan tries to deceive them, but God lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Those who work righteousness have an ever-present help in time of trouble. In every time of need He is near. When they are tempted, He stands as their defence, saying, "I will guide thee with mine eye." I will deliver thee from perplexity, and be a covert for thee against the strife of tongues.

The cause is the Lord's. He is on board the ship as commander-in-chief. He will guide us safely into port. He can command the winds and the waves, and they will obey Him. If we follow His directions, we have no need to be anxious or troubled. In Him we may trust. He bestows His richest endowments upon those who love Him and keep His commandments. He will never forsake those who work in His lines.

Satan will strive to retain every soul in his strong power. He will not willingly relinquish his dominion over men. Therefore the work of advancing the gospel will meet with great opposition from his synagogue. His last effort will be a desperate one, but his overthrow will be complete.

"Blessed is the man that endures temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." John saw the remnant people of God when they had gained the victory over the Beast, and over his Image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name. Redeemed and glorified, they stood on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And he says, "They sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." As they surround the throne of God, they see their Saviour bearing upon His glorified body the marks of the crucifixion, and from myriads of voices peals forth the chorus of praise, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

EGW Study Notes 2***Preparation Day, May 30th, 2025*****The Southern Review
September 13, 1898, par. 1-5****“Christ’s Representatives”**

Christ attaches a weight of importance to the obedience of his people to the commandments of God. They are to have an intelligent knowledge of them, and bring them into their daily life. Men cannot keep the commandments of God only as he is in Christ, and Christ in Him. And it is not possible for him to be in Christ, having light on the commandments, while disregarding the least of them. By steadfast, willing obedience to His word, they evidence their love for the Son of God. Not to keep the commandments of God is not to love Him. None will keep the law of God unless they love Him who is the only begotten of the Father. And none the less surely, if they love Him, will they express their love and obedience to Him. All who love Christ will be loved of the Father, and He will manifest Himself to them. In all their emergencies and perplexities, they will have a helper in Jesus Christ.

That Christ should manifest Himself to them, and yet be invisible to the world, was a mystery to the disciples. They could not understand the words of Christ in their spiritual sense. They were thinking of the outward, visible manifestation. They could not take in the fact that they could have the presence of Christ with them, and yet He be unseen by the world. They did not understand the meaning of a spiritual manifestation.

The great Teacher longed to give the disciples all the encouragement and comfort possible; for they were to be sorely tried. But it was difficult for them to comprehend His words. They had yet to learn of that spiritual life that could give them the spiritual power they needed.


The promise of a Comforter presented a rich truth to them. It assured them that they should not lose their faith under the most trying circumstances. The Holy Spirit sent in the name of Christ was to teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance. The Holy Spirit was to be the representative of Christ, the Advocate who is constantly pleading for the fallen race. He pleads that spiritual power may be given them, that by the power, mightier than all the enemies of God and man, they may be able to overcome their spiritual foes.

He who knows the end from the beginning has provided for the attack of Satanic agencies, and he will fulfill His word to the faithful in every age. That word is sure and steadfast; not one jot or tittle of it can fail. If man will keep under the protection of God, his banner will be over them as an impregnable fortress. He will give evidence that His word can never fail. He will prove a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawn. He, the Son of Righteousness, will arise with healing in his beams.


LESSON 10

“UPON WHOM THE ENDS HAVE COME”

May 31 - June 6

 **MEMORY VERSE :** “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. [1 Corinthians 10:11-12]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Revelation 6:12–17; Matthew 24:36–44; Genesis 6:1–8; 2 Peter 2:4–11; Genesis 18:17–32; Daniel 7:9, 10.

 **INTRODUCTION :** The Bible is filled with accounts of God’s people that point to future events and that hold keys to helping us understand present truth. In fact, some of those accounts foreshadow last-day events with surprising detail, providing us a broader foundation for understanding the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation clearly.

Without violating an individual’s freedom of conscience, God can perfectly steer the events that will happen in the last days, events that He revealed to the prophets. Some of these important stories are obvious, because the New Testament refers to them specifically in describing last-day events: Sodom and Gomorrah, the Flood, and so on. Others require careful thought and exploration in order to mine from them the truths that have been given to us in the Word of God.

During the next couple of weeks, we will be searching through a number of key stories in order to see what they might have to say about events such as the Second Coming, the investigative judgment, the final crisis, and more. And, through it all, we find Christ as the centre, for He must be the foundation as well as the end goal of all our prophetic endeavours.

Further Thought***Preparation Day, June 6th, 2025*****Patriarchs and Prophets
Chapter 7, pp. 101-102****“The Flood”**

"By the word of God . . . the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:5-7. Another storm is coming. The earth will again be swept by the desolating wrath of God, and sin and sinners will be destroyed.

The sins that called for vengeance upon the antediluvian world exist today. The fear of God is banished from the hearts of men, and His law is treated with indifference and contempt. The intense worldliness of that generation is equalled by that of the generation now living. Said Christ, "As in the days that were before the Flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:38, 39. God did not condemn the antediluvians for eating and drinking; He had given them the fruits of the earth in great abundance to supply their physical wants. Their sin consisted in taking these gifts without gratitude to the Giver, and debasing themselves by indulging appetite without restraint. It was lawful for them to marry. Marriage was in God's order; it was one of the first institutions which He established. He gave special directions concerning this ordinance, clothing it with sanctity and beauty; but these directions were forgotten, and marriage was perverted and made to minister to passion.

A similar condition of things exists now. That which is lawful in itself is carried to excess. Appetite is indulged without restraint. Professed followers of Christ are today eating and drinking with the drunken, while their names stand in honoured church records. Intemperance benumbs the moral and spiritual powers and prepares the way for indulgence of the lower passions. Multitudes feel under no moral obligation to curb their sensual desires, and they become the slaves of lust. Men are living for the pleasures of sense; for this world and this life alone. Extravagance pervades all circles of society. Integrity is sacrificed for luxury and display. They that make haste to be rich pervert justice and oppress the poor, and "slaves and souls of men" are still bought and sold. Fraud and bribery and theft stalk unrebuked in high places and in low. The issues of the press teem with records of murder--crimes so cold-blooded and causeless that it seems as though every instinct of humanity were blotted out. And these atrocities have become of so common occurrence that they hardly elicit a comment or awaken surprise. The spirit of anarchy is permeating all nations, and the outbreaks that from time to time excite the horror of the world are but indications of the pent-up fires of passion and lawlessness that, having once escaped control, will fill the earth with woe and desolation. The picture which Inspiration has given of the antediluvian world represents too truly the condition to which modern society is fast hastening. Even now, in the present century, and in professedly Christian lands, there are crimes daily perpetrated as black and terrible as those for which the old-world sinners were destroyed.

Before the Flood God sent Noah to warn the world, that the people might be led to repentance, and thus escape the threatened destruction. As the time of Christ's second appearing draws near, the Lord sends His servants with a warning to the world to prepare for that great event. Multitudes have been living in transgression of God's law, and now He in mercy calls them to obey its sacred precepts. All who will put away their sins by repentance toward God and faith in Christ are offered pardon. But many feel that it requires too great a sacrifice to put away sin. Because their life does not harmonize with the pure principles of God's moral government, they reject His warnings and deny the authority of His law.

Of the vast population of the earth before the Flood, only eight souls believed and obeyed God's word through Noah. For a hundred and twenty years the preacher of righteousness warned the world of the coming destruction, but his message was rejected and despised. So it will be now. Before the Lawgiver shall come to punish the disobedient, transgressors are warned to repent, and return to their allegiance; but with the majority these warnings will be in vain. Says the apostle Peter, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and

saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning." 2 Peter 3:3, 4. Do we not hear these very words repeated, not merely by the openly ungodly, but by many who occupy the pulpits of our land? "There is no cause for alarm," they cry. "Before Christ shall come, all the world is to be converted, and righteousness is to reign for a thousand years. Peace, peace! all things continue as they were from the beginning. Let none be disturbed by the exciting message of these alarmists." But this doctrine of the millennium does not harmonize with the teachings of Christ and His apostles. Jesus asked the significant question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8. And, as we have seen, He declares that the state of the world will be as in the days of Noah. Paul warns us that we may look for wickedness to increase as the end draws near: "The Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1. The apostle says that "in the last days perilous times shall come." 2 Timothy 3:1. And he gives a startling list of sins that will be found among those who have a form of godliness.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, June 6th, 2025****The Story of Redemption
Chapter 63, p. 415-416****“The Millennium”**

My attention was again directed to the earth. The wicked had been destroyed, and their dead bodies were lying on its surface. The wrath of God in the seven last plagues had been visited upon the inhabitants of the earth, causing them to gnaw their tongues from pain and to curse God. The false shepherds had been the signal objects of Jehovah's wrath. Their eyes had consumed away in their holes, and their tongues in their mouths, while they stood upon their feet. After the saints had been delivered by the voice of God, the wicked multitude turned their rage upon one another. The earth seemed to be deluged with blood, and dead bodies were from one end of it to the other.

The earth looked like a desolate wilderness. Cities and villages, shaken down by the earthquake, lay in heaps. Mountains had been moved out of their places, leaving large caverns. Ragged rocks, thrown out by the sea, or torn out of the earth itself, were scattered all over its surface. Large trees had been uprooted and were strewn over the land. Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Here he will be confined, to wander up and down over the broken surface of the earth and see the effects of his rebellion against God's law. For a thousand years he can enjoy the fruit of the curse which he has caused.

Limited alone to the earth, he will not have the privilege of ranging to other planets, to tempt and annoy those who have not fallen. During this time Satan suffers extremely. Since his fall his evil traits have been in constant exercise. But he is then to be deprived of his power and left to reflect upon the part which he has acted since his fall, and to look forward with trembling and terror to the dreadful future, when he must suffer for all the evil that he has done and be punished for all the sins that he has caused to be committed.

I heard shouts of triumph from the angels and from the redeemed saints which sounded like ten thousand musical instruments, because they were to be no more annoyed and tempted by Satan and because the inhabitants of other worlds were delivered from his presence and his temptations.

Then I saw thrones, and Jesus and the redeemed saints sat upon them; and the saints reigned as kings and priests unto God. Christ, in union with His people, judged the wicked dead, comparing their acts with the Statute Book, the Word of God, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. Then they meted out to the wicked the portion which they must suffer, according to their works; and it was written against their names in the book of death. Satan also and his angels were judged by Jesus and the saints. Satan's punishment was to be far greater than that of those whom he had deceived. His suffering would so far exceed theirs as to bear no comparison with it. After all those whom he had deceived had perished, Satan was still to live and suffer on much longer.

After the judgment of the wicked dead had been finished, at the end of the one thousand years, Jesus left the city, and the saints and a train of the angelic host followed Him. Jesus descended upon a great mountain, which, as soon as His feet touched it, parted asunder and became a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the great and beautiful city, with twelve foundations and twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We cried out, “The city! the great city! It is coming down from God out of heaven!” And it came down in all its splendour and dazzling glory, and settled in the mighty plain which Jesus had prepared for it.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, June 6th, 2025**

Maranatha, The Lord is Coming
Chapter 11, p. 313
“Heaven and Earth During the Millennium”

November 1st**The Captivity of Satan and His Angels**

The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

Jude 6

The earth looked like a desolate wilderness. Cities and villages, shaken down by the earthquake, lay in heaps. Mountains had been moved out of their places, leaving large caverns. Ragged rocks, thrown out by the sea, or torn out of the earth itself, were scattered all over its surface. Large trees had been uprooted and were strewn over the land. Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years.

Here he will be confined, to wander up and down over the broken surface of the earth and see the effects of his rebellion against God's law. For a thousand years he can enjoy the fruit of the curse which he has caused. Limited alone to the earth, he will not have the privilege of ranging to other planets, to tempt and annoy those who have not fallen. During this time, Satan suffers extremely. Since his fall his evil traits have been in constant exercise. But he is then to be deprived of his power, and left to reflect upon the part which he has acted since his fall, and to look forward with trembling and terror to the dreadful future, when he must suffer for all the evil that he has done and be punished for all the sins that he has caused to be committed.


I heard shouts of triumph from the angels and from the redeemed saints, which sounded like ten thousand musical instruments, because they were to be no more annoyed and tempted by Satan and because the inhabitants of other worlds were delivered from his presence and his temptations.

To God's people the captivity of Satan will bring gladness and rejoicing. Says the prophet: "It shall come to pass in the day that Jehovah shall give you rest from thy sorrow, and from thy trouble, and from the hard service wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this parable against the king of Babylon [here representing Satan], and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! ... Jehovah hath broken the staff of the wicked, the sceptre of the rulers; that smote the peoples in wrath with a continual stroke, that ruled the nations in anger, with a persecution that none restrained." Verses 3-6, R.V.


LESSON 11

“RUTH AND ESTHER”

June 7 - June 13

 **MEMORY VERSE :** “And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, *that* she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.”
[Esther 5:2]

 **SCRIPTURE :** Ruth 1:1–5; Ruth 2:5–20; Job 1:6–11; Esther 3:1–14; Matthew 4:8-9; Revelation 12:14–17;

 **INTRODUCTION :** This week we continue to explore stories that prefigure last-day events. By using real-life events and people, God helps us to see things from His perspective and helps us understand how to interpret the prophecies that come later, which are given to help strengthen our faith.

Our attention turns to two important women whose stories have touched the hearts of countless generations: Ruth and Esther. One is a dispossessed widow who finds hope after meeting the kindly Boaz, her kinsman redeemer. Their marriage has become a favourite love story for Christians because of the way it reflects Christ’s love for us. The other is a young girl living in a foreign land who becomes aware of a plot to destroy her people and finds herself thrust onto the main stage in the drama that unfolds to save them.

In prophecy, of course, a woman is a powerful symbol for God’s church, shedding much light on how God regards His people. Let’s look at the biblical accounts of these two women, whose life circumstances have been immortalized in the Word of God, and seek to draw whatever lessons we can from their experiences.

Further Thought***Preparation Day, June 13th, 2025*****Patriarchs and Prophets****Chapter 59, p. 605-606****“The First King of Israel”**

And the Lord said unto Samuel: "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken Me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee." The prophet was reproved for grieving at the conduct of the people toward himself as an individual. They had not manifested disrespect for him, but for the authority of God, who had appointed the rulers of His people. Those who despise and reject the faithful servant of God show contempt, not merely for the man, but for the Master who sent him. It is God's words, His reproofs and counsel, that are set at nought; it is His authority that is rejected.

The days of Israel's greatest prosperity had been those in which they acknowledged Jehovah as their King--when the laws and the government which He had established were regarded as superior to those of all other nations. Moses had declared to Israel concerning the commandments of the Lord: "This is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." Deuteronomy 4:6. But by departing from God's law the Hebrews had failed to become the people that God desired to make them, and then all the evils which were the result of their own sin and folly they charged upon the government of God. So completely had they become blinded by sin.

The Lord had, through His prophets, foretold that Israel would be governed by a king; but it does not follow that this form of government was best for them or according to His will. He permitted the people to follow their own choice, because they refused to be guided by His counsel. Hosea declares that God gave them a king in His anger. Hosea 13:11. When men choose to have their own way, without seeking counsel from God, or in opposition to His revealed will, He often grants their desires, in order that, through the bitter experience that follows, they may be led to realize their folly and to repent of their sin. Human pride and wisdom will prove a dangerous guide. That which the heart desires contrary to the will of God will in the end be found a curse rather than a blessing.

God desired His people to look to Him alone as their Law-giver and their Source of strength. Feeling their dependence upon God, they would be constantly drawn nearer to Him. They would become elevated and ennobled, fitted for the high destiny to which He had called them as His chosen people. But when a man was placed upon the throne, it would tend to turn the minds of the people from God. They would trust more to human strength, and less to divine power, and the errors of their king would lead them into sin and separate the nation from God.

Samuel was instructed to grant the request of the people, but to warn them of the Lord's disapproval, and also make known what would be the result of their course. "And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king." He faithfully set before them the burdens that would be laid upon them, and showed the contrast between such a state of oppression and their present comparatively free and prosperous condition. Their king would imitate the pomp and luxury of other monarchs, to support which, grievous exactions upon their persons and property would be necessary. The goodliest of their young men he would require for his service. They would be made charioteers and horsemen and runners before him. They must fill the ranks of his army, and they would be required to till his fields, to reap his harvests, and to manufacture implements of war for his service. The daughters of Israel would be for confectioners and bakers for the royal household. To support his kingly state he would seize upon the best of their lands, bestowed upon the people by Jehovah Himself. The most valuable of their servants also, and of their cattle, he would take, and "put them to his work." Besides all this, the king would require a tenth of all their income, the profits of their labour, or the products of the soil. "Ye shall be his servants," concluded the prophet. "And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day." However burdensome its exactions should be found, when once a monarchy was established, they could not set it aside at pleasure.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, June 13th, 2025****Prophets and Kings
Chapter 63, p. 598-605****"In the Days of Queen Esther"**

Under the favour shown them by Cyrus, nearly fifty thousand of the children of the captivity had taken advantage of the decree permitting their return. These, however, in comparison with the hundreds of thousands scattered throughout the provinces of Medo-Persia, were but a mere remnant. The great majority of the Israelites had chosen to remain in the land of their exile rather than undergo the hardships of the return journey and the re-establishment of their desolated cities and homes.

A score or more of years passed by, when a second decree, quite as favourable as the first, was issued by Darius Hystaspes, the monarch then ruling. Thus did God in mercy provide another opportunity for the Jews in the Medo-Persian realm to return to the land of their fathers. The Lord foresaw the troublous times that were to follow during the reign of Xerxes,--the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther,--and He not only wrought a change of feeling in the hearts of men in authority, but also inspired Zechariah to plead with the exiles to return.

"Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north," was the message given the scattered tribes of Israel who had become settled in many lands far from their former home. "I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, says the Lord. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwells with the daughter of Babylon. For thus says the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath He sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that touches you touches the apple of His eye. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me." Zechariah 2:6-9.

It was still the Lord's purpose, as it had been from the beginning, that His people should be a praise in the earth, to the glory of His name. During the long years of their exile He had given them many opportunities to return to their allegiance to Him. Some had chosen to listen and to learn; some had found salvation in the midst of affliction. Many of these were to be numbered among the remnant that should return. They were likened by Inspiration to "the highest branch of the high cedar," which was to be planted "upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel." Ezekiel 17:22, 23.

It was those "whose spirit God had raised" (Ezra 1:5) who had returned under the decree of Cyrus. But God ceased not to plead with those who voluntarily remained in the land of their exile, and through manifold agencies He made it possible for them also to return. The large number, however, of those who failed to respond to the decree of Cyrus, remained unimpressible to later influences; and even when Zechariah warned them to flee from Babylon without further delay, they did not heed the invitation.

Meanwhile conditions in the Medo-Persian realm were rapidly changing. Darius Hystaspes, under whose reign the Jews had been shown marked favour, was succeeded by Xerxes the Great. It was during his reign that those of the Jews who had failed of heeding the message to flee were called upon to face a terrible crisis. Having refused to take advantage of the way of escape God had provided, now they were brought face to face with death.

Through Haman the Agagite, an unscrupulous man high in authority in Medo-Persia, Satan worked at this time to counterwork the purposes of God. Haman cherished bitter malice against Mordecai, a Jew. Mordecai had done Haman no harm, but had simply refused to show him worshipful reverence. Scorning to "lay hands on Mordecai alone," Haman plotted "to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai." Esther 3:6.

Misled by the false statements of Haman, Xerxes was induced to issue a decree providing for the massacre of all the Jews "scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces" of the Medo-Persian kingdom. Verse 8. A certain day was appointed on which the Jews were to be destroyed and their property confiscated. Little did the king realize the far-reaching results that would have accompanied the complete carrying out of this decree. Satan himself, the hidden instigator of the scheme, was trying to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God.

"In every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning

among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes." Esther 4:3. The decree of the Medes and Persians could not be revoked; apparently there was no hope; all the Israelites were doomed to destruction.

But the plots of the enemy were defeated by a Power that reigns among the children of men. In the providence of God, Esther, a Jewess who feared the Most High, had been made queen of the Medo-Persian kingdom. Mordecai was a near relative of hers. In their extremity they decided to appeal to Xerxes in behalf of their people. Esther was to venture into his presence as an intercessor. "Who knows," said Mordecai, "whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Verse 14.

The crisis that Esther faced demanded quick, earnest action; but both she and Mordecai realized that unless God should work mightily in their behalf, their own efforts would be unavailing. So Esther took time for communion with God, the source of her strength. "Go," she directed Mordecai, "gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish." Verse 16.

The events that followed in rapid succession,--the appearance of Esther before the king, the marked favour shown her, the banquets of the king and queen with Haman as the only guest, the troubled sleep of the king, the public honour shown Mordecai, and the humiliation and fall of Haman upon the discovery of his wicked plot,--all these are parts of a familiar story. God wrought marvellously for His penitent people; and a counter decree issued by the king, allowing them to fight for their lives, was rapidly communicated to every part of the realm by mounted couriers, who were "hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment." "And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them." Esther 8:14, 17.

On the day appointed for their destruction, "the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people." Angels that excel in strength had been commissioned by God to protect His people while they "stood for their lives." Esther 9:2, 16.

Mordecai was given the position of honour formerly occupied by Haman. He "was next unto King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren" (Esther 10:3); and he sought to promote the welfare of Israel. Thus did God bring His chosen people once more into favour at the Medo-Persian court, making possible the carrying out of His purpose to restore them to their own land. But it was not until several years later, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes I, the successor of Xerxes the Great, that any considerable number returned to Jerusalem, under Ezra.

The trying experiences that came to God's people in the days of Esther were not peculiar to that age alone. The revelator, looking down the ages to the close of time, has declared, "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17. Some who today are living on the earth will see these words fulfilled. The same spirit that in ages past led men to persecute the true church, will in the future lead to the pursuance of a similar course toward those who maintain their loyalty to God. Even now preparations are being made for this last great conflict.

The decree that will finally go forth against the remnant people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews. Today the enemies of the true church see in the little company keeping the Sabbath commandment, a Mordecai at the gate. The reverence of God's people for His law is a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling on His Sabbath.

Satan will arouse indignation against the minority who refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. By false representations and angry appeals, men will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a "Thus says the Scriptures" to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for Sunday laws. But those who fear God, cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield will be fought the last great conflict in the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Today, as in the days of Esther and Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, June 13th, 2025****Gospel Workers
Chapter 63, p. 433-437****“Christ’s Followers, The Light of The World”**

In none of our buildings should we seek to make a display, for this would not advance the work. Our economy should testify to our principles. We should employ methods of work that are not transient. Everything should be done solidly....

The lax way which some churches have of incurring debts and keeping in debt, was presented before me. In some cases a continual debt is upon the house of God. There is a continual interest to be paid. These things should not and need not be. If there is that wisdom and tact and zeal manifested for the Master which God requires, there will be a change in these things. The debts will be lifted. God calls for offerings from those who can give, and even the poorer members can do their little. Self-denial will enable all to do something. Both old and young, parents and children, are to show their faith by their works. Let the necessity that each act a part be most strenuously impressed upon the members of the church. Let everyone do his best. When there is a will to do, God will open the way. He does not design that His cause shall be trammelled with debt.

God calls for self-sacrifice. This will bring not only financial but spiritual prosperity. Self-denial and self-sacrifice will work wonders in advancing the spirituality of the church....

The test question for every Christian to ask himself is, "Have I, in my inmost soul, supreme love for Christ? Do I love His tabernacle? Will not the Lord be honoured by my making His sacred institution my first consideration? Is my love for God and my Redeemer strong enough to lead me to deny self? When tempted to indulge in pleasure and selfish enjoyment, shall I not say, No, I will spend nothing for my own gratification while the house of God is burdened with debt?"

Our Redeemer claims far more than we give Him. Self interposes its desire to be first; but the Lord claims the whole heart, the entire affections. He will not come in as second. And should not Christ have our first and highest consideration? Should He not demand this token of our respect and loyalty? These things underlie our very heart-life, in the home circle and in the church. If the heart, the soul, the strength, the life, is surrendered wholly to God, if the affections are given wholly to Him, we shall make Him supreme in all our service. When we are in harmony with God, the thought of His honour and glory comes before everything else. No person is preferred before Him in our gifts and offerings. We have a sense of what it means to be partners with Christ in the sacred firm.

The house where God meets with His people will be dear and sacred to every one of His loyal children. It will not be left crippled with debt. To allow such a thing would appear almost like a denial of your faith. You will be ready to make a great personal sacrifice if only you may have a house free from debt, where God can meet with and bless His people.

Every debt upon every house of worship among us may be paid if the members of the church will plan wisely and put forth earnest, zealous effort to cancel the debt. And in every case where a debt is lifted, let there be a service of thanksgiving, which shall be as a re-dedication to God of His house.--"Testimonies for the Church, Vol. VI, pages 100-104.

The need for a meeting-house where there is a newly formed company of believers, has been presented before me in a panoramic view. I saw workmen building humble houses of worship. Those newly come to the faith were helping with willing hands, and those who had means were assisting with their means. In the basement of the church, above ground, a schoolroom was prepared for the children, and a teacher was sent there to take charge. The numbers in the school were not large, but it was a happy beginning. I heard the songs of children and of parents: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that built it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman wakes but in vain." "Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul. While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being." [Psalm 127:1; 146:1, 2.]

The establishment of churches, the erection of meeting-houses and school-buildings, was extended from city to

city, and the tithe was increasing to carry forward the work. Plants were made not only in one place, but in many places, and the Lord was working to increase His forces.

In this work all classes will be reached. When the Holy Spirit works among us, souls who are unready for Christ's appearing are convicted. Many come to our meetings and are converted who for years have not attended meetings in any church. The simplicity of the truth reaches their hearts. The tobacco devotees sacrifice their idol, and the liquor drinker his liquor. They could not do this if they did not by faith grasp the promises of God for the forgiveness of their sins.

The truth as it is in the Word comes before high and low, rich and poor, and those who receive the message become workers with us and with God, and a strong force is raised up to labour harmoniously. This is our work. It is not to be neglected in any of our camp-meeting labour. It is a part of every gospel mission. Instead of setting every talent to work for the lowest outcasts, we should seek in every place to raise up a company of believers who will unite with us in uplifting the standard of truth, and working for rich and poor. Then as churches are established, there will be an increase of helpers to labour for the destitute and the outcast.—General Conference Bulletin, March, 1899.

Many not of our faith are longing for the very help that Christians are in duty bound to give. If God's people would show a genuine interest in their neighbours, many would be reached by the special truths for this time. Nothing will or ever can give character to the work like helping people just where they are.—*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. VI* page 280.

Examination for the Ministry

Men should not be encouraged to go into the field as ministers without unmistakable evidence that God has called them. The Lord will not entrust the burden for His flock to unqualified individuals. Those whom God calls must be men of deep experience, tried and proved, men of sound judgment, men who will dare to reprove sin in the spirit of meekness, men who understand how to feed the flock. God knows the heart, and He knows whom to select.—*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. I, page 209.*


There has been too little done in examining ministers; and for this very reason churches have had the labours of unconverted, inefficient men, who have lulled the members to sleep, instead of awakening them to greater zeal and earnestness in the cause of God. There are ministers who come to the prayer-meeting, and pray the same old, lifeless prayers over and over; they preach the same dry discourses from week to week and from month to month. They have nothing new and inspiring to present to their congregations, and this is evidence that they are not partakers of the divine nature. Christ is not abiding in the heart by faith.


Those who claim to keep and teach the holy law of God, and yet are continually transgressing that law, are stumbling-blocks both to sinners and to believers in the truth. The loose, lax way in which many regard the law of Jehovah and the gift of His Son, is an insult to God. The only way in which we can correct this wide-spread evil, is to examine closely everyone who would become a teacher of the Word. Those upon whom this responsibility rests, should acquaint themselves with his history since he professed to believe the truth. His Christian experience and his knowledge of the Scriptures, the way in which he holds present truth, should all be understood. No one should be accepted as a labourer in the cause of God, until he makes it manifest that he has a real, living experience in the things of God.


LESSON 12

“PRECURSORS”

June 14 - June 20

 **MEMORY VERSE :** *“For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” [2 Timothy 1:7]*

 **SCRIPTURE :** Daniel 2:31–45; Daniel 3:1–12; Daniel 17; Daniel 18; Matthew 12:9–14; John 14:1; Acts 12:1–17; Romans 1:18–25; Revelation 13:11–17;
{See also Revelation 13}

 **INTRODUCTION :** This week, we will look at two more Bible stories that foreshadow last-day events in remarkable detail.

First, we will examine the account of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, which has obvious allusions to the issues portrayed in Revelation 13. Then we will turn to the New Testament, where we find that the experience of the early Christians also can help us understand what to expect between now and the return of Christ.

Both examples highlight remarkable courage and provide keys to finding peace of mind under the most trying of circumstances.

Again and again, Jesus said such things as “Do not fear,” and “Why do your thoughts trouble you?” It is important to remember that the focus of prophecy is Christ, and, as such, we must be able to find the same counsel throughout the scenes portrayed in earth’s closing moments. “ ‘Let not your heart be troubled,’ ” He taught His disciples, “ ‘you believe in God, believe also in Me’ ” (*John 14:1, NKJV*).

In other words, yes, last-day events will be difficult and trying for those who seek to stay faithful to God. But ultimately, we should view these events with hope, not fear.

Further Thought***Preparation Day, June 20th, 2025*****The Great Controversy
Chapter 40, p. 635-652****“God’s People Delivered”**

When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honour the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof.

The people of God—some in prison cells, some hidden in solitary retreats in the forests and the mountains—still plead for divine protection, while in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of his chosen. Said the Lord: “Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goes . . . to come into the mountain of Jehovah, to the Mighty One of Israel. And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.” [Isaiah 30:29, 30.]

With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens, and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God’s covenant, and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness.

By the people of God a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, “Look up,” and, lifting their eyes to the heavens, they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen they look up steadfastly into Heaven, and see the glory of God, and the Son of man seated upon his throne. In his divine form they discern the marks of his humiliation; and from his lips they hear the request, presented before his Father and the holy angels, “I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.” [John 17:24.] Again a voice, musical and triumphant, is heard, saying, “They come! they come! holy, harmless, and undefiled. They have kept the word of my patience; they shall walk among the angels;” and the pale, quivering lips of those who have held fast their faith, utter a shout of victory.

It is at midnight that God manifests his power for the deliverance of his people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up, and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying, “It is done.” [Revelation 16:17, 18.]

That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, “such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.” [Revelation 16:17, 18.] The firmament appears to open and shut. The glory from the throne of God seems flashing through. The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of the hurricane, like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness, are swallowed up by the angry waters. Babylon the Great hath come in remembrance before God, “to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” [Revelation 16:19, 21.] Great hailstones, everyone “about the weight of a talent,” are doing their work of destruction. The proudest cities of the earth are laid low. The

lordly palaces, upon which the world's great men have lavished their wealth in order to glorify themselves, are crumbling to ruin before their eyes. Prison walls are rent asunder, and God's people, who have been held in bondage for their faith, are set free.

Graves are opened, and "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth" "awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." [Daniel 12:2.] All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept his law. "They also which pierced Him," [Revelation 1:7.] those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of his truth and his people, are raised to behold him in his glory, and to see the honour placed upon the loyal and obedient.

Thick clouds still cover the sky; yet the sun now and then breaks through, appearing like the avenging eye of Jehovah. Fierce lightnings leap from the heavens, enveloping the earth in a sheet of flame. Above the terrific roar of thunder, voices, mysterious and awful, declare the doom of the wicked. The words spoken are not comprehended by all; but they are distinctly understood by the false teachers. Those who a little before were so reckless, so boastful and defiant, so exultant in their cruelty to God's commandment-keeping people, are now overwhelmed with consternation, and shuddering in fear. Their wails are heard above the sound of the elements. Demons acknowledge the divinity of Christ, and tremble before his power, while men are supplicating for mercy, and grovelling in abject terror.

Said the prophets of old as they beheld in holy vision the day of God: "Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty." [Isaiah 13:6.] "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." "In that day a man shall cast the idols of his silver, and the idols of his gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he arises to shake terribly the earth." [Isaiah 2:10-12, 21 (MARGIN).]

Through a rift in the clouds, there beams a star whose brilliancy is increased fourfold in contrast with the darkness. It speaks hope and joy to the faithful, but severity and wrath to the transgressors of God's law. Those who have sacrificed all for Christ are now secure, hidden as in the secret of the Lord's pavilion. They have been tested, and before the world and the despisers of truth they have evinced their fidelity to Him who died for them. A marvellous change has come over those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death. They have been suddenly delivered from the dark and terrible tyranny of men transformed to demons. Their faces, so lately pale, anxious, and haggard, are now aglow with wonder, faith, and love. Their voices rise in triumphant song: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." [Psalm 46:1-3.]

While these words of holy trust ascend to God, the clouds sweep back, and the starry heavens are seen, unspeakably glorious in contrast with the black and angry firmament on either side. The glory of the celestial city streams from the gates ajar. Then there appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone folded together. Says the prophet, "The heavens shall declare His righteousness; for God is judge himself." [Psalm 50:6.] That holy law, God's righteousness, that amid thunder and flame was proclaimed from Sinai as the guide of life, is now revealed to men as the rule of judgment. The hand opens the tables, and there are seen the precepts of the Decalogue, traced as with a pen of fire. The words are so plain that all can read them. Memory is aroused, the darkness of superstition and heresy is swept from every mind, and God's ten words, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, are presented to the view of all the inhabitants of the earth.

It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God's holy requirements. The Lord gave them his law; they might have compared their characters with it, and learned their defects while there was yet opportunity for repentance and reform; but in order to secure the favour of the world, they set aside its precepts and taught others to transgress. They have endeavoured to compel God's people to profane his Sabbath. Now they are condemned by that law which they have despised. With awful distinctness they see that they are

without excuse. They chose whom they would serve and worship. "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serves God and him that serves him not." [Malachi 3:18.]

The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among them, have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God. Too late they see the true nature of their spurious Sabbath, and the sandy foundation upon which they have been building. They find that they have been fighting against God. Religious teachers have led souls to perdition while professing to guide them to the gates of Paradise. Not until the day of final accounts will it be known how great is the responsibility of men in holy office, and how terrible are the results of their unfaithfulness. Only in eternity can we rightly estimate the loss of a single soul. Fearful will be the doom of him to whom God shall say, Depart, thou wicked servant.

The voice of God is heard from Heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to his people. Like peals of loudest thunder, his words roll through the earth. The Israel of God stand listening, with their eyes fixed upward. Their countenances are lighted up with his glory, and shine as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked cannot look upon them. And when the blessing is pronounced on those who have honoured God by keeping his Sabbath holy, there is a mighty shout of victory.

Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour, and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious, until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a "man of sorrows," to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, he comes, victor in Heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. "Faithful and True," "in righteousness he doth judge and make war." And "the armies in Heaven follow him." [Revelation 19:11, 14.] With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend him on his way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms,— "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." No human pen can portray the scene, nor mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendour. "His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light." [Habakkuk 3:3, 4.] As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head, but a diadem of glory rests on his holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun. "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." [Revelation 19:16.]

Before his presence, "all faces are turned into paleness;" upon the rejecters of God's mercy falls the terror of eternal despair. "The heart melts, and the knees smite together," "and the faces of them all gather blackness." [Jeremiah 30:6; Nahum 2:10.] The righteous cry with trembling, "Who shall be able to stand?" The angels' song is hushed, and there is a period of awful silence. Then the voice of Jesus is heard, saying, "My grace is sufficient for you." The faces of the righteous are lighted up, and joy fills every heart. And the angels strike a note higher, and sing again, as they draw still nearer to the earth.

The King of kings descends upon the cloud, wrapped in flaming fire. The heavens are rolled together as a scroll, the earth trembles before him, and every mountain and island is 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." [Psalm 50:3, 4.]

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" [Revelation 6:15-17.]

The derisive jests have ceased. Lying lips are hushed into silence. The clash of arms, the tumult of battle, "with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood," [Isaiah 9:5.] is stilled. Naught now is heard but the voice of prayer and the sound of weeping and lamentation. The cry bursts forth from lips so lately scoffing, "The great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" The wicked pray to be buried beneath the rocks of the mountains, rather than meet the face of Him whom they have despised and rejected.

That voice which penetrates the ear of the dead, they know. How often have its plaintive, tender tones called them to repentance. How often has it been heard in the touching entreaties of a friend, a brother, a Redeemer. To the rejecters of his grace, no other could be so full of condemnation, so burdened with denunciation, as that voice which has so long pleaded, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" [Ezekiel 33:11.] Oh that it were to them the voice of a stranger! Says Jesus: "I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof." [Proverbs 1:24, 25.] That voice awakens memories which they would fain blot out,—warnings despised, invitations refused, privileges slighted.

There are those who mocked Christ in his humiliation. With thrilling power come to their minds the Sufferer's words, when, adjured by the high priest, he solemnly declared, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." [Matthew 26:64.] Now they behold him in his glory, and they are yet to see him sitting on the right hand of power.

Those who derided his claim to be the Son of God are speechless now. There is the haughty Herod who jeered at his royal title, and bade the mocking soldiers crown him king. There are the very men who with impious hands placed upon his form the purple robe, upon his sacred brow the thorny crown, and in his unresisting hand the mimic sceptre, and bowed before him in blasphemous mockery. The men who smote and spit upon the Prince of life, now turn from his piercing gaze, and seek to flee from the overpowering glory of his presence. Those who drove the nails through his hands and feet, the soldier who pierced his side, behold these marks with terror and remorse.

With awful distinctness do priests and rulers recall the events of Calvary. With shuddering horror they remember how, wagging their heads in Satanic exultation, they exclaimed, "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him." [Matthew 27:42, 43.]

Vividly they recall the Saviour's parable of the husbandmen who refused to render to their lord the fruit of the vineyard, who abused his servants and slew his son. They remember, too, the sentence which they themselves pronounced: The lord of the vineyard will miserably destroy those wicked men. In the sin and punishment of those unfaithful men, the priests and elders see their own course and their own just doom. And now there rises a cry of mortal agony. Louder than the shout, "Crucify him! crucify him!" which rang through the streets of Jerusalem, swells the awful, despairing wail, "He is the Son of God! He is the true Messiah!" They seek to flee from the presence of the King of kings. In the deep caverns of the earth, rent asunder by the warring of the elements, they vainly attempt to hide.

In the lives of all who reject truth, there are moments when conscience awakens, when memory presents the torturing recollection of a life of hypocrisy, and the soul is harassed with vain regrets. But what are these compared with the remorse of that day when "fear cometh as desolation," when "destruction cometh as a whirlwind!" [Proverbs 1:27.] Those who would have destroyed Christ and his faithful people, now witness the glory which rests upon them. In the midst of their terror they hear the voices of the saints in joyful strains exclaiming, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." [Isaiah 25:9.]

Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then raising his hands to heaven he cries, "Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!" Throughout the length and breadth of the earth, the dead shall hear that voice; and they that hear shall live. And the whole earth shall ring with the tread of the exceeding great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. From the prison-house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory, crying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is the victory?" [1 Corinthians 15:55.] And the living righteous and the risen saints unite their voices in a long, glad shout of victory.

All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam, who stands among the risen throng, is of lofty height and majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations; in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race. But all arise with the freshness and vigour of eternal youth. In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image; but Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious

body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will “grow up” [Malachi 4:2.] to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ's faithful ones will appear “in the beauty of the Lord our God;” in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood.

The living righteous are changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal, and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Angels “gather together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Little children are borne by holy angels to their mothers' arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the city of God.

On each side of the cloudy chariot are wings, and beneath it are living wheels; and as the chariot rolls upward, the wheels cry, “Holy,” and the wings, as they move, cry, “Holy,” and the retinue of angels cry, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.” And the redeemed shout “Alleluia!” as the chariot moves onward toward the New Jerusalem.

Before entering the city of God, the Saviour bestows upon his followers the emblems of victory, and invests them with the insignia of their royal state. The glittering ranks are drawn up, in the form of a hollow square, about their King, whose form rises in majesty high above saint and angel, whose countenance beams upon them full of benignant love. Throughout the unnumbered host of the redeemed, every glance is fixed upon him, every eye beholds His glory whose “visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” Upon the heads of the overcomers, Jesus with his own right hand places the crown of glory. For each there is a crown, bearing his own “new name,” [Revelation 2:17.] and the inscription, “Holiness to the Lord.” In every hand are placed the victor's palm and the shining harp. Then, as the commanding angels strike the note, every hand sweeps the harp strings with skilful touch, awaking sweet music in rich, melodious strains. Rapture unutterable thrills every heart, and each voice is raised in grateful praise: “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.” [Revelation 1:5, 6.]

Before the ransomed throng is the holy city. Jesus opens wide the pearly gates, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. There they behold the Paradise of God, the home of Adam in his innocence. Then that voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, is heard, saying, “Your conflict is ended.” “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Now is fulfilled the Saviour's prayer for his disciples, “I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.” “Faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,” [Jude 24.] Christ presents to the Father the purchase of his blood, declaring, “Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me.” “Those that thou gave me I have kept.” Oh, the wonders of redeeming love! the rapture of that hour when the infinite Father, looking upon the ransomed, shall behold his image, sin's discord banished, its blight removed, and the human once more in harmony with the divine!

With unutterable love, Jesus welcomes his faithful ones to the “joy of their Lord.” The Saviour's joy is in seeing, in the kingdom of glory, the souls that have been saved by his agony and humiliation. And the redeemed will be sharers in this joy, as they behold, among the blessed, those who have been won to Christ through their prayers, their labours, and loving sacrifice. As they gather about the great white throne, gladness unspeakable will fill their hearts, when they behold those whom they have won for Christ, and see that one has gained others, and these still others, all brought into the haven of rest, there to lay their crowns at Jesus' feet, and praise him through the endless cycles of eternity.

As the ransomed ones are welcomed to the city of God, there rings out upon the air an exultant cry of adoration. The two Adams are about to meet. The Son of God is standing with outstretched arms to receive the father of our race,—the being whom he created, who sinned against his Maker, and for whose sin the marks of the crucifixion are borne upon the Saviour's form. As Adam discerns the prints of the cruel nails, he does not fall upon the bosom of his Lord, but in humiliation casts himself at his feet, crying, “Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain!” Tenderly the Saviour lifts him up, and bids him look once more upon the Eden home from which he has so long been exiled.

After his expulsion from Eden, Adam's life on earth was filled with sorrow. Every dying leaf, every victim of sacrifice, every blight upon the fair face of nature, every stain upon man's purity, was a fresh reminder of his sin. Terrible was the agony of remorse as he beheld iniquity abounding, and, in answer to his warnings, met the reproaches cast upon himself as the cause of sin. With patient humility he bore, for nearly a thousand years, the penalty of transgression. Faithfully did he repent of his sin, and trust in the merits of the promised Saviour, and he died in the hope of a resurrection. The Son of God redeemed man's failure and fall, and now, through the work of the atonement, Adam is re-instated in his first dominion.

Transported with joy, he beholds the trees that were once his delight,—the very trees whose fruit he himself had gathered in the days of his innocence and joy. He sees the vines that his own hands have trained, the very flowers that he once loved to care for. His mind grasps the reality of the scene; he comprehends that this is indeed Eden restored, more lovely now than when he was banished from it. The Saviour leads him to the tree of life, and plucks the glorious fruit, and bids him eat. He looks about him, and beholds a multitude of his family redeemed, standing in the Paradise of God. Then he casts his glittering crown at the feet of Jesus, and, falling upon his breast, embraces the Redeemer. He touches the golden harp, and the vaults of Heaven echo the triumphant song, “Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again!” The family of Adam take up the strain, and cast their crowns at the Saviour's feet as they bow before him in adoration.

This reunion is witnessed by the angels who wept at the fall of Adam, and rejoiced when Jesus, after his resurrection, ascended to Heaven, having opened the grave for all who should believe on his name. Now they behold the work of redemption accomplished, and they unite their voices in the song of praise.

Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire,—so resplendent is it with the glory of God,—are gathered the company that have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.” [Revelation 15:2.] With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, “having the harps of God,” they stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men; and there is heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, “the voice of harpers harping with their harps.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; 7:14-17] And they sing “a new song” before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb,—a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience,—an experience such as no other company have ever had. “These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes.” These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as “the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” “These are they which came out of great tribulation;” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; Revelation 7:14-17.] they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments. But they have been delivered, for they have “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” “In their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault” before God. “Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sits on the throne shall dwell among them.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; Revelation 7:14-17.] They have seen the earth wasted with famine and pestilence, the sun having power to scorch men with great heat, and they themselves have endured suffering, hunger, and thirst. But “they shall hunger no more; neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; 7:14-17.]

In all ages the Saviour's chosen have been educated and disciplined in the school of trial. They walked in narrow paths on earth; they were purified in the furnace of affliction. For Jesus' sake they endured opposition, hatred, calumny. They followed him through conflicts sore; they endured self-denial and experienced bitter disappointments. By their own painful experience they learned the evil of sin, its power, its guilt, its woe; and they look upon it with abhorrence. A sense of the infinite sacrifice made for its cure, humbles them in their own sight, and fills their hearts with gratitude and praise which those who have never fallen cannot appreciate. They love much, because they have been forgiven much. Having been partakers of Christ's sufferings, they are fitted to be partakers with him of his glory.

The heirs of God have come from garrets, from hovels, from dungeons, from scaffolds, from mountains, from deserts, from the caves of the earth, from the caverns of the sea. On earth they were “destitute, afflicted, tormented.” Millions went down to the grave loaded with infamy, because they steadfastly refused to yield to the

deceptive claims of Satan. By human tribunals they were adjudged the vilest of criminals. But now “God is judge himself.” [Psalm 50:6.] Now the decisions of earth are reversed. “The rebuke of his people shall he take away.” [Isaiah 25:8.] “They shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord.” He hath appointed “to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” [Isaiah 62:12; 61:3.] They are no longer feeble, afflicted, scattered, and oppressed. Henceforth they are to be ever with the Lord. They stand before the throne clad in richer robes than the most honoured of the earth have ever worn. They are crowned with diadems more glorious than were ever placed upon the brow of earthly monarchs. The days of pain and weeping are forever ended. The King of glory has wiped the tears from all faces; every cause of grief has been removed. Amid the waving of palm-branches they pour forth a song of praise, clear, sweet, and harmonious; every voice takes up the strain, until the anthem swells through the vaults of Heaven, “Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” And all the inhabitants of Heaven respond in the ascription, “Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever.” [Revelation 7:10, 12.]

In this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance. The length and the breadth, the depth and the height of redeeming love are but dimly comprehended. The plan of redemption will not be fully understood, even when the ransomed see as they are seen and know as they are known; but through the eternal ages, new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind. Though the griefs and pains and temptations of earth are ended, and the cause removed, the people of God will ever have a distinct, intelligent knowledge of what their salvation has cost.

The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. Never will it be forgotten that He whose power created and upheld the unnumbered worlds through the vast realms of space, the Beloved of God, the Majesty of Heaven, He whom cherub and shining seraph delighted to adore,—humbled himself to uplift fallen man; that he bore the guilt and shame of sin, and the hiding of his Father's face, till the woes of a lost world broke his heart, and crushed out his life on Calvary's cross. That the Maker of all worlds, the Arbiter of all destinies, should lay aside his glory, and humiliate himself from love to man, will ever excite the wonder and adoration of the universe. As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer, and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in his countenance; as they behold his throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that his kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in rapturous song, “Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his own most precious blood!”

The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries. In the light that streams from Calvary, the attributes of God which had filled us with fear and awe appear beautiful and attractive. Mercy, tenderness, and parental love are seen to blend with holiness, justice, and power. While we behold the majesty of his throne, high and lifted up, we see his character in its gracious manifestations, and comprehend, as never before, the significance of that endearing title, our Father.

It will be seen that He who is infinite in wisdom could devise no plan for our salvation except the sacrifice of his Son. The compensation for this sacrifice is the joy of peopling the earth with ransomed beings, holy, happy, and immortal. The result of the Saviour's conflict with the powers of darkness is joy to the redeemed, redounding to the glory of God, throughout eternity. And such is the value of the soul that the Father is satisfied with the price paid; and Christ himself, beholding the fruits of his great sacrifice, is satisfied.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, June 20th, 2025**

My Life Today
Chapter 3, march 5th, p. 68
“A Challenging Life”

Three Hebrew Worthies

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Daniel 3:17-18

A severe test came to ... these youth when Nebuchadnezzar issued a proclamation, calling upon all the officers of the kingdom to assemble at the dedication of the great image, and at the sound of the musical instruments, to bow down and worship it. Should any fail of doing this, they were immediately to be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. The worship of this image had been brought about by the wise men of Babylon in order to make the Hebrew youth join in their idolatrous worship. They were beautiful singers, and the Chaldeans wanted them to forget their God and accept the worship of the Babylonian idols.

The appointed day came, and at the sound of the music, the vast company that had assembled at the king's command “fell down and worshiped the golden image.” But these faithful young men would not bow down....

Then the king commanded the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated; and when this was done, the three Hebrews were cast in. So furious were the flames that the men who cast the Hebrews in were burned to death.

Suddenly the countenance of the king paled with terror.... His voice trembling with excitement, the monarch exclaimed, “Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

From age to age the heroes of faith have been marked by their fidelity to God, and they have been brought conspicuously before the world that their light might shine to those in darkness. Daniel and his three companions are illustrious examples of Christian heroism.... From their experience in the court of Babylon we may learn what God will do for those who serve Him with full purpose of heart.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, June 20th, 2025****Signs of the Times
November 7th, 1900, par. 1-11****“In The Master’s Service”**

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

If the disciples had now preached the Gospel to the Gentiles or the Samaritans, they would have lost their influence with the Jews. By exciting the prejudice of the Pharisees, they would have involved themselves in controversy, which would have discouraged them at the outset. Even the disciples were slow to understand that the Gospel was to be carried to all nations. Until they themselves could grasp this truth, they were not prepared to labour for the Gentiles. If the Jews would receive the Gospel, God purposed to make them His messengers to the Gentiles. Therefore they were first to hear the message.

The Saviour continued: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go hence. And when ye come into a house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

The Saviour portrayed before His delegated messengers the treatment they would receive as they bore testimony for Him. He would not allow them to enter upon their work as His messengers without telling them what they would meet. He had a complete knowledge of the struggles they would encounter. He showed them the plan of the battle, pointing out the dangers before them. They were not to go into the work blindfold, but were to count the cost of every trial.

"Beware of men," Christ said; "for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake; for a testimony against them and the Gentiles."

Christ did not wish His disciples to engage in the warfare in their own strength, thinking that they could break down every opposing influence; for then they would be taken unawares by the enemy. He told them what they might expect. He told them that they must count the cost. At the same time He assured them that help from on high would be given them. They were fighting the good fight of faith, and they would not be left alone. Heavenly angels would fight in their ranks, and the mighty General of heaven would lead the way. They might fear that their sinfulness would make them powerless. They might feel that they could not stand against the enemy. They were to remember that Omnipotence could make them more than conquerors if they would go forward in faith, refusing to fail or be discouraged.

The Holy Spirit will supply with grace those who feel their inefficiency. Those who trust in the Lord will be surrounded with a wall of light and holiness. Christ says to His soldiers today: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

This spiritual wickedness will develop as time goes on. Laws will be made to compel men to worship God in accordance with human opinions. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

The powers of this earth will unite with the powers from beneath to oppress God's people. In the Revelation, John writes: "I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him, and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by the sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."


When Satanic agencies shall unite with the professed Christian world in opposing God, these words of the prophet will be fulfilled. In blind zeal "the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake; but he that endures to the end shall be saved."


God desires His servants to remember the instruction here given, that they may not be deceived in regard to what is coming upon the world. Of ourselves we can do nothing. Without the Spirit of God we are utterly helpless. Our strength lies in hiding in Jesus. God can do more in one moment to convict people than we can do in a lifetime. Therefore let us hold fast to the arm of Omnipotence. Let us lean upon Jesus. Thus we shall grow strong to do His will. The Lord is our helper. He will not leave or forsake us. Mrs. E. G. White.


LESSON 13

“IMAGES OF THE END”

June 21 - June 27

 **MEMORY VERSE :** *“And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.” [Jonah 1:9]*

 **SCRIPTURE :** 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Daniel 5:1-31; Jonah 3:5-10; Matthew 12:38-42; Revelation 16:12-19; Revelation 18:4;

 **INTRODUCTION :** This week will be our final look at accounts that help clarify our understanding of last-day events. This time we will look at the mission of Jonah to Nineveh; the fall of Babylon; and the rise of Cyrus, the Persian king who liberated God’s people and enabled them to return to the Promised Land.

As with the other stories we’ve examined, these historical accounts have held profound meaning for every generation. But they also have special relevance to the final generations living before Christ returns. That is, we can mine from these historical accounts various elements that can help us better understand what we call “present truth.”

At the same time, we must remember one thing concerning all these stories that appear to foreshadow last-day events: we must be careful to look at broad themes and allusions and not try to parse every detail to the point of creating prophetic absurdities. As in the parables of Jesus, we should look for the major points and principles. We should not milk every detail in hopes of finding some hidden truth. Instead, we should look for the outlines, the principles; and from these we can discover elements relevant for the last days.

Further Thought***Preparation Day, June 27th, 2025*****Prophets and Kings
Chapter 43, p. 535-538****“The Unseen Watcher”**

Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that the fact might be determined whether it would fulfill the purposes of the Watcher and the Holy One. Prophecy has traced the rise and progress of the world's great empires--Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with the nations of less power, history has repeated itself. Each has had its period of test; each has failed, its glory faded, its power departed.

While nations have rejected God's principles, and in this rejection have wrought their own ruin, yet a divine, overruling purpose has manifestly been at work throughout the ages. It was this that the prophet Ezekiel saw in the wonderful representation given him during his exile in the land of the Chaldeans, when before his astonished gaze were portrayed the symbols that revealed an overruling Power that has to do with the affairs of earthly rulers.

Upon the banks of the river Chebar, Ezekiel beheld a whirlwind seeming to come from the north, "a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber." A number of wheels intersecting one another were moved by four living beings. High above all these "was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." "And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings." Ezekiel 1:4, 26; 10:8. The wheels were so complicated in arrangement that at first sight they appeared to be in confusion; yet they moved in perfect harmony. Heavenly beings, sustained and guided by the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, were impelling those wheels; above them, upon the sapphire throne, was the Eternal One; and round about the throne was a rainbow, the emblem of divine mercy.

As the wheel-like complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations He that sits above the cherubim still guides the affairs of this earth.

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

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

Today the signs of the times declare that we are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Everything in our world is in agitation. Before our eyes is fulfilling the Saviour's prophecy of the events to precede His coming: "Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. . . . Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." Matthew 24:6, 7.

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

The Bible, and the Bible only, gives a correct view of these things. Here are revealed the great final scenes in the history of our world, events that already are casting their shadows before, the sound of their approach causing the earth to tremble and men's hearts to fail them for fear.

"Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty, and makes it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scatters abroad the inhabitants thereof; . . . because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate." Isaiah 24:1-6.

"Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. . . . The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate." "The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languishes; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men." Joel 1:15-18, 12.

"I am pained at my very heart; . . . I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled." Jeremiah 4:19, 20.

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." [Jeremiah 30:7]

"Because thou hast made the LORD, *which is* my refuge, *even* the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." [Psalm 91:9-10]

"O daughter of Zion, . . . the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies. Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel." Micah 4:10-12. God will not fail His church in the hour of her greatest peril. He has promised deliverance. "I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents," He has declared, "and have mercy on his dwelling places." Jeremiah 30:18.

Then will the purpose of God be fulfilled; the principles of His kingdom will be honoured by all beneath the sun.

EGW Study Notes 1**Preparation Day, June 27th, 2025****From Splendour to Shadow
Chapter 22, p. 149-150****“Jonah’s Day and Ours”**

Today the cities are in need of knowledge of the true God as were the Ninevites. Christ’s ambassadors are to point men to the nobler world. According to the Scriptures, the only city that will endure is the city whose builder and maker is God. Through His servants the Lord is calling on men to secure the immortal inheritance.

There is coming rapidly an almost universal guilt on the cities, because of the steady increase of determined wickedness. Every day brings fresh revelations of strife, bribery, fraud, violence, lawlessness, indifference to human suffering, and brutal destruction of human life. Every day testifies to the increase of insanity, murder, and suicide. Men boast of the progress and enlightenment of the age in which we now live; but God sees the earth filled with iniquity and violence. Men declare that the law of God has been abrogated, and as a result, a tide of evil is sweeping over the world. Nobility of soul, gentleness, piety, are bartered away to gratify the lust for forbidden things.

With long-sufferance and tender compassion God deals with the transgressors of His law. And yet, the end of God’s forbearance with those who persist in disobedience is approaching rapidly.

Ought men to be surprised over a sudden change in the dealings of the Supreme Ruler with the inhabitants of a fallen world? Ought they be surprised that God should bring destruction on those whose ill-gotten gains have been obtained through fraud? Many have chosen to remain under the banner of the originator of rebellion against the government of heaven.

The forbearance of God has been so great that we marvel. The Omnipotent One has been exerting a restraining power over His own attributes. God allows men a period of probation, but there is a point beyond which divine patience is exhausted. The Lord bears long with men, giving warnings to save them, but a time will come when the rebellious element will be blotted out, in mercy to themselves and to those who would be influenced by their example.

The Spirit of God is being withdrawn. Disasters follow one another in quick succession—earthquakes, tornadoes, fire, and flood. Apparently these calamities are capricious outbreaks of disorganized unregulated forces of nature, beyond the control of man; but they are among the agencies by which God seeks to arouse men and women to a sense of their danger.

God’s messengers in the great cities are not to become discouraged over the wickedness and depravity they face while proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation. The Lord gave Paul in wicked Corinth a message: “Do not be afraid, ... for I am with you ...; I have many people in this city.” Acts 18:9, 10, RSV. In every city there are many who with proper teaching may learn to become followers of Jesus.

God’s message for the inhabitants of earth today is, “Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 24:44. The conditions in the great cities proclaim in thunder tones that the hour of God’s judgment is come and that the end of all things earthly is at hand. In quick succession the judgments of God will follow one another—fire, and flood, and earthquake, with war and bloodshed. The angel of mercy cannot much longer shelter the impenitent. The storm is gathering; and those only will stand who respond to the invitations of mercy, as did the inhabitants of Nineveh under the preaching of Jonah, and become sanctified through obedience to the laws of the divine Ruler.

EGW Study Notes 2**Preparation Day, June 27th, 2025****Signs of the Times
December 29th, 1890, par. 1-6****“A Symbol of the Final Destruction”**

"Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."

The destruction of Babylon pictures to some degree the final destruction of the world, of which the prophet writes, "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." Destruction came upon Babylon while the king and his lords were engaged in feasting and revelry. Cyrus and his army marched up the bed of the river Euphrates; for trenches had been dug, and the river turned from its course, so that there was no obstruction to their entering the city, provided the gates were opened. The guardsmen were indulging in merriment and revelry, and the city was left without defence. Before the officers were aware, the enemy had entered the city, and escape was impossible. Those in one part of the city were slain or captured before those in another part knew that the city was invaded. No alarm was sounded, no cry could be raised to warn the people that the forces of Cyrus were upon them.

The monarch, his princes, and guardsmen, were given up to feasting, and, intoxicated with strong drink, they knew nothing of the peril of the kingdom. There was a noise at the palace gates, the doors were forced open, the troops of Cyrus rushed in, and in a short time the king and his guests were lying mangled in the heaps of the slain, and the drunken slept a perpetual sleep. Thus was the prophecy of Isaiah and Jeremiah fulfilled to the letter.

The prophet describes Babylon as the glory of kingdoms, and in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar it was represented by the head of gold. But although it was the greatest kingdom of the earth, the prophet had declared: "I will rise up against them, says the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son and nephew, says the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, says the Lord of hosts."

Through the prophet Isaiah the Lord declares what shall come upon those who pursue a course similar to that of these despisers of his word. He says: "The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together; the Lord of hosts musters the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty." He looks down the ages, and declares what shall be: "Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt; and they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travails; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." The prophet then describes the signs of the day of God, and Christ also speaks of these signs as tokens of his near coming. "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger."

Babylon is a symbol of the world at large. When its doom was made certain, its kings and officers seemed to be as men insane, and their own course hastened its destiny. When the doom of a nation is fixed, it seems that all the energy, wisdom, and discretion of its former time of prosperity, deserts its men of position, and they hasten the evil

they would avert. Outside enemies are not the greatest peril to an individual or a nation. The overthrow of a nation results, under the providence of God, from some unwise or evil course of its own. But the people who fear God, who are loyal to his laws, who carry out the principles of righteousness in their lives, have a sure defence; God will be the refuge of those who trust in him.

