

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS

A large, ethereal eye is superimposed on the sky in the upper right quadrant of the image. The eye is composed of soft, glowing clouds and light, with a visible iris and pupil. The overall background is a vast sky filled with soft, white and light blue clouds, with a bright light source (the sun) creating a lens flare effect in the center.

"AS
THE APPLE
OF HIS EYE"

*PROPHECIES, EXPERIENCES,
AND MISSION OF GOD'S PEOPLE*

SECOND HALF 2021

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SECOND HALF
JULY - DECEMBER

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AND MISSION OF GOD'S PEOPLE*



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INTRODUCTION

The lessons for this half year focus on the important Biblical subject of the people whom God loves as the apple of His eye. There are prophecies, promises, blessings, and experiences as well as tests, shaking, faithfulness, and victory. Beginning with the origin of life on earth, the lessons traverse the centuries of history, looking at experiences such as deliverance from slavery, being taken captivity to a strange land, and return from captivity by some who faced the challenges of starting over. Centuries later, Jesus came to earth to carry out His mission as the Lamb of God and establish the Christian church as an international body with a worldwide mission, promising that, despite trials, persecution, and intense struggles, the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

Going back to Egypt with a message of freedom for God's people, Moses was to tell the Pharaoh that Israel was His "son" and "firstborn." "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn." This was repeated: "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 firstborn." Exodus 4:22, 23.

"When the Hebrew people were suffering cruel oppression under the hand of their taskmasters, the Lord looked upon them, and He called Israel His son. He bade Moses go to Pharaoh with the message, 'Israel is My son, even My firstborn. And I say unto thee, Let My son go, that he may serve Me.' The Lord did not wait until His people went forth and stood in triumph on the shores of the Red Sea before He called Israel His son, but while they were under oppression, degraded, downtrodden, suffering all that the power and the invention of the Egyptians could impose to make their lives bitter and to destroy them, then God undertakes their cause and declares to Pharaoh, 'Israel is My son, even My firstborn.'" —*The Southern Work*, p. 14.

Moses fulfilled his mission to lead Israel to freedom. Egypt was far away, and the sea and the wilderness were victoriously crossed when, looking back at how wonderfully the Lord had protected and guided His people, Moses, in his last song, exclaimed: "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye." Deuteronomy 32:10. Thus, Israel was recognized by God not only as His son but also as the nation that was very personal to Him—"the apple of His eye."

Centuries passed, and the record of Israel's history was frequently marred by sin and rebellion. Many of the people lost their hope and faith and went astray. Although only a remnant remained, the value that the Lord saw in them did not change; to Him the faithful were still "the apple of His eye." "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath He sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." Zechariah 2:8. Yes, "God loves His children with infinite love. To Him the dearest object on earth is His church." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 165.

"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." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 599.

We are now at the end of history, when the last prophecies will be fulfilled. A great work and a great battle are ahead of us. Are we progressing in faith to be ready for these events? Are we the holy missionary people that the Lord needs?

"Christ's church is to be a blessing, and its members are to be blessed as they bless others. The object of God in choosing a people before all the world was not only that He might adopt them as His sons and daughters, but that through them He might confer on the world the benefits of divine illumination. When the Lord chose Abraham, it was not simply to be the special friend of God, but to be a medium of the precious and peculiar privileges the Lord desired to bestow upon the nations. He was to be a light amid the moral darkness of his surroundings.

"Whenever God blesses His children with light and truth, it is not only that they may have the gift of eternal life, but that those around them may also be spiritually enlightened.... 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' And when God makes His children salt, it is not only for their own preservation, but that they may be agents in preserving others." —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 205.

Are we doing what He expects from us in this dark world? Remember, the Lord has a plan and a mission for His people. Let us go forward, remaining firm and solid on the immovable foundation on which His church was established—Jesus Christ. Let us be precious instruments in His hand for the salvation of others; then all of His promises will be fulfilled. If we keep this high goal in mind, the study of these lessons will be a great blessing.

"... For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Hebrews 13:5,6.

"Will the Lord forget His people in this trying hour? Did He forget faithful Noah when judgments were visited upon the antediluvian world? Did He forget Lot when the fire came down from heaven to consume the cities of the plain? Did He forget Joseph surrounded by idolaters in Egypt? Did He forget Elijah when the oath of Jezebel threatened him with the fate of the prophets of Baal? Did He forget Jeremiah in the dark and dismal pit of his prison house? Did He forget the three worthies in the fiery furnace? or Daniel in the den of lions?" —*Darkness Before Dawn*, p. 43.

"He has a tender care for the beings whom He has so loved as to give His dearest Beloved to save." —*Education*, p. 256.

"There is one thing in this world which is the greatest object of Christ's solicitude. It is His church on earth; for its members should be representatives, in spirit and character, of Him. The world is to recognize in them the representatives of Christianity, the depository of sacred truths in which is stored the most precious jewels for the enrichment of others. Through the ages of moral darkness and error, through centuries of strife and persecution, the church of Christ has been as a city set on a hill." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, p. 265.

May we be that light until the end is our prayer.

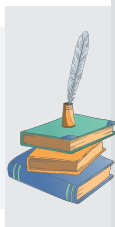
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LESSON 1

Sabbath, July 3, 2021

Divine Promise and Origin



"Often the Israelites seemed unable or unwilling to understand God's purpose for the heathen. Yet it was this very purpose that had made them a separate people and had established them as an independent nation among the nations of the earth. Abraham, their father, to whom the covenant promise was first given, had been called to go forth from his kindred, to the regions beyond, that he might be a light bearer to the heathen. Although the promise to him included a posterity as numerous as the sand by the sea, yet it was for no selfish purpose that he was to become the founder of a great nation in the land of Canaan. God's covenant with him embraced all the nations of earth. 'I will bless thee,' Jehovah declared, 'and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.' Genesis 12:2, 3." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 367, 368.

CALL OF ABRAM

SUNDAY

1. What call did Abram receive when he was living in Ur, a city located in the territory of modern-day Iraq? What mission did the Lord give him?

 **Genesis 12:1** Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.

 **Acts 7:2, 3** The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, ³And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee.

"It was for the purpose of bringing the best gifts of Heaven to all the peoples of earth that God called Abraham out from his idolatrous kindred and bade him dwell in the land of Canaan. 'I will make of thee a great nation,' He said, 'and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.' Genesis 12:2. It was a high honor to which Abraham was called—that of being the father of the people who for centuries were to be the guardians and preservers of the truth of God to the world, the people through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed in the advent of the promised Messiah." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 15.

MONDAY

2. What great promise did the call convey? What would characterize Abram's seed that was to compose God's chosen people?

 **Genesis 12:2, 3; 15:5, 6** And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed... ^{15:5}And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. ⁶And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

"There was given to Abraham the promise, especially dear to the people of that age, of a numerous posterity and of national greatness: 'I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.' And to this was added the assurance, precious above every other to the inheritor of faith, that of his line the Redeemer of the world should come: 'In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.' " —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 125.

"The message of God came to Abraham, 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.' In order that God might qualify him for his great work as the keeper of the sacred oracles, Abraham must be separated from the associations of his early life. The influence of kindred and friends would interfere with the training which the Lord purposed to give His servant. Now that Abraham was, in a special sense, connected with heaven, he must dwell among strangers. His character must be peculiar, differing from all the world. He could not even explain his course of action so as to be understood by his friends. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and his motives and actions were not comprehended by his idolatrous kindred." —*Daughters of God*, pp. 25, 26.

THE PROMISED SON

TUESDAY

3. Did the seed come into being immediately after the promise was given? What age did the patriarch reach before there was any indication of the promise's fulfillment? Finally, when did he receive a message that pointed to the exact time?

 **Genesis 15:2-4; 17:1, 21; 21:2,3** And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless,

"In the obedience of faith, Abraham had forsaken his native country—had turned away from the graves of his fathers and the home of his kindred. He had wandered as a stranger in the land of his inheritance. He had waited long for the birth of the promised heir." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 148.

"As Abraham had no son, he at first thought that his trusty servant, Eliezer, should become his son by adoption, and his heir. But God informed Abraham that his servant should not be his son and heir, but that he should really have a son. 'And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be.'" —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 77.

WEDNESDAY

4. What special experience was made by Jacob, one of Isaac's sons? What significance do his struggle and supreme victory have for us today?

and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?²³ And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. ²⁴And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir....^{17:1} And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect....²¹ But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year....^{21:2} For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. ³And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

 **Genesis 32:24-28** And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.²⁵ And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.²⁶ And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.²⁷ And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.²⁸ And

he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

“... If men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them. Jacob, after his night of wrestling with the Angel, exclaimed, ‘I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.’ Genesis 32:30. Jacob had been guilty of a great sin in his conduct toward Esau; but he had repented. His transgression had been forgiven, and his sin purged; therefore he could endure the revelation of God’s presence. But wherever men came before God while willfully cherishing evil, they were destroyed.” –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 107,108.

“Jacob pleaded with determined spirit, ‘I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.’ Genesis 32:26. This spirit of persistence was inspired by Him who wrestled with the patriarch. It was He who gave him the victory, and He changed his name from Jacob to Israel, saying, ‘As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.’ Genesis 32:28. That for which Jacob had vainly wrestled in his own strength was won through self-surrender and steadfast faith. ‘This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.’ 1 John 5:4.” –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 144.

Becoming a great nation

THURSDAY

5. What led to Jacob and his family leaving the promised land to move to Egypt? What comforting message did he receive on the way?

his father Isaac. ²And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. ³And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: ⁴I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

 **Genesis 43:1; 46:1-4** And the famine was sore in the land....^{46:1}And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of

 **Acts 7:11, 12** Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance.¹²But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

"The assurance, 'Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation,' was significant. The promise had been given to Abraham of a posterity numberless as the stars, but as yet the chosen people had increased but slowly. And the land of Canaan now offered no field for the development of such a nation as had been foretold. It was in the possession of powerful heathen tribes, that were not to be dispossessed until 'the fourth generation.' If the descendants of Israel were here to become a numerous people, they must either drive out the inhabitants of the land or disperse themselves among them. The former, according to the divine arrangement, they could not do; and should they mingle with the Canaanites, they would be in danger of being seduced into idolatry. Egypt, however, offered the conditions necessary to the fulfillment of the divine purpose. A section of country well-watered and fertile was open to them there, affording every advantage for their speedy increase. And the antipathy they must encounter in Egypt on account of their occupation—for every shepherd was 'an abomination unto the Egyptians'—would enable them to remain a distinct and separate people and would thus serve to shut them out from participation in the idolatry of Egypt." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 232.

FRIDAY

6. How many souls went to Egypt with Jacob? What happened to them?

 **Exodus 1:1-5; 1:7, 12** Now these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man

and his household came with Jacob.

²Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,

³Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,

⁴Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

⁵And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already....

^{1:7}And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.... ¹²But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

"There were but a few families that first went down into Egypt. These increased to a great multitude." —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 147.

"The Israelites had already become very numerous; they 'were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.' Under Joseph's fostering care, and the favor of the king who was then ruling, they had spread rapidly over the land. But they had kept themselves a distinct race, having nothing in common with the Egyptians in customs or religion; and their increasing numbers now excited the fears of the king and his people, lest in case of war they should join themselves with the enemies of Egypt. Yet policy forbade their banishment from the country." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 241, 242.

CRY FOR DELIVERANCE

SABBATH

7. What fears rose in the new Pharaoh and his people as they saw the children of Israel multiplying rapidly? Although the Israelites were once welcome guests, what did the Egyptians now do to try to reduce their numbers? What became increasingly urgent?

 Exodus 1:9, 10; 2:23-25 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:¹⁰ Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land...^{2:23} And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.²⁴ And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.²⁵ And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.

"Many of them were able and understanding workmen, and they added greatly to the wealth of the nation; the king needed such laborers for the erection of his magnificent palaces and temples. Accordingly he ranked them with the Egyptians who had sold themselves with their possessions to the kingdom. Soon taskmasters were set over them, and their slavery became complete. 'And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor.' But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew.'...

"The time for Israel's deliverance had come. But God's purpose was to be accomplished in a manner to pour contempt on human pride. The deliverer was to go forth as a humble shepherd, with only a rod in his hand; but God would make that rod the symbol of His power." – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 241, 251.



FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

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

LESSON 2

Sabbath, July 10, 2021

Miraculous Deliverance



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

CALLED TO CARRY OUT A GREAT MISSION

SUNDAY

1. What did the Lord communicate to Moses when He appeared to him from the burning bush? What moment had come in His great plan?

 **Exodus 3:7-9** *And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people*

which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; ⁸And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

"The Hebrew nation were in servitude for a great number of years. They were slaves in Egypt, and the Egyptians treated them as though they had a right to control them in soul, body, and spirit. But the Lord was not indifferent to their condition, He had not forgotten His oppressed people. The record says: 'God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had

respect unto them.' 'The Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land, and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.'"—*The Southern Work*, p. 41.

MONDAY

2. After God gave Moses the good news that he would deliver His people from bondage, what mission and encouragement did He give him?

 **Exodus 3:10-12** Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. ¹¹And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? ¹²And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

"The Lord commanded Moses to go and speak unto Pharaoh, bidding him to allow Israel to leave Egypt. For four hundred years they had been in Egypt, and had been in slavery to the Egyptians." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 287.

"The time for Israel's deliverance had come. But God's purpose was to be accomplished in a manner to pour contempt on human pride. The deliverer was to go forth as a humble shepherd, with only a rod in his hand; but God would make that rod the symbol of His power....

"The divine command given to Moses found him self-distrustful, slow of speech, and timid. He was overwhelmed with a sense of his incapacity to be a mouthpiece for God to Israel. But having once accepted the work, he entered upon it with his whole heart, putting all his trust in the Lord.... God blessed his ready obedience, and he became eloquent, hopeful, self-possessed, and well fitted for the greatest work ever given to man. This is an example of what God does to strengthen the character of those who trust Him fully and give themselves unreservedly to His commands." —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 87.

GREAT NEWS FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

TUESDAY

3. Going to Egypt, with whom should Moses first meet? What wonderful message from God was he to give them?

 **Exodus 3:15-17** And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me

unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations. ¹⁶Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: ¹⁷And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

"Moses was commanded first to assemble the elders of Israel, the most noble and righteous among them, who had long grieved because of their bondage,..." –*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 170.

"From the beginning, God has been working by His Holy Spirit through human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race. This was manifest in the lives of the patriarchs. To the church in the wilderness also, in the time of Moses, God gave His 'good Spirit to instruct them.' Nehemiah 9:20. And in the days of the apostles He wrought mightily for His church through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The same power that sustained the patriarchs, that gave Caleb and Joshua faith and courage, and that made the work of the apostolic church effective, has upheld God's faithful children in every succeeding age." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 53.

WEDNESDAY

4. To whom would Moses and the elders of Israel need to present the request for the people's release? Could they expect the Egyptian authority to readily accept such a petition?

 **Exodus 3:18-20** And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God. ¹⁹And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. ²⁰And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

"Moses did not expect that this was the manner in which the Lord would use him to deliver Israel from Egypt. He thought that it would be by warfare. And when the Lord made known to him that he must stand before Pharaoh, and in his name demand him to let Israel go, he shrank from the task.

"The Pharaoh before whom he was to appear, was not the one who had decreed that he should be put to death. That king was dead, and another had taken the reins of government. Nearly all the Egyptian kings were called by the name of Pharaoh. Moses would have preferred to stand at the head of the children of Israel as their general, and make war with the Egyptians. But this was not God's plan. He would be magnified before His people, and teach not only them, but the Egyptians, that there is a living God, who has power to save, and to destroy." —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 170, 171.

PHARAOH'S REFUSAL AND THE PLAGUES

THURSDAY

5. What message from God did Moses deliver to the Pharaoh after five plagues had struck the land and the king would still not free the enslaved people?

 *Exodus 9:14 For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth.*

"Every time he refused to submit to God's will his heart became harder and less impressible by the Spirit of God. He sowed the seed of obstinacy, and God left it to vegetate. He might have prevented it by a miracle, but that was not His plan. He allowed it to grow and produce a harvest of its own kind, thus, proving the truthfulness of the scripture: 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' When a man plants doubts, he will reap doubts. By rejecting the first light and every following ray, Pharaoh went from one degree of hardness of heart to another, until the cold, dead forms of the first-born only checked his unbelief and obstinacy for a moment. And then, determined not to yield to God's way, he continued his willful course until overwhelmed by the waters of the Red Sea." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 119, 120.

FRIDAY

6. After the tenth plague, which was required to bend the iron will of the Egyptians, what sudden order did the Pharaoh finally give?

 **Exodus 12:31-33** And 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. ³²Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also. ³³And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.

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

THE EXODUS

SABBATH

7. What great event finally took place? What was the Lord's purpose in delivering Israel from Egyptian slavery?

hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

 **Acts 7:6, 7** And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years. ⁷And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

 **Exodus 12:40, 41** Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹And it came to pass at the end of the four

 **Exodus 29:46** And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the Lord their God.

"That day completed the history revealed to Abraham in prophetic vision centuries before: 'Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.' Genesis 15:13, 14. The four hundred years had been fulfilled. 'And it came to pass the selfsame day, that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.'" –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 281, 282.

"... Like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay. Through the symbols of the great darkness and the smoking furnace, God had revealed to Abraham the bondage of Israel in Egypt, and had declared that the time of their sojourning should be four hundred years. 'Afterward,' He said, 'shall they come out with great substance.' Genesis 15:14. Against that word, all the power of Pharaoh's proud empire battled in vain. On 'the self-same day' appointed in the divine promise, 'it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.' Exodus 12:41." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 32.



FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"This case is placed on record for our benefit. Just what took place in Pharaoh's heart will take place in every soul that neglects to cherish the light and walk promptly in its rays. God destroys no one. The sinner destroys himself by his own impenitence. When a person once neglects to heed the invitations, reproofs, and warnings of the Spirit of God, his conscience becomes seared, and the next time he is admonished, it will be more difficult to yield obedience than before. And thus with every repetition. Conscience is the voice of God, heard amid the conflict of human passions; when it is resisted, the Spirit of God is grieved." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 120.

LESSON 3

Sabbath, July 17, 2021

Traveling under Divine Protection



"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." Exodus 19:4.

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah 63:9.

A PATH THROUGH THE SEA

SUNDAY

- 1. What did the Egyptians do when the Israelites were camped near the Red Sea? What solution did the Lord present for this terrible situation?**

Exodo 14:9, 13-16 But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon...¹³ And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. ¹⁴ The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. ¹⁵ And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: ¹⁶ But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

"... Pharaoh commanded to let Israel go; but after the Egyptians had buried their dead, he repented that he had let Israel go. His counselors and mighty men tried to account for their bereavement. They would not admit that the visitation or judgment was from God, and therefore they pursued after the children of Israel.

"When the Israelites beheld the Egyptian host in pursuit, some upon horses and some in chariots, and equipped for war, their hearts failed them. The Red Sea was before, the Egyptian host behind. They could see no way of escape. A shout of triumph burst from the Egyptians to find Israel completely in their power. The Israelites were greatly terrified."
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 265.

MONDAY

2. What path did the Lord open for His people? What did Israel see on that great, memorable day?

 **Exodus 14:22, 29-31** And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left....²⁹The children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. ³⁰Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. ³¹And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.

"The Egyptians dared to venture in the path God had prepared for His people, and angels of God went through their host and removed their chariot wheels. They were plagued. Their progress was very slow, and they began to be troubled. They remembered the judgments that the God of the Hebrews had brought upon them in Egypt, to compel them to let Israel go, and they thought that God might deliver them all into the hands of the Israelites. They decided that God was fighting for the Israelites, and they were terribly afraid, and were turning about to flee from them...." —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 209, 210.

"... The Lord commanded Moses to bid them go forward, and to lift up the rod and stretch out his hand over the sea and divide it. He did so, and lo, the sea parted, and the children of Israel passed over dry shod. Pharaoh had so long withstood God, and hardened his heart against His mighty, wondrous works, that he in blindness rushed into the path which God had miraculously prepared for His people. Again Moses was

commanded to stretch forth his hand over the sea, 'and the sea returned to his strength,' and the waters covered the Egyptian host, and they were drowned." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 265, 266

GUIDANCE BY DAY AND BY NIGHT

TUESDAY

3. Who led the people in their arduous journey? Could they see Him personally as He accompanied them as their vanguard and rearguard?

 **Exodus 13:21, 22** And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: ²²He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

"From the beginning of sin Christ was with His people to dispute the authority of Satan, for He saw that the conflict must be carried on here in the earth.... Enshrouded in the pillar of cloud by day and in the pillar of fire by night, Christ directed, guided, counseled the children of Israel in their journeyings from Egypt to Canaan. But how unwilling were the children of Israel to be led, how unwilling to be controlled by the voice of the Angel of the Lord! How eager they were in vindicating their own course, in justifying themselves in their rebellious feelings, and in following their own ideas and plans!" –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 108.

"The wonderful pillar of cloud which had accompanied them in their wanderings and served to protect them from the fervid rays of the sun, had moved grandly before them all day, subject neither to sunshine nor storm, and at night it had become a pillar of fire to light them on their way. They had followed it as the signal of God to go forward; but now they questioned among themselves if it might not be the shadow of some terrible calamity that was about to befall them, for had it not led them on the wrong side of the mountain, into an impassable way?" – *Signs of the Times*, April 1, 1880.

WEDNESDAY

4. In addition to being their light at night and their shade during the day, what else did the "cloud" provide? Therefore, what can we say assuredly with the psalmist?

 **Exodus 14:19, 20** And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: ²⁰And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a

cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

📖 **Psalm 121:5** The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

"The Egyptians could not see the Hebrews, for the cloud of thick darkness was before them, which cloud was all light to the Israelites. Thus did God display His power to prove His people, whether they would trust in Him after giving them such tokens of His care and love for them, and to rebuke their unbelief and murmuring." —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 123.

THURSDAY

5. What else did the "cloud" do throughout the wilderness journey? Were the Israelites ever alone or abandoned during their journey?

went onward in all their journeys: ³⁷But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

📖 **Nehemiah 9:19** Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go.

📖 **Exodus 40:36-38** And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel

"This nation of slaves was to be taught of God. Jesus Christ, enshrouded in the pillar of cloud and fire, was to be their invisible leader, the ruler over all their tribes. Moses was to be the mouthpiece of God. For forty years God ruled over them as they journeyed through the wilderness.... They were to be kept separate from all nations, to be directed and counseled until, through a correct representation of the divine character, they should come to know God, to reverence and obey His commandments." —*The Southern Work*, pp. 41, 42.

"As were God's people anciently, so should we be prepared to advance when the cloud rises and moves forward, and to halt when the cloud hovers over a certain place. None can stand still, making no advancement." —(Manuscript 56, May 9, 1902) *The Upward Look*, p. 143.

BREAD FROM HEAVEN

FRIDAY

6. What did the Lord provide for that immense multitude after traveling for six weeks and as reserves began to run low?

 **Exodus 16:4,17,18, 32** Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the

people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no....¹⁷ And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.¹⁸ And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating....³² And Moses said, This is the thing which the Lord commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt.

"And the Levites' hymn, recorded by Nehemiah, vividly pictures God's care for Israel, even during these years of rejection and banishment: 'Thou in Thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness; the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go. Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not Thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. Yea, forty years didst Thou sustain them in the wilderness.... Their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.' Nehemiah 9:19-21." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 406, 407.

"The light that God has given and will continue to give on the food question is to be to His people today what the manna was to the children of Israel. The manna fell from heaven, and the people were told to gather it and prepare it to be eaten. So in the different countries of the world light will be given to the Lord's people, and health foods suited to these countries will be prepared." —*Medical Ministry*, p. 267.

SABBATH

7. For how long time did the Father provide daily food for His children? What did the Bible writer call that special providence?

 **Exodus 16:35** And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

 **Joshua 5:11, 12** And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched

corn in the selfsame day. ¹²And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

 **Psalm 78:23-25** Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven, ²⁴And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.²⁵Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

"When the God of Israel brought His people out of Egypt, He withheld flesh meats from them in a great measure, but gave them bread from heaven and water from the flinty rock." –*Counsels on Health*, p. 111.

"The manna continued to fall, and they were fed by a divine hand morning and evening. The cloudy pillar by day and the pillar of fire by night signified the presence of God, which was a living memorial before them. The divine presence was not dependent upon the presence of Moses. But at the very time that he was pleading with the Lord in the mount in their behalf, they were rushing into shameful errors, into transgression of the law so recently given in grandeur." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 340.

"For forty years they were daily reminded by this miraculous provision, of God's unfailing care and tender love.... Sustained by 'the corn of heaven,' they were daily taught that, having God's promise, they were as secure from want as if surrounded by fields of waving grain on the fertile plains of Canaan. "The manna, falling from heaven for the sustenance of Israel, was a type of Him who came from God to give life to the world." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 297.



FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"The wilderness wandering was not only ordained as a judgment upon the rebels and murmurers, but it was to serve as a discipline for the rising generation, preparatory to their entrance into the Promised Land. Moses declared to them, 'As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee,' 'to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no. And He ... suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.' Deuteronomy 8:5, 2, 3." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 407.

LESSON 4

Sabbath, July 24, 2021

Gift of the Law



"If God's commandments are to be binding for a thousand generations, it will take them into the kingdom of God, into the presence of God and His holy angels.

"This is an argument that cannot be controverted. The commandments of God will endure through all time and eternity. Are they, then, given us as a burden? No. 'And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is at this day.' Deuteronomy 6:24 The Lord gave His people commandments, in order that by obeying them they might preserve their physical, mental, and moral health. They were to live by obedience; but death is the sure result of the disobedience of the law of God." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 413, 414.

COMMANDMENTS LINKED TO ETERNITY

SUNDAY

- 1. When the Israelites came to Mount Sinai, what did the Lord give for the benefit of His people, speaking to them directly with His own voice? Then, where did He write them?**
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 **Exodus 20:1** And God spake all these words, saying,...

 **Deuteronomy 9:10** And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the Lord spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

 **Exodus 34:28; 31:18** And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments....
^{31:18} And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

"The commandments of God are comprehensive and far reaching; in a few words they unfold the whole duty of man. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' Mark 12:30, 31. In these words the length and breadth, the depth and height, of the law of God is comprehended; for Paul declares, 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.' Romans 13:10. The only definition we find in the Bible for sin is that 'sin is the transgression of the law.' 1 John 3:4. The Word of God declares, 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' Romans 3:23. 'There is none that doeth good, no, not one.' Romans 3:12. Many are deceived concerning the condition of their hearts. They do not realize that the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. They wrap themselves about with their own righteousness, and are satisfied in reaching their own human standard of character; but how fatally they fail when they do not reach the divine standard, and of themselves they cannot meet the requirements of God." –*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 320.

MONDAY

2. What do the Scriptures record about the validity and extent of these divine principles? What did Jesus say about how long the holy law would be valid?

 **Psalm 111:7, 8** The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.⁸ They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

 **Matthew 5:17** Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

 **Luke 16:17** And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

"'Till heaven and earth pass,' said Jesus, 'one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.' The sun shining in the heavens, the solid earth upon which you dwell, are God's witnesses that His law is changeless and eternal. Though they may pass away, the divine precepts shall endure. 'It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.' Luke 16:17. The system of types that pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God was to be abolished at His death; but the precepts of the Decalogue are as immutable as the throne of God." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 308.

"Our work is to hold up the law of God; for Christ has said that 'it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail.' He has said, 'Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.'" –*Signs of the Times*, April 22, 1889

THE STANDARD FOR SALVATION

TUESDAY

3. In addition to the divine, holy Decalogue, what did Moses give to the people from the Lord to govern the sanctuary services and daily life? What was included in the additional provisions?

 **Leviticus 7:37, 38; 11:46, 47** This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering,

and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings; ³⁸Which the Lord commanded Moses in mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the Lord, in the wilderness of Sinai....^{11:46} This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: ⁴⁷To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

 **Exodus 22:31** And ye shall be holy men unto me: neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; ye shall cast it to the dogs.

“The earth also is defiled under 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.’ Many marvel that the human race have so degenerated, physically, mentally, and morally. They do not understand that it is the violation of God’s constitution and laws, and the violation of the laws of health, that has produced this sad degeneracy. The transgression of God’s commandments has caused His prospering hand to be removed.” –*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 41, pp. 123, 124.

“... The Bible presents two laws, one changeless and eternal, the other provisional and temporary, so there are two covenants.” –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 370.

WEDNESDAY

4. What is the function of God’s law, since it cannot justify the sinner?

 **Romans 3:20; 7:7** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin...^{7:7} What shall we say then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

“By the law is the knowledge of sin’ (Romans 3:20); for ‘sin is the transgression of the law.’ 1 John 3:4. It is through the law that men are

convicted of sin; and they must feel themselves sinners, exposed to the wrath of God, before they will realize their need of a Saviour. Satan is continually at work to lessen man's estimate of the grievous character of sin. And those who trample the law of God under their feet are doing the work of the great deceiver; for they are rejecting the only rule by which they can define sin, and bring it home to the conscience of the transgressor.

"The Law of God reaches to those secret purposes, which, though they may be sinful, are often passed over lightly, but which are in reality the basis and the test of character. It is the mirror into which the sinner is to look if he would have a correct knowledge of his moral character. And when he sees himself condemned by that great standard of righteousness, his next move must be to repent of his sins, and seek forgiveness through Christ. Failing to do this, many try to break the mirror which reveals their defects, to make void the law which points out the blemishes in their life and character." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 219.

REFLECTION OF LOVE AND LOYALTY

THURSDAY

5. Given by the loving God, what is the fulfilling of His law?

 **Romans 13:8-10** Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. ⁹For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ¹⁰Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

"Love to God must be brought into our daily life. Then, and then only, can we show true love for our fellowmen. When this is done, when Christ is enthroned in our hearts, we manifest by our daily life, by our conversation, by our unselfish interest in one another, by our deep love for souls, that we are doers of the Word of God. The reality of our conversation is marked by a deep earnest piety, which purifies the soul, and works unceasingly for the good of others.

"'Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God.'"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.'"The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover a multitude of sins.'" —*Signs of the Times*, March 11, 1897.

FRIDAY

6. How significant is the fact that Israel was given God's law, promises, prophecies, and oracles? What did Moses and the apostle Paul write about this?

 **Deuteronomy 4:6** Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

 **Romans 3:1, 2; 9:4, 5** What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? ²Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.... ^{9:4}Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; ⁵Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

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

SABBATH

7. What do the Scriptures say about those who obey the holy commandments of the Lord? How will every Christian relate to these precious principles?

 **Psalms 112:1; 128:1** Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments....^{128:1}Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.

 **Revelation 22:14** Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

"God had given men His commandments as a rule of life, but His law was transgressed, and every conceivable sin was the result." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 91.

"None need fear that their liberality would bring them to want. Obedience to God's commandments would surely result in prosperity. 'For this thing,' God said, 'the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto.' 'Thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.' Deuteronomy 15:10, 6." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 187.

"He who becomes a partaker of the divine nature will be in harmony with God's great standard of righteousness, His holy law. This is the rule by which God measures the actions of men. This will be the test of character in the judgment." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 314.



FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"God requires perfection of His children. His law is a transcript of His own character, and it is the standard of all character. This infinite standard is presented to all that there may be no mistake in regard to the kind of people whom God will have to compose His kingdom. The life of Christ on earth was a perfect expression of God's law, and when those who claim to be children of God become Christlike in character, they will be obedient to God's commandments. Then the Lord can trust them to be of the number who shall compose the family of heaven. Clothed in the glorious apparel of Christ's righteousness, they have a place at the King's feast. They have a right to join the blood-washed throng." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 315.

"It is for the best interest of men, even in this world, to obey God's commandments. And it is surely for their eternal interest to submit to God, and be at peace with Him.... God made him a free moral agent, to obey or disobey. The reward of everlasting life—an eternal weight of glory—is promised to those who do God's will, while the threatenings of His wrath hang over all who defy His law." —*The Sanctified Life*, p. 76.

LESSON 5

Sabbath, July 31, 2021

God's Covenant with His People



"In Exodus 19 we read: 'Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.'

"Wonderful condescension is this! God offers to make the Israelites His peculiar treasure, if they obey His law and glorify His name." —*Lift Him Up*, p. 139.

SUNDAY

1. Although not yet living, who were included in the covenant between God and Abraham? When the right time came, what did Lord offer His people?

 **Genesis 17:7** *And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.*

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

"God, in His infinite wisdom, chose Israel as the depository of priceless treasures of truth for all nations. He gave them His law as the standard of the character they were to develop before the world, before angels, and before the unfallen worlds. They were to reveal to the world the laws of the government of heaven. By precept and example they were to bear a decided testimony for the truth. The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their prosperity. They were to be a kingdom of priests and princes. God furnished them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth." —(The Southern Work, January 10, 1905) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, pp. 1180, 1181.

COVENANT OF PROMISES

MONDAY

2. What did God's covenant with Abraham include? In addition to the promises made to him, what provisions did the Lord add to the covenant made with Israel?

 **Genesis 17:2, 6, 8** And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee

exceedingly.... ⁶And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.... ⁸And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

 **Exodus 19:5, middle part, 6** ... Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people:... ⁶And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

"Soon after the encampment at Sinai, Moses was called up into the mountain to meet with God.... Israel was now to be taken into a close and peculiar relation to the Most High—to be incorporated as a church and a nation under the government of God. The message to Moses for the people was: '... if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.' Exodus 19:4-6."—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 135.

TUESDAY

3. How did the people respond to the blessings offered to them by the Lord through Moses? What did the people promise after hearing the holy laws, conditions, and promises?

 **Exodus 19:7, 8; 24:3** And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. ⁸And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord....^{24:3}And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do.

"Moses returned to the camp, and having summoned the elders of Israel, he repeated to them the divine message. Their answer was, 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.' Thus they entered into a solemn covenant with God,

pledging themselves to accept Him as their Ruler, by which they became, in a special sense, the subjects of His authority.

"In their bondage the people had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant.... Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law, and their need of a Saviour.... God brought them to Sinai; He manifested His glory; He gave them His law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience.... The people did not realize ... that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God's law.... Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, 'All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.' Exodus 24:7."—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 135.

WEDNESDAY

4. After the people, for the second time, gave their consent and expressed their willingness to obey, what did Moses build? Then, why did he also build twelve pillars and choose leaders from the twelve tribes to offer sacrifices to the Lord?

 **Exodus 24:4-6** *And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord. ⁶And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.*

"Upon descending from the mountain, Moses 'came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.'

"Thus by a most solemn service the children of Israel were once more set apart as a peculiar people. The sprinkling of the blood represented the shedding of the blood of Jesus, by which human beings are cleansed from sin." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 506, 507.

ENCOMPASSING ALL THE PEOPLE

THURSDAY

5. Why do you think it was necessary to strengthen the covenant between God and man, rather than simply making mutual promises? Why was everything written in a document called “the book of the covenant” and presented to the people a second time?

 **Exodus 24:7** And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.

“God’s favor toward Israel had always been conditional on their obedience. At the foot of Sinai they had entered into covenant relationship with Him as His ‘peculiar treasure ... above all people.’ Solemnly they had promised to follow in the path of obedience. ‘All that the Lord hath spoken we will do,’ they had said. Exodus 19:5, 8. And when, a few days afterward, God’s law was spoken from Sinai, and additional instruction in the form of statutes and judgments was communicated through Moses, the Israelites with one voice had again promised, ‘All the words which the Lord hath said will we do.’ At the ratification of the covenant, the people had once more united in declaring, ‘All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.’ Exodus 24:3, 7. God had chosen Israel as His people, and they had chosen Him as their King.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 293.

“This is the pledge that God’s people are to make in these last days. Their acceptance with God depends on a faithful fulfillment of the terms of their agreement with Him. God includes in His covenant all who will obey Him. To all who will do justice and judgment, keeping their hand from doing any evil,...” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 142.

FRIDAY

6. Why was the ratification of the covenant made not through simple initials or signatures, such as we do today, but through a much more solemn, sacred way? What did it mean when Moses sprinkled the book of the covenant and the people themselves with the same blood?

 **Exodus 24:8** And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.

 **Hebrews 9:18-20** Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. ¹⁹For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with

water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, ²⁰Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined

"Moses had written, not the ten commandments, but the judgments which God would have them observe, and the promises on condition that they would obey Him. He read this to the people, and they pledged themselves to obey all the words which the Lord had said. Moses then wrote their solemn pledge in a book, and offered sacrifice unto God for the people. 'And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.' The people repeated their solemn pledge to the Lord to do all that He had said, and to be obedient." –*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 240.

ROYAL COVENANT SEALED WITH BLOOD

SABBATH

7. What did the leaders of Israel experience after the covenant between God and His people was completed? Similarly, what took place after Jesus referred to His shedding the blood of the new testament?

 **Exodus 24:9-11** Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: ¹⁰And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. ¹¹And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.

 **Matthew 26:26-28** And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. ²⁷And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; ²⁸For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

"Moses obeyed the command of God, and took with him Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, with seventy of the most influential elders in Israel, who had assisted him in his work, and placed them at such distance that they might behold the majesty of the divine presence, while the people should worship at the foot of the mount....

"They did not behold the person of God, but only the inexpressible glory which surrounded Him. Previous to this, had they looked upon such sacred glory, they could not have lived, for they were unprepared for it. But the exhibitions of God's power had filled them with fear, which wrought in them repentance for their past transgressions. They loved and revered God, and had been purifying themselves, and contemplating His great glory, purity and mercy, until they could approach nearer Him who had been the subject of all their meditations. God had enshrouded His glory with a thick cloud, so that the people could not behold it. The office of the elders whom Moses took with him, was to aid him in leading the host of Israel to the promised land. This work was of such magnitude that God condescended to put His Spirit upon them. He honored them with a nearer view of the glory which surrounded His exalted majesty, that they might with wisdom act their part in the work assigned them of guiding His people with His fear and glory continually before them." —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 271, 272.



For additional study

"In the most definite manner Christ through Moses had set before them God's purpose, and had made plain the terms of their prosperity. 'Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God,' He said; 'the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.... Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations.... Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them. Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which He swore unto thy fathers; and He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: He will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which He swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people.... And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee.' Deuteronomy 7:6, 9, 11-15."—Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 288, 289.

LESSON 6

Sabbath, August 7, 2021

Positioned around the Sanctuary



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

GOD'S DWELLING PLACE

SUNDAY

1. Among other things, what did the Lord ask His people to do? What was His great purpose for the sanctuary?

 **Exodus 25:8; 29:45** *And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them....^{29:45} And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.*

 **Revelation 21:3** *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, 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.*

"God directed that a tabernacle should be built, where the Israelites, during their wilderness-journeying, could worship Him. Orders from heaven were given that this tabernacle should be built without delay." —(Review and Herald, October 28, 1902) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1108.

"In the building of the sanctuary as a dwelling place for God, Moses was directed to make all things according to the pattern of things in the heavens.

God called him into the mount, and revealed to him the heavenly things, and in their similitude the tabernacle, with all that pertained to it, was fashioned. "So to Israel, whom He desired to make His dwelling place, He revealed His glorious ideal of character. The pattern was shown them in the mount when the law was given from Sinai and when God passed by before Moses and proclaimed, 'The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.' Exodus 34:6." –*Education*, p. 35.

MONDAY

2. Therefore, what is one of the most distinctive names given to the tabernacle and also later to the temple?

 **1 Samuel 1:24; 3:15** *And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young....^{3:15} And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision.*

 **John 2:16** *And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.*

"Henceforth the people were to be honored with the abiding presence of their King. 'I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God,' and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory' (Exodus 29:45, 43), was the assurance given to Moses. As the symbol of God's authority and the embodiment of His will, there was delivered to Moses a copy of the Decalogue engraved by the finger of God Himself upon two tables of stone (Deuteronomy 9:10; Exodus 32:15, 16), to be sacredly enshrined in the sanctuary, which, when made, was to be the visible center of the nation's worship." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 314.

"We shall talk of the loving faithfulness of God as the true, tender, compassionate shepherd of His flock, which He has declared that none shall pluck out of His hand. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like clear-flowing streams, will come from God's truly believing ones. 'Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.' Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.' Psalms 23:6; 73:24, 25." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 367, 368.

THE PLACE OF ATONEMENT AND REFUGE

TUESDAY

3. In every case, when an individual or the people sinned or committed errors, where could they find forgiveness and comfort? Therefore, what can we call this incomparable place?

 **Leviticus 4:27-29, 31** And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty; ²⁸Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. ²⁹And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering...³¹And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

"But this ideal they were, in themselves, powerless to attain. The revelation at Sinai could only impress them with their need and helplessness. Another lesson the tabernacle, through its service of sacrifice, was to teach—the lesson of pardon of sin, and power through the Saviour for obedience unto life." —*Education*, p. 36.

"The tabernacle here mentioned was a temporary tent arranged for the worship of God. The tabernacle, the pattern of which God gave to Moses, had not yet been built." —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 287.

"'He shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.' An atonement was also to be made for the altar, to 'cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.' Leviticus 16:16, 19." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 418.

WEDNESDAY

4. While people could meet other people in various places, with whom could they meet in the sanctuary? What did every true believer feel when he entered the house of the Lord?

 **Exodus 33:7; 29:42, 43** And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp....^{29:42}This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord: where I will meet you, to

speak there unto thee. ⁴³And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory.

 **Psalm 122:1** I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

"The tent was pitched without the encampment, but Moses called it 'the tabernacle of the congregation.' All who were truly penitent, and desired to return to the Lord, were directed to repair thither to confess their sins and seek His mercy....

"The Lord hearkened to his prayer, and directed him to summon seventy men of the elders of Israel—men not only advanced in years, but possessing dignity, sound judgment, and experience. 'And bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation,' He said, 'that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.'" —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 327, 380.

THE CENTER

THURSDAY

5. Whenever the people moved from one place to another, what was always placed in the center of the camp? In such cases, did the Levites camp wherever they preferred, or was there an exact place and order to respect? What does this teach us even today?

 **Numbers 1:50; 3:38, 23, 35, 29** But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things

that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle...

^{3:38}But those that encamp before the tabernacle toward the east, even before the tabernacle of the congregation eastward, shall be Moses, and Aaron and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary for the charge of the children of Israel; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death....²³The families of the Gershonites shall pitch behind the tabernacle westward...³⁵And the chief of the house of the father of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail: these shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle northward....²⁹The families of the sons of Kohath shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle southward.

"Another remarkable exhibition to the nations round about was the perfect order observed in the camp of the Israelites. They could see the cloud hovering over the place where the tabernacle was to be pitched; they observed the priests and other appointed agencies going about their special work, each one doing the part assigned him in the work of preparing

the camp for the night. No one did anything that someone else should do. Whoever would have tried to do another man's work would have suffered the death penalty. Each one attended to his special duty. In the erecting of the tabernacle, part fitted to part, and the house of the Lord was set up with beautiful precision. Not a word was spoken, not an order given, excepting by the one in charge. No one was confused; everything was put together in accordance with the similitude shown to Moses in the mount." –*Lift Him Up*, p. 145.

FRIDAY

6. Besides the Levites, what did the congregation respect in reference to the tabernacle? Could every tribe choose its own place in the camp as it wished, or did each have a specified place in the encampment? What do we learn from such regulations?

 *Numbers 2:2, 3, 5, 7, 18, 20, 22* Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation

"Everything connected with the pitching of the camp was an object lesson to the children, schooling them in habits of precision and carefulness and order. The children that were old enough were required to learn how to pitch the tents in which they lived, and to observe perfect order in all that they did.... Constantly they were obtaining an education in regard to heavenly things. Constantly the parents were explaining to their children why the Israelites were traveling in the wilderness; why the law was given at Sinai; and what they expected to do and to be when they reached the Land of Promise." –*Lift Him Up*, p. 145.

"The position of each tribe also was specified. Each was to march and to encamp beside its own standard, as the Lord had commanded: 'Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall

shall they pitch. ³And on the east side toward the rising of the sun shall they of the standard of the camp of Judah pitch throughout their armies: and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be captain of the children of Judah.... ⁵And those that do pitch next unto him shall be the tribe of Issachar: and Nethaneel the son of Zuar shall be captain of the children of Issachar,...⁷Then the tribe of Zebulun: and Eliab the son of Helon shall be captain of the children of Zebulun...¹⁸On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim according to their armies: and the captain of the sons of Ephraim shall be Elishama the son of Ammihud....²⁰And by him shall be the tribe of Manasseh: and the captain of the children of Manasseh shall be Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur....²²Then the tribe of Benjamin: and the captain of the sons of Benjamin shall be Abidan the son of Gideoni.

they pitch."As they encamp, so shall they set forward, every man in his place by their standards.' Numbers 2:2, 17. The mixed multitude that had accompanied Israel from Egypt were not permitted to occupy the same quarters with the tribes, but were to abide upon the outskirts of the camp; and their offspring were to be excluded from the community until the third generation. Deuteronomy 23:7, 8." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 375.

GOD'S CONTINUAL PRESENCE

SABBATH

7. What happened when the tabernacle was dedicated? Day and night, what was the visible sign of God's presence in the tabernacle?

Exodus 40:34-38 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the

tabernacle. ³⁵And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. ³⁶And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys. ³⁷But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

"God commanded Moses for Israel, 'Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them' (Exodus 25:8), and He abode in the sanctuary, in the midst of His people. Through all their weary wandering in the desert, the symbol of His presence was with them. So Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment. He pitched His tent by the side of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us, and make us familiar with His divine character and life. 'The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.' John 1:14, R.V., margin." –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 23, 24.



For additional study

"Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the tabernacle was a symbol—that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all, the priests robed in spotless white, and in the deep mystery of the inner place, above the mercy seat, between the figures of the bowed, worshipping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul. It was the same purpose long afterward set forth by the apostle Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit:..." –*Education*, p. 36.

LESSON 7

Sabbath, August 14, 2021

The Priestly Ministry



"As referring to the temple at Jerusalem, the Saviour's words, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,' had a deeper meaning than the hearers perceived. Christ was the foundation and life of the temple. Its services were typical of the sacrifice of the Son of God. The priesthood was established to represent the mediatorial character and work of Christ. The entire plan of sacrificial worship was a foreshadowing of the Saviour's death to redeem the world. There would be no efficacy in these offerings when the great event toward which they had pointed for ages was consummated."
—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 165.

SUNDAY

1. Whom did the Lord designate to serve in the ancient priesthood? What was done before they could begin to serve in the tabernacle?

 **Exodus 28:1; 40:12, 15** And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons....^{40:12} And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water....¹⁵ And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.

"After the dedication of the tabernacle, the priests were consecrated to their sacred office. These services occupied seven days, each marked by special ceremonies. On the eighth day they entered upon their ministration.

Assisted by his sons, Aaron offered the sacrifices that God required, and he lifted up his hands and blessed the people. All had been done as God commanded, and He accepted the sacrifice, and revealed His glory in a remarkable manner; fire came from the Lord and consumed the offering upon the altar. The people looked upon this wonderful manifestation of divine power with awe and intense interest. They saw in it a token of God's glory and favor, and they raised a universal shout of praise and adoration and fell on their faces as if in the immediate presence of Jehovah." – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 359.

SACRED SERVICES AND LAWS

MONDAY

2. Although Aaron and his sons ministered before the Lord, in favor of whom did they carry out their continual ministry? Whom or what did the Levitical priests and their service symbolize?

offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the Lord commanded.

 **Hebrews 5:1; 8:1, 2** For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:...^{8:1} Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty of the heavens; ²A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

 **Leviticus 9:7** And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt

"By divine direction the tribe of Levi was set apart for the service of the sanctuary. In the earliest times every man was the priest of his own household. In the days of Abraham the priesthood was regarded as the birthright of the eldest son. Now, instead of the first-born of all Israel, the Lord accepted the tribe of Levi for the work of the sanctuary. By this signal honor He manifested His approval of their fidelity, both in adhering to His service and in executing His judgments when Israel apostatized in the worship of the golden calf. The priesthood, however, was restricted to the family of Aaron. Aaron and his sons alone were permitted to minister before the Lord; the rest of the tribe were entrusted with the charge of the tabernacle and its furniture, and they were to attend upon the priests in their ministration, but they were not to sacrifice, to burn incense, or to see the holy things till they were covered." – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 350.

TUESDAY

3. In addition to their sacred service in the tabernacle, in what other important area did the priests serve?

 **Leviticus 10:11** And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

 **Deuteronomy 33:10** They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar.

 **Malachi 2:7** For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.

“Even religious teachers have failed to present the holy standard by which character is measured, because they have ceased to respect every one of the precepts that God has given, which are holy, and just, and good. Men have taken upon themselves the responsibility of erecting a standard in harmony with their own ideas, and the law of Jehovah has been dishonored. This is why there is so great and widespread iniquity. This is why our days are becoming like the days of Noah and Lot.” —(Review and Herald, May 2, 1893) *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 567.

“‘The priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.’ The people should counsel with him, for he is God’s appointed messenger. They should not only hear, but they should ask questions, that they may have a clear knowledge of truth. He is not to withhold his knowledge from them, but is to regard it as a sacred trust, to be imparted to others. His mind is to be a treasure-house of good things, from which, whenever occasion demands, he can draw a ‘Thus saith the Lord.’” —Review and Herald, October 13, 1904.

COMMUNICATION WITH GOD FOR THE PEOPLE

WEDNESDAY

4. What did the priests do in specific emergencies when there was an urgent need to consult with the Lord for the benefit of the people?

 **Exodus 28:30** And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron’s heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.

 **1 Samuel 28:5, 6** And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

⁶And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

 **Ezra 2:63** *And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim.*

"At the right and left of the breastplate were set two larger stones, which shone with great brilliancy. When difficult matters were brought to the judges, which they could not decide, they were referred to the priests, and they inquired of God, who answered them. If He favored, and if He would grant them success, a halo of light and glory especially rested upon the precious stone at the right. If he disapproved, a vapor or cloud seemed to settle upon the precious stone at the left hand. When they inquired of God in regard to going to battle, the precious stone at the right, when circled with light, said, Go, and prosper. The stone at the left, when shadowed with a cloud, said, Thou shalt not go; thou shalt not prosper." —*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 183,184.

THURSDAY

5. When there were difficult problems, where did the children of Israel go to obtain correct judgment?

 **Deuteronomy 17:8-10** *If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and*

between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; ⁹And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment: ¹⁰And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall show thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee.

"In searching the Scriptures, in feeding upon the words of life, O consider it is the voice of God to the soul. We may be confused sometimes over the voice of our friends; but in the Bible we have the counsel of God upon all important subjects which concern our eternal interests, and in temporal matters we may learn a great deal. Its teaching will be always suited to our peculiar circumstances and calculated to prepare us to endure trial and fit us for our God-given work." —*A Call to Stand Apart*, p. 69.

"The question may be asked, How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plow, and driveth the oxen? By seeking her as silver, and searching for her as for hid treasures. 'For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and

doth teach him."This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.'" –*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 355.

MINISTRY FOR THE SICK AND THE PEOPLE

FRIDAY

6. In case of plague or sickness, what was the priest's work in the healing of the sick?

 **Leviticus 13:2, 3, 6** When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought

unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests: ³And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean....⁶And the priest shall look on him again the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean: it is but a scab: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.

"God commanded that the children of Israel should in no case allow impurities of their persons, or of their clothing. Those who had any personal uncleanness were shut out of the camp until evening, and then were required to cleanse themselves and their clothing before they could enter the camp. Also they were commanded of God to have no impurities upon the premises within a great distance of the encampment, lest the Lord should pass by and see their uncleanness." –*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4, pp. 141, 142.

"By the ritual law the leper was pronounced unclean. Whatever he touched was unclean. The air was polluted by his breath. Like one already dead, he was shut out from the habitations of men. One who was suspected of having the disease must present himself to the priests, who were to examine and decide his case. If pronounced a leper, he was isolated from his family, cut off from the congregation of Israel, and doomed to associate with those only who were similarly afflicted. Even kings and rulers were not exempt. A monarch attacked by this terrible disease must yield up the scepter and flee from society." –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 67.

SABBATH

7. What other task did the priests have?

 **Numbers 6:23-26** Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,²⁴The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: ²⁵The

*Lord make his face shine upon thee,
and be gracious unto thee.²⁶ The
Lord lift up his countenance upon
thee, and give thee peace.*

"In the typical service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 485.
"God intended that these great leaders of His people should be representatives of Christ. Aaron bore the names of Israel upon his breast. He communicated to the people the will of God. He entered the most holy place on the Day of Atonement, 'not without blood,' as a mediator for all Israel. He came forth from that work to bless the congregation, as Christ will come forth to bless His waiting people when His work of atonement in their behalf shall be ended." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 426.



For additional study

"Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. In the service of the Jewish priesthood we are continually reminded of the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. All who come to Christ today are to remember that His merit is the incense that mingles with the prayers of those who repent of their sins and receive pardon and mercy and grace. Our need of Christ's intercession is constant. Day by day, morning and evening, the humble heart needs to offer up prayers to which will be returned answers of grace and peace and joy." –(Manuscript 14, 1901) Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1078.

"Mark the figure presented in verse five (1 Peter 2:5): 'Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.' Then these lively stones are exerting a tangible, practical influence in the Lord's spiritual house. They are a holy priesthood, performing pure, sacred service. They offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God." –Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 461.

LESSON 8

Sabbath, August 21, 2021

Under God's Government



"The government of Israel was administered in the name and by the authority of God. The work of Moses, of the seventy elders, of the rulers and judges, was simply to enforce the laws that God had given; they had no authority to legislate for the nation. This was, and continued to be, the condition of Israel's existence as a nation. From age to age, men inspired by God were sent to instruct the people and to direct in the enforcement of the laws." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 603.

GOD AND KING

SUNDAY

1. What did the psalmist do to the Lord? Did he recognize and worship Him only as God?

 *Psalms 44:4; 47:6, 7* Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.... ^{47:6} Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. ⁷ For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

"God is our King, and we are His subjects." —*Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1903.

"Who, then, is to be regarded as the Ruler of the nations? The Lord God Omnipotent. All kings, all rulers, all nations, are His, under His rule and government." —(Manuscript 119, 1903) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1081.

"God is King, He is high and lifted up, and the train of His glory fills the temple. God is to be feared, He alone is to be worshiped. His laws are holy, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. How weak and foolish is the position taken by finite opposers of His government, as they

declare that the law of the Governor of all intelligences is abolished. Who put these words into the mouth of men?"—*Review and Herald*, October 9, 1894.

MONDAY

2. After making a covenant with God, into what government was Israel as a nation incorporated by Him? What is this special type of government commonly called?

 **Exodus 19:4-6** Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: ⁵And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. ⁶These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

"Soon after the encampment at Sinai, Moses was called up into the mountain to meet with God. Alone he climbed the steep and rugged path, and drew near to the cloud that marked the place of Jehovah's presence. Israel was now to be taken into a close and peculiar relation to the Most High—to be incorporated as a church and a nation under the government of God....

"Moses returned to the camp, and having summoned the elders of Israel, he repeated to them the divine message. Their answer was, 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.' Thus they entered into a solemn covenant with God, pledging themselves to accept Him as their ruler, by which they became, in a special sense, the subjects of His authority." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 303.

"A theocracy is a government which derives its power immediately from God. The government of Israel was a true theocracy. That was really a government of God. At the burning bush, God commissioned Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. By signs and wonders and mighty miracles multiplied, God delivered Israel from Egypt and led them through the wilderness and finally into the promised land." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, Appendix, pp. 761, 762.

TUESDAY

3. From what place did the Lord communicate as Israel's Leader and give instructions for the people?

 **Exodus 25:22** And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

"God's truth is the same in all ages, although differently developed to meet the wants of His people in various periods. Under the Old Testament dispensation every important work was closely connected with the sanctuary. In the holy of holies the great I AM took up His abode.... There, above the mercy seat, overshadowed by the wings of the cherubim, dwelt the Shekinah of His glory, the perpetual token of His presence, while the breastplate of the high priest, set with precious stones, made known from the sacred precincts of the sanctuary the solemn message of Jehovah to the people. Wonderful dispensation, when the Holy One, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, thus manifested His glory, and revealed His will to the children of men!" —*That I May Know Him*, p. 101.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

WEDNESDAY

4. Considering the large number of people, what good advice did Moses' father in law, Jethro, give him on the condition that God would command that this be done? Did the people agree with this proposal?

 **Exodus 18:21-23** Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of

thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: ²²And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. ²³If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

 **Deuteronomy 1:13, 14** Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. ¹⁴And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do.

"In the days of the theocracy, when Moses was endeavoring to carry alone burdens so heavy that he would soon have worn away under them, he was counseled by Jethro to plan for a wise distribution of responsibilities. 'Be thou for the people to Godward,' Jethro advised, 'that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.' Jethro further advised that men be appointed to act as 'rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.' These were to be 'able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness.' They were to 'judge the people at all seasons,' thus relieving Moses of the

wearing responsibility of giving consideration to many minor matters that could be dealt with wisely by consecrated helpers....

"In harmony with this plan, 'Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.' Exodus 18:19-26." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 92-94.

THURSDAY

5. What preparation for service were the seventy elders given? What special gift did the Lord give to those who were to share the burden of decision making and leadership for the many people?

 *Numbers 11:16-18, first part* And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.¹⁷ And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.¹⁸ And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow.

"Later, when choosing seventy elders to share with him the responsibilities of leadership, Moses was careful to select, as his helpers, men possessing dignity, sound judgment, and experience. In his charge to these elders at the time of their ordination, he outlined some of the qualifications that fit a man to be a wise ruler in the church. 'Hear the causes between your brethren,' said Moses, 'and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's.' Deuteronomy 1:16, 17." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 94.

"The setting up of the tabernacle 'was followed by the consecration of the priests, the celebration of the Passover, the numbering of the people, and the completion of various arrangements essential to their civil or religious system, so that nearly a year was spent in the encampment at Sinai. Here their worship had taken a more definite form, the laws had been given for the government of the nation, and a more efficient organization had been effected preparatory to their entrance into the land of Canaan." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 374.

CHOSEN JUDGES AND LEADERS

FRIDAY

6. In the next period, after the nation was established in Canaan, whom did the Lord call to lead the people? What did the latter tend to do, and how did God deal with this?

 *Judges 2:16-19* Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.¹⁷ And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they

went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not so.¹⁸ And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the Lord because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.¹⁹ And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

"The government of Israel was administered in the name and by the authority of God. The work of Moses, of the seventy elders, of the rulers and judges, was simply to enforce the laws that God had given; they had no authority to legislate for the nation. This was, and continued to be, the condition of Israel's existence as a nation. From age to age men inspired by God were sent to instruct the people and to direct in the enforcement of the laws....

"There was ever a remnant who were true to Jehovah; and from time to time the Lord raised up faithful and valiant men to put down idolatry and to deliver the Israelites from their enemies. But when the deliverer was dead, and the people were released from his authority, they would gradually return to their idols. And thus the story of backsliding and chastisement, of confession and deliverance, was repeated again and again." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 603, 545.

GOD, THE CENTER OF AUTHORITY

SABBATH

7. Even though dozens of men occupied executive positions, who remained the center of authority and government for the nation? How close and constant was the Lord in guiding and ruling His people?

 *Psalm 48:14* For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

 *Isaiah 48:17* Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

"The government of Israel was characterized by the most thorough organization, wonderful alike for its completeness and its simplicity. The order so strikingly displayed in the perfection and arrangement of all God's created works was manifest in the Hebrew economy. God was the center of authority and government, the sovereign of Israel. Moses stood as their visible leader, by God's appointment, to administer the laws in His name. From the elders of the tribes a council of seventy was afterward chosen to assist Moses in the general affairs of the nation. Next came the priests, who consulted the Lord in the sanctuary. Chiefs, or princes, ruled over the tribes. Under these were 'captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens,' and, lastly, officers who might be employed for special duties. Deuteronomy 1:15." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 374.



For additional study

"From the outset of the journey from Egypt, lessons had been given for their training and discipline. Even before they left Egypt a temporary organization had been effected, and the people were arranged in companies, under appointed leaders. At Sinai the arrangements for organization were completed. The order so strikingly displayed in all the works of God was manifest in the Hebrew economy. God was the center of authority and government. Moses, as His representative, was to administer the laws in His name. Then came the council of seventy, then the priests and the princes, under these 'captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens' (Numbers 11:16, 17; Deuteronomy 1:15), and, lastly, officers appointed for special duties. The camp was arranged in exact order, the tabernacle, the abiding place of God, in the midst, and around it the tents of the priests and the Levites. Outside of these each tribe encamped beside its own standard." –Education, pp. 37, 38.

Please read the Missionary Report
of the Good Samaritan Department on page 62.

LESSON 9

Sabbath, August 28, 2021

Origin of the Monarchy



"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." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 605,606.

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

SUNDAY

- 1. What did the people of Israel propose to Gideon? Did he consent to their suggestion? What was revealed in their request and in Gideon's reply?**

 *Judges 8:22, 23* Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. ²³And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you.

"The people of Israel, in their gratitude at deliverance from the Midianites, proposed to Gideon that he should become their king, and that the throne should be confirmed to his descendants. This proposition was in direct violation of the principles of the theocracy. God was the king of Israel, and

for them to place a man upon the throne would be a rejection of their Divine Sovereign. Gideon recognized this fact; his answer shows how true and noble were his motives. 'I will not rule over you,' he declared; 'neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you.'" —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 555.

MONDAY

2. Unlike Gideon, what did Abimelech do arbitrarily and with force? How did this usurper's life end after he reigned over Israel for three years? At that time, what ideas did the people have about a monarchy?

 *Judges 9:1, 2, 6, 22, 53, 54*
Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying, *"Speak, I*

pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, Whether is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal, which are threescore and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you? remember also that I am your bone and your flesh.... ⁶*And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king, by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem....* ²²*When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel,...* ⁵³*a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull.* ⁵⁴*Then he called hastily unto the young man his armourbearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died.*

"Abimelech was successful in his schemes, and was accepted, at first by the Shechemites, and afterward by the people generally, as the ruler of Israel. But while thus exalted to the highest position in the gift of the nation, he was utterly unworthy of the trust. His birth was ignoble, his character vicious. The higher and nobler qualities—virtue, integrity, and truth—he had never cherished. He possessed a strong will and indomitable perseverance, and thus, by the most unscrupulous measures, he accomplished his purposes.... "Had the Israelites preserved a clear perception of right and wrong, they would have seen the fallacy of Abimelech's reasoning, and the injustice of his claims. They would have seen that he was filled with envy, and actuated by a base ambition to exalt himself by the ruin of his brethren. Those who are controlled by policy rather than by principle are not to be trusted. They will pervert the truth, conceal facts, and construe the words of others to mean that which was never intended. They will employ flattering words, while the poison of asps is under their tongue. He who does not earnestly seek the divine guidance will be deceived by their smooth words and their artful plans." —*Signs of the Times*, August 4, 1881.

MOTIVOS TRAS EL DESEO DE UN REY

TUESDAY

3. What request did the elders of Israel present to Samuel one day? What did this show about their understanding and appreciation of the government that God intended for His people?

 *1 Samuel 8:1, 4, 5 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that ... ⁴all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, ⁵And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.*

"The dissatisfied longing for worldly power and display, is as difficult to cure now as in the days of Samuel. Christians seek to build as worldlings build, to dress as worldlings dress, to imitate the customs and practices of those who worship only the god of this world. The instructions of God's Word, the counsels and reproofs of His servants, and even warnings sent directly from His throne, seem powerless to subdue this unworthy ambition. When the heart is estranged from God, almost any pretext is sufficient to justify a disregard of His authority. The promptings of pride and self-love are gratified at whatever expense to the cause of God." –(Signs of the Times, July 13, 1882) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1013.

WEDNESDAY

4. How did Samuel feel when he heard this request? What did the Lord say to him? Whom were they really rejecting in presenting such a petition?

 *1 Samuel 8:6-8 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. ⁷And 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. ⁸According 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 unconsecrated and world-loving are ever ready to criticize and condemn those who have stood fearlessly for God and the right. If a defect is seen in one whom the Lord has entrusted with great responsibilities, then all his former devotion is forgotten, and an effort is made to silence his voice and destroy his influence. But let these self-constituted judges remember that the Lord reads the heart. They cannot hide its secrets

from His searching gaze. God declares that He will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing.

"The most useful men are seldom appreciated. Those who have labored most actively and unselfishly for their fellow man, and who have been instrumental in achieving the greatest results, are often repaid with ingratitude and neglect. When such men find themselves set aside, their counsels slighted and despised, they may feel that they are suffering great injustice. But let them learn from the example of Samuel not to justify or vindicate themselves, unless the Spirit of God unmistakably prompts to such a course. Those who despise and reject the faithful servant of God, not merely show contempt for the man, but for the Master who sent him. It is God's words, His reproofs and counsel, that are set at naught; His authority that is rejected." —(Signs of the Times, July 13, 1882) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1013.

WARNINGS AGAINST A MONARCHY

THURSDAY

5. What did Samuel explain clearly to them so that they would understand what such a change of government would lead to, including many disadvantages they would experience in rejecting God's government in favor of an earthly monarchy?

 **1 Samuel 8:10-17** And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king. ¹¹And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint

them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. ¹²And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. ¹³And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. ¹⁴And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. ¹⁵And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. ¹⁶And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your asses, and put them to his work. ¹⁷He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

"He [Samuel] 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.... Besides all this, the king would require a tenth of all their income, the profits of their labor, 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." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 606.

FRIDAY

6. Did the elders take to heart the dangers and disadvantages of a monarchy, and then reconsider their request? Why were they not interested in listening to the voice of the Lord and accepting His administration?

 **1 Samuel 8:19-22** *Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; ²⁰That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. ²¹And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord. ²²And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.*

"The Israelites did not realize that to be in this respect unlike other nations was a special privilege and blessing. God had separated the Israelites from every other people, to make them His own peculiar treasure. But they, disregarding this high honor, eagerly desired to imitate the example of the heathen! And still the longing to conform to worldly practices and customs exists among the professed people of God. As they depart from the Lord they become ambitious for the gains and honors of the world. Christians are constantly seeking to imitate the practices of those who worship the god of this world. Many urge that by uniting with worldlings and conforming to their customs they might exert a stronger influence over the ungodly. But all who pursue this course thereby separate from the Source of their strength. Becoming the friends of the world, they are the enemies of God. For the sake of earthly distinction they sacrifice the unspeakable honor to which God has called them, of showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 607.

ISRAEL'S FIRST KING

SABBATH

7. What command of the Lord did Samuel obey? Whom did he anoint as the first king?

1 Samuel 9:27; 10:1, 6 And as they were going down to the end of the

city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still a while, that I may show thee the word of God.^{10:1} Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?...⁶ And the spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.

"At the gate of the city Saul was met by the prophet himself. God had revealed to Samuel that at that time the chosen king of Israel would present himself before him. As they now stood face to face, the Lord said to Samuel, 'Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over My people.' ...

"Samuel conducted the stranger to the place of assembly, where the principal men of the town were gathered. Among them, at the prophet's direction, the place of honor was given to Saul, and at the feast the choicest portion was set before him. The services over, Samuel took his guest to his own home, and there upon the housetop he communed with him, setting forth the great principles on which the government of Israel had been established, and thus seeking to prepare him, in some measure, for his high station.

"When Saul departed, early next morning, the prophet went forth with him. Having passed through the town, he directed the servant to go forward. Then he bade Saul stand still to receive a message sent him from God.... As evidence that this was done by divine authority, he foretold the incidents that would occur on the homeward journey and assured Saul that he would be qualified by the Spirit of God for the station awaiting him." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 609, 610.

For additional study

"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." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 605.





MISSIONARY REPORT OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN DEPARTMENT

To be read on Sabbath, August 28, 2021

The Special Sabbath School Offering
will be gathered on Sabbath, September 4, 2021

To all brothers, sisters, friends, and acquaintances around the world: Warm, cordial greetings to you!

The work of the Good Samaritan Department owes its growth to Christian cooperation, sacrifice, and a spirit of self-denial on the part of all who are sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit.

The sacred Word warns us that, in the last days of this world, life will be very difficult in the social, religious, and economic realms.

The apostle James summarizes in a few words the purpose of the activities of the Good Samaritan: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James 1:27.

Orphans, widows, the elderly, and the sick compose the most fragile portions of society. Without the help of those who are healthy, strong, and financially blessed, the world's victims would suffer abandonment and a very sad fate.

In the time of the prophet Elijah, as a consequence of Israel's repeated transgressions, there was a long period of drought that caused great difficulty not only for the people but also for God's prophet. But then he received a message of hope: "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." 1 Kings 17:8, 9.

Who was the widow of Zarephath? "This woman was not an Israelite. She had never had the privileges and blessings that the chosen people of God had enjoyed; but she was a believer in the true God and had walked in all the light that was shining on her pathway. And now, when there was no safety for Elijah in the land of Israel, God sent him to this woman to find an asylum in her home.

"So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand....

"The widow said, 'As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse:'... 1 Kings 17:10-12.

"In this poverty-stricken home the famine pressed sore, and the pitifully meager fare seemed about to fail. The coming of Elijah on the very day when the widow feared that she must give up the struggle to sustain life tested to the utmost her faith in the power of the living God to provide for her necessities. But even in her dire extremity she bore witness to her faith by a compliance with the request of the stranger who was asking her to share her last morsel with him.

"In response to Elijah's request for food and drink, the widow said, 'As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake,...

"The widow had hitherto treated all strangers with kindness and liberality. Now, regardless of the suffering that might result to herself and child, and trusting in the God of Israel to supply her every need, she met this supreme test of hospitality by doing 'according to the saying of Elijah.'" –*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 129, 130.

This moment was crucial for the future of the widow. If she had denied hospitality to the man of God, with her son she would have eaten her last loaf of bread and awaited death. Sometimes there are circumstances that we cannot put off. How many times have we said, "No, not today; maybe another time."

But the widow of Zarephath shared her last loaf with Elijah, and in exchange for that she saved her life and that of her son. God has promised great blessings to all who in difficult moments give sympathy and assistance to those in need. He has not changed. His power today is just as strong as it was in the time of Elijah.

How did the story end? "And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days." 1 Kings 17:15.

If, as it was for the widow, today were our last, would we honor the servant of God? If we had a little faith, like a mustard seed, surely we would fulfill the will of God!

"God cannot use men who, in time of peril, when the strength, courage, and influence of all are needed, are afraid to take a firm stand for the right." – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 142.

Dear friend, brother, and sister, you and I represent the widow who ministered to Elijah. Even if we have almost nothing, the Lord wants to choose us to carry out a special task. Provide for the needs of the prophet—God's needy people. Are we ready to give and sacrifice something? Next Sabbath the special offering for the Good Samaritan Department will be gathered. God will bless each sacrifice. Whatever we give, even if it is small, will be sufficient with God's blessing to nourish the servant of God and ourselves for a long time.

– Stefano La Corte
General Conference Good Samaritan Department Leader

LESSON 10

Sabbath, September 4, 2021

Schism in Israel



"With the rending of the kingdom early in Rehoboam's reign the glory of Israel began to depart, never again to be regained in its fullness. At times during the centuries that followed, the throne of David was occupied by men of moral worth and far-seeing judgment, and under the rulership of these sovereigns the blessings resting upon the men of Judah were extended to the surrounding nations. At times the name of Jehovah was exalted above every false god, and His law was held in reverence. From time to time mighty prophets arose to strengthen the hands of the rulers and to encourage the people to continued faithfulness. But the seeds of evil already springing up when Rehoboam ascended the throne were never to be wholly uprooted; and at times the once-favored people of God were to fall so low as to become a byword among the heathen."
—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 96.

HIGH CONSTRUCTION COSTS

SUNDAY

- 1. After the temple was built in Jerusalem, what expensive building projects did Solomon undertake?**

 **1 Kings 9:15** *And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the Lord, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer.*

"The missionary spirit that God had implanted in the heart of Solomon and in the hearts of all true Israelites was supplanted by a spirit of commercialism. The opportunities afforded by contact with many nations were used for personal aggrandizement. Solomon sought to strengthen his position politically by building fortified cities at the gateways of

commerce. He rebuilt Gezer, near Joppa, lying along the road between Egypt and Syria; Beth-horon, to the westward of Jerusalem, commanding the passes of the highway leading from the heart of Judea to Gezer and the seacoast; Megiddo, situated on the caravan road from Damascus to Egypt, and from Jerusalem to the northward; and 'Tadmor in the wilderness' (2 Chronicles 8:4), along the route of caravans from the east. All these cities were strongly fortified. The commercial advantages of an outlet at the head of the Red Sea were developed by the construction of 'a navy of ships in Ezion-geber,... on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.' Trained sailors from Tyre, 'with the servants of Solomon,' manned these vessels on voyages 'to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold,' and 'great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones.' Verse 18; 1 Kings 9:26, 28; 10:11." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 71, 72.

MONDAY

2. Did Solomon remain fully faithful to the Lord? What prophecy was pronounced against his kingdom because of grave sins and apostasy?

 **1 Kings 11:5-11, 30, 31** For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father. ⁷Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem,

and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. ⁸And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. ⁹And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, ¹⁰And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the Lord commanded. ¹¹Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee,... I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.... ³⁰And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: ³¹And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee.

"Solomon's course brought its sure penalty. His separation from God through communication with idolaters was his ruin. As he cast off his allegiance to God, he lost the mastery of himself. His moral efficiency was gone. His fine sensibilities became blunted, his conscience seared. He who in his early reign had displayed so much wisdom and sympathy

in restoring a helpless babe to its unfortunate mother (see 1 Kings 3:16-28), fell so low as to consent to the erection of an idol to whom living children were offered as sacrifices. He who in his youth was endowed with discretion and understanding, and who in his strong manhood had been inspired to write, 'There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death' (Proverbs 14:12), in later years departed so far from purity as to countenance licentious, revolting rites connected with the worship of Chemosh and Ashtoreth. He who at the dedication of the temple had said to his people, 'Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God' (1 Kings 8:61), became himself an offender, in heart and life denying his own words. He mistook license for liberty. He tried—but at what cost!—to unite light with darkness, good with evil, purity with impurity, Christ with Belial." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 57, 58.

HEAVY TAX BURDEN

TUESDAY

3. When Rehoboam succeeded Solomon, what complaints did the people bring to him? What did they request?

 **1 Kings 12:3, 4** *That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee."*

"The tribes had long suffered grievous wrongs under the oppressive measures of their former ruler. The extravagance of Solomon's reign during his apostasy had led him to tax the people heavily and to require of them much menial service. Before going forward with the coronation of a new ruler, the leading men from among the tribes determined to ascertain whether or not it was the purpose of Solomon's son to lessen these burdens. 'So Jeroboam and all Israel came and spake to Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.'" — *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 88, 89.

WEDNESDAY

4. With whom did Rehoboam consult before answering the people's request? Whose counsel did he accept, and

 **1 Kings 12:5-8** *And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed. "And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How*

what did he do with the wise advice that was given to him by the experienced counsellors?

do ye advise that I may answer this people? ⁷And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever. ⁸But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him.

"Rehoboam... [was] the son whom Solomon chose to be his successor,..."
—(Review and Herald, July 3, 1913) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1033.

"Although Solomon had longed to prepare the mind of Rehoboam, his chosen successor, to meet with wisdom the crisis foretold by the prophet of God, he had never been able to exert a strong molding influence for good over the mind of his son, whose early training had been so grossly neglected. Rehoboam had received from his mother, an Ammonitess, the stamp of a vacillating character. At times he endeavored to serve God and was granted a measure of prosperity; but he was not steadfast, and at last he yielded to the influences for evil that had surrounded him from infancy. In the mistakes of Rehoboam's life and in his final apostasy is revealed the fearful result of Solomon's union with idolatrous women." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 88.

THURSDAY

5. How contrary was the suggestion of the young counselors? What Spirit can we say was not heeded?

spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter? ¹⁰And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. ¹¹And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

 **1 Kings 12:9-11** And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have

"Dissatisfied, Rehoboam turned to the younger men with whom he had associated during his youth and early manhood, and inquired of them, 'What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?' 1 Kings 12:9. The young men suggested that he deal sternly with the subjects of his

kingdom and make plain to them that from the very beginning he would brook no interference with his personal wishes.

“Flattered by the prospect of exercising supreme authority, Rehoboam determined to disregard the counsel of the older men of his realm, and to make the younger men his advisers. Thus it came to pass that on the day appointed, when ‘Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam’ for a statement concerning the policy he intended to pursue, Rehoboam ‘answered the people roughly,...saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.’ Verses 12-14.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 89, 90.

FOLLOWING BAD ADVICE

FRIDAY

6. Whom did the king turn against? What answer did he give three days later when the people came back?

 **1 Kings 12:12-15** So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day. ¹³And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men’s counsel that

they gave him; ¹⁴And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

¹⁵Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

 **2 Chronicles 10:15** So the king hearkened not unto the people: for the cause was of God, that the Lord might perform his word, which he spake by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

“Had Rehoboam and his inexperienced counselors understood the divine will concerning Israel, they would have listened to the request of the people for decided reforms in the administration of the government. But in the hour of opportunity that came to them during the meeting in Shechem, they failed to reason from cause to effect, and thus forever weakened their influence over a large number of the people. Their expressed determination to perpetuate and add to the oppression introduced during Solomon’s reign was in direct conflict with God’s plan for Israel, and gave the people ample occasion to doubt the sincerity of their motives. In this unwise and unfeeling attempt to exercise power, the king and his chosen counselors revealed the pride of position and authority.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 90.

7. What serious schism arose following Rehoboam's cruel response to the reasonable requests of the people? What was the painful result of this, and how long did it last?

 **1 Kings 12:16, 17** So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. ¹⁷But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

 **2 Chronicles 10:19.** And Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

"The Lord did not allow Rehoboam to carry out the policy he had outlined. Among the tribes were many thousands who had become thoroughly aroused over the oppressive measures of Solomon's reign, and these now felt that they could not do otherwise than rebel against the house of David. 'When all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.' Verse 16. "The breach created by the rash speech of Rehoboam proved irreparable. Thenceforth the twelve tribes of Israel were divided, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin composing the lower or southern kingdom of Judah, under the rulership of Rehoboam; while the ten northern tribes formed and maintained a separate government, known as the kingdom of Israel, with Jeroboam as their ruler. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of the prophet concerning the rending of the kingdom. 'The cause was from the Lord.' Verse 15." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 90, 91.



For additional study

"The people whom God had chosen to stand as a light to the surrounding nations were turning from their Source of strength and seeking to become like the nations about them. As with Solomon, so with Rehoboam—the influence of wrong example led many astray. And as with them, so to a greater or less degree is it today with everyone who gives himself up to work evil—the influence of wrongdoing is not confined to the doer. No man liveth unto himself. None perish alone in their iniquity. Every life is a light that brightens and cheers the pathway of others, or a dark and desolating influence that tends toward despair and ruin. We lead others either upward to happiness and immortal life, or downward to sorrow and eternal death. And if by our deeds we strengthen or force into activity the evil powers of those around us, we share their sin." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 94.

LESSON 11

Sabbath, September 11, 2021

Parable of the Vineyard



"The children of Israel were to occupy all the territory which God appointed them. Those nations that rejected the worship and service of the true God were to be dispossessed. But it was God's purpose that by the revelation of His character through Israel men should be drawn unto Him. To all the world the gospel invitation was to be given. Through the teaching of the sacrificial service, Christ was to be uplifted before the nations, and all who would look unto Him should live. All who, like Rahab the Canaanite and Ruth the Moabitess, turned from idolatry to the worship of the true God were to unite themselves with His chosen people. As the numbers of Israel increased, they were to enlarge their borders until their kingdom should embrace the world." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 19.

FRUITFUL HILL AND NOBLE VINE

SUNDAY

- 1. What parable did the Lord use to portray the history, conditions, and expectations that He had for His people? What was the soil like in which He planted His vineyard?**
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 *Isaiah 5:1* Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill.

 *Psalms 80:8* Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

"The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her

wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.’ Deuteronomy 32:9-12. Thus He brought the Israelites unto Himself, that they might dwell as under the shadow of the Most High. Miraculously preserved from the perils of the wilderness wandering, they were finally established in the Land of Promise as a favored nation.

“By means of a parable, Isaiah has told with touching pathos the story of Israel’s call and training to stand in the world as Jehovah’s representatives, fruitful in every good work:...” –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 17.

MONDAY

2. What kind of vine did the Lord choose to plant in His vineyard? What did He do to protect and nurture it?

 *Jeremiah 2:21* Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed:...

 *Isaiah 5:2* And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein.

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

“Christ was their instructor. As He had been with them in the wilderness, so He was still to be their teacher and guide. In the tabernacle and the temple His glory dwelt in the holy Shekinah above the mercy seat. In their behalf He constantly manifested the riches of His love and patience.” –*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 17, 18.

DISAPPOINTMENT AT THE HARVEST

TUESDAY

3. What did the Owner say concerning what He had done in planting the vineyard? Nevertheless, what did He find at the time of the harvest?

 *Isaiah 5:2, 4, last part* And he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.... ⁴What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

"But ancient Israel did not fulfill God's purpose. The Lord declared, 'I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me?' Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself." And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt Me and My vineyard. What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: and I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For... He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.' Jeremiah 2:21; Hosea 10:1; Isaiah 5:3-7." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 19, 20.

WEDNESDAY

4. In addition to not producing the expected fruit, what happened to the vine? What did the Lord therefore ask His people to do?

🔖 *Jeremiah 2:21, last part ... How then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?*

🔖 *Isaiah 5:3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.*

"The Lord had through Moses set before His people the result of unfaithfulness. By refusing to keep His covenant, they would cut themselves off from the life of God, and His blessing could not come upon them. At times these warnings were heeded, and rich blessings were bestowed upon the Jewish nation and through them upon surrounding peoples. But more often in their history they forgot God and lost sight of their high privilege as His representatives.... Thus the Gentile world was given occasion to misinterpret the character of God and the laws of His kingdom." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 20, 21.

PRIVILEGES AND PROTECTION WITHDRAWN

THURSDAY

5. What would one expect the Owner to do, since the vineyard had produced nothing and the vine degenerated into a strange plant?

🔖 *Isaiah 5:5, 6 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: 6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come*

up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

"With a father's heart, God bore with His people. He pleaded with them by mercies given and mercies withdrawn. Patiently He set their sins before them and in forbearance waited for their acknowledgment. Prophets and messengers were sent to urge His claim upon the husbandmen; but, instead of being welcomed, these men of discernment and spiritual power were treated as enemies. The husbandmen persecuted and killed them. God sent still other messengers, but they received the same treatment as the first, only that the husbandmen showed still more determined hatred....

"The goodly vine planted by the divine Husbandman upon the hills of Palestine was despised by the men of Israel and was finally cast over the vineyard wall; they bruised it and trampled it under their feet and hoped that they had destroyed it forever. The Husbandman removed the vine and concealed it from their sight. Again He planted it, but on the other side of the wall and in such a manner that the stock was no longer visible. The branches hung over the wall, and grafts might be joined to it; but the stem itself was placed beyond the power of men to reach or harm." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 21, 22.

FRIDAY

6. What two kingdoms and people did the fruitless, degenerated vineyard represent?

 *Isaiah 5:7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.*

"Had Rehoboam and his inexperienced counselors understood the divine will concerning Israel, they would have listened to the request of the people for decided reforms in the administration of the government. But in the hour of opportunity that came to them during the meeting in Shechem, they failed to reason from cause to effect, and thus forever weakened their influence over a large number of the people. Their expressed determination to perpetuate and add to the oppression introduced during Solomon's reign was in direct conflict with God's plan for Israel, and gave the people ample occasion to doubt the sincerity of their motives. In this unwise and unfeeling attempt to exercise power, the king and his chosen counselors revealed the pride of position and authority." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 90.

ONLY A REMNANT

SABBATH

7. How is this parable to be understood? Were errors and apostasy general among God's chosen people, or was the problem only with the vast majority? What positive words were nevertheless heard concerning a faithful few in the time of the monarchy?

 **Isaiah 1:9; 6:13** Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah....^{6:13} But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.

"'They which lead thee,' the prophet continued, 'cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.' Verse 12. During the reign of Ahaz this was literally true; for of him it is written: 'He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom;' yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel.' 2 Chronicles 28:2, 3; 2 Kings 16:3.

"This was indeed a time of great peril for the chosen nation. Only a few short years, and the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel were to be scattered among the nations of heathendom. And in the kingdom of Judah also the outlook was dark. The forces for good were rapidly diminishing, the forces for evil multiplying. The prophet Micah, viewing the situation, was constrained to exclaim: 'The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men.' 'The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge.' Micah 7:2, 4. 'Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant,' declared Isaiah, 'we should have been as Sodom, and ... Gomorrah.' Isaiah 1:9." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 324.



For additional study

"Of special value to God's church on earth today—the keepers of His vineyard—are the messages of counsel and admonition given through the prophets who have made plain His eternal purpose in behalf of mankind. In the teachings of the prophets, His love for the lost race and His plan for their salvation are clearly revealed. The story of Israel's call, of their successes and failures, of their restoration to divine favor, of their rejection of the Master of the vineyard, and of the carrying out of the plan of the ages by a goodly remnant to whom are to be fulfilled all the covenant promises—this has been the theme of God's messengers to His church throughout the centuries that have passed. And today God's message to His church—to those who are occupying His vineyard as faithful husbandmen—is none other than that spoken through the prophet of old.

"'Sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.' Isaiah 27:2, 3." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 22.

LESSON 12

Sabbath, September 18, 2021

Disobedience and Consequences



"So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria," because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed His covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded,...' 2 Kings 17:23; 18:12.

"In the terrible judgments brought upon the ten tribes the Lord had a wise and merciful purpose. That which He could no longer do through them in the land of their fathers He would seek to accomplish by scattering them among the heathen.... Among them were some who had remained true to God, and others who had humbled themselves before Him. Through these, 'the sons of the living God' (Hosea 1:10), He would bring multitudes in the Assyrian realm to a knowledge of the attributes of His character and the beneficence of His law." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 292.

MESSENGERS AND WARNINGS

SUNDAY

1. Whom did the Lord send continually to His people to give them messages of exhortation and correction despite their wrong course? What was the result of His servants' messages and ministry to the leaders and people?

2 Kings 17:13, 14 Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. ¹⁴Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God.

"The prophets continued to protest against these evils and to plead for rightdoing. 'Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy,' Hosea urged; 'break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you.' 'Turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.' 'O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity:... say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.' Hosea 10:12; 12:6; 14:1, 2....

"With the severest reproofs, God sought to arouse the impenitent nation to a realization of its imminent danger of utter destruction. Through Hosea and Amos, He sent the ten tribes message after message, urging full and complete repentance, and threatening disaster as the result of continued transgression. 'Ye have plowed wickedness,' declared Hosea, 'ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men. Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled.... In a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off.' Hosea 10:13-15." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 282, 279, 280.

MONDAY

2. Where did Ephraim, the ten tribes of Israel making up the northern kingdom, go for solutions or relief? What did the Lord's servant prophesy concerning Samaria, the capital of Israel, the kingdom, and its population?

📖 *Hosea 8:9; 12:1* For they are gone up to Assyria, a wild ass alone by himself: Ephraim hath hired lovers....^{12:1} Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily increaseth lies and desolation; and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt.

📖 *Isaiah 8:4, last part, 7* ...The spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria....⁷ Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.

"Some of the leaders in Israel felt keenly their loss of prestige and wished that this might be regained. But instead of turning away from those practices which had brought weakness to the kingdom, they continued in iniquity, flattering themselves that when occasion arose, they would attain to the political power they desired by allying themselves with the heathen. 'When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian.' 'Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.' 'They do make a covenant with the Assyrians.' Hosea 5:13; 7:11; Hosea 12:1." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 280.

THE MONARCHY IN ISRAEL AND JUDAH

TUESDAY

3. What happened with the last king of Israel when he refused to consider all of the previous remedies and warnings? Besides King Hoshea's demise, what else reached its end?

 **2 Kings 17:5, 6, 18, 23** Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. ⁶In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.... ¹⁸Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.... ²³Until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.

"'They set up kings without my consent; .made princes, and I knew it not.' Hosea 8:4. Every principle of justice was set aside; those who should have stood before the nations of earth as the depositaries of divine grace, 'dealt treacherously against the Lord' and with one another. Hosea 5:7.

"With the severest reproofs, God sought to arouse the impenitent nation to a realization of its imminent danger of utter destruction. Through Hosea and Amos He sent the ten tribes message after message, urging full and complete repentance, and threatening disaster as the result of continued transgression. 'Ye have plowed wickedness,' declared Hosea, 'ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men. Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled.... In a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off.' Hosea 10:13-15."

—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 279,280.

WEDNESDAY

4. Although Judah, the kingdom in the south, escaped the captivity, what eventually happened to them?

 **2 Kings 17:19** Also Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

 **2 Chronicles 36:11-14** Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. ¹²And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled

not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord. ¹³And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel. ¹⁴Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

"Foremost among those who were rapidly leading the nation to ruin was Zedekiah their king. Forsaking utterly the counsels of the Lord as given through the prophets, forgetting the debt of gratitude he owed Nebuchadnezzar, violating his solemn oath of allegiance taken in the name of the Lord God of Israel, Judah's king rebelled against the prophets, against his benefactor, and against his God. In the vanity of his own wisdom he turned for help to the ancient enemy of Israel's prosperity, 'sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people.'...

To the 'profane wicked prince' had come the day of final reckoning. 'Remove the diadem,' the Lord decreed, 'and take off the crown.' Not until Christ Himself should set up His kingdom was Judah again to be permitted to have a king. 'I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it,' was the divine edict concerning the throne of the house of David; 'and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.' Ezekiel 21:25-27." *—Prophets and Kings, pp. 450, 451.*

THE RESULT—THE BABYLONIAN INVASION

THURSDAY

5. When they refused to hear and even mocked the messages of the prophets, what terrible enemy attacked Jerusalem?

 **2 Chronicles 36:15-17** And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: ¹⁶But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. ¹⁷Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew

their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.

"The enemy swept down like a resistless avalanche and devastated the city. The Hebrew armies were beaten back in confusion. The nation was conquered. Zedekiah was taken prisoner, and his sons were slain before his eyes. The king was led away from Jerusalem a captive, his eyes were put out, and after arriving in Babylon he perished miserably. The beautiful temple that for more than four centuries had crowned the summit of Mount Zion was not spared by the Chaldeans. 'They burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.' 2 Chronicles 36:19." – *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 458, 459.

FRIDAY

6. What happened to the city and the beautiful temple? What did many of those who survived the massacres of those painful days have to endure?

 **2 Chronicles 36:18-20** *And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all those he brought to Babylon.¹⁹ And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.²⁰ And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia.*

"At the time of the final overthrow of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, many had escaped the horrors of the long siege, only to perish by the sword. Of those who still remained, some, notably the chief of the priests and officers and the princes of the realm, were taken to Babylon and there executed as traitors. Others were carried captive, to live in servitude to Nebuchadnezzar and to his sons 'until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah.' Verses 20, 21." – *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 458, 459.

A BETTER WAY WAS POSSIBLE

SABBATH

7. Do you think it would have been possible for God's people to avoid those national disasters? What lessons can we learn from what happened to them? What did God say about how to prevent such horrible things and receive His blessings?

 **Deuteronomy 5:29** O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

 **Isaiah 48:18** O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.

 **Psalm 119:165** Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

"The yoke is placed upon the oxen to aid them in drawing the load, to lighten the burden. So with the yoke of Christ. When our will is swallowed up in the will of God, and we use His gifts to bless others, we shall find life's burden light. He who walks in the way of God's commandments is walking in company with Christ, and in His love the heart is at rest. When Moses prayed, 'Shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee,' the Lord answered him, 'My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.' And through the prophets the message was given, 'Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls.' Exodus 33:13, 14; Jeremiah 6:16. And He says, 'O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.' Isaiah 48:18." —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 330, 331.



For additional study

"God knows that if we were left to follow our own inclinations, to go just where our will would lead us, we would fall into Satan's lines and become possessors of His attributes. Therefore the law of God confines us to the will of One who is high and noble and elevating. He desires that we shall patiently and wisely take up the duties of service.... A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. The service is looked upon by such a one in the light of drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance.... Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. "God presents to the world two classes. For the one—the wicked—He says, 'There is no peace.' Isaiah 48:22. Of the other, 'Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them.' Psalm 119:165...."—*That I May Know Him*, p. 120.

LESSON 13

Sabbath, September 25, 2021

The Remnant and a New Beginning



"With sorrow-stricken heart, the visitor from afar gazed upon the ruined defenses of his loved Jerusalem. And is it not thus that angels of heaven survey the condition of the church of Christ? Like the dwellers at Jerusalem, we become accustomed to existing evils, and often are content while making no effort to remedy them. But how are these evils regarded by beings divinely illuminated? Do not they, like Nehemiah, look with sorrow-burdened heart upon ruined walls, and gates burned with fire?" —(The Southern Work, March 22, 1904) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1136.

THE PROMISE OF A REMNANT

SUNDAY

1. Despite long years of exile in foreign lands, what did the prophets proclaim about Israel and Judah?

 **Isaiah 10: 21, 22** The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. ²²For though

thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.

 **Hosea 6:1-3** Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. ²After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. ³Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

"The exhortations of the prophet to Judah to behold the living God, and to accept His gracious offers, were not in vain. There were some who gave earnest heed, and who turned from their idols to the worship of Jehovah. They learned to see in their Maker love and mercy and tender compassion. And in the dark days that were to come in the history of

Judah, when only a remnant were to be left in the land, the prophet's words were to continue bearing fruit in decided reformation. 'At that day,' declared Isaiah, 'shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel. And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the images.' Isaiah 17:7, 8." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 320.

MONDAY

2. In fulfillment of the prophetic word concerning the restoration, what did the Persian king do shortly after the fall of the Babylonian empire?

 *Ezra 1:1-3* Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of

the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, ²Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

"The advent of the army of Cyrus before the walls of Babylon was to the Jews a sign that their deliverance from captivity was drawing nigh. More than a century before the birth of Cyrus, Inspiration had mentioned him by name, and had caused a record to be made of the actual work he should do in taking the city of Babylon unawares, and in preparing the way for the release of the children of the captivity. Through Isaiah the word had been spoken:

"Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him;... to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; 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: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.' Isaiah 45:1-3." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 551.

TUESDAY

3. In response to this decree, how many of the exiles took advantage of the opportunities given to leave Babylon and return to the land of their fathers?

 *Ezra 2:1, 2, 64* Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; ²Which came with

Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mizpar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:... ⁶⁴The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore.

"Upon Zerubbabel (known also as Sheshbazzar), a descendant of King David, Cyrus placed the responsibility of acting as governor of the company returning to Judea; and with him was associated Joshua the high priest. The long journey across the desert wastes was accomplished in safety, and the happy company, grateful to God for His many mercies, at once undertook the work of re-establishing that which had been broken down and destroyed. 'The chief of the fathers' led out in offering of their substance to help defray the expense of rebuilding the temple; and the people, following their example, gave freely of their meager store." – *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 559,560.

REBUILDING SACRED OBJECTS AND PLACES

WEDNESDAY

4. Once they reached their destination and found their homes, what did they want to reestablish?

 **Ezra 3:1-3** And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. ²Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God. ³And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening.

"As speedily as possible, an altar was erected on the site of the ancient altar in the temple court. To the exercises connected with the dedication of this altar, the people had 'gathered themselves together as one man;' and there they united in reestablishing the sacred services that had been interrupted at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Before separating to dwell in the homes they were endeavoring to restore, 'they kept also the Feast of Tabernacles.' Ezra 3:1-6." – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 560.

THURSDAY

5. What sacred building did they have in their hearts to rebuild now that they had returned to the promised land? When did they lay the foundation?

 **Ezra 3:6, last part. 8** ...But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid. ⁸Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the Lord.

"The setting up of the altar of daily burnt offerings greatly cheered the faithful remnant. Heartily they entered into the preparations necessary for the rebuilding of the temple, gathering courage as these preparations advanced from month to month. They had for many years been deprived of the visible tokens of God's presence. And now, surrounded as they were by many sad reminders of the apostasy of their fathers, they longed for some abiding token of divine forgiveness and favor. Above the regaining of personal property and ancient privileges, they valued the approval of God. Wonderfully had He wrought in their behalf, and they felt the assurance of His presence with them; yet they desired greater blessings still. With joyous anticipation they looked forward to the time when, with the temple rebuilt, they might behold the shining forth of His glory from within." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 560, 563.

THE DECREE TO REESTABLISH SACRED THINGS

FRIDAY

6. What decree did the Persian king Artaxerxes Longimanus issue in B.C. 457? Who returned to Judah at that time?

 **Ezra 7:11-14** Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of his statutes to Israel. ¹²Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time. ¹³I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. ¹⁴Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to inquire concerning

Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand.

"About seventy years after the return of the first company of exiles under Zerubbabel and Joshua, Artaxerxes Longimanus came to the throne of Medo-Persia. The name of this king is connected with sacred history by a series of remarkable providences. It was during his reign that Ezra and Nehemiah lived and labored. He is the one who in 457 B.C. issued the third and final decree for the restoration of Jerusalem. His reign saw the return of a company of Jews under Ezra,...

"The decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus for the restoring and building of Jerusalem, the third issued since the close of the seventy years' captivity, is remarkable for its expressions regarding the God of heaven, for its recognition of the attainments of Ezra, and for the liberality of the grants made to the remnant people of God. Artaxerxes refers to Ezra as 'the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of His statutes to Israel;' 'a scribe of the law of the God of heaven.' The king united with his counselors in offering freely 'unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem;' and in addition he made provision for meeting many heavy expenses by ordering that they be paid 'out of the king's treasure house.' Verses 11, 12, 15, 20.

"... And he further decreed: 'Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?'"
—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 607, 610, 611.

RESTORING AND REBUILDING THE CITY WALLS

SABBATH

7. Years later, what active servant of God requested permission to go to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls? Under God's blessing, how long did it take to restore the city walls?

 *Nehemiah 2:4, 5; 6:15* Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers'sepulchres, that I may build it.... ^{6:15}So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.

"There is need of Nehemiahs in the church today—not men who can pray and preach only, but men whose prayers and sermons are braced with firm and eager purpose. The course pursued by this Hebrew patriot in the accomplishment of his plans is one that should still be adopted by ministers and leading men. When they have laid their plans, they should present them to the church in such a manner as to win their interest and cooperation. Let the people understand the plans and share in the work, and they will have a personal interest in its prosperity. The success attending Nehemiah's efforts shows what prayer, faith, and wise, energetic action will accomplish. Living faith will prompt to energetic action. The spirit manifested by the leader will be, to a great extent, reflected by the people. If the leaders professing to believe the solemn, important truths that are to test the world at this time, manifest no ardent zeal to prepare a people to stand in the day of God, we must expect the church to be careless, indolent, and pleasure-loving." —(The Southern Watchman, March 29, 1904) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1137.



For additional study

*"We need Nehemiahs in this age of the world, who shall arouse the people to see how far from God they are because of the transgression of His law. Nehemiah was a reformer, a great man raised up for an important time. As he came in contact with evil and every kind of opposition, fresh courage and zeal were aroused. His energy and determination inspired the people of Jerusalem; and strength and courage took the place of feebleness and discouragement. His holy purpose, his high hope, his cheerful consecration to the work, were contagious. The people caught the enthusiasm of their leader, and in his sphere each man became a Nehemiah, and helped to make stronger the hand and heart of his neighbor. Here is a lesson for ministers of the present day. If they are listless, inactive, destitute of godly zeal, what can be expected of the people to whom they minister?" (The Southern Watchman, June 28, 1904) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1137.*

LESSON 14

Sabbath, October 2, 2021

Apple of His Eye



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

HIS TREASURED POSSESSION

SUNDAY

- 1. How did the Lord express His feelings of affection for His people? What shows that He intended for Israel to be special and holy?**
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 **Deuteronomy 7:6; 26:18** For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth....
^{26:18} And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments.

"Human learning cannot qualify for that kingdom. The subjects of Christ's kingdom are not made thus by forms and ceremonies, by a large study of books. 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent.' The members of Christ's kingdom are members of His body, of which He himself is the head.

They are the elect sons of God, 'a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,' that they should show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." –*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 413.

MONDAY

2. How do you feel when the Lord says that He wants you to be His special treasure?

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

 **Psalm 135:4** For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.

"Christ's redeemed ones are His jewels, His precious and peculiar treasure. 'They shall be as the stones of a crown'—'the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.' Zechariah 9:16; Ephesians 1:18. In them 'He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.' Christ looks upon His people in their purity and perfection as the reward of all His sufferings, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory—Christ the great center, from whom radiates all glory." –*That I May Know Him*, p. 369.

DIVINE ESTEEM

TUESDAY

3. According to the Holy Scriptures, what does the Lord feel about His people? Compare the benevolent attitude that He has toward His church with how we tend to treat others.

 **Hosea 11:1** When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

 **1 Kings 10:9, middle part** ...The Lord loved Israel for ever.

 **Jeremiah 31:3** The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

"I testify to my brethren and sisters that the church of Christ, enfeebled and defective as it may be, is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard. While He extends to all the world His invitation to come to Him and be saved, He commissions His angels to render divine help to every soul that cometh to Him in repentance and contrition, and He comes personally by His Holy Spirit into the midst of His church. 'If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there

is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning.... Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.'" –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 15.

WEDNESDAY

4. How precious does He consider the church members? If someone harms them, how sensitive is God to it?

 **Deuteronomy 32:10** He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

 **Zechariah 2:8** For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.

"God surrounded Israel with every facility, gave them every privilege, that would make them an honor to His name and a blessing to surrounding nations. If they would walk in the ways of obedience, He promised to make them 'high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor.' 'All people of the earth,' He said, 'shall hear that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee.' The nations which shall hear all these statutes shall say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' Deuteronomy 26:19; 28:10; 4:6." –*Education*, p. 40.

"God has thrust His people into the gap, to make up the hedge, to raise up the foundation of many generations. The heavenly intelligences, angels that excel in strength, are waiting, obedient to His command, to unite with human agencies; and the Lord will interpose when matters have come to such a pass that none but a divine power can counteract the satanic agencies at work. When His people shall be in the greatest danger, seemingly unable to stand against the power of Satan, God will work in their behalf. Man's extremity is God's opportunity." –*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 373.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

THURSDAY

5. What are some things that show God's loving care for His people?

 **Deuteronomy 29:2,3, 5; 8:4, 7-9** And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; ³The great temptations which thine eyes

have seen, the signs, and those great miracles:... ⁵And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.... ^{8:4}Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years....⁷For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; ⁸A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; ⁹A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

“‘Go forward,’ God said to Israel, when the flowing waters of the Red Sea blocked their passage as they moved out in the path which Providence had indicated. As they placed their feet in the waters of the sea, they did what the Lord required of them. They did not see what God would do next. They did not see the broad path opened for them by the power of God until they manifested their faith by moving forward. And then God’s power was revealed. The waters on either side were piled up like a wall, leaving an open path before them.” –*Signs of the Times*, July 19, 1899.

FRIDAY

6. After receiving so many blessings, what should flow naturally from our hearts? How deep should our compliance with and loyalty to His commandments be?

thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.... ^{10:12}And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, ¹³To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? ¹⁴Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord’s thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. ¹⁵Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.

 *Deuteronomy 6:4, 5; 10:12-15* Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: ⁵And thou shalt love the Lord

"Christ gave Himself for the redemption of the race, that all who believe in Him may have everlasting life. Those who appreciate this great sacrifice receive from the Saviour that most precious of all gifts—a clean heart. They gain an experience that is more valuable than gold or silver or precious stones. They sit together in heavenly places in Christ, enjoying in communion with Him the joy and peace that He alone can give. They love Him with heart and mind and soul and strength, realizing that they are His blood-bought heritage. Their spiritual eyesight is not dimmed by worldly policy or worldly aims. They are one with Christ as He is one with the Father." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 7.

"To love God with all the heart, to be a partaker with Christ in His humiliation and suffering, means more than many understand. The atonement of Christ is the great central truth around which cluster all the truths that pertain to the great work of redemption. The mind of man is to blend with the mind of Christ. This union sanctifies the understanding, giving the thoughts clearness and force...." —*Lift Him Up*, p. 229.

PRaise AND FELLOWSHIP

SABBATH

7. What other expressions of praise will logically flow out to others from those who truly trust the Lord? If we love Him, whom will we esteem and maintain a good relationship with?

 **Psalm 149:1** Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.

 **Acts 2:42** And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

 **Philippians 2:1,2** If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, ²Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

 **1 John 1:7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

"In obedience to the word of their Master the disciples assembled in Jerusalem to wait for the fulfillment of God's promise. Here they spent

ten days, days of deep heart searching. They put away all differences and drew close together in Christian fellowship.

"At the end of ten days the Lord fulfilled His promise by a wonderful outpouring of His Spirit. 'Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.' And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.' Acts 2:2-4, 41." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 15.



For additional study

"God will do marvelous things for those who trust in Him. It is because His professed people trust so much to their own wisdom, and do not give the Lord an opportunity to reveal His power in their behalf, that they have not more strength. He will help His believing children in every emergency, if they will place their entire confidence in Him. He will work mightily for a faithful people who obey His word without questioning or doubt." –*Signs of the Times*, July 19, 1899.

LESSON 15

Sabbath, October 9, 2021

Foundation of the Church



"The church on earth is God's temple, and it is to assume divine proportions before the world. This building is to be the light of the world. It is to be composed of living stones laid close together, stone fitting to stone, making a solid building. All these stones are not of the same shape or dimension. Some are large and some are small, but each one has its own place to fill. In the whole building there is not to be one misshapen stone. Each one is perfect. And each stone is a living stone, a stone that emits light. The value of the stones is determined by the light they reflect to the world." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 281.

SUNDAY

- 1. What question did Jesus ask His disciples one day? How did Peter answer this question under inspiration?**
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 **Matthew 16:13-17** When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? ¹⁴And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. ¹⁵He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? ¹⁶And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. ¹⁷And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

"From the first, Peter had believed Jesus to be the Messiah. Many others who had been convicted by the preaching of John the Baptist, and had accepted Christ, began to doubt as to John's mission when he was imprisoned and put to death; and they now doubted that Jesus was the

Messiah, for whom they had looked so long. Many of the disciples who had ardently expected Jesus to take His place on David's throne left Him when they perceived that He had no such intention. But Peter and his companions turned not from their allegiance. The vacillating course of those who praised yesterday and condemned today did not destroy the faith of the true follower of the Saviour. Peter declared, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' He waited not for kingly honors to crown his Lord, but accepted Him in His humiliation. Peter had expressed the faith of the twelve." –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 411, 412.

THE ONE TRUE, FIRM FOUNDATION

MONDAY

2. Once they understood His identity, what did Jesus say about calling His church into existence?

 **Matthew 16:18, first part** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;...

"'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' 1 Corinthians 3:11. 'Upon this rock,' said Jesus, 'I will build My church.' In the presence of God, and all the heavenly intelligences, in the presence of the unseen army of hell, Christ founded His church upon the living Rock. That Rock is Himself—His own body, for us broken and bruised. Against the church built upon this foundation, the gates of hell shall not prevail.

"How feeble the church appeared when Christ spoke these words! There was only a handful of believers, against whom all the power of demons and evil men would be directed; yet the followers of Christ were not to fear. Built upon the Rock of their strength, they could not be overthrown. "For six thousand years, faith has builded upon Christ. For six thousand years the floods and tempests of satanic wrath have beaten upon the Rock of our salvation; but it stands unmoved." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 413

TUESDAY

3. What do the Holy Scriptures say about the "Rock" that is mentioned here? Is Jesus the foundation of only the Christian church, or also of the patriarchs and prophets' faith?

 **Isaiah 28:16** Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

"The truth which Peter had confessed is the foundation of the believer's faith. It is that which Christ Himself has declared to be eternal life." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 412.

"The word 'Peter' signifies a loose stone. Christ did not refer to Peter as being the rock upon which He would found His church. His expression 'this rock,' applied to Himself as the foundation of the Christian church." –(Signs of the Times, October 28, 1913) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1095.

"Christ was the foundation and center of the sacrificial system in both the patriarchal and the Jewish age. Since the sin of our first parents there has been no direct communication between God and man. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may redeem man and vindicate the authority and holiness of the law of God." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 366.

"Centuries before the Saviour's advent Moses had pointed to the Rock of Israel's salvation. The psalmist had sung of 'the Rock of my strength.' Isaiah had written, 'Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation.' Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 62:7; Isaiah 28:16. Peter himself, writing by inspiration, applies this prophecy to Jesus." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 413.

WEDNESDAY

4. What decision was reached by the builders who trusted more in their own understanding and merit than in the Lord? How can one honor Him in his life, activities, and responsibilities, even when under the temptations of difficult circumstances?

 **Matthew 21:42** Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

 **Acts 4:10, 11** Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. ¹¹This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

 **1 Corinthians 3:11** For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

"He [Peter] had referred to the stone set at nought by the builders—meaning the authorities of the church, who should have perceived the value of Him whom they rejected—but which had nevertheless become

the head of the corner. In those words he directly referred to Christ, who was the foundation stone of the church." –*The Story of Redemption*, p. 252.

"Christ would have averted the doom of the Jewish nation if the people had received Him. But envy and jealousy made them implacable. They determined that they would not receive Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. They rejected the Light of the world, and thenceforth their lives were surrounded with darkness as the darkness of midnight." –*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 295.

GROWTH AND ENDURANCE

THURSDAY

5. According to Jesus, what is the difference between common groups, associations, or organizations and the true church or family of God?

 **Matthew 16:18, last part; 7:24, 25**

... And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.... ^{7:24}Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: ²⁵And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

"To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father's love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, and that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against." –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 18.

FRIDAY

6. How urgently does God draw those who tend to be separate and independent from Him into a living relationship as part of His precious spiritual building?

 **1 Peter 2:3-5** If so be ye have

tasted that the Lord is gracious. ⁴To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ⁵Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

"In the temple there is not one misshapen stone. Each is perfect, and in the diversity there is unity, making a complete whole. One thing is sure, every stone is a living stone, a stone that emits light. Now is the time for the stones taken from the quarry of the world to be brought into the workshop of God, and hewed, squared, and polished, that they may shine."—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 273.

"The church on earth is to become the court of holy love.... Christian fellowship is one means by which character is formed. Thus selfishness is purged from the life, and men and women are drawn to Christ, the great center. Thus is answered His prayer that His followers may be one as He is one with the Father."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 281.

SABBATH

7. What will happen to all who individually and collectively join Jesus as part of the living temple of God?

📖 Ephesians 2:18-22 *For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. ¹⁹Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; ²⁰And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; ²¹In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: ²²In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

📖 1 Corinthians 3:16 *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

"The Jewish temple was built of hewn stones quarried out of the mountains, and every stone was fitted for its place in the temple, hewed, polished, and tested, before it was brought to Jerusalem. And when all were brought to the ground, the building went together without the sound of ax or hammer. This building represents God's spiritual temple, which is composed of material gathered out of every nation, and tongue, and people, of all grades, high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. These are not dead substances, to be fitted by hammer and chisel. They are living stones, quarried out from the world by the truth; and the great Master Builder, the Lord of the temple, is now hewing and polishing them, and fitting them for their respective places in the spiritual temple. When completed, this temple will be perfect in all its

parts, the [object of] admiration of angels and men, for its builder and maker is God." –*The Upward Look*, p. 281.

"In this world we are to shine in good works. The Lord requires His people ... to reflect the light of God's character, God's love, as Christ reflected it. As we look unto Jesus, all our lives will be aglow with that wondrous light. Every part of us is to be light; then whichever way we turn, light will be reflected from us to others. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. In Him is no darkness at all; therefore, if we are in Christ, there will be no darkness in us." –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 281.



For additional study

"Now is the time for the stones to be taken from the quarry of the world and brought into God's workshop, to be hewed, squared, and polished, that they may shine. This is God's plan, and He desires all who profess to believe the truth to fill their respective places in the great, grand work for this time.

"The angelic architect has brought his golden measuring rod from heaven, that every stone may be hewed and squared by the divine measurement, and polished to shine as an emblem of heaven, radiating in all directions the bright, clear beams of the Sun of Righteousness."
–*In Heavenly Places*, p. 281.

LESSON 16

Sabbath, October 16, 2021

The Church's Mission



"Everyone who is connected with God will impart light to others. If there are any who have no light to give, it is because they have no connection with the Source of light." —(Historical Sketches, p. 291) *Christian Service*, p. 21.

CALLED TO SERVE AND PREACH

SUNDAY

- 1. What was one reason why Jesus called His disciples? Why do you think He repeated His promise to them after the miracle of the draught of fish?**
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📖 Mark 1:16-18 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.¹⁷ And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. ¹⁸ And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

📖 Luke 5:8-10 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. ⁹ For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: ¹⁰ And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

"Every youth should be taught the necessity and the power of application. Upon this, far more than upon genius or talent, does success depend. Without application the most brilliant talents avail little, while

with rightly directed effort persons of very ordinary natural abilities have accomplished wonders. And genius, at whose achievements we marvel, is almost invariably united with untiring, concentrated effort." –*Education*, p. 232.

"To the early church had been entrusted a constantly enlarging work—that of establishing centers of light and blessing wherever there were honest souls willing to give themselves to the service of Christ." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 90.

MONDAY

2. For what tasks did He select and ordain the twelve disciples? How were they equipped to fulfill their mission?

 **Mark 3:13,14; 6:7, 12,13** And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.¹⁴ And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach....^{6:7} And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits....¹² And they went out, and preached that men should repent.¹³ And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

"It was at the ordination of the Twelve that the first step was taken in the organization of the church that after Christ's departure was to carry on His work on the earth. Of this ordination the record says, 'He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He would: and they came unto Him. And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach.' Mark 3:13, 14.

"Look upon the touching scene. Behold the Majesty of heaven surrounded by the Twelve whom He has chosen. He is about to set them apart for their work. By these feeble agencies, through His word and Spirit, He designs to place salvation within the reach of all." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 18.

OTHERS CALLED TO PREACH

TUESDAY

3. Why did Jesus appoint seventy more preachers? How does the need of today compare with that in the disciples' time?

 **Luke 10:1, 2** After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.² Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

"It is the privilege of every soul to be a living channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that Christ desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour's love. All heaven is waiting for channels through which can be poured the holy oil to be a joy and blessing to human hearts." –*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 419.

"God has appointed His children to give light to others, and if they fail to do it, and souls are left in the darkness of error because of their failure to do that which they might have done, had they been vitalized by the Holy Spirit, they will be accountable to God. We have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light, in order that we may show forth the praises of Christ." –(Review and Herald, December 12, 1893) *Christian Service*, p. 21.

WEDNESDAY

4. With what enthusiasm did the seventy return and tell Jesus about their experiences? How is it possible for God's people to have similar success today?

 **Luke 10:17-19** *And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. ¹⁸And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. ¹⁹Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*

"Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His recognized followers on earth. Jesus is the friend of sinners; and His heart is touched with their woe. He has all power, both in heaven and on earth; but He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 122.

"The one soul whom He sought to help became a means of reaching others and bringing them to the Saviour. This is ever the way that the work of God has made progress on the earth. Let your light shine, and other lights will be kindled." –*Gospel Workers*, p. 195.

THE GREAT COMMISSION AND PROMISE

THURSDAY

5. Even before He ascended to heaven, what great commission did the Lord give to His disciples? In addition to His followers' mission, what great promise did He give them? How did the kingdom of heaven advance?

 **Matthew 28:18-20** And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹Go ye therefore,

"Before ascending to heaven, Christ gave His disciples their commission. He told them that they were to be the executors of the will in which He bequeathed to the world the treasures of eternal life." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 27.

"Every follower of Jesus has a work to do as a missionary for Christ, in the family, in the neighborhood, in the town or city where he lives. All who are consecrated to God are channels of light. God makes them instruments of righteousness to communicate to others the light of truth." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 632.

"The followers of Christ are to be the light of the world; but God does not bid them make an effort to shine. He does not approve of any self-satisfied endeavor to display superior goodness. He desires that their souls shall be imbued with the principles of heaven; then, as they come in contact with the world, they will reveal the light that is in them. Their steadfast fidelity in every act of life will be a means of illumination." –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 36.

FRIDAY

6. What will happen when God's servants preach the gospel everywhere? Besides to His disciples, to whom did the Lord entrust this wonderful commission?

and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

 **Mark 16:15, 16, 20** And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.... ²⁰And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.

 **Matthew 24:14** And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

"God requires His people to shine as lights in the world. It is not merely the ministers who are required to do this, but every disciple of Christ." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 122.

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

"As the rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the globe, so God designs that the light of the gospel shall extend to every soul upon the earth. If the church of Christ were fulfilling the purpose of our Lord, light would be shed upon all that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death." –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 42.

SABBATH

7. What resources are given to the preachers of the gospel? What blessings come to them as well as those to whom they minister?

 **Acts 1:8** *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.*

"As the divine endowment—the power of the Holy Spirit—was given to the disciples, so it will today be given to all who seek aright. This power alone is able to make us wise unto salvation and to fit us for the courts above. Christ wants to give us a blessing that will make us holy. 'These things have I spoken unto you,' He says, 'that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.' John 15:11. Joy in the Holy Spirit is health-giving, life-giving joy. In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself, making Himself a fountain of divine influences, to give health and life to the world.

"As God so liberally bestows His gifts on you, remember that it is in order that you may return them to the Giver, multiplied by being imparted. Bring into the lives of others light and joy and peace. Every day we need the discipline of self-humiliation, that we may be prepared to receive the heavenly gift, not to hoard it, not to rob God's children of His blessing,

but to give it in all its rich fullness to others. When more than now shall we need a heart open to receive, aching, as it were, with its longing to impart?" –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 273.



For additional study

"The Holy Spirit was to descend on those who love Christ. By this they would be qualified, in and through the glorification of their Head, to receive every endowment necessary for the fulfilling of their mission. The Life-giver held in His hand not only the keys of death but a whole heaven of rich blessings. All power in heaven and earth was given to Him, and having taken His place in the heavenly courts, He could dispense these blessings to all who receive Him. The church was baptized with the Spirit's power. The disciples were fitted to go forth and proclaim Christ, first in Jerusalem, where the shameful work of dishonoring the rightful King had been done, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth. The evidence of the enthronement of Christ in His mediatorial kingdom was given." –*My Life Today*, p. 47.

LESSON 17

Sabbath, October 23, 2021

The Early Church



"Thus it will ever be when the Spirit of God takes possession of the life. Those whose hearts are filled with the love of Christ, will follow the example of Him who for our sake became poor, that through His poverty we might be made rich. Money, time, influence—all the gifts they have received from God's hand, they will value only as a means of advancing the work of the gospel. Thus it was in the early church; and when in the church of today it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 71.

PRAYER, UNITY, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

SUNDAY

- 1. What is reported about what happened in the early church in the days after Jesus' ascension? How many people participated in those blessed meetings?**
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 **Acts 1:12-15** Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. ¹³And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. ¹⁴These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. ¹⁵And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty.)

"Giving the disciples further directions, Christ said: '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 Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.' But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49.

"In obedience to the word of their Master the disciples assembled in Jerusalem to wait for the fulfillment of God's promise. Here they spent ten days, days of deep heart searching. They put away all differences and drew close together in Christian fellowship." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 15.

MONDAY

2. What wonderful condition did they come to after days of prayer and supplication? What will happen among God's people today when we also pray and plead with God for His blessings?

 **Acts 2:1** *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

"Notice that it was after the disciples had come into perfect unity, when they were no longer striving for the highest place, that the Spirit was poured out. They were of one accord. All differences had been put away. And the testimony borne of them after the Spirit had been given is the same. Mark the word: 'The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.' The Spirit of Him who died that sinners might live, animated the entire congregation of believers." —*Evangelism*, pp. 698, 699.

TUESDAY

3. What promise was then fulfilled? What did the believers experience when the Holy Spirit was poured out in great power?

commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.... ^{2,2}*And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

 **Acts 1:4; 2:2-4** *And, being assembled together with them,*

"After Christ's ascension, the disciples were gathered together in one place to make humble supplication to God. And after ten days of heart searching and self-examination, the way was prepared for the Holy Spirit to enter the cleansed, consecrated soul temples. Every heart was filled with the Spirit, as though God desired to show His people that it was His prerogative to bless them with the choicest of heaven's blessings.... The sword of the Spirit flashed right and left. Newly edged with power, it pierced even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow."—(Review and Herald, June 10, 1902) *Evangelism*, p. 698.

GREAT FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE

WEDNESDAY

4. When the Holy Spirit took possession of the disciples, what resulted from their preaching to the multitudes who were present in Jerusalem for the Passover?

 **Acts 2:41** *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

"At the end of ten days the Lord fulfilled His promise by a wonderful out-pouring of His Spirit. 'Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.' And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Acts 2:2-4, 41. "'And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.'" Mark 16:20. Notwithstanding the fierce opposition that the disciples met, in a short time the gospel of the kingdom had been sounded to all the inhabited parts of the earth." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 15.

THURSDAY

5. What happened in the daily life of the believers in the following weeks? What do you think will happen when

 **Acts 2:42-47** *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴And all that*

**the same humility of heart,
unity under the Holy Spirit,
and devotion to God and His
kingdom are seen among His
people right before Jesus’
coming?**

believed were together, and had all things common; ⁴⁵And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. ⁴⁶And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, ⁴⁷Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

“Every Christian saw in his brother the divine similitude of benevolence and love. One interest prevailed. One object swallowed up all others. All hearts beat in harmony. The only ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ’s character, and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom. ‘The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.... With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all.’ Acts 4:32, 33. ‘And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.’ Acts 2:47. The Spirit of Christ animated the whole congregation; for they had found the pearl of great price.
“These scenes are to be repeated, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the former rain, but the latter rain will be more abundant.” –*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 120, 121.

FRIDAY

6. When harmony, fellowship, generosity, and the living testimony characterized the early church’s life, what great blessing did the Lord bestow?

 **Acts 4:4** *Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.*

“God wants His witnesses to present the genuine in contrast to that which is false. There were many converted under Peter’s preaching.... Can you be surprised that... the number of those who believed was about five thousand? The seed that Christ had been sowing while He was on earth, sprang up. Many were waiting for this God-given testimony to come from the disciples in reference to Christ and His resurrection, and they believed when they heard it; for it revived the testimony they had heard from the lips of Jesus, and they took their stand in the ranks of those who believed the gospel of Christ.” –*Review and Herald*, April 22, 1890.

7. Even though the church grew to be a large multitude, what spirit reigned among them? What happened to the message that they preached?

 **Acts 4:31-35** And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word

of God with boldness. ³²And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. ³³And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, ³⁵And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

"Of the apostolic church, in those bright days when the glory of the risen Christ shone upon them, it is written that no man said 'that ought of the things which he possessed was his own.' Neither was there any among them that lacked." And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.' Acts 4:32, 34, 33; 2:46, 47." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 137.



For additional study

"To the early church had been entrusted a constantly enlarging work—that of establishing centers of light and blessing wherever there were honest souls willing to give themselves to the service of Christ. The proclamation of the gospel was to be worldwide in its extent, and the messengers of the cross could not hope to fulfill their important mission unless they should remain united in the bonds of Christian unity, and thus reveal to the world that they were one with Christ in God. Had not their divine Leader prayed to the Father, 'Keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are'? And had He not declared of His disciples, 'The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world'? Had He not pleaded with the Father that they might be 'made perfect in one,' that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me'? John 17:11, 14, 23, 21. Their spiritual life and power was dependent on a close connection with the One by whom they had been commissioned to preach the gospel." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 90.

Please read the Missionary Report from
the General Conference Education Department on page 116.

LESSON 18

Sabbath, October 30, 2021

God's People as His Flock



"The relation of Christ to His people is compared to a shepherd. He saw, after the Fall, His sheep in a pitiable condition exposed to sure destruction. He left the honors and glory of His Father's house to become a shepherd, to save the ... wandering sheep who were ready to perish. His winning voice was heard calling them to His fold, a safe and sure retreat from the hand of robbers; also a shelter from the scorching heat, and a protection from the chilling blasts. His care was continually exercised for the good of His sheep. He strengthened the weak, nourished the suffering, and gathered the lambs of the flock in His arms, and carried them in His bosom. His sheep love Him. He goeth before His sheep, and they hear His voice and follow Him." —*Lift Him Up*, p. 196.

A PERFECT SYMBOL

SUNDAY

1. As what are God's people often pictured in Scripture?

 *Psalms 77:20; 78:52 Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.... 78:52 But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.*

"'He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.... And the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice.' The Eastern shepherd does not drive his sheep. He depends not upon force or fear; but going before, he calls them. They know his voice, and obey the call. So does the Saviour-Shepherd with His sheep. The Scripture says, 'Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.' Through the prophet, Jesus declares, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-

kindness have I drawn thee.' He compels none to follow Him. 'I drew them,' He says, 'with cords of a man, with bands of love.' Psalm 77:20; Jeremiah 31:3; Hosea 11:4." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 480.

MONDAY

2. In this connection, what did Jesus say what would happen to the church?

 **Matthew 10:16; 7:15** Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.... ^{7:15} Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

 **Luke 10:3** Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

"Behold,' Christ said, 'I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.' Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.' Matthew 10:16, 22. They hated Christ without a cause. Is it any marvel that they hate those who bear His sign, who do His service? They are counted as the offscouring of the earth." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, pp. 235, 236.

TUESDAY

3. What do people need every day for their physical sustenance? Likewise, what does one need for spiritual sustenance and growth?

 **1 Chronicles 4:39** And they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.

 **Joel 1:18** How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.

 **Matthew 4:4** But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

"Man is only finite. At best his sphere is limited. If he is a branch of the living Vine, he must, with other branches, draw nourishment from the parent stock. This makes him of value with God. If men do not draw daily sustenance from the living Vine, they cannot bear the fruit of the Vine, and are cast forth as worthless branches, to be consumed." –*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 17, p. 198. "Spiritual life consists in Christ's being the light and life of the soul temple,

as the blood is the life of the body. All who study the word are represented as eating the word, feeding on Christ.... Even as the bodily necessities must be supplied daily, so the word of God must be daily studied—eaten, and digested, and practiced. This sustains the nourishment, to keep the soul in health. The neglect of the word means starvation to the soul. The word describes the blessed man as one meditating day and night upon the truths of God's word. We all are to feast upon the word of God." —*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, pp. 43, 44.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SHEEP AND SHEPHERDS

WEDNESDAY

4. What characteristics do sheep and lambs have that make them appropriate illustrations of God's people and His church? How do these characteristics apply to Jesus?

 *Jeremiah 11:19* But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against

me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

 *Isaiah 40:11; 53:7* He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. ^{53:7} He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

"An innocent lamb was chosen as a representation of Christ." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, p. 191.

"The innocent lamb slain in Egypt, the blood of which sprinkled upon the door-posts caused the destroying angel to pass over the homes of Israel, prefigured the sinless Lamb of God, whose merits can alone avert the judgment and condemnation of fallen man. The Saviour had been obedient to the Jewish law, and observed all its divinely appointed ordinances. He had just identified Himself with the paschal lamb as its great antitype,..." —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 128.

THURSDAY

5. Furthermore, what will happen to the spiritual flock if those to whom God has entrusted them do not guide

 *Ezekiel 34:5, 6* And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. ⁶ My sheep wandered through all the mountains,

them properly? How does this apply even to those who may consider themselves intelligent?

and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

 **Psalm 119:176** I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

 **Isaiah 53:6, first part** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;...

"The church on earth is composed of erring men and women, who need patient, painstaking effort that they may be trained and disciplined to work with acceptance in this life, and in the future life to be crowned with glory and immortality." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 526.

"The sheep that has strayed from the fold is the most helpless of all creatures. It must be sought for by the shepherd, for it cannot find its way back. So with the soul that has wandered away from God; he is as helpless as the lost sheep, and unless divine love had come to his rescue he could never find his way to God." –*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 187.

THE CHIEF SHEPHERD

FRIDAY

6. Subject as human beings are to the great danger of going astray, what does the Lord do? What is His constant, loving appeal to the members of His flock?

 **Ezekiel 34:12, 31** As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day....³¹ And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.

 **Hebrews 13:20, 21** Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,²¹ Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in

his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.

[L] Jeremiah 7:23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

"As the shepherd loves his sheep, and cannot rest if even one be missing, so, in an infinitely higher degree, does God love every outcast soul. Men may deny the claim of His love, they may wander from Him, they may choose another master; yet they are God's, and He longs to recover His own. He says, 'As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.' Ezekiel 34:12." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 187.

SABBATH

7. Although the Lord is the great Shepherd, whom has He appointed to watch over and protect His people?

few; ³⁸Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

[L] Numbers 27:16, 17 Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, ¹⁷Which may go out before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd.

[L] Matthew 9:36-38 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.³⁷Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are

[L] 1 Peter 5:1, 2 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: ²Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

"Christ is the chief shepherd. He has entrusted the care of His flock to under shepherds. He requires these shepherds to have the same

interest for His sheep which He has ever manifested, and to ever feel the responsibility of the charge He has entrusted to them. Ministers, who are called of God to labor in word and doctrine, are Christ's shepherds. He has appointed them under Himself to oversee and tend His flock. He has solemnly commanded these to be faithful shepherds, to feed the flock with diligence, to follow His example, to strengthen the weak, nourish the fainting, and shield them from devouring beasts. He points them to His example of love for His sheep. To secure their deliverance, He laid down His life for them. If they imitate His self-denying example, the flock will prosper under their care." —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 114, 115.

"A vital connection with the Chief Shepherd will make the undershepherd a living representative of Christ, a light indeed to the world. An understanding of all points of our faith is essential, but it is of still greater importance that the minister be sanctified through the truth he presents." —*Lift Him Up*, p. 200.



For additional study

"We are not to follow Christ fitfully or capriciously, only when it is for our advantage. We must choose to follow Him. In daily life we must follow His example, as a flock trustfully follows its shepherd. We are to follow Him by suffering for His sake, saying at every step, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' Job 13:15. His life practice must be our life practice. And as we thus seek to be like Him and to bring our wills into conformity to His will we shall reveal Him." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 298.



MISSIONARY REPORT FROM THE GENERAL CONFERENCE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

To be read on Sabbath, October 30, 2021

The Special Sabbath School Offering
se recogerá el sábado, 6 de noviembre de 2021

"From the earliest times the faithful in Israel had given much care to the education of the youth. The Lord had directed that even from babyhood the children should be taught of His goodness and His greatness.... In the days of Christ the town or city that did not provide for the religious instruction of the young was regarded as under the curse of God." –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 68, 69.

Almost forty years after the Seventh-day Adventist Church was organized, God gave Sister Ellen G. White a clear, direct message regarding His plans for the education of Adventist children. "In planning for the education of their children outside the home, parents should realize that it is no longer safe to send them to the public school, and should endeavor to send them to schools where they will obtain an education based on a Scriptural foundation....

"In localities where there is a church, schools should be established,...

"Work as if you were working for your life to save the children from being drowned in the polluting, corrupting influences of the world." –*Child Guidance*, pp. 304, 308.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church invested in schools early on. However, only twelve years after the above message was published, World War I erupted; and faithful Reformers found themselves without a church. By 1925, the General Conference of the International Missionary Society was organized. By the 1950s, the first primary schools of the IMS were established. In 1989, a General Conference Education Department was proposed, and in 1997 this department became part of the General Conference under the leadership of Sister Raquel Orce.

The Education Department continues to carry the torch of commitment begun in ancient Israel to instill the teachings of God into the minds and hearts of our children. Today, this department has three primary goals: to protect the innocence of the children and youth, to preserve their minds and moral values from erroneous teachings and practices, and to prepare an army of young people to share the gospel message with a dying world.

By the grace of God, and with an ever-growing team of dedicated professionals, these goals are being accomplished through the following methods: Sabbath School Lessons for children; children's Week of Prayer Readings that summarize the adult Readings and include word puzzles and activities; bi-monthly newsletters for leaders, parents, educators, ministers, and youth leaders, providing helpful information regarding the physical, educational, and spiritual needs of the children; educational videos for Sabbath school classes and schools; Bible activities that challenge children and youth to learn more about the Bible (Hebron Challenge); symposiums for educators and school leaders; scholarships for students from underprivileged families; a volunteer program that allows

young people to help at IMS schools around the world; books; support for Sabbath school teachers, education leaders, home schools, IMS schools, and more. Most materials are offered on the Education Department's website free of charge so that children, churches, and schools everywhere can benefit without worrying about expenses.

As of this writing, the IMS has approximately 475 schools located in eighteen countries across Africa (458), South America (8), Central America (4), North America (4), and Asia (1). School enrollments range from less than ten students to more than three hundred. The great majority of students who attend these schools are not from IMS families. It is through the missionary work done in these schools that the children and their families learn about Jesus and the special message for this time. Because the children are very young when they hear the truth, results are not seen immediately. However, the seeds planted in young hearts today will bear abundant fruit in years ahead. About this Sister White wrote: "Teachers ... should realize that they have the most important missionary field in the world." —*Christian Education*, p. 31. "When I was shown by the angel of God that an institution should be established for the education of our youth, I saw that it would be one of the greatest means ordained of God for the salvation of souls." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 419.

Many of our schools work independently of one another, and not all are able to provide the same level of academic and spiritual excellence. To unite the schools, to help them reach the same high standard, and to better understand their needs, it is essential for members of the Department of Education team to travel, to visit the educational facilities, to tour campuses, and to review financial records and teaching methods, as well as to meet with teachers, students, and school directors to hear about their needs. Many schools struggle to pay fair salaries to their teaching staff, grapple with costly building repairs or safety concerns, are unable to afford a Christian curriculum, and continually agonize over having to turn away students who cannot afford to pay for their tuition. The recent Coronavirus Pandemic has only added to these financial burdens.

The Education Department works hard on a very small budget. Team members frequently donate from their own pockets to fund needed projects. The book *Here Am I* was written to help raise funds for such a purpose. The Department's Facebook and Instagram pages describe the educational needs and also post follow-up information and pictures so that donors can see how and where their donations have been used. Through faith, much has been accomplished; but there is still much more to do. New schools need to be built; our own curriculum must be written; and new projects must be started.

The Special Sabbath School offering to be gathered next Sabbath is an opportunity for you to join in the blessed work of educating individuals for eternity by investing in the lives and futures of our children. May God bless your gift, so that through you a child will have the opportunity to accept Jesus!

—Margie Holmstroem Seely
General Conference Education Department Leader

LESSON 19

Sabbath, November 6, 2021

Promises for the Little Flock



"'As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' These are the chosen of God; they are those to whom Christ addresses the words: 'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.'" —*Signs of the Times*, June 11, 1894.

SUNDAY

1. What illustration did Jesus use to represent the church and its members? To whom do the sheep and lambs belong? What attitude will faithful shepherds demonstrate?

Matthew 26:31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

John 21:15-17 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. ¹⁶He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. ¹⁷He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

"Jesus says, 'My sheep hear My voice,... and they follow Me.' John 10:27. The Shepherd of Israel does not drive His flock, but He leads them. His attitude is wholly one of invitation. 'My sheep hear My voice.' If we are indeed sons and daughters of God, we not only hear, but recognize the voice above all others. We appreciate the words of Christ, we distinguish the truth as it is in Jesus from all error, and the truth refreshes the soul and fills it with gladness...." —*That I May Know Him*, p. 52.

MONDAY

2. What specific knowledge of and love for His flock does the great Shepherd have?

 **John 10:14, 11** *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.... ¹¹I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*

"As an earthly shepherd knows his sheep, so does the divine Shepherd know His flock that are scattered throughout the world. 'Ye My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.'" —*Gospel Workers*, p. 181.

"He had represented Himself as the light, the source of life and gladness to nature and to man. Now in a beautiful pastoral picture He represents His relation to those that believe on Him. No picture was more familiar to His hearers than this, and Christ's words linked it forever with Himself. Never could the disciples look on the shepherds tending their flocks without recalling the Saviour's lesson. They would see Christ in each faithful shepherd. They would see themselves in each helpless and dependent flock." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 476.

TRUST AND TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

TUESDAY

3. On the other hand, what does the true flock know, and how much do the faithful sheep trust Him?

 **John 10:3,4, 27** *To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. ⁴And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.... ²⁷My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*

"Every soul is as fully known to Jesus as if he were the only one for whom the Saviour died. The distress of every one touches His heart. The cry

for aid reaches His ear. He came to draw all men unto Himself. He bids them, 'Follow Me,' and His Spirit moves upon their hearts to draw them to come to Him. Many refuse to be drawn. Jesus knows who they are. He also knows who gladly hear His call, and are ready to come under His pastoral care. He says, 'My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.' He cares for each one as if there were not another on the face of the earth." –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 479, 480.

"He will save them from every evil, shield them from all dangers, if they will heed His voice. He says, 'My sheep hear My voice,... and they follow Me.' In Christ they will find pasture, obtain strength and hope, and will not be troubled with restless longings for something to divert the mind and satisfy the heart. They have found the pearl of great price, and the mind is at peaceful rest. Their pleasures are of a pure, peaceful, elevated, heavenly character. They leave no painful reflections, no remorse. Such pleasures do not impair health or prostrate the mind, but are of a healthful nature." –*Child Guidance*, p. 467.

WEDNESDAY

4. Is genuine discipleship something temporary for good times? What do the Scriptures say about those who will be redeemed in glory?

shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

 **1 Peter 2:21** *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.*

 **Revelation 14:4** *These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

 **Matthew 24:12, 13** *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. ¹³But he that*

"Were the thousand channels of selfishness cut off that now exist, and the means directed in the right channel, there would be a large revenue flowing into the treasury. Many purchase idols with money that should go to the house of God. No one can practice real benevolence without practicing genuine self-denial. Self-denial and the cross lie directly in the path of every Christian who is truly following Christ. Jesus says: 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.' Will every soul consider the fact that Christian discipleship includes self-denial, self-sacrifice, even to the laying down

of life itself, if need be, for the sake of Him who has given His life for the life of the world?" –*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 288, 289.

"As you give heed to the light you have, greater light will come." –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 150.

THE LITTLE FLOCK AND THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

THURSDAY

5. How consistent are the faithful in the Lord's flock? What wonderful promises has He given to them?

 **Matthew 7:13, 14** Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

 **Luke 12:32; 22:29** Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. ^{22:29} And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me.

"In comparison with the millions of the world, God's people will be, as they have ever been, a little flock; but if they stand for the truth as revealed in His word, God will be their refuge. They stand under the broad shield of Omnipotence. God is always a majority. When the sound of the last trump shall penetrate the prison house of the dead, and the righteous shall come forth with triumph, exclaiming, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' (1 Corinthians 15:55)—standing then with God, with Christ, with the angels, and with the loyal and true of all ages, the children of God will be far in the majority." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 590.

FRIDAY

6. Who else are numbered with the Lord's flock, and what will He do for them?

 **John 10:16** And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.

 **Matthew 8:10, 11** When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. ¹¹ And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

"Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people; and in the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest day, these faithful ones, 'blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke,' will 'shine as lights in the world.' The darker the night, the more brilliantly will they shine." –*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 188, 189.

SABBATH

7. What is the Lord's desire and purpose for His flock that He has purchased with His own blood? What will happen when persecution breaks upon God's people?

John 10:16, last part ...And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Ephesians 2:14; 4:3-6 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us....
^{4,3}Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
⁴There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; ⁵One Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

"... When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together, and present to the enemy a united front.... The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 401 (1900).

LESSON 20

Sabbath, November 13, 2021

As an Olive Tree



"Thus Paul shows that God is abundantly able to transform the hearts of Jew and Gentile alike, and to grant to every believer in Christ the blessings promised to Israel. He repeats Isaiah's declaration concerning God's people: 'Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: for He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma and been made like unto Gomorrah.'" –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 379.

A GREEN OLIVE TREE AND GOOD FRUIT

SUNDAY

1. What plant is used in prophecy to represent the people of Israel? What happened to the noble plant after it reached full development?

📖 Jeremiah 11:16, 17; 21:14 *The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken. ¹⁷For the Lord of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal....^{21:14}But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the Lord: and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all things round about it.*

"Where her branches should have yielded fruit without stint, they were broken off because of her stubborn disobedience. The wrong course of the people of Jerusalem brought its sure result upon them and upon those whom they influenced. They departed from the example of the holy men

who caught their inspiration from Jesus Christ, their invisible Leader. They could not possibly form characters that God could approve." –(Letter 34, 1899) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1155.

MONDAY

2. What were some of the gifts and benefits that Israel received? However, what had the nation become at the beginning of the gospel era?

 *Romans 9:4,5; 11:28, first part; 9:2, 3 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; ⁵Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen...^{11:28}As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes....^{9:2}That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. ³For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*

"The Jews were God's chosen people, through whom He had purposed to bless the entire race. From among them God had raised up many prophets. These had foretold the advent of a Redeemer who was to be rejected and slain by those who should have been the first to recognize Him as the Promised One." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 374.

"As a nation the Jews refused to receive Christ. He had led them in their travels, as their invisible, infinite Leader. He had communicated His will to them, but in the test they rejected Him, their only hope, their only salvation, and God rejected them. 'But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.' John 1:12. To all who receive and obey the conditions, God's gifts flow steadily, without repentance, without recall. God has imparted His gifts to man to be used, not according to hereditary or fanciful ideas, not according to natural impulses or inclination, but according to His will...." –*This Day with God*, p. 31.

BROKEN BRANCHES

TUESDAY

3. Why were some of the original branches of the olive tree broken off? When did this problem begin?

 *Romans 11:20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear.*

 *Acts 19:9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the*

multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

📖 **Hebrews 3:19; 4:6** So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief...^{4,6} Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief.

"Through unbelief and the rejection of Heaven's purpose for her, Israel as a nation had lost her connection with God." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 377.

"Shall the warnings from God be passed by unheeded? Shall the opportunities for service be unimproved? Shall the world's scorn, the pride of reason, conformity to human customs and traditions, hold the professed followers of Christ from service to Him? Will they reject God's word as the Jewish leaders rejected Christ? The result of Israel's sin is before us. Will the church of today take warning?" –*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 306.

WEDNESDAY

4. What did the fact that a large number of Israelites were unbelieving and were therefore cut off from the tree (the nation) mean for Israel as a whole?

📖 **Romans 11:1, 2, 5** I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. ²Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying....⁵ Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

"Even though Israel rejected His Son, God did not reject them. Listen to Paul as he continues the argument: 'I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.'" –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 375.

WHAT DETERMINES THE OUTCOME

THURSDAY

5. If people continue in unbelief, what hope is there that they may be grafted back into the noble olive tree?

 *Romans 11:23, 24* And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

"Israel had stumbled and fallen, but this did not make it impossible for them to rise again. In answer to the question, 'Have they stumbled that they should fall?' the apostle replies: 'God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.'...

"Notwithstanding Israel's failure as a nation, there remained among them a goodly remnant of such as should be saved. At the time of the Saviour's advent there were faithful men and women who had received with gladness the message of John the Baptist, and had thus been led to study anew the prophecies concerning the Messiah. When the early Christian church was founded, it was composed of these faithful Jews who recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the one for whose advent they had been longing. It is to this remnant that Paul refers when he writes, 'If the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.'" —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 375-377.

FRIDAY

6. While some branches were broken off for their unbelief, what happened to others that originally were part of a wild olive tree?

 *Romans 11:17* And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

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

"In his epistle to the Romans, Paul set forth the great principles of the gospel. He stated his position on the questions which were agitating the Jewish and the Gentile churches, and showed that the hopes and promises which had once belonged especially to the Jews were now offered to the Gentiles also." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 377, 373.

A SOLEMN APPEAL TO CHRISTIANS

SABBATH

7. What solemn appeal did the apostle therefore make to both classes of people?

 **Romans 11:18, 19, 21, 22** Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not

the root, but the root thee.¹⁹Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in....²¹For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. ²²Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

"In this we are plainly taught that we should not despise the Jews; for among them the Lord has mighty men, who will proclaim the truth with power. 'For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God;...' –Manuscript Releases, vol. 6, pp. 325, 326.

"Through unbelief and the rejection of Heaven's purpose for her, Israel as a nation had lost her connection with God. But the branches that had been separated from the parent stock God was able to reunite with the true stock of Israel—the remnant who had remained true to the God of their fathers. 'They also,' the apostle declares of these broken branches, 'if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.' 'If thou,' he writes to the Gentiles, 'wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.' –The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 377, 378.



For additional study

"If ever a people needed light, it is those who are living in the very closing days of this earth's history. We want to know what saith the Scripture. We want to come to the living oracles of God. We want that living faith which grasps the arm of infinite power, and we want to rely with all our being upon Jesus Christ, our righteousness. And we may do it. Yes, we do it profitably to our own soul's interest." –Faith and Works, p. 66.

"Notwithstanding the awful doom pronounced upon the Jews as a nation at the time of their rejection of Jesus of Nazareth, there have lived from age to age many noble, God-fearing Jewish men and women who have suffered in silence.... Some have learned to see in the lowly Nazarene whom their forefathers rejected and crucified, the true Messiah of Israel....

"It is to this class that Isaiah referred in his prophecy, 'A remnant shall be saved.' From Paul's day to the present time, God by His Holy Spirit has been calling after the Jew as well as the Gentile. 'There is no respect of persons with God,' declared Paul. The apostle regarded himself as 'debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians,' as well as to the Jews; but he never lost sight of the decided advantages possessed by the Jews over others, 'chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.' 'The gospel,' he declared, 'is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.'" –The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 379, 380.

LESSON 21

Sabbath, November 20, 2021

The Church as a Temple



"Upon the foundation that Christ Himself had laid, the apostles built the church of God. In the Scriptures the figure of the erection of a temple is frequently used to illustrate the building of the church. Zechariah refers to Christ as the Branch that should build the temple of the Lord. He speaks of the Gentiles as helping in the work: 'They that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord;' and Isaiah declares, 'The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls.' Zechariah 6:12, 15; Isaiah 60:10." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 595.

BUILDER OF THE TEMPLE

SUNDAY

1. According to the prophecy of Zechariah, who would come one day? What would be the special mission of the Lord's Servant, the BRANCH?

 **Zechariah 3:8; 6:12** *Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH....^{6:12} And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord.*

"The work of Christ as man's intercessor is presented in that beautiful prophecy of Zechariah concerning Him 'whose name is the Branch.' Says the prophet: 'He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His [the Father's] throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between Them both.' Zechariah 6:12, 13.

"'He shall build the temple of the Lord.' By His sacrifice and mediation Christ is both the foundation and the builder of the church of God. The apostle Paul points to Him as 'the chief Cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord:

in whom ye also,' he says, 'are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.' Ephesians 2:20-22." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 415, 416.

MONDAY

2. As prophesied, what did the Lord reveal to one of His disciples? What does it mean that the gates of hell would not prevail against it?

 **Matthew 16:18** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

"The word 'Peter' signifies a loose stone. Christ did not refer to Peter as being the rock upon which He would found His church. His expression, 'this rock,' applied to Himself as the foundation of the Christian church." – (Signs of the Times, October 28, 1913) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1095.

"'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' 1 Corinthians 3:11. 'Upon this rock,' said Jesus, 'I will build My church.' In the presence of God, and all the heavenly intelligences, in the presence of the unseen army of hell, Christ founded His church upon the living Rock. That Rock is Himself—His own body, for us broken and bruised. Against the church built upon this foundation, the gates of hell shall not prevail." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 413.

A SOLID FOUNDATION AND STRUCTURE

TUESDAY

3. In addition to being the actual Builder, what would Jesus be in this holy spiritual temple? What would happen to those who believe on Him?

 **Isaiah 28:16** Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

 **1 Peter 2:6** Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

"Jesus continued: 'I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' The word Peter signifies a stone—a rolling stone. Peter was not the rock upon which the church was founded. The gates of hell did prevail against

him when he denied his Lord with cursing and swearing. The church was built upon One against whom the gates of hell could not prevail.

"Centuries before the Saviour's advent Moses had pointed to the Rock of Israel's salvation. The psalmist had sung of 'the Rock of my strength.' Isaiah had written, 'Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation.' Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 62:7; Isaiah 28:16. Peter himself, writing by inspiration, applies this prophecy to Jesus. He says, 'If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious: 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.' 1 Peter 2:3-5, R.V." –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 412, 413.

WEDNESDAY

4. In addition to the foundation, who is a major part of this building? Being a solid structure, how does the holy temple grow?

 *Ephesians 2:20, 21* And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; ²¹In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.

"Christ is the uniting link in the golden chain which binds believers together in God. There must be no separating in this great testing time. The people of God are 'fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.' Ephesians 2:19-21. The children of God constitute one united whole in Christ, who presents His cross as the center of attraction. All who believe are one in Him." –*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 21.

LIVING STONES IN A SPIRITUAL TEMPLE

THURSDAY

5. Who is privileged to be part of the spiritual house that the Lord is still building? What is the meaning of "lively stones"?

 *1 Peter 2:4, 5* To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ⁵Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

"How amazed is heaven at the present condition of the church that could be so much to the world if every stone were in its proper place, a living stone to emit light! A stone that does not shine is worthless. That which constitutes the value of our churches is not dead, lusterless stones, but living stones, stones that catch the bright beams from the Chief Cornerstone, even the Sun of Righteousness—the bright glory in which are combined the beams of mercy and truth that have met together, of righteousness and peace that have kissed each other." —(Letter 15, 1892) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1116.

FRIDAY

6. If we are part of that holy building with Jesus and the prophets, who will live in this sanctuary and in us? How many can say that this has been their experience until now?

 **Ephesians 2:22** *In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

"The Jewish temple was built of hewn stones quarried out of the mountains, and every stone was fitted for its place in the temple, hewed, polished and tested, before it was brought to Jerusalem. And when all were brought to the ground, the building went together without the sound of an ax or hammer. This building represents God's spiritual temple, which is composed of material gathered out of every nation and tongue and people, of all grades, high and low, rich and poor, learned and ignorant. These are not dead substances, to be fitted by hammer and chisel. They are living stones quarried out from the world by the truth, and the great Master Builder, the Lord of the temple, is now hewing and polishing them and fitting them for their respective places in the spiritual temple. When completed, this temple will be perfect in all its parts, the admiration of angels and of men, for its builder and maker is God. Truly, those who are to compose this glorious building are 'called to be saints.'" —*That I May Know Him*, p. 151.

THE CHURCH AS A PILLAR

SABBATH

7. When all of the church members have Jesus as the basis of their lives and are

 **1 Timothy 3:15** *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

**joined together with the
prophets and apostles, how
solid will the building be?
When this is the case, what is
the church?**

"Adventists, seeing that the churches rejected the testimony of God's Word, could no longer regard them as constituting the church of Christ, 'the pillar and ground of the truth;' and as the message, 'Babylon is fallen,' began to be proclaimed, they felt themselves justified in separating from their former connection." —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 366.

"The oil so much needed by those who are represented as foolish virgins, is not something to be put on the outside. They need to bring the truth into the sanctuary of the soul, that it may cleanse, refine, and sanctify. It is not theory that they need; it is the sacred teachings of the Bible, which are not uncertain, disconnected doctrines, but are living truths, that involve eternal interests that center in Christ. In Him is the complete system of divine truth. The salvation of the soul, through faith in Christ, is the ground and pillar of the truth." —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 16.



For additional study

"The apostles built upon a sure foundation, even the Rock of Ages. To this foundation they brought the stones that they quarried from the world. Not without hindrance did the builders labor. Their work was made exceedingly difficult by the opposition of the enemies of Christ. They had to contend against the bigotry, prejudice, and hatred of those who were building upon a false foundation. Many who wrought as builders of the church could be likened to the builders of the wall in Nehemiah's day, of whom it is written: 'They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.' Nehemiah 4:17." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 596, 597. "God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to the high destiny open to every soul. But the Jews had not understood the significance of the building they regarded with so much pride.... The courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts. In cleansing the temple from the world's buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin—from the earthly desires,... the selfish lusts, the evil habits that corrupt the soul.... Only Christ can cleanse the soul temple.... His presence will cleanse and sanctify the soul, so that it may be a holy temple unto the Lord, and 'an habitation of God through the Spirit.' Ephesians 2:22." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 191.

LESSON 22

Sabbath, November 27, 2021

The Church as the Bride



"God is the husband of His church. The church is the bride, the Lamb's wife. Every true believer is a part of the body of Christ. Christ regards unfaithfulness shown to Him by His people as the unfaithfulness of a wife to her husband. We are to remember that we are members of Christ's body." –(Letter 39, 1902) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 985, 986.

SUNDAY

1. What do we read about Jerusalem as a symbol for the church? Who identifies Himself as her Husband?

 **Isaiah 62:4** *Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.*

"A Jewish marriage was an impressive occasion, and its joy was not displeasing to the Son of man. By attending this feast, Jesus honored marriage as a divine institution." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 150.

"It is then that the peaceful and long-desired kingdom of the Messiah shall be established under the whole heaven. 'The Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord.' 'The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.' 'Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called My Delight, and thy land Beulah.' 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.' Isaiah 51:3; 35:2; 62:4, 5, margin." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 302.

MONDAY

2. Who will rejoice over her, just as the bridegroom rejoices over his bride?

📖 *Isaiah 62:5* For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

📖 *Zephaniah 3:14-17* Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. ¹⁵The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. ¹⁶In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. ¹⁷The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

“‘As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.’ *Isaiah 62:5*. ‘He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with singing.’ *Zephaniah 3:17*. And heaven and earth shall unite in the Father’s song of rejoicing: ‘For this My son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 207.

THE LORD’S WIFE

TUESDAY

3. How do other prophecies apply the symbol of marriage between God and His people?

📖 *Isaiah 54:6, 7* For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken

and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. ⁷For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. *recogeré con grandes misericordias.*

📖 *Jeremiah 3:14* Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

“Like every other one of God’s good gifts entrusted to the keeping of humanity, marriage has been perverted by sin; but it is the purpose of the gospel to restore its purity and beauty. In both the Old and the New Testament the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people, the redeemed ones whom He has purchased at the cost of Calvary. ‘Fear not,’ He says; ‘thy Maker is thine Husband; the Lord of hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.’ ‘Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you.’ *Isaiah 54:4, 5*; *Jeremiah 3:14*. In the ‘Song of Songs’ we hear the bride’s voice saying, ‘My Beloved is mine, and I am His.’ And He who is to her ‘the chiefest among ten thousand,’ speaks to His chosen one, ‘Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee.’ *Song of Solomon 2:16; 5:10; 4:7.*” —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 64.

WEDNESDAY

4. How does the apostle Paul use similar symbols and terminologies to describe the intimate relationship that exists between Christ and His church?

 **Ephesians 5:23-26** For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ²⁴Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ²⁶That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

"In later times Paul the apostle, writing to the Ephesian Christians, declares that the Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife, to be her protector, the house-band, binding the members of the family together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. Therefore he says, 'As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives.' Ephesians 5:24-28." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 64, 65.

HIS DESIRE FOR HIS BRIDE

THURSDAY

5. How much has Jesus loved His church? What was His purpose in giving Himself for her?

 **Ephesians 5:27-32** That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy

and without blemish. ²⁸So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. ²⁹For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: ³⁰For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. ³¹For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. ³²This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

"But the church is very precious in His sight. It is the case which contains His jewels, the fold which encloses His flock, and He longs to see it without spot or blemish or any such thing. He yearns after it with unspeakable love. This is why He has given us opportunities to work for Him, and He accepts our labors as tokens of our love and loyalty." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 261.

"The Lord has wrought with you, enabling you to act your part as His workman; but there are other workmen also who are to act their part as His instrumentalities. These help to compose the whole body. All are to be united as parts of one great organism. The Lord's church is composed of living, working agencies, who derive their power to act from the Author and Finisher of their faith. They are to carry forward in harmony the great work resting on them. God has given you your work. But He has other instrumentalities, and to them He has given their work, that all may become, through sanctification of the truth, members of Christ's body, of His flesh and of His bones. Representing Christ, we act for time and for eternity; and men, even worldly men, take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and have learned of Him." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 174.

FRIDAY

6. Who will have prepared for the Lamb's marriage?

 *Revelation 19:7* Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

"The church is the bride, the Lamb's wife. She should keep herself pure, sanctified, holy. Never should she indulge in any foolishness; for she is the bride of a King. Yet she does not realize her exalted position. If she understood this, she would be all-glorious within. (Letter 177, 1901.)

"The church is the bride of Christ, and her members are to yoke up with their Leader. God warns us not to defile our garments." –(Letter 123 1/2, 1898)*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 986.

THE MARRIAGE FEAST OF THE LAMB

SABBATH

7. What is represented by the clean, white linen in which the bride is attired? According to the Scripture, how are those who are invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb considered?

 *Revelation 19:8, 9* And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. ⁹And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

"By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess. To the church it is given 'that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,' 'not having spot,

or wrinkle, or any such thing.’ Revelation 19:8; Ephesians 5:27. The fine linen, says the Scripture, ‘is the righteousness of saints.’ Revelation 19:8. It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour.

“The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. All the strength of their affections was given to their heavenly Father. A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair. This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence. Had they remained true to God it would ever have continued to enshroud them.” –*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 310, 311.



For additional study

*“In both the Old and the New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall bring home His bride to the Father’s house, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb. He says, ‘As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.’ ‘Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken;... but thou shalt be called My Delight;... for the Lord delighteth in thee.’ ‘He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing.’ Isaiah 62:5, 4, margin; Zephaniah 3:17. When the vision of heavenly things was granted to John the apostle, he wrote: ‘I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.’ ‘Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ Revelation 19:6, 7, 9.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 151.*

LESSON 23

Sabbath, December 4, 2021

The Church as Jesus' Body



"God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church—Christ's body—is left in darkness. In His providence He places His servants in close connection with His church in order that they may have less confidence in themselves and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 163.

SUNDAY

1. With what do the Scriptures often compare or represent the church?

 **Colossians 1:18** *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

 **Ephesians 5:23** *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*

 **Colossians 3:15** *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*

"Since His ascension, Christ the great Head of the church, has carried forward His work in the world by chosen ambassadors, through whom He speaks to the children of men, and ministers to their needs. The position of those who have been called of God to labor in word and doctrine for the upbuilding of His church, is one of grave responsibility. In Christ's stead they are to beseech men and women to be reconciled to God; and

they can fulfil their mission only as they receive wisdom and power from above.” –*Gospel Workers*, p. 13.

“There have ever been in the church those who are constantly inclined toward individual independence. They seem unable to realize that independence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren, especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people. God has invested His church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising, for he who does this despises the voice of God.” –*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 163, 164.

MEMBERS OF ONE SPIRITUAL BODY

MONDAY

2. Just as different organs are part of a physical body, what do the various members of the congregation form? How do we know that different organs do not form different bodies? What does this mean?

 **Romans 12:4** For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office.

 **1 Corinthians 12:12,13** For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. ¹³For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

 **Ephesians 4:4** There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

“Dear Brethren: As all the different members of the human system unite to form the entire body, and each performs its office in obedience to the intelligence that governs the whole, so the members of the church of Christ should be united in one symmetrical body, subject to the sanctified intelligence of the whole.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 16.

“The Lord has not qualified any one of us to bear the burden of the work alone. He has associated together men of different minds, that they may counsel with and assist one another. In this way the deficiency in the experience and the abilities of one is supplied by the experience and the abilities of another. We should all study carefully the instruction given in Corinthians and Ephesians regarding our relation to one another as members of the body of Christ.” –*This Day with God*, p. 154.

TUESDAY

3. What would result if each organ existed and acted independently of the body? In the same manner, why is it inconceivable for the church members to act independently of the church body?

1 Corinthians 12:14-16 *For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁶And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?*

"We are all members of one body and are complete only in Christ Jesus, who will uplift His people from the low level to which sin has degraded them and will place them where they shall be acknowledged in the heavenly courts as laborers together with God." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 202.

DIFFERENT PARTS AND DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS

MIÉRCOLES

4. Do all organs have the same function and position in the body? What would happen if all of the members performed exactly the same service in the church? How readily do we accept and correctly value the gifts and service of others?

1 Corinthians 12:17-20 *If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? ¹⁸But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. ¹⁹And if they were all one member, where were the body? ²⁰But now are they many members, yet but one body.*

"Because men are not of the same stamp of character, this is no reason why they should draw apart. If we are children of the heavenly King, we shall not be at such variance that we shall stand in one another's way. "It is by the Lord's orders that His servants have varied gifts. It is by His appointment that men of varied minds are brought into the church, to be laborers together with Him. We have many different minds to meet, and different gifts are needed. God's servants are to work in perfect harmony.

I thank the Lord that we are not all exactly the same, while we are all to have the same spirit—the spirit that dwelt in Christ. The apostle John was not the same as the apostle Peter. Each was to subdue his peculiarities and soften his temperament, that they might help each other, through belief in and sanctification of the truth.” —*This Day with God*, p. 262.

THURSDAY

5. Explain how every church member is necessary and helpful to the others, just as every organ needs the others. How dangerous is it if a person does not appreciate or even despises certain people with their gifts?

 **1 Corinthians 12:21-24** *And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. ²²Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: ²³And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. ²⁴For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.*

“Those who are inclined to regard their individual judgment as supreme are in grave peril. It is Satan’s studied effort to separate such ones from those who are channels of light, through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to bear the responsibilities of leadership in connection with the advancement of the truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of His people. For any worker in the Lord’s cause to pass these by, and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God, is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy and overthrown.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 164.

NO SCHISM IN THE BODY

FRIDAY

6. How important is it for everyone to believe wholeheartedly and accept the fact that members in the church are like the body’s organs? Why are the spirit of independence or schisms between brethren very dangerous?

 **1 Corinthians 12:25; 1:10** *That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another....^{1:10}Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

📖 **2 Corinthians 13:11** Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

"The church as a body is to do all in its power to promote union and prevent schisms. If unsound doctrine is introduced, the safety of the flock of Christ will be endangered; and it is the duty of those in authority, who are jealous for the truth as it is in Jesus, to make a firm, decided protest."
—*Review and Herald*, January 16, 1900.

"If one member of Christ's household falls into temptation, the other members are to look after him with kindly interest, seeking to arrest the feet that are straying into false paths, and win him to a pure, holy life. This service God requires from every member of His church." (See 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.)—*This Day with God*, p. 147.

SABBATH

7. When one accepts others as necessary parts of the same body, what will happen if one member suffers? At the same time, when one person rejoices, who will also join with him in rejoicing?

📖 **1 Corinthians 12:26** And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

📖 **Romans 12:15** Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

📖 **1 Peter 3:8** Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.

"We are not to allow our perplexities and disappointments to eat into our souls and make us fretful and impatient. Let there be no strife, no evil thinking or evil speaking, lest we offend God. My brother, if you open your heart to envy and evil surmising, the Holy Spirit cannot abide with you. Seek for the fullness that is in Christ. Labor in His lines. Let every thought and word and deed reveal Him. You need a daily baptism of the love that in the days of the apostles made them all of one accord. This love will bring health to body, mind, and soul. Surround your soul with an atmosphere that will strengthen spiritual life. Cultivate faith, hope, courage, and love. Let the peace of God rule in your heart. Then you will be enabled to discharge your responsibilities. The Holy Spirit will impart

a divine efficiency, a calm, subdued dignity, to all your efforts to relieve suffering. You will testify that you have been with Jesus.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 191.



For additional study

“The Lord in His wisdom has arranged that by means of the close relationship that should be maintained by all believers, Christian shall be united to Christian and church to church. Thus the human instrumentality will be enabled to cooperate with the divine. Every agency will be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all the believers will be united in an organized and well-directed effort to give to the world the glad tidings of the grace of God.” –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 164.

“There is a work for us to do. We must begin here to cultivate the meekness of Christ. There are stern battles for us to fight against our traits of character that lead us to decisions that make it hard and unfavorable for others. We are not commended by God for a zeal that savors of pharisaism; for this is not of Christ. We are not to go to an extreme in false charity, neither are we to follow a course of unbending severity in cases where kindness and mercy and love would have a telling power. The ax must be laid at the root of the tree. True conversion is needed. Heart work is essential. The nature must be renewed after the divine image, until the work of grace is completed in the soul.” –*Review and Herald*, January 16, 1900.

LESSON 24

Sabbath, December 11, 2021

The Body of Christ



"Very close and sacred is the relation between Christ and His church—He the bridegroom, and the church the bride; He the head, and the church the body. Connection with Christ, then, involves connection with His church.

"The church is organized for service; and in a life of service to Christ, connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful performance of church duties. This is an important part of one's training; and in a church imbued with the Master's life, it will lead directly to effort for the world without." —*Education*, pp. 268, 269.

SUNDAY

1. Can we say that the church is a body like many others? Whose body is the church?

 **Colossians 1:24** *Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.*

 **1 Corinthians 12:27** *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

"Such is the infinite goodness of God that through Jesus Christ's merits He not only spares but pardons and justifies us, and through the righteousness of Christ imputes righteousness to us, and exalts and ennobles us by making us children of His adoption. We become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. He lifts men and women from their degradation and exalts them in righteousness.... He calls them His jewels, and a peculiar treasure unto Him. They are trophies of His grace and power, and of His greatness and riches in glory. They therefore are not their own, but are bought with a price, and through the extraordinary office of the atonement of Christ have been brought into nearness and the most sacred relationship to Jesus Christ. They are called His heritage,

His children, the members of Christ's body, of His flesh and of His bones; yea, they are joined to the Lord by intimate relationship with Him." –*Our High Calling*, p. 17.

FLESH OF HIS FLESH AND BONE OF HIS BONES

MONDAY

2. In what sense is the church the body of Christ? How do we relate to that?

 **Ephesians 5:30** *For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*

"The Lord has wrought with you, enabling you to act your part as His workman; but there are other workmen also who are to act their part as His instrumentalities. These help to compose the whole body. All are to be united as parts of one great organism. The Lord's church is composed of living, working agencies, who derive their power to act from the Author and Finisher of their faith. They are to carry forward in harmony the great work resting on them. God has given you your work. But He has other instrumentalities, and to them He has given their work, that all may become, through sanctification of the truth, members of Christ's body, of His flesh and of His bones. Representing Christ, we act for time and for eternity; and men, even worldly men, take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and have learned of Him." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 174.

TUESDAY

3. Since we all are part of Christ's body, what relationship do we have with each other?

 **Romans 12:5** *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

"As long as we are in this world, we must be linked one with another. Humanity is interlaced and interwoven with humanity. As Christians we are members one of another.... The Lord designs us as His sons and

daughters, whom He calls His friends, to help one another. This is to be a part of our practical Christian work." –*Our High Calling*, p. 184.

"Christ is the uniting link in the golden chain which binds believers together in God. There must be no separating in this great testing time. The people of God are, 'fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.' Verses 19-21. The children of God constitute one united whole in Christ, who presents His cross as the center of attraction. All who believe are one in Him." –*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 21.

WEDNESDAY

4. If the church is truly the body of Christ, who is the Head? What does this mean for each person in the church?

 **Ephesians 1:22, 23** And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, ²³Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

 **Colossians 1:18** And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

"'The head of every man is Christ.' God, who put all things under the Saviour's feet, 'gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.' 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22, 23. The church is built upon Christ as its foundation; it is to obey Christ as its Head. It is not to depend upon man, or be controlled by man. Many claim that a position of trust in the church gives them authority to dictate what other men shall believe and what they shall do. This claim God does not sanction. The Saviour declares, 'All ye are brethren.' All are exposed to temptation, and are liable to error. Upon no finite being can we depend for guidance. The Rock of faith is the living presence of Christ in the church. Upon this the weakest may depend, and those who think themselves the strongest will prove to be the weakest, unless they make Christ their efficiency. 'Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.' The Lord 'is the Rock, His work is perfect.' 'Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.' Jeremiah 17:5; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 2:12." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 414.

HOLY, UNBLAMEABLE, AND UNREPROVABLE

THURSDAY

5. What did the Lord go through to unite us with and form His body? What is His high purpose for His church?

 **Colossians 1:22** *In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.*

"The Son of God stooped to uplift the fallen. For this He left the sinless worlds on high, the ninety and nine that loved Him, and came to this earth to be 'wounded for our transgressions' and 'bruised for our iniquities.' Isaiah 53:5. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He knew what it meant to be hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He was a stranger and a sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women of today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God. 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,... full of grace and truth.' John 1:14." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 472.

FRIDAY

6. What ministries and services has the Lord established so that His body may achieve His holy, eternal purpose?

 **Ephesians 4:12** *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

"God has appointed apostles, pastors, evangelists, and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith. God declares to His people, 'Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.' There must be a continual advancement. Step by step His followers must make straight paths for their feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. Those who would labor for God must work intelligently to replenish the deficiencies in themselves and glorify the Lord God of Israel by standing in the light, working in the light of the Sun of Righteousness. Thus they will carry the church forward and upward and heavenward, making its separation from the world more and more distinct." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 406.

7. How can the believers grow in all things to become the holy image of the spiritual Head? From whom does the whole body, joined and perfectly fit together, receive the ability to grow in charity?

 **Ephesians 4:15,16** But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: ¹⁶From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

"Although a company of Christians united in church capacity have not all the same talents, yet it is the duty of everyone to work. Talents differ, but to every man is given his work. All are dependent upon Christ in God. He is the glorious Head of all grades and classes of people associated through faith in the Word of God. Bound together by a common belief in heavenly principles, they are all dependent on Him who is the Author and Finisher of their faith. He has created the principles that produce universal oneness, universal love. His followers should meditate upon His love. They should not stop short of reaching the standard set before them. If the principles of Christianity are lived, they will produce universal harmony and perfect peace. When the heart is imbued with the Spirit of Christ, there is no quarreling, no seeking for the supremacy, no striving to be reigning lords." —(Manuscript 46, March 31, 1902, "Unity a Sign of Discipleship") *The Upward Look*, p. 104.



For additional study

"Not the slightest wound can be given by word, spirit, or action, that does not touch the heart of Him who gave His life for fallen humanity. Let us bear in mind that Christ is the great heart from which the lifeblood flows to every organ in the body. He is the head, from which extends every nerve to the minutest and remotest member of the body. When one member of that body with which Christ is so mysteriously connected, suffers, the throb of pain is felt by our Saviour.

"Will the church arouse? Will its members come into sympathy with Christ, so they will have His tenderness for all the sheep and lambs of His fold? For their sake the Majesty of heaven made Himself of no reputation; for them He came to a world all seared and marred with the curse, He toiled day and night to instruct, to elevate, and to bring everlasting joy to a thankless, disobedient people. For their sake He became poor, that they through His poverty might be rich. For them He denied Himself; for them He endured privation, scorn, contempt, suffering, and death. For them He took the form of a servant. This is our pattern; will we copy it? Will we have a care for God's heritage? Will we cherish tender compassion for the erring, the tempted, and the tried?" —(Letter 45, 1894) *Welfare Ministry*, pp. 23, 24.

LESSON 25

Sabbath, December 18, 2021

A Remnant Will Be Saved



"Notwithstanding Israel's failure as a nation, there remained among them a goodly remnant of such as should be saved. At the time of the Saviour's advent there were faithful men and women who had received with gladness the message of John the Baptist, and had thus been led to study anew the prophecies concerning the Messiah. When the early Christian church was founded, it was composed of these faithful Jews who recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the one for whose advent they had been longing. It is to this remnant that Paul refers when he writes, 'If the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.'" —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 376, 377.

GREAT NUMBER OF PROGENY SUNDAY

- 1. What promises tell of the abundance of descendants and the great number of God's children?**
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 **Genesis 13:16; 15:5; 22:17** And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered....^{15:5} And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be....^{22:17} That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.

"As Abraham stepped out into the night, he seemed to hear the divine voice that called him out of Chaldea fifty years before, saying, 'Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them.... So shall thy seed be.' Can it be the same voice that commands him to slay his son? He remembers the promise: 'I will make thy seed as the dust of the

earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.' Is it not the voice of a stranger that commands him to offer his son as a sacrifice? Can God contradict Himself? Would He cut off the only hope of the fulfillment of the promise?" –*The Youth's Instructor*, June 6, 1901.

"After Abraham's separation from Lot, the Lord said to him, 'Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.'"The word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed; and lo, one born in my house is mine heir.'" –*The Spirit of Prophecy*, pp. 94, 95.

MONDAY

2. However, what conditions have to be met for the promises to be fulfilled? What will happen if the conditions are not met?

 *Deuteronomy 28:1, 2; 28:15, 16* And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: ²And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God... ^{28:15}But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: ¹⁶Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.

"It should be remembered that the promises and the threatenings of God are alike conditional." –*Evangelism*, p. 695.

"God's promises are conditional. In order to make it possible for Him to bless us, we must do our part. We cannot expect that all His blessings will come to us naturally, if we fold our hands in inactivity. We are to be laborers together with God. It is our privilege and duty to labor for souls ready to perish.

"If you have a knowledge of God and have taken your position under the banner of Prince Emmanuel, remember that you are not to allow yourself to come under the control of the powers of darkness—the fallen angels. You

are to keep in mind the promises that pertain to eternal life and godliness, and seek for divine power that is given to enable you to escape everything that would lead you astray." –*Peter's Counsel to Parents*, pp. 25, 26.

TUESDAY

3. What evidence shows that God's every promise is conditional? Who were the remnant of the great multitude of Israel?

Numbers 14:34 After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

Jeremiah 18:7, 8 At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; ⁸If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

"It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness; He desired to lead them directly to the land of Canaan and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But 'they could not enter in because of unbelief.' Hebrews 3:19. Because of their backsliding and apostasy they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the Promised Land. In like manner, it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed and His people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But unbelief separated them from God. As they refused to do the work which He had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message. In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning and find in Him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 458.

A REMNANT IN THE TIME OF ELIJAH

WEDNESDAY

4. Although the great majority of the millions that formed Israel went deep into apostasy, what did the Lord tell Elijah about the remnant at that time? What promises did the Lord give to Ezekiel about the remnant that would escape?

1 Kings 19:4, 18 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers....¹⁸Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

 **Ezekiel 6:8; 14:22** Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries....
^{14:22}Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it.

“Through long, dark years when ruler after ruler stood up in bold defiance of Heaven and led Israel deeper and still deeper into idolatry, God sent message after message to His backslidden people. Through His prophets He gave them every opportunity to stay the tide of apostasy and to return to Him. During the years that were to follow the rending of the kingdom, Elijah and Elisha were to live and labor, and the tender appeals of Hosea and Amos and Obadiah were to be heard in the land. Never was the kingdom of Israel to be left without noble witnesses to the mighty power of God to save from sin. Even in the darkest hours some would remain true to their divine Ruler and in the midst of idolatry would live blameless in the sight of a holy God. These faithful ones were numbered among the goodly remnant through whom the eternal purpose of Jehovah was finally to be fulfilled.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 108.

A REMNANT WILL BE SAVED

THURSDAY

5. How thankful was Ezra for the remnant who returned to Judah after the captivity? What was his earnest prayer for them?

 **Ezra 9:8,13, 14** And now for a little space grace hath been showed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage...
¹³And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this;¹⁴Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of

these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?

"The decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus for the restoring and building of Jerusalem, the third issued since the close of the seventy years' captivity, is remarkable for its expressions regarding the God of heaven, for its recognition of the attainments of Ezra, and for the liberality of the grants made to the remnant people of God....

"'The chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised'—these were the goodly remnant, about fifty thousand strong, from among the Jews in the lands of exile, who determined to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity offered them 'to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.'" —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 610, 559.

FRIDAY

6. Can we say that all who call themselves Israel are truly Israel? Who only belong to the Israel of God?

 **Romans 9:6-8** Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: ⁷Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. ⁸That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

"A mere profession of faith in Christ, a boastful knowledge of the truth, does not make a man a Christian. A religion that seeks only to gratify the eye, the ear, and the taste, or that sanctions self-indulgence, is not the religion of Christ." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 317.

"Where there is a lack of home religion, a profession of faith is valueless.... Many are deceiving themselves by thinking that the character will be transformed at the coming of Christ, but there will be no conversion of heart at His appearing. Our defects of character must here be repented of, and through the grace of Christ we must overcome them while probation shall last. This is the place for fitting up for the family above." —*The Adventist Home*, p. 319.

ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM

SABBATH

7. According to Isaiah and the apostle Paul, even if the nominal children of Israel were as the sand of the sea, who would be saved?

 *Romans 9:27; 11:5* Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: ^{11:5} Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

"Thus Paul shows that God is abundantly able to transform the hearts of Jew and Gentile alike, and to grant to every believer in Christ the blessings promised to Israel. He repeats Isaiah's declaration concerning God's people: 'Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: for He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma and been made like unto Gomorrah.'" –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 379.



For additional study

"Of the remnant people of God it is written, '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." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 398.

"This distinctive banner is to be borne through the world to the close of probation. In describing the remnant people of God, John says, 'Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Revelation 14:12. This is the law and the gospel. The world and the churches are uniting in harmony in transgressing the law of God, in tearing away God's memorial, and in exalting a sabbath that bears the signature of the man of sin. But the Sabbath of the Lord thy God is to be a sign to show the difference between the obedient and the disobedient. I saw some reaching out their hands to remove the banner, and to obscure its significance...." –*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 385.

Please read the Missionary Report from
the General Conference Publishing Department on page 161.

LESSON 26

Sabbath, December 25, 2021

A People with a Mission



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

BLESSINGS FOR ETERNITY

SUNDAY

1. How far will the blessings promised to Abraham extend? In view of that great reality, what was Abraham's responsibility?

 **Genesis 12:3; 18:19** *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.... ^{18:19}For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

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

"The all-embracing terms of this covenant were familiar to Abraham's children and to his children's children. It was in order that the Israelites might be a blessing to the nations, and that God's name might be made known 'throughout all the earth' (Exodus 9:16), that they were delivered from Egyptian bondage. If obedient to His requirements, they were to be placed far in advance of other peoples in wisdom and understanding; but this supremacy was to be reached and maintained only in order that through them the purpose of God for 'all nations of the earth' might be fulfilled." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 368, 369.

MONDAY

2. When Moses instructed the Israelites to observe the statutes that God had given them, what did he say such obedience would lead to?

 *Deuteronomy 4:5, 6* Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. ⁶Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

"Their obedience to the laws of God would make them marvels of prosperity before the nations of the world. He who could give them wisdom and skill in all cunning work would continue to be their teacher and would ennoble and elevate them through obedience to His laws. If obedient, they would be preserved from the diseases that afflicted other nations and would be blessed with vigor of intellect. The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their prosperity. They were to be a kingdom of priests and princes. God furnished them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth." — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 222.

DECLARING GOD'S GLORY AMONG THE HEATHEN

TUESDAY

3. In God's plans, what was Israel's great mission for other people? What was necessary in their lives for them to be a light to others?

 *1 Chronicles 16:23, 24* Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation. ²⁴Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

 *Isaiah 58:7, 8* Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to

thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? ⁸Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward.

"God never meant that the widespread misery in the world should exist. He never meant that one man should have an abundance of the luxuries of life, while the children of others should cry for bread. The means over and above the actual necessities of life are entrusted to man to do good, to bless humanity. The Lord says, 'Sell that ye have, and give alms.' Luke 12:33. Be 'ready to distribute, willing to communicate.' 1 Timothy 6:18. 'When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.' Luke 14:13. 'Loose the bands of wickedness,' 'undo the heavy burdens,' 'let the oppressed go free,' 'break every yoke.' 'Deal thy bread to the hungry,' 'bring the poor that are cast out to thy house.' 'When thou seest the naked, ... cover him.' 'Satisfy the afflicted soul.' Isaiah 58:6, 7, 10. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Mark 16:15. These are the Lord's commands. Are the great body of professed Christians doing this work?" —*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 370, 371.

WEDNESDAY

4. What wonderful prophecy shows what God's desire was for Israel in relation to those who did not know Him? What did the Lord shine upon His people to put them in a position to fulfill this wonderful mission?

 **Isaiah 60:1-3** *Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. ²For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. ³And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.*

"It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth.

"This is the work outlined by the prophet Isaiah in the words, 'O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not

afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.’ Isaiah 40:9, 10.” –*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 415.

GO, PREACH THE GOSPEL

THURSDAY

5. Similarly, after establishing His church, what beautiful mission did the Lord give to it? What promise to the preachers is connected with this wonderful responsibility?

Matthew 28:19, 20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Mark 16:15, 16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

“And at the close of His earthly ministry, when He charged His disciples with a solemn commission to go ‘into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,’ He declared that their ministry would receive confirmation through the restoration of the sick to health. Ye ‘shall lay hands on the sick,’ He said, ‘and they shall recover.’ Mark 16:15, 18. By healing in His name the diseases of the body, they would testify to His power for the healing of the soul. “The Saviour’s commission to the disciples includes all believers to the end of time. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the gospel. All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ.” –*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 466.

FRIDAY

6. As spiritual ministers and holy people, what good news is God’s church commissioned to proclaim everywhere?

Exodus 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

 **Matthew 24:14** *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

"The Lord has made His church the repository of divine influence. The heavenly universe is waiting for the members to become channels through which the current of life shall flow to the world, that many may be converted, and in their turn become channels through which the grace of Christ shall flow to the desert portions of the Lord's vineyard.

"Every one who is connected with God will impart light to others. If there are any who have no light to give, it is because they have no connection with the Source of light.

"God has appointed His children to give light to others, and if they fail to do it, and souls are left in the darkness of error because of their failure to do that which they might have done, had they been vitalized by the Holy Spirit, they will be accountable to God. We have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light, in order that we may show forth the praises of Christ."
—*Christian Service*, p. 21.

THE HOLY SPIRIT PROMISED FOR PREACHING

SABBATH

7. What supreme power did the Lord promise to all who preach and testify of the eternal, saving truth?

 **Acts 1:8** *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.*

"The Holy Spirit was to descend on those who love Christ. By this they would be qualified, in and through the glorification of their Head, to receive every endowment necessary for the fulfilling of their mission. The Life-giver held in His hand not only the keys of death but a whole heaven of rich blessings. All power in heaven and earth was given to Him, and having taken His place in the heavenly courts, He could dispense these blessings to all who receive Him. The church was baptized with the Spirit's power. The disciples were fitted to go forth and proclaim Christ, first in Jerusalem, where the shameful work of dishonoring the rightful King had been done, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth. The evidence of the enthronement of Christ in His mediatorial kingdom was given.

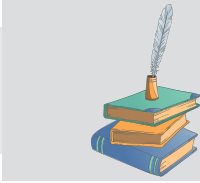
"God desires that the receivers of His grace shall be witnesses to its power. Those whose course has been most offensive to Him He freely accepts; when they repent, He imparts to them His divine Spirit, places them in the highest positions of trust, and sends them forth into the camp of the disloyal to proclaim His boundless mercy." –*My Life Today*, p. 47.



For additional study

"As the divine endowment—the power of the Holy Spirit—was given to the disciples, so it will today be given to all who seek aright. This power alone is able to make us wise unto salvation and to fit us for the courts above. Christ wants to give us a blessing that will make us holy. 'These things have I spoken unto you,' He says, 'that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.' John 15:11. Joy in the Holy Spirit is health-giving, life-giving joy. In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself, making Himself a fountain of divine influences, to give health and life to the world." –Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 273.

"All who are on the Lord's side are to confess Christ. 'Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord.' The faith of the genuine believer will be made manifest in purity and holiness of character. Faith works by love and purifies the soul, and with faith there will be corresponding obedience, a faithful doing of the words of Christ. Christianity is always intensely practical, adapting itself to all the circumstances of actual life. 'Ye are My witnesses.' To whom? To the world; for you are to bear about with you a holy influence. Christ is to abide in your soul, and you are to talk of Him and make manifest the charms of His character." –Messages to Young People, p. 200.



MISSIONARY REPORT GENERAL CONFERENCE PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT

To be read on Sabbath, December 25, 2021

The Special Sabbath School Offering
will be gathered on Sabbath, January 1, 2022

"Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!"
Job 19:23, 24.

The urgent need to spread the last warning message throughout the world is a high priority for every child of God. The development of every gift, method, and modality for preaching the gospel of salvation to every person is the primary objective of the General Conference Publishing Department. It has a responsibility to develop, publish, and distribute written materials in print and online.

The great number of different languages in the various countries is an enormous challenge. There are approximately 7,000 different languages in the world, 90 percent of which are spoken by at least 100,000 people each (<https://www.europapress.es/>). There are 196 to 203 recognized countries (<https://www.bbc.com/>), and the "official" language is English in 59 countries, followed by French (29), Arabic (27), Spanish (20), and Portuguese (10) (<https://www.europapress.es/>). The publishing work is monumental, considering that the world population is now approximately 7.8 billion people (<https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>).

We thank God for the publishing work that is currently being done by the church around the world. Books, magazines, and printed and virtual brochures are placed at the disposal of members and interested people in four primary languages—English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese. Regular publications include the biannual Sabbath School Lessons, the quarterly Sabbath Watchman, and the annual Readings for the Week of Prayer, which are translated into approximately 75 additional languages for a total of 80 different ones.

The publications include a wide range of subjects, such as doctrine, prophecy, family, youth, children, music, health, and many more that are produced and offered worldwide on well-known broadcast platforms and at affordable prices. There are approximately 124 different titles (<https://www.>

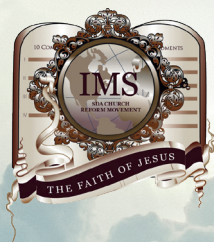
amazon.com/IMS/e/B08CHM2MD7/ref=dp_byline_cont_pop_book_2). To improve access to the church's hymnal, it has been possible, by the grace of God, to prepare the audiovisual content in English and Spanish for the International Hymnal.

"In a large degree through our publishing houses is to be accomplished the work of that other angel who comes down from heaven with great power and who lightens the earth with his glory [Revelation 18:1]."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p.140 (1902).

Other projects are being developed thanks to the efforts of writers, editors, translators, graphic designers, and multimedia specialists in the church. We request your continual spiritual assistance, prayer, and financial support for this work.

We are grateful to all in the divisions, unions, and fields who cooperate with the General Conference Publishing Department in the distribution of publications, as well as to everyone who will contribute generously for the special Sabbath School Offering next week.

—Raquel Orce Sotomayor
General Conference Publishing Department Leader



"AS THE APPLE OF HIS EYE"

*PROPHECIES, EXPERIENCES,
AND MISSION OF GOD'S PEOPLE*

"There is one thing in this world which is the greatest object of Christ's solicitude. It is His church on earth; for its members should be representatives, in spirit and character, of Him. The world is to recognize in them the representatives of Christianity, the depository of sacred truths in which is stored the most precious jewels for the enrichment of others. Through the ages of moral darkness and error, through centuries of strife and persecution, the church of Christ has been as a city set on a hill." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, p. 265.

