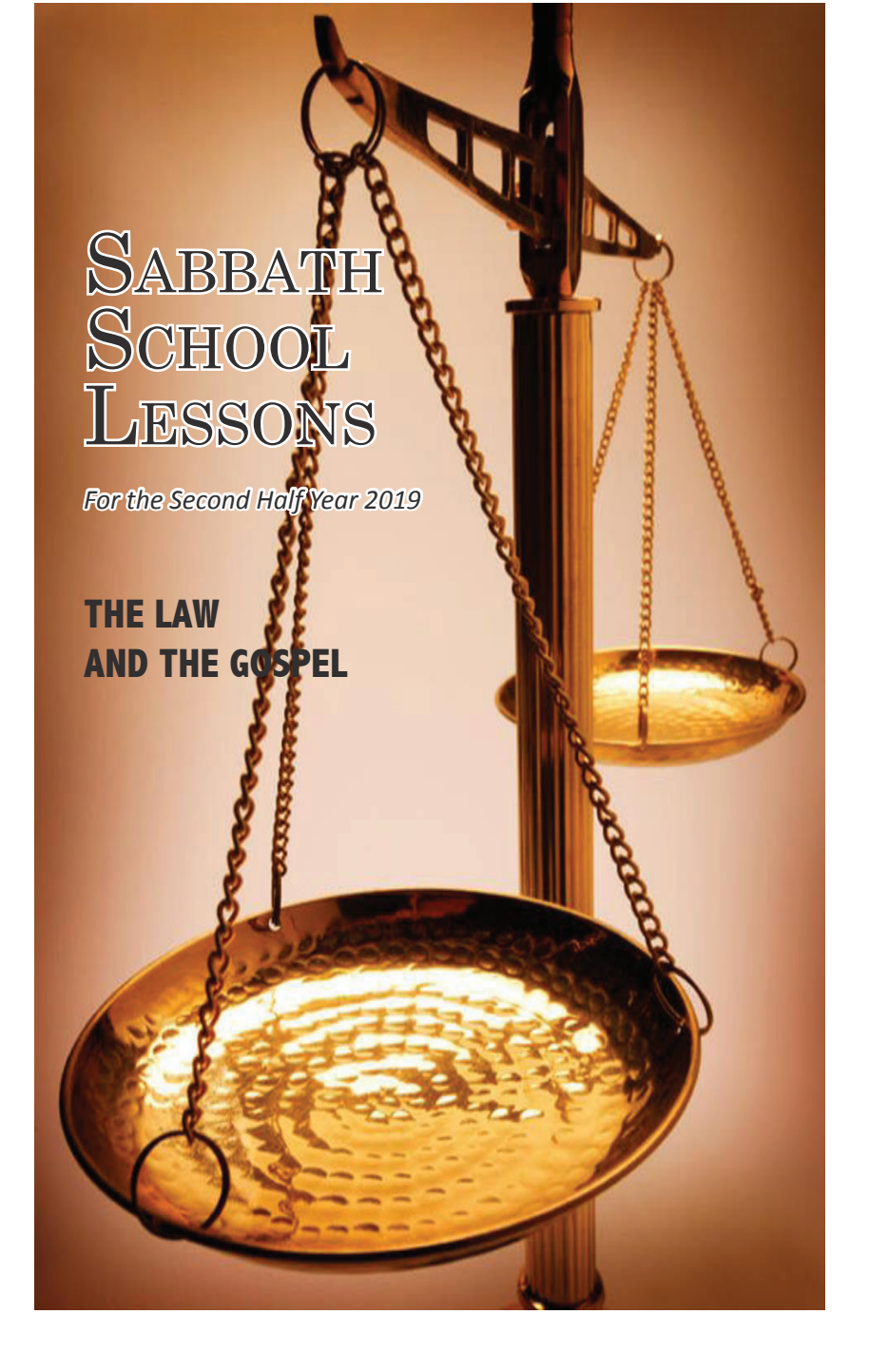




SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS

For the Second Half Year 2019

**THE LAW
AND THE GOSPEL**

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS

For the Second Half Year 2019

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

Published by the
General Conference
International Missionary Society
Seventh-day Adventist Church
Reform Movement

625 West Avenue / Cedartown, GA 30125
Telephone 770-748-0077 / Fax 770-748-0095
Email: info@sda1844.org / Internet: www.sda1844.org

© 2019 International Missionary Society, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, General Conference. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be edited, altered, modified, adapted, translated, reproduced, or published by any person or entity without prior written authorization from the International Missionary Society. Write to Publishing@sda1844.org for authorization.

Author: Antonino Di Franca

Review and editing of content
by the General Conference Ministerial Department

Translation, editing, and design
by the General Conference Publishing Department

Cover: <http://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/241596/file-305156759-jpg>

CONTENTS

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

Introduction	7
1. The Gospel in Eden	9
2. Offering the Firstling	13
3. A Promise Containing an Oath	16
4. An Illustration of Christ	21
5. God's Covenant with His people	25
6. The Ten Commandments and Love	29
7. Confession, Sacrifice, and Forgiveness	33
8. Rejoicing in God's Presence	37
9. I Am Sorry for My Sin	41
<i>General Conference Canvassing Department</i>	<i>45</i>
10. I Love Your Law	47
11. Clean and White As Snow	51
12. He Will Justify Many	55
13. I Will Give You a New Heart	59
14. Vision of the High Priest Joshua's Experience	63
15. The Gospel and the Law	67
16. The Gospel—God's Power for Salvation	71
17. Justification by Grace through Faith	75
<i>Missionary Report from the European Division</i>	<i>79</i>
18. Gospel and Peace with God	80
19. Dead to Sin and Alive to God through Christ	85
20. Free from Condemnation	89
21. Life through the Spirit	93
22. The Law Leads Man to Christ	96
23. Two Ministries Compared	101
24. Christ, the Purpose of the Law	105
25. The Law Is Like a Mirror	109
26. The Law Is Spiritual	113
<i>Missionary Report from the General Conference Health Department</i>	<i>117</i>

INTRODUCTION

The law and the gospel are two irreplaceable components of God's plan to redeem fallen man. The law shows what sin is, and the gospel saves the repentant sinner from sin and eternal death. The Scriptures do not mention these two terms in the first chapters of Genesis, but both of them existed before Eden. Furthermore, while the Old Testament does not mention the word "gospel," its broad scope (God's great love, grace, promises, justification, and salvation) permeates every book. Virtually every page of the Holy Scriptures gives evidence of the plan of redemption carried out by the Lamb of God, who "was foreordained before the foundation of the world." 1 Peter 1:20. In His great love and grace, the Lord has "chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." Ephesians 1:4.

The gospel attests that justification and salvation are not granted on the basis of human merit but as the free gift of God's grace. This was present in the promise given in Eden concerning the Seed of the woman, who would bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15), as well as in the testimony given of Abraham, who "believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness." Genesis 15:6. The great subject of justification that is presented in the New Testament has its foundation in the Old Testament. The prophet Habakkuk stated that "the just shall live by his faith." Habakkuk 2:4. The law and the gospel are thus presented in the Old Testament as linked to each other.

In the many different churches, how many believe that the Old and New Testaments are in full harmony, teaching that salvation is received by grace through faith? Not many. A great number teach that there were two different systems, one for the time of the patriarchs and prophets (salvation being achieved by obedience to the law) and the other for the time of the New Testament (salvation by grace). This is one of the many errors that have been spread throughout the world.

The Spirit of prophecy states: "There is no discord between the Old Testament and the New. In the Old Testament we find the gospel of a coming Saviour; in the New Testament we have the gospel of a Saviour revealed as the prophecies had foretold. While the Old Testament is constantly pointing forward to the true offering, the New Testament shows that the Saviour prefigured by the typical offerings has come. The dim glory of the Jewish age has been succeeded by the brighter, clearer glory of the Christian age." —(Signs of the Times, July 29, 1886) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1095.

"Good works can never purchase salvation, but they are an evidence of the faith that acts by love and purifies the soul. And though the eternal reward is not bestowed because of our merit, yet it will be in proportion to the work that has been done through the grace of Christ." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 314.

This is not the only problem. The next one is the opposite—the assertion that the writers of the New Testament taught that the law of God was abolished by Jesus' death on the cross and believers are free from obeying it. "But not once," Sister Ellen G. White writes, "has Christ stated that His coming destroyed the claims of God's law. On the contrary, in the very last message to His church, by way of Patmos, He pronounces a benediction upon those who keep His Father's law: '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.' Revelation 22:14." —(Signs of the Times, July 29, 1886) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1095.

"His law is the transcript of His character. It is the standard that all must reach if they would enter the kingdom of God. No one need walk in uncertainty.... The law of God is not abolished. It will live through the eternal ages. By Christ's death it was magnified, and sin was exposed in its true light." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 137.

"The moral law was never a type or a shadow. It existed before man's creation, and will endure as long as God's throne remains. God could not change or alter one precept of His law in order to save man; for the law is the foundation of His government. It is unchangeable, unalterable, infinite, and eternal. In order for man to be saved, and for the honor of the law to be maintained, it was necessary for the Son of God to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin. He who knew no sin became sin for us. He died for us on Calvary. His death shows the wonderful love of God for man, and the immutability of His law." —(Review and Herald, April 22, 1902) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1097.

Let us remember that salvation was always and still is given by grace through faith. The Old and New Testaments are not in opposition to each other, and the law and the gospel are in complete harmony. The law defines sin, and the gospel of Jesus Christ saves the repentant sinner from sin. Without God's law, sin is not condemned and there is no need of grace. Those who deny the validity of the law indirectly deny grace.

"The law and the gospel are in perfect harmony. Each upholds the other. In all its majesty the law confronts the conscience, causing the sinner to feel his need of Christ as the propitiation for sin. The gospel recognizes the power and immutability of the law. 'I had not known sin, but by the law,' Paul declares. The sense of sin, urged home by the law, drives the sinner to the Saviour. In his need man may present the mighty arguments furnished by the cross of Calvary. He may claim the righteousness of Christ; for it is imparted to every repentant sinner." —(Review and Herald, April 22, 1902) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1096.

The Sabbath School Lessons in the Fourth Quarter present some concepts from the letters of the apostle Paul regarding the law that may be difficult to grasp. Nevertheless, it is important to study them along with those that seem somewhat easier to understand. As we study all of these things, let us pray for light and connect everything with the truths found in the Revelation regarding the faithful remnant: "And 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." "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 12:17; 14:12.

These very important Biblical subjects—the law and the gospel—are essential parts of the plan of redemption, so it is essential to get a firm grasp of them at this time. Let us cherish this opportunity, pray for divine guidance, and humbly ask for wisdom so that the study of these lessons will result in a great blessing for every believer.

—*The brothers and sisters of the General Conference
and the Ministerial Department*

SPECIAL SABBATH SCHOOL OFFERING FOR
The General Conference Youth Department

GOD BLESS YOUR LOVING SACRIFICE FOR HIM!

1

Sabbath, July 6, 2019

The Gospel in Eden

“Ever since the fall of man, Christ had been the Revealer of truth to the world. By Him the incorruptible seed, ‘the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever,’ is communicated to men. 1 Peter 1:23. In that first promise spoken to our fallen race in Eden, Christ was sowing the gospel seed.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 37.

GOD’S BLESSING

- 1. In addition to giving him life, what else did the Lord give to man in Eden? In what wonderful environment did He place him?**

Genesis 1:28; 2:8, 9 *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth....* ^{2:8}*And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.* ⁹*And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

“Adam was crowned king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of His hands.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 40.

“The Lord placed our first parents in the Garden of Eden. He surrounded them with everything that could minister to their happiness, and He bade them acknowledge Him as the possessor of all things. In the garden He caused to grow every tree that was pleasant to the eye or good for food;...” —*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 65.

- 2. What great responsibility was assigned to him? Compliance with what divine prohibition would demonstrate his loyalty and obedience and enable him to grow spiritually? In a garden full of delicious food, was the divine requirement something difficult?**

Genesis 2:15-17 *And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.* ¹⁶*And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of*

every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ¹⁷But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

“Very happy were the holy pair in Eden. Unlimited control was given them over every living thing. The lion and the lamb sported together peacefully and harmlessly around them, or slumbered at their feet. Birds of every variety of color and plumage flitted among the trees and flowers, and about Adam and Eve, while their mellow-toned music echoed among the trees in sweet accord to the praises of their Creator.

“In the midst of the garden, near the tree of life, stood the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Of this tree the Lord commanded our first parents not to eat, neither to touch it, lest they die. He told them that they might freely eat of all the trees in the garden except one; but if they ate of that tree they should surely die.” —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 35.

TEMPTATION AND FALL

3. What leading question did the tempter voice when the woman came close to the forbidden tree? What lie did the deceiver speak?

Genesis 3:1, 4, 5 *Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?... ⁴And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: ⁵For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

“Satan would convey the idea that by eating of the forbidden tree, they would receive a new and more noble kind of knowledge than they had hitherto attained. This has been his special work with great success ever since his fall, to lead men to pry into the secrets of the Almighty, and not to be satisfied with what God has revealed, and not careful to obey that which He has commanded. He would lead them to disobey God’s commands, and then make them believe that they are entering a wonderful field of knowledge, which is purely supposition, and a miserable deception. They fail to understand what God has revealed, and disregard his explicit commandments, and aspire after wisdom, independent of God, and seek to understand that which He has been pleased to withhold from mortals. They are elated with their ideas of progression, and charmed with their own vain philosophy; but grope in midnight darkness relative to true knowledge. They are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 40, 41.

4. How did the woman react to what she viewed as fascinating possibilities? What was the tragic consequence of the first couple’s direct disobedience?

Isaiah 43:27, first part *Thy first father hath sinned....*

Genesis 3:6, 7 *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. ⁷And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

"Our first parents were led into sin through indulging a desire for knowledge that God had withheld from them. In seeking to gain this knowledge, they lost all that was worth possessing. If Adam and Eve had never touched the forbidden tree, God would have imparted to them knowledge—knowledge upon which rested no curse of sin, knowledge that would have brought them everlasting joy. All that they gained by listening to the tempter was an acquaintance with sin and its results. By their disobedience, humanity was estranged from God and the earth was separated from heaven." —*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 427, 428.

5. What other results followed? What did the Lord provide them for clothing, representing Christ's atoning blood?

Genesis 3:9, 10, 21 *And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? ¹⁰And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.... ²¹Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*

Zechariah 3:4 *And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.*

"The divine presence was manifested in the garden. In their innocence and holiness they had joyfully welcomed the approach of their Creator; but now they fled in terror, and sought to hide in the deepest recesses of the garden." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 57.

"A fig-leaf apron will never cover our nakedness. Sin must be taken away, and the garment of Christ's righteousness must cover the transgressor of God's law. Then when the Lord looks upon the believing sinner, He sees, not the fig leaves covering him, but Christ's own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. Man has hidden his nakedness, not under a covering of fig leaves, but under the robe of Christ's righteousness." —*The Upward Look*, p. 378.

A PREVENTATIVE MEASURE

6. What was necessary to keep the man and his wife from becoming eternal transgressors?

Genesis 3:22-24 *And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: ²³Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. ²⁴So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

"They were informed that they would have to lose their Eden home. They had yielded to Satan's deception and believed the word of Satan, that God would lie. By their transgression they had opened a way for Satan to gain access to them more readily, and it was not safe for them to remain in the Garden of Eden, lest in their state of sin they gain access to the tree of life and perpetuate a life of sin. They entreated to be permitted to remain, although they acknowledged that they had forfeited all right to blissful Eden. They promised that they would in the future yield to God implicit obedience. They were informed that in their fall from inno-

cence to guilt they gained no strength but great weakness. They had not preserved their integrity while they were in a state of holy, happy innocence, and they would have far less strength to remain true and loyal in a state of conscious guilt. They were filled with keenest anguish and remorse. They now realized that the penalty of sin was death." —*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 40, 41.

PROMISE OF THE COMING REDEEMER

7. In what beautiful promise did the Lord present mankind's redemption from the slavery of Satan, sin, and death?

Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

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

"The first intimation of such a hope was given to Adam and Eve in the sentence pronounced upon the serpent in Eden when the Lord declared to Satan in their hearing, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.' Genesis 3:15.

"As the guilty pair listened to these words, they were inspired with hope; for in the prophecy concerning the breaking of Satan's power they discerned a promise of deliverance from the ruin wrought through transgression. Though they must suffer from the power of their adversary because they had fallen under his seductive influence and had chosen to disobey the plain command of Jehovah, yet they need not yield to utter despair. The Son of God was offering to atone with His own lifeblood for their transgression. To them was to be granted a period of probation, during which, through faith in the power of Christ to save, they might become once more the children of God." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 681, 682.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"The Saviour's coming was foretold in Eden. When Adam and Eve first heard the promise, they looked for its speedy fulfillment. They joyfully welcomed their first-born son, hoping that he might be the Deliverer. But the fulfillment of the promise tarried. Those who first received it died without the sight. From the days of Enoch the promise was repeated through patriarchs and prophets, keeping alive the hope of His appearing, and yet He came not. The prophecy of Daniel revealed the time of His advent, but not all rightly interpreted the message....

"But like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay." —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 34; *A Call to Stand Apart*, p. 5.

* * *

Offering the Firstling

“The Lord gave Cain and Abel directions regarding the sacrifice they were to bring Him. Abel, a keeper of sheep, obeyed the Lord’s command and brought a lamb as his offering. This lamb, as it was slain, represented the Lamb of God, who was to be slain for the sins of the world. Cain brought as an offering the fruit of the ground, his own produce. He was not willing to be dependent on Abel for an offering. He would not go to him for a lamb. He thought his own works perfect, and these he presented to God.”

—*Christ Triumphant*, p. 35.

1. Who were the first two children born into the world? What were their occupations when they became mature?

Genesis 4:1, 2 *And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. ²And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*

“Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam, differed widely in character. Abel had a spirit of loyalty to God; he saw justice and mercy in the Creator’s dealings with the fallen race, and gratefully accepted the hope of redemption. But Cain cherished feelings of rebellion, and murmured against God because of the curse pronounced upon the earth and upon the human race for Adam’s sin. He permitted his mind to run in the same channel that led to Satan’s fall—indulging the desire for self-exaltation and questioning the divine justice and authority.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 71.

ABEL’S OFFERING IN CONTRAST TO CAIN’S

2. Seeing himself in light of the divine law, what did Abel offer to God? What did this show about him?

Genesis 4:4 *And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.*

Romans 2:14, 15 *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: ¹⁵Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.*

“Cain thought himself righteous, and he came to God with a thank offering only. He made no confession of sin, and acknowledged no need of mercy. But Abel came with the blood that pointed to the Lamb of God. He came as a sinner, confessing himself lost; his only hope was the unmerited love of God. The Lord had respect to his offering, but to Cain and his offering He had not respect. The sense of need, the recognition of our poverty and sin, is the very first condition of acceptance with God. ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ Matthew 5:3.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 152.

3. Did his brother have the same trust in the Lord? Refusing to obey His will, whom did Cain allow to take control of his mind?

Genesis 4:6, 7 *And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? ⁷If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*

“Cain talked with Abel about their sacrifices and charged God with partiality. Abel interceded with his brother, repeating to him the very words of God’s command to them both regarding the offerings He required. Cain was provoked because his younger brother should presume to teach him. He allowed envy and jealousy to fill his heart. He hated his brother because he was preferred before him. As Cain pondered over the matter, he grew still more angry.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 35.

“The Lord saw the wrath of Cain. He saw the falling of his countenance. Thus is revealed how closely the Lord marks every action, all the intents and purposes, yes, even the expression of the countenance. This, though man may say nothing, expresses his refusal to do the way and will of God.” —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 26.

4. Being full of darkness and fury, what did Cain do to his brother? How far did he go in the service of evil?

Genesis 4:8 *And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.*

“He saw his mistake in offering only his own substance before the Lord, without the fitting sacrifice of a lamb, but he determined to vindicate himself and condemn Abel. Satan worked through him, inspiring him with a desire to slay his brother.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 35.

“Although Adam and Eve related with sorrow to their children the sad story of the Fall, their family became a divided family. Cain chose to serve Satan, Abel to serve God. Cain killed his brother Abel, because he would not follow his example.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 41.

THE GIFT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

5. Although Cain hated and killed his brother, how did Jesus consider Abel and his shed blood? On what basis did the Lord view Abel as righteous—his actions or Christ’s merits?

Matthew 23:35 *That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.*

Luke 18:19 *And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is, God.*

“Abel, the very first Christian of Adam’s children, died a martyr.” —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 33.

“Abel was a believer in Christ, and was as verily saved by His power as was Peter or Paul.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 392.

“... In full faith of the Messiah to come, and with humble reverence, he [Abel] presented the offering. God had respect unto his offering. A light flashes from Heaven and consumes the offering of Abel.” —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 48.

“Patriarchs, prophets, and martyrs from righteous Abel, looked forward to a coming Saviour, and they showed their faith in Him by sacrifices and offerings. The sacrifice of beasts shadowed forth the sinless offering of God’s dear Son, and pointed forward to His death upon the cross.” —*Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, July 15, 1893.

6. What prompted Abel to offer such an excellent sacrifice to God? What is required for one to obtain forgiveness?

Hebrews 11:4; 9:22 *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh....^{9:22} And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.*

“‘By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.’ Hebrews 11:4. Abel grasped the great principles of redemption. He saw himself a sinner, and he saw sin and its penalty, death, standing between his soul and communion with God. He brought the slain victim, the sacrificed life, thus acknowledging the claims of the law that had been transgressed. Through the shed blood he looked to the future sacrifice, Christ dying on the cross of Calvary; and trusting in the atonement that was there to be made, he had the witness that he was righteous, and his offering accepted.

“Cain had the same opportunity of learning and accepting these truths as had Abel. He was not the victim of an arbitrary purpose. One brother was not elected to be accepted of God, and the other to be rejected. Abel chose faith and obedience; Cain, unbelief and rebellion. Here the whole matter rested.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 72.

7. In view of this experience, what do we need to learn from Abel about how to obtain righteousness and a good witness? Whose blood, which is more precious than that of Abel, will bring about man’s justification and salvation?

Hebrews 12:24 *And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

Matthew 26:28 *For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

John 1:12 *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.*

“Thank God that He who spilled His blood for us, lives to plead it, lives to make intercession for every soul who receives Him. ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ 1 John 1:9. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. It speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, for Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us. We need to keep ever before us the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. That life-cleansing, life-sustaining blood, appropriated by living faith, is our hope. We need to grow in appreciation of its inestimable value, for it speaks for us only as we by faith claim its virtue, keeping the conscience clean and at peace with God.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 47.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“Cain and Abel represent two classes that will exist in the world till the close of time. One class avail themselves of the appointed sacrifice for sin; the other venture to depend upon their own merits; theirs is a sacrifice without the virtue of divine mediation, and thus it is not able to bring man into favor with God. It is only through the merits of Jesus that our transgressions can be pardoned. Those who feel no need of the blood of Christ, who feel that without divine grace they can by their own works secure the approval of God, are making the same mistake as did Cain. If they do not accept the cleansing blood, they are under condemnation. There is no other provision made whereby they can be released from the thralldom of sin.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 72, 73.

* * *

3

Sabbath, July 20, 2019

A Promise Containing an Oath

“Abraham has now fully and nobly borne the test, and by his faithfulness re-deemed his lack of perfect trust in God, which lack led him to take Hagar as his wife. After the exhibition of Abraham’s faith and confidence, God renews His promise to him. ‘And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By Myself I have sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, 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. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.’ Genesis 22:15-18.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 101.

1. **What was the first command from the Lord to Abram that the Scriptures record? And, later, did the Lord ever ask any human being for a sacrifice as great as that which He commanded Abraham?**

Genesis 12:1, 4; 22:1-3 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....⁴So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran....^{22:1}And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.²And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.³And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

"Abraham had to leave his country and his father's house, and sojourn in a strange land, in order to introduce successfully the new order of things in his household.... This could be done only by cultivating home religion. But it was not possible for Abraham to do this while he was surrounded by his idolatrous kinsfolk and friends. He must at God's command go out alone, and listen to the voice of Christ, the leader of the children of Israel.... Abraham decided to obey the law of God, and the Lord knew that there would be no betrayal of sacred trust on his part, no yielding to any other guide than Him whom he felt under responsibility to obey." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 286, 287.

"This act of faith in Abraham is recorded for our benefit. It teaches us the great lesson of confidence in the requirements of God, however close and cutting they may be; and it teaches children perfect submission to their parents and to God. By Abraham's obedience we are taught that nothing is too precious for us to give to God." —(Signs of the Times, January 27, 1887) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1094.

ABRAHAM'S LOYALTY AND OBEDIENCE

2. In his relationship with God, did Abraham demonstrate his loyalty only by leaving Ur? What is shown by the way Abraham responded to numerous commands from the Lord?

Hebrews 11:8 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

Nehemiah 9:7, 8, first part *Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; ⁸And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land ... to his seed,...*

Genesis 26:5 *Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*

"Of Abraham it is written that 'he was called the friend of God,' 'the father of all them that believe.' James 2:23; Romans 4:11. The testimony of God concerning this faithful patriarch is, 'Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.' And again, '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.' It was a high honor to which Abraham was called, that of being the father of the people who for centuries were the guardians and preservers of the truth of God for the world—of that people through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed in the advent of the promised Messiah.... There would be on the part of Abraham no betraying of the truth for selfish purposes. He would keep the law and deal justly and righteously. And he would not only fear the Lord himself, but would cultivate religion in his home. He would instruct his family in righteousness. The law of God would be the rule in his household." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 140, 141.

3. What alone can account for Abraham's obedience to the divine commands? What valuable spiritual fruit made it possible?

Genesis 15:5, 6 *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.*

James 2:23 *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.*

"Without the grace of Christ, the sinner is in a hopeless condition; nothing can be done for him; but through divine grace, supernatural power is imparted,... It is through the impartation of the grace of Christ that sin is discerned in its hateful nature, and finally driven from the soul temple. It is through grace that we are brought into fellowship with Christ, to be associated with Him in the work of salvation. Faith is the condition upon which God has seen fit to promise pardon to sinners; not that there is any virtue in faith whereby salvation is merited, but because faith can lay hold of the merits of Christ, the remedy provided for sin....

"Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.' Romans 4:3-5." —*Selected Messages*, vol. 1, pp. 366, 367.

SHARING SPIRITUAL VALUES WITH OTHERS

4. What did Abraham teach his children and household? What great promises did the Lord make to him and his descendants?

Genesis 18:18, 19; 22:18; 26:4 *Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹For 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.... ^{22:18}And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.... ^{26:4}And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*

"Abraham was a man favored of God. The Lord said: '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.' Abraham was honored of God because he cultivated home religion and caused the fear of the Lord to pervade his whole household. It is God who says: 'I know him, that he will command'—there will be no betraying of sacred trust on his part, no yielding to anyone but God; there is a law, and Abraham will keep it; no blind affection will cloud his sense of right and interfere between God and the souls of his children; that kind of indulgence which is the veriest cruelty will not lead Abraham astray." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 547, 548.

5. As a justified believer, what was the patriarch searching for as he moved from place to place? What was revealed by the fact that he built altars wherever he went?

Genesis 12:7, 8; 13:4 *And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. ⁸And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.... ^{13:4}Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.*

“Your home is a little world of itself.... You are the ones who must decide whether your children shall choose the service of God or the service of mammon, eternal life or eternal death....

“Like the patriarchs of old, those who profess to love God should erect an altar to Him wherever they pitch their tent.... Let the father, as priest of the household, lay upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. In such a household Jesus will love to abide.”
—*My Life Today*, p. 33.

GOD’S COVENANT AND OATH

6. What assurance did God give to Abraham and thus to all believers?

Genesis 22:16, 17 *And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: ¹⁷That 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.*

Hebrews 6:13, 14, 17 *For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, ¹⁴Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.... ¹⁷Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath.*

“On Mount Moriah, God again renewed His covenant, confirming with a solemn oath the blessing to Abraham and to his seed through all coming generations: ‘By Myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, 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 seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.’” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 153.

7. Of what nature were the blessings that the Lord promised to Abraham and his seed? Who is the true Offspring, the Bearer of the gospel of salvation?

Romans 4:13 *For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*

Galatians 3:16 *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*

"Abraham himself was to share the inheritance.... The gift to Abraham and his seed included not merely the land of Canaan, but the whole earth. So says the apostle, 'The promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.' Romans 4:13. And the Bible plainly teaches that the promises made to Abraham are to be fulfilled through Christ. All that are Christ's are 'Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise'—heirs to 'an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away'—the earth freed from the curse of sin. Galatians 3:29; 1 Peter 1:4. For 'the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High,' and 'the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.' Daniel 7:27; Psalm 37:11." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 169.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 367.

"The father is the lawmaker of the household; and, like Abraham, he should make the law of God the rule of his home. God said of Abraham, 'I know him, that he will command his children and his household.' Genesis 18:19. There would be no sinful neglect to restrain evil, no weak, unwise, indulgent favoritism; no yielding of his conviction of duty to the claims of mistaken affection. Abraham would not only give right instruction, but he would maintain the authority of just and righteous laws. God has given rules for our guidance. Children should not be left to wander away from the safe path marked out in God's word, into ways leading to danger, which are open on every side. Kindly, but firmly, with persevering, prayerful effort, their wrong desires should be restrained, their inclinations denied." —*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 390, 391.

* * *

Sabbath, July 27, 2019

An Illustration of Christ

“Joseph illustrates Christ.... Joseph’s integrity and virtue were fiercely assailed, and she who would lead him astray could not prevail, therefore her hatred was strong against the virtue and integrity which she could not corrupt, and she testified falsely against him. The innocent suffered because of his righteousness. He was cast into prison because of his virtue. Joseph was sold to his enemies by his own brethren for a small sum of money. The Son of God was sold to His bitterest enemies by one of His own disciples. Jesus was meek and holy. His was a life of unexampled self-denial, goodness, and holiness. He was not guilty of any wrong. Yet false witnesses were hired to testify against Him. He was hated because He had been a faithful reprovener of sin and corruption. Joseph’s brethren stripped him of his coat of many colors. The executioners of Jesus cast lots for His seamless coat.” *—Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 174; *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1096.

JOSEPH AS VIEWED BY HIS BROTHERS

1. **What do we know about the youth of Joseph and his actions when he was still at home with his family? How did his brothers consider him?**

Genesis 37:2, first part, 4 ... *Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father’s wives.... “And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.*

“There was one, however, of a widely different character—the elder son of Rachel, Joseph, whose rare personal beauty seemed but to reflect an inward beauty of mind and heart. Pure, active, and joyous, the lad gave evidence also of moral earnestness and firmness. He listened to his father’s instructions, and loved to obey God. The qualities that afterward distinguished him in Egypt—gentleness, fidelity, and truthfulness—were already manifest in his daily life. His mother being dead, his affections clung the more closely to the father, and Jacob’s heart was bound up in this child of his old age. He ‘loved Joseph more than all his children.’ Genesis 37:3.” *—Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 209.

2. **What else made his brothers hate him? Was it his fault that the relationship between him and his brothers got worse and worse?**

Genesis 37:5 *And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.*

Acts 7:9, first part *And the patriarchs, moved with envy,...*

"His [Joseph's] brothers rudely repulsed him. He told them his errand, but they answered him not. Joseph was alarmed at their angry looks. Fear took the place of joy, and he instinctively shrank with dread from their presence. They then took hold of him violently. They taunted him with the admonitions he had given them in the past, accused him of relating his dreams to exalt himself above them in the mind of their father, that he might love him more than themselves." —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 140; *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1096.

SOLD AS A SLAVE

3. How far did his brothers' hatred go? Instead of shedding his innocent blood, what did they do? As Joseph, who was sold by one who gave the impression that he loved Him?

Genesis 37:19, 20, 26-28 *And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. ²⁰Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.... ²⁶And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? ²⁷Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. ²⁸Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.*

Matthew 26:15 *And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.*

"The life of Joseph illustrates the life of Christ. It was envy that moved the brothers of Joseph to sell him as a slave; they hoped to prevent him from becoming greater than themselves. And when he was carried to Egypt, they flattered themselves that they were to be no more troubled with his dreams, that they had removed all possibility of their fulfillment. But their own course was overruled by God to bring about the very event that they designed to hinder. So the Jewish priests and elders were jealous of Christ, fearing that He would attract the attention of the people from them. They put Him to death, to prevent Him from becoming king, but they were thus bringing about this very result." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 239.

4. What happened to Joseph in Egypt? Throughout all the years of heavy burdens and responsibilities away from his home, who was with Joseph and helped him in every way?

Genesis 37:36; 39:2, 3 *And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.... ^{39:2}And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. ³And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand.*

"Those who study the Bible, counsel with God, and rely upon Christ will be enabled to act wisely at all times and under all circumstances. Good principles will be illustrated in actual life. Only let the truth for this time be cordially received and become the basis of character, and it will produce steadfastness of purpose,

which the allurements of pleasure, the fickleness of custom, the contempt of the world-loving, and the heart's own clamors for self-indulgence are powerless to influence. Conscience must be first enlightened, the will must be brought into subjection. The love of truth and righteousness must reign in the soul, and a character will appear which heaven can approve." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 43.

5. After the bitter experience with his brothers, who tried to trap him and hated and denounced him when he refused to compromise? What did he suffer, even though he was innocent?

Genesis 39:7, 9, last part, 12, 16-20 *And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me....⁹How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?...¹²And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out....¹⁶And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.¹⁷And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me:¹⁸And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.¹⁹And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.²⁰And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.*

"Joseph regarded his being sold into Egypt as the greatest calamity that could have befallen him; but he saw the necessity of trusting in God as he had never done when protected by his father's love. Joseph brought God with him into Egypt, and the fact was made apparent by his cheerful demeanor amid his sorrow. As the ark of God brought rest and prosperity to Israel, so did this God-loving, God-fearing youth bring a blessing to Egypt. This was manifested in so marked a manner that Potiphar, in whose house he served, attributed all his blessings to his purchased slave, and made him a son rather than a servant. It is God's purpose that those who love and honor His name shall be honored also themselves, and that the glory given to God through them shall be reflected upon themselves." —(The Youth's Instructor, March 11, 1897) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1096.

CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES

6. What critical situation arose in Canaan, in the house of Jacob? What did Joseph's brothers have to do for the extended family to survive during the famine?

Genesis 41:57; 42:1-3 *And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands....^{42:1}Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another?²And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.³And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.*

"The famine extended to the land of Canaan and was severely felt in that part of the country where Jacob dwelt. Hearing of the abundant provision made by the king of Egypt, ten of Jacob's sons journeyed thither to purchase grain. On their

arrival they were directed to the king's deputy, and with other applicants they came to present themselves before the ruler of the land. And they 'bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth.' 'Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.' Genesis 42:6, 8." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 224.

- 7. How did Joseph feel when he saw his brothers after a very long time, especially since the last time he had seen them, some of them wanted to kill him and then they sold him into slavery? How did he welcome them the second time they visited Egypt?**

Genesis 42:24; 43:16, 33, 34 *And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes....* ^{43:16}*And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon....* ³³*And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.* ³⁴*And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.*

"Seeing their confusion, he said kindly, 'Come near to me, I pray you;' and as they came near, he continued, 'I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.' Genesis 45:4, 5. Feeling that they had already suffered enough for their cruelty toward him, he nobly sought to banish their fears and lessen the bitterness of their self-reproach." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 230, 231.

"Joseph bore the test of character in adversity, and the gold was undimmed by prosperity. He showed the same sacred regard for God's will when he stood next to the throne as when in the prisoner's cell. Joseph carried his religion everywhere, and this was the secret of his unwavering fidelity." —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 94.

TENDERNESS, LOVE, AND FORGIVENESS

- 8. What was demonstrated when Joseph made himself known to his brothers? Instead of condemning them for the evil they had done to him, what did he do?**

Genesis 45:3-5 *And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. ⁴And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. ⁵Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.*

"Joseph was one of the few who could withstand temptation. He showed that he had an eye single to the glory of God. He evidenced a lofty regard for God's will, alike when occupying the prisoner's cell and when standing next the throne. He carried his religion with him wherever he went and in whatever situation he was placed. True religion has an all-pervading power. It gives tone to everything man does. You need not go out of the world in order to be a Christian, but you may carry your religion, with all its sanctifying influences, into all you do and say. You may

discharge well the duties belonging to the situation where God has placed you, by keeping the heart fixed upon heavenly things, and thus break the spell now upon you through unwise association. Had you followed the light you would now be able to escape the snares which those who discern not the will of God have laid to captivate your soul." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 124.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"The integrity of Joseph and his wonderful work in preserving the lives of the whole Egyptian people were a representation of the life of Christ." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 286.

"The lessons given Joseph in his youth by Jacob in expressing his firm trust in God and relating to him again and again the precious evidences of His lovingkindness and unceasing care were the very lessons he needed in his exile among an idolatrous people. In the testing time he put these lessons to a practical use. When under the severest trial, he looked to his heavenly Father, whom he had learned to trust. Had the precepts and example of the father of Joseph been of an opposite character, the pen of inspiration would never have traced upon the pages of sacred history the story of integrity and virtue that shines forth in the character of Joseph. The early impressions made upon his mind garrisoned his heart in the hour of fierce temptation and led him to exclaim, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' Genesis 39:9." —*Child Guidance*, p. 197.

* * *

5

Sabbath, August 3, 2019

God's Covenant with His People

"In the most definite manner, God through Moses set before them His purpose and 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.... 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,... Thou shalt be blessed above all people.' Deuteronomy 7:6-14." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 222.

- 1. After promising Abraham that his descendants would be as the stars of heaven, what did the Lord tell him? Who would be part of the covenant forever?**

Genesis 17:6-8, 19, 21 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. ⁷And 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. 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.... ¹⁹And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.... ²¹But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

“... The Lord manifested Himself again to Abraham and said unto him, ‘I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant.’ Again the Lord repeated by His angel His promise to give Sarah a son, and that she should be a mother of many nations. Abraham did not yet understand the promise of God. His mind immediately rested upon Ishmael, as though through him would come the many nations promised, and he exclaimed, in his affection for his son, ‘O that Ishmael might live before Thee!’

“Again the promise is more definitely repeated to Abraham: ‘Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.’ Genesis 17:18, 19.” —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 78.

PROMISES AND COVENANT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

2. When Israel became a great multitude, what promises and covenant did the Lord repeat to comfort His people and prepare them for the exodus from Egypt?

Exodus 6:3-8 *And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. ⁴And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. ⁵And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. ⁶Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: ⁷And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the Lord.*

“When God called Moses,... He knew that the people were in blindness and ignorance, that their minds had become beclouded in faith, and that they were almost destitute of a knowledge of God. They had become degraded by associating with a nation of idolaters, and had corrupted their ways by practicing idolatry. Yet there were many who were righteous and steadfast among this downtrodden people. The Lord directed Moses to give them a message from Himself. He said: ‘Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.’ Exodus 6:6, 7.” —*Review and Herald*, December 17, 1895.

3. After the Lord set the Israelites free and they were on their way to the promised land, what promises did the Lord have Moses repeat to the congregation? What other promises did He add?

Exodus 19:5, 6 *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:⁶ And 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.*

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

“Their obedience to the 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, pp. 221, 222.

GIFT OF FREEDOM AND THE RENEWED COVENANT

4. Before giving the law on Mount Sinai, what did the Lord give to His people? Still today, how significant is it that the Lord makes us free from spiritual slavery before entrusting us with His law?

Exodus 19:4; 20:2; 29:46 *Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself....^{20:21} am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage....^{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.*

“‘With great power, and with a mighty hand,’ God brought His chosen people out of the land of Egypt. Exodus 32:11. ‘He sent Moses His servant; and Aaron whom He had chosen. They showed His signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.’ ‘He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up: so He led them through the depths.’ Psalm 105:26, 27; 106:9. He rescued them from their servile state, that He might bring them to a good land, a land which in His providence He had prepared for them as a refuge from their enemies. He would bring them to Himself and encircle them in His everlasting arms; and in return for His goodness and mercy they were to exalt His name and make it glorious in the earth.” —*Prophecies and Kings*, p. 16.

5. Besides the promises, what was included in the covenant that the Lord proposed to His people? Instead of a simple signature, what was necessary for the ratification of the covenant? What does the sprinkling of blood signify?

Exodus 24:12 *And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.*

Nehemiah 9:13 *Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments.*

Exodus 24:7, 8 *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. ⁸And 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.*

“All through the pages of sacred history, where the dealings of God with His chosen people are recorded, there are burning traces of the great I AM. Never has He given to the sons of men more open manifestations of His power and glory than when He alone was acknowledged as Israel’s ruler, and gave the law to His people. Here was a scepter swayed by no human hand; and the stately goings forth of Israel’s invisible King were unspeakably grand and awful.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 365.

GOD’S DESIRE FOR A HOLY PEOPLE

6. What was and is the Lord’s primary desire for His people?

Exodus 22:31, first part *And ye shall be holy men unto me:...*

Leviticus 11:44, first part, 45 *For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy.... ⁴⁵For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.*

“God requires moral perfection in all. Those who have been given light and opportunities should, as God’s stewards, aim for perfection, and never, never lower the standard of righteousness to accommodate inherited and cultivated tendencies to wrong. Christ took upon Him our human nature, and lived our life, to show us that we may be like Him by partaking of the divine nature. We may be holy, as Christ was holy in human nature. Why then are there so many disagreeable characters in the world? It is because they do not suspect that their disagreeable ways and rough, impolite speech is the result of an unholy heart....” —*This Day with God*, p. 32.

7. Were freedom, the covenant with God, His promises, His government, and the possession of the promised land all granted because of the people’s works or merit? Are justification and salvation granted because of man’s actions and goodness?

Deuteronomy 9:4-6, 13 *Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee. ⁵Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ⁶Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.... ¹³Fur-*

thermore the Lord spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people.

“The nearer we come to Jesus and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly we shall discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the less we shall feel like exalting ourselves. Those whom heaven recognizes as holy ones are the last to parade their own goodness.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 160.

“Come with humble hearts, not thinking that you must do some good work to merit the favor of God, or that you must make yourself better before you can come to Christ. You are powerless to do good, and cannot better your condition. Apart from Christ we have no merit, no righteousness. Our sinfulness, our weakness, our human imperfection make it impossible that we should appear before God unless we are clothed in Christ’s spotless righteousness. We are to be found in Him not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness which is in Christ.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 333.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“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.

* * *

6

Sabbath, August 10, 2019

The Ten Commandments and Love

“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.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 320.

1. What does the Lord emphasize in the First Commandment regarding His relationship with His people and His right to their heartfelt worship?

Exodus 20:2, 3 *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ³Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

“Jehovah revealed Himself, not alone in the awful majesty of the judge and lawgiver, but as the compassionate guardian of His people: ‘I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.’ He whom they had already known as their Guide and Deliverer, who had brought them forth from Egypt, making a way for them through the sea, and overthrowing Pharaoh and his hosts, who had thus shown Himself to be above all the gods of Egypt—He it was who now spoke His law.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 114.

GOD’S MERCY

2. How broad and extensive is the Lord’s mercy for those who love Him and keep His commandments? Is there a difference between the measure of mercy presented in the gospel and that which is given in Exodus 20?

Exodus 20:4-6 *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: ⁵Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; ⁶And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

“‘Showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.’ In prohibiting the worship of false gods, the second commandment by implication enjoins the worship of the true God. And to those who are faithful in His service, mercy is promised, not merely to the third and fourth generation as is the wrath threatened against those who hate Him, but to thousands of generations.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 306.

“In rejecting the truth, men reject its Author. In trampling upon the law of God, they deny the authority of the Lawgiver. It is as easy to make an idol of false doctrines and theories as to fashion an idol of wood or stone.... Thousands deify nature while they deny the God of nature. Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world today as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah. The god of many professedly wise men, of philosophers, poets, politicians, journalists—the god of polished fashionable circles, of many colleges and universities, even of some theological institutions—is little better than Baal, the sun-god of Phoenicia.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 583.

3. In the example of God’s resting after the creation was completed, what did He give to and require of those who were created in His image? In addition to physical and spiritual rest, what other beautiful promise did He connect with the observance of His holy day?

Exodus 20:8-11 *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: ¹⁰But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy*

gates: ¹¹For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Isaiah 56:2 *Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.*

“Six days were employed in the work of creation; upon the seventh, God rested, and He then blessed this day, and set it apart as a day of rest for man.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 111.

“The Sabbath is a token between God and His people. It is a holy day, given by the Creator to us as a day upon which to rest, and reflect upon sacred things. God designed it to be observed through every age as a perpetual covenant....” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 110.

“All heaven was represented to me as beholding and watching upon the Sabbath those who acknowledge the claims of the fourth commandment and are observing the Sabbath. Angels were marking their interest in, and high regard for, this divine institution. Those who sanctified the Lord God in their hearts by a strictly devotional frame of mind, and who sought to improve the sacred hours in keeping the Sabbath to the best of their ability, and to honor God by calling the Sabbath a delight—these the angels were specially blessing with light and health, and special strength was given them.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 704, 705.

REMEMBER ALL HIS BENEFITS

4. What great privilege did the Sabbath commandment grant to slaves even in ancient times? What did they and will we remember so as to observe the holy day of rest with deep gratitude?

Deuteronomy 5:13-15 *Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: ¹⁴But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. ¹⁵And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.*

“God has given us the whole of six days in which to do our work, and has reserved only one to Himself. This should be a day of blessing to us—a day when we should lay aside all our secular matters and center our thoughts upon God and heaven....

“The Sabbath of the Lord is to be made a blessing to us and to our children. They are to look upon the Sabbath as a day of delight, a day which God has sanctified; and they will so consider it if they are properly instructed.” —*Child Guidance*, pp. 529, 531.

5. What promise is linked to the observance of the fifth commandment that encompasses the esteem and respect owed to one’s parents? What does this reveal about the heart of the Decalogue?

Exodus 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Ephesians 6:1, 2 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. ²Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise.

“Here is a commandment with a promise which the Lord will surely fulfill to those who obey.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 108; *The Adventist Home*, p. 75.

“This is the first commandment with promise. It is binding upon childhood and youth, upon the middle-aged and the aged. There is no period in life when children are excused from honoring their parents. This solemn obligation is binding upon every son and daughter and is one of the conditions to their prolonging their lives upon the land which the Lord will give the faithful. This is not a subject unworthy of notice, but a matter of vital importance. The promise is upon condition of obedience. If you obey, you shall live long in the land which the Lord your God gives you. If you disobey, you shall not prolong your life in that land.” —*The Adventist Home*, pp. 292, 293.

THE FOUNDATION OF GOD’S LAW

6. Are love and grace the bases of only some commandments or of them all? What is included in the phrase used by Jesus, “all the law and the prophets”?

Matthew 22:36-40 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? ³⁷Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

“He here explicitly shows the questioner the two great principles of the law: Love to God and love to man. Upon these two principles of God’s moral government hang all the law and the prophets. The first four commandments indicate the duty of man to his Creator; and the first and great commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. This love is not a passion, nor a fruitless faith in the existence and power of God, a cold acknowledgment of His boundless love; but it is a living, active principle, manifested in willing obedience of all His requirements.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, pp. 51, 52.

“The divine law requires us to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. Without the exercise of this love, the highest profession of faith is mere hypocrisy. ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments,’ says Christ, ‘hang all the law and the prophets.’ Matthew 22:37-40.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 218.

7. If the foundation of the Ten Commandments is love, what is necessary for them to be obeyed? Therefore, how is the divine law best summarized?

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.*¹⁰ *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

Galatians 5:14 *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

“God is love, and His law is love. Its two great principles are love to God and love to man. ‘Love is the fulfilling of the law.’ Romans 13:10. The character of God is righteousness and truth; such is the nature of His law. Says the psalmist: ‘Thy law is the truth:’ ‘all Thy commandments are righteousness.’ Psalm 119:142, 172. And the apostle Paul declares: ‘The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.’ Romans 7:12. Such a law, being an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 467.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“The love of Christ must control our hearts, and the peace of God will abide in our homes. Seek God with a broken and contrite spirit, and you will be melted with compassion toward your brethren. You will be prepared to add to brotherly kindness, charity, or love. Without charity we will become ‘as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.’ Our highest professions are hollow and insincere; but ‘love is the fulfilling of the law.’ We shall be found wanting, if we do not add charity that suffereth long and is kind, that vaunteth not itself, that seeketh not her own.” —*Review and Herald*, February 21, 1888.

“When the sinner sees his Saviour dying upon the cross under the curse of sin in his stead, beholding His pardoning love, love awakes in his heart. The sinner loves Christ, because Christ has first loved him, and love is the fulfilling of the law. The repenting soul realizes that God ‘is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ The Spirit of God works in the believer’s soul, enabling him to advance from one line of obedience to another, reaching on from strength to greater strength, from grace to grace in Jesus Christ.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 374, 375.

* * *

7

Sabbath, August 17, 2019

Confession, Sacrifice, and Forgiveness

“The sacrificial offerings were ordained by God to be to man a perpetual reminder and a penitential acknowledgment of his sin and a confession of his faith in the promised Redeemer. They were intended to impress upon the fallen race the solemn truth that it was sin that caused death.” —*Lift Him up*, p. 324.

- 1. What is man’s natural condition? Is he able to recognize his own weaknesses and sins by himself?**

Jeremiah 17:9 *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

Psalms 19:12 *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

"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.

DEFINING SIN

2. What has the Lord given man to make this recognition possible? With this means of identification available, can the Ten Commandments provide justification to the one who has transgressed them?

Romans 7:7; 3:20 *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....^{3:20} 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.*

"Our love to Christ will be in proportion to the depth of our conviction of sin, and by the law is the knowledge of sin." —*Faith and Works*, p. 96.

"'By the law is the knowledge of sin.' Romans 3:20. In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God's great standard of righteousness. It is a mirror which shows the perfection of a righteous character and enables him to discern the defects of his own. The law reveals to man his sin.... It declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. He must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed; and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice...." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 20.

CONFESSION

3. What will follow with the help of the law when one acknowledges his sin?

Psalms 32:5 *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*

Proverbs 28:13 *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

"Sins not repented of are sins not forgiven. Those who think themselves forgiven for sins of which they have never felt the sinfulness and over which they have never felt contrition of soul, only deceive themselves.... Our strength lies in our conscious weakness.... In self-distrust we cry to God for help, and work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Casting away all confidence in the arm of flesh, we cling with firm grasp to Jesus...." —*Our High Calling*, p. 82.

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.’ The blessing comes because of pardon; pardon comes through faith that the sin, confessed and repented of, is borne by the great Sin-bearer.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 150.

4. When the old covenant was in effect in the time of the ceremonial sacrificial system, what did the penitent sinner do when, with the help of the law, he had become conscious of having committed sin?

Leviticus 4:27, 28, 32 *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.... ³²And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish.*

“The ceremonial law was to answer a particular purpose in Christ’s plan for the salvation of the race. The typical system of sacrifices and offerings was established that through these services the sinner might discern the great offering, Christ.... The ceremonial law was glorious; it was the provision made by Jesus Christ in counsel with His Father, to aid in the salvation of the race. The whole arrangement of the typical system was founded on Christ. Adam saw Christ prefigured in the innocent beast suffering the penalty of his transgression of Jehovah’s law.” —(Review and Herald, May 6, 1875) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 1094, 1095; *The Faith I Live by*, p. 106.

5. When he placed his hand on the victim’s head, what did the penitent confess? What did he then have to do to the innocent animal?

Leviticus 4:33; 5:5 *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering.... ^{5:5}And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing.*

“The most important part of the daily ministration was the service performed in behalf of individuals. The repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle, and, placing his hand upon the victim’s head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the innocent sacrifice. By his own hand the animal was then slain, and the blood was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil, behind which was the ark containing the law that the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the sanctuary. In some cases the blood was not taken into the holy place; but the flesh was then to be eaten by the priest, as Moses directed the sons of Aaron, saying, ‘God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation.’ Leviticus 10:17.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 354.

THE EFFECTIVE SACRIFICE

6. What was done with the blood of the victim that symbolically took the place of the penitent? In reality, who would be sacrificed one day as the Lamb of God for the forgiveness of man’s trespasses?

Leviticus 4:30, 31 *And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. ³¹And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the Lord; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.*

Matthew 26:28 *For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

“The ceremonial law was given by Christ.... The solemn service of the sanctuary typified the grand truths that were to be revealed through successive generations. The cloud of incense ascending with the prayers of Israel represents His righteousness that alone can make the sinner’s prayer acceptable to God; the bleeding victim on the altar of sacrifice testified of a Redeemer to come; and from the holy of holies the visible token of the divine Presence shone forth. Thus through age after age of darkness and apostasy faith was kept alive in the hearts of men until the time came for the advent of the promised Messiah.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 367.

“Faith, in itself, is an act of the mind. Jesus Himself is the Author and the Finisher of our faith. He gave His life for us; and His blood speaks in our behalf better things than spoke the blood of Abel, which cried unto God against Cain the murderer. Christ’s blood was shed to remit our sins.” —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 77.

7. In the fullness of time, what happened with the animals that were sacrificed under the Levitical system? Whose life was offered in sacrifice for the redemption of the penitents who believe in Him?

Hebrews 9:11, 12, 14 *But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; ¹²Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us....*

¹⁴*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

“Through Christ, restoration as well as reconciliation is provided for man. The gulf that was made by sin has been spanned by the cross of Calvary. A full, complete ransom has been paid by Jesus, by virtue of which the sinner is pardoned, and the justice of the law is maintained. All who believe that Christ is the atoning sacrifice may come and receive pardon for their sins; for through the merit of Christ, communication has been opened between God and man. God can accept me as His child, and I can claim Him and rejoice in Him as my loving Father. We must center our hopes of heaven upon Christ alone, because He is our substitute and surety.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 363.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“Type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. Our great High Priest has made the only sacrifice that is of any value in our salvation. When He offered Himself on the cross, a perfect atonement was made for the sins of the people. We are now standing in the outer court, waiting and looking for that

blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. No sacrifices are to be offered without, for the great High Priest is performing His work in the Most Holy Place. In His intercession as our advocate, Christ needs no man's virtue, no man's intercession. He is the only sin-bearer, the only sin-offering. Prayer and confession are to be offered only to Him who has entered once for all into the Most Holy Place. He will save to the uttermost all who come to Him in faith. He ever liveth to make intercession for us...." —*Lift Him up*, p. 319.

* * *

8

Sabbath, August 24, 2019

Rejoicing in God's Presence

"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, worshiping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul." —*Education*, p. 36.

A SPECIAL REVELATION OF GOD

1. What great event did the Israelites personally witness at the foot of Mount Sinai? Whose voice did they hear?

Exodus 19:11, 16, 20 *And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai....* ¹⁶*And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that ...* ²⁰*the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.*

Deuteronomy 4:12 *And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.*

"The Lord then gave Moses express directions in regard to preparing the people for Him to approach nigh to them, that they might hear His law spoken, not by angels, but by Himself.... The people were required to refrain from worldly labor and care, and to possess devotional thoughts. God required them also to wash their clothes. He is no less particular now than He was then." —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 233.

"The sound of a trumpet summoned Israel to meet with God.... The Father and the Son, attended by a multitude of angels, were present upon the mount.... When the divine Presence was manifested upon Sinai, the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire in the sight of all Israel." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 339.

2. After His powerful declaration of His law and government on Sinai, what did the Lord instruct the people to build? What was His purpose for this?

Exodus 25:8, 22; 29:42-46 *And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them....²²And 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....^{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.⁴⁴And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office.⁴⁵And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.⁴⁶And 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.*

“‘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....

“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....” —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 192.

3. What other manifestation of God's glory occurred during the dedication of the sanctuary? After that, what continual manifestation of the divine presence was above 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.*

“After the work of the tabernacle was finished, ‘a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.’...

“The Lord directed the Israelites in all their travels through the wilderness. When it was for the good of the people, and the glory of God, that they should pitch their tents in a certain place, and there abide, God signified His will to them by the pillar of cloud resting low directly over the tabernacle. And there it remained until God would have them journey again. Then the cloud of glory was lifted up high above the tabernacle, and then they journeyed again.” —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, p. 10.

“Moses called their attention.... 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?’” —*Signs of the Times*, May 13, 1886.

- 4. Even if some of the people were away from their land, what promise did the Lord give through His prophet? As a father with his children, what deep desire do the messages from the Lord show?**

Zechariah 2:10; 8:3 *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord....* ^{8:3}*Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain.*

"This promise of blessing should have met fulfillment in large measure during the centuries following the return of the Israelites from the lands of their captivity. It was God's design that the whole earth be prepared for the first advent of Christ, even as today the way is preparing for His second coming. At the end of the years of humiliating exile, God graciously gave to His people Israel, through Zechariah, the assurance: 'I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain.' And of His people He said, 'Behold,... I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.' Zechariah 8:3, 7, 8." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 703, 704.

- 5. When the fullness of time came, how did the Lord manifest Himself among men? How did John and Jesus Himself speak of His human body that the people observed every day during His sojourn on earth?**

John 1:14; 2:19-21; 4:23, 24 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth....* ^{2:19}*Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* ²⁰*Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?* ²¹*But he spake of the temple of his body....* ^{4:23}*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.* ²⁴*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

"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.

- 6. Whom did those who had the privilege of seeing Jesus during His ministry really see?**

John 14:9 *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*

John 12:44, 45 *Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. ⁴⁵And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.*

“Who is Christ? He is the only begotten Son of the living God. He is to the Father as a word that expresses the thought—as a thought made audible. Christ is the word of God. Christ said to Philip, ‘He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.’ His words were the echo of God’s words. Christ was the likeness of God, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.

“As a personal being, God has revealed Himself in His Son. Jesus, the outshining of the Father’s glory, ‘and the express image of his person’ (Hebrews 1:3), was on earth found in fashion as a man. As a personal Saviour He came to the world. As a personal Saviour He ascended on high. As a personal Saviour He intercedes in the heavenly courts. Before the throne of God in our behalf ministers ‘One like unto the Son of man.’ Revelation 1:13.” —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 21.

MINISTERING IN HEAVEN

7. When the earthly temple services were finished, where did our Redeemer continue His mediatorial work? When will God’s desire to be among His people be completely fulfilled, and His people rejoice in His presence forever?

Hebrews 8:1, 2; 7:25 *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 in the heavens; ²A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.... ^{7:25}Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

1 John 2:1, 2 *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ²And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

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.*

“By His spotless life, His obedience, His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ interceded for the lost race. And now not as a mere petitioner does the Captain of our salvation intercede for us, but as a conqueror claiming His victory. His offering is complete, and as our Intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censer containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people. Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, the incense ascends to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgression. To the true believer Christ is indeed the minister of the sanctuary, officiating for him in the sanctuary, and speaking through God’s appointed agencies.” —(Manuscript 142, 1899) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 930, 931.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“In the temple in heaven, the dwelling place of God, His throne is established in righteousness and judgment. In the most holy place is His law, the great rule of right by which all mankind are tested. The ark that enshrines the tables of the law is covered with the mercy seat, before which Christ pleads His blood in the sinner’s behalf. Thus is represented the union of justice and mercy in the plan of human redemption. This union infinite wisdom alone could devise and infinite power accomplish; it is a union that fills all heaven with wonder and adoration. The cherubim of the earthly sanctuary, looking reverently down upon the mercy seat, represent the interest with which the heavenly host contemplate the work of redemption. This is the mystery of mercy into which angels desire to look—that God can be just while He justifies the repenting sinner and renews His intercourse with the fallen race; that Christ could stoop to raise unnumbered multitudes from the abyss of ruin and clothe them with the spotless garments of His own righteousness to unite with angels who have never fallen and to dwell forever in the presence of God.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 415.

* * *

Please read the Missionary Report from the General Conference
Canvassing Department on page 45.

9

Sabbath, August 31, 2019

I Am Sorry for My Sin

“Shall we look at our sins, and begin to mourn, and say, I have done wrong, and I cannot come to God with any degree of confidence? Does not the Bible say, ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness?’ 1 John 1:9. It is a proper thing for us to have a realization of the terrible character of sin. It was sin that caused Christ to suffer ignominious death on Calvary. But while we should understand that sin a terrible thing, yet we should not listen to the voice of our adversary, who says, ‘You have sinned, and you have no right to claim the promises of God.’ You should say to the adversary, ‘It is written, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1.’” —*Our High Calling*, p. 83.

THE SINNER’S FEELINGS

- 1. How does a person feel when he becomes aware of his sins against God and men?**

Psalm 38:2 *For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.*

Job 6:4, first and last parts *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me,... the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.*

“Shall the example presented in the history of the children of Israel have any weight with us? Shall those who claim to believe the truth be influenced to judge

from their human feelings as did Israel? When the servants of God are called upon to do the disagreeable duty of correcting the erring, let not those upon whom the Lord has not laid this burden stand between the offender and God. If you cannot see matters in the light in which they have been presented, hold your peace; let the arrows of the Almighty fall just where He has directed they shall fall.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 125.

“With personal piety and a consistent course of life our earnest, heart-felt appeals will be, through God, as sharp arrows of the Almighty to pierce the sin-hardened heart, as sharp sickles to reap a precious harvest for the heavenly garner. If we are co-laborers with Christ, we shall all have sheaves to bring to the Master—souls saved through our instrumentality.” —*Review and Herald*, April 24, 1883.

2. How did the psalmist express his great grief over his sins and iniquities? Was he able to bear their heavy weight?

Psalms 38:4 *For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.*

Ezra 9:6 *And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.*

Psalms 40:12 *For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.*

Matthew 11:28 *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

“All are accountable for their actions while in this world upon probation. All have power to control their actions, if they will. If they are weak in virtue and purity of thoughts and acts, they can obtain help from the Friend of the helpless. Jesus is acquainted with all the weaknesses of human nature, and if entreated, will give strength to overcome the most powerful temptations. All can obtain this strength if they seek for it in humility.

“Jesus gives all a blessed invitation who are burdened and laden with sin, to come to Him, the sinner’s Friend. ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.’ Matthew 11:28-30.” —*An Appeal to Mothers*, pp. 31, 32.

“The great burden of every soul should be, Is my heart renewed? Is my soul transformed? Are my sins pardoned through faith in Christ? Have I been born again? Am I complying with the invitation, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest’? Matthew 11:28.... Do you count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus? And do you feel it your duty to believe every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God?” —(Manuscript 32, 1896) *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 117.

SORROW AND CONFESSION

3. Did he try to cover up or lessen his responsibility before God for his actions? How did he truly feel about his sin?

Psalm 38:18 *For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.*

2 Corinthians 7:9, 10 *Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. ¹⁰For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

Psalm 32:5 *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*

“The humble heart will not think confession beneath him. He will not feel it a disgrace to confess if he has in any way, even in thought, hurt his brother or hindered God’s work through him.

“Sins not repented of are sins not forgiven. Those who think themselves forgiven for sins of which they have never felt the sinfulness and over which they have never felt contrition of soul, only deceive themselves.... Our strength lies in our conscious weakness.... In self-distrust we cry to God for help, and work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Casting away all confidence in the arm of flesh, we cling with firm grasp to Jesus....” —*Our High Calling*, p. 82.

4. How is the sinner’s spiritual and psychological condition described? How much does one suffer when he has sinned and there is no human way to make it right or repair its consequences?

Psalm 38:3 *There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.*

Isaiah 1:6 *From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.*

Psalm 6:2 *Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed.*

“David often triumphed in God, and yet he dwelt much upon his own unworthiness and sinfulness. His conscience was not asleep or dead. ‘My sin,’ he cried, ‘is ever before me.’ Psalm 51:3. He did not flatter himself that sin was a matter with which he had nothing to do, and that should not concern him. As he saw the depths of deceit in his heart, he ... prayed that God would ... cleanse him from secret faults.

“It is not safe for us to close our eyes and harden our consciences, that we shall not see or realize our sins.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 82.

5. How wide, deep, and long is his unremitting sorrow?

Psalm 38:6 *I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.*

Job 30:28 *I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, and I cried in the congregation.*

Psalm 35:14, second part *I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*

"Seek the Lord with all your heart. Come with zeal, and when you sincerely feel that without the help of God you perish, when you pant after Him as the hart panteth after the water brooks, then will the Lord strengthen you speedily. Then will your peace pass all understanding. If you expect salvation, you must pray. Take time. Be not hurried and careless in your prayers. Beg of God to work in you a thorough reformation, that the fruits of His Spirit may dwell in you, and you shine as lights in the world. Be not a hindrance or curse to the cause of God; you can be a help, a blessing. Does Satan tell you that you cannot enjoy salvation full and free? Believe him not." —*Maranatha*, p. 69.

NO SELF-JUSTIFICATION

6. How may a person try to excuse or justify himself when he recognizes his guilt? Who alone can help in this terrible situation?

Psalms 38:13-15; 39:7, 8; 120:1; 118:5 *But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. ¹⁴Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. ¹⁵For in thee, O Lord, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.... ^{39:7}And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. ⁸Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.... ^{120:1}In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me.... ^{118:5}I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place.*

"Dear brother:... I know that you are often tempted and tried. I know that the Lord will not leave you to wrestle with these temptations alone. Only believe Jesus is your Helper, a very present help in time of trouble. Somehow today it seemed to me I must see you and bid you look up; yes, look up through the mist, through the clouds to the Sun of Righteousness. You must not be depressed. It is the depressing discouragements that are sapping your life forces. You must be cheerful even though disappointed in men. Jesus understands; Jesus is true; Jesus is your Saviour. Only a little while of trial, a little moment of affliction, then an eternal weight of glory....

"The deepest and truest philosophy of life and faith is to bring ourselves into the most intimate relation with God. God is giving you an experience, and if you do not grieve too much and feel too keenly, you will have physical strength. But sorrow and dissension and untruthfulness is to you a living death. But you must in faith commit your case to God. Truth will triumph and you will triumph with it." —*The Upward Look*, p. 276.

7. What can the repentant one who has committed a serious sin expect from people, such as his friends and companions? Who alone can give anyone freedom from transgression?

Psalms 38:11; 31:11; 32:3-6 *My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.... ^{31:11}I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.... ^{32:3}When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. ⁴For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drouth of summer. Selah. ⁵I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah. ⁶For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.*

"All the words of consolation I may give you will not amount to much. You know the Source of your strength and your consolation. You are not a stranger to Jesus and His love. You are among many to whom life is a long conflict of pain and weariness and disappointment. Hope deferred has made the heart sad, but this world is the scene of our trials, our griefs, our sorrows. We are here to bear the test of God. The fire of the furnace is to kindle till our dross is consumed and we come forth as gold purified in the furnace of affliction. You may, my dear brother, ponder upon the mysterious providence of God that has taken from you the light of your eyes." —*This Day with God*, p. 348.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"David was pardoned of his transgression because he humbled his heart before God in repentance and contrition of soul, and believed that God's promise to forgive would be fulfilled. He confessed his sin, repented, and was reconverted. In the rapture of the assurance of forgiveness, he exclaimed, 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.' Psalm 32:1, 2. The blessing comes because of pardon; pardon comes through faith that the sin, confessed and repented of, is borne by the great Sin Bearer. Thus from Christ cometh all our blessings. His death is an atoning sacrifice for our sins. He is the great Medium through whom we receive the mercy and favor of God." —*Our High Calling*, p. 83.

* * *

Missionary Report from the General Conference Canvassing Department

To be read on Sabbath, August 31, 2019

The Special Sabbath School Offering will be gathered on Sabbath, September 7, 2019

Momentous events are taking place in our world today. Everything is in agitation. Crime is increasing rapidly. Floods, famines, earthquakes, wars, and pestilences follow one another in quick succession. Surely we are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Only a moment of time remains for us to fulfill our Lord's commission to preach the gospel to every creature. We have His assurance of help in performing our task.

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Habakkuk 2:14. In vision, Sister Ellen G. White saw the Lord's glory prested as streams of light going around the world through the divine agency of the publishing work. How is God's glory to shine out? How are the publications and the canvassing work to go around the world?

The prophet Isaiah says: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isaiah 60:1.

When God has a work to do on this earth, He calls men and women to His service, and His glory shines through them. When Jesus looked at the unsaved multitudes, "He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and we're scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." He said, "The harvest truly

is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.” Matthew 9:36-38. What a scene is portrayed here—God’s children scattered like sheep without a shepherd. People are hurting today. Many are sick and discouraged, alone, and afraid. They live in villages and towns, and many are trapped in the large cities. To reach them, a call for laborers is proclaimed.

The great need of this hour, then, is colporteurs ...

- who are consecrated
- who are willing to do God’s work
- who will carry religious and health literature to every home
- who will share the truth
- who will shed the light of Jesus’ love in every home
- who will engage in God’s business
- who will sell books—God’s books

This includes all of the church members who will go out in spite of trying circumstances. Perhaps you are one of these men or women.

The distribution of literature is appointed by Heaven. It cannot, it must not, continue to be neglected. “Young men, young women, you are called by the Master to take up His work. There is a famine in the land for the pure gospel.” —(Manuscript 113, 1901) *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 24. The opportunity is open for you right now to become involved in the grandest project of the universe—giving God’s last warning to a judgment-bound world.

You may be impressed that God has a special place for you in the colporteur ministry. However, you may also feel very inadequate. Pay close attention to these words: “The Lord imparts a fitness for the work to every man and woman who will cooperate with divine power. All the requisite talent, courage, perseverance, faith, and tact will come as they put the armor on.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 333.

Your prayers and financial support are urged for the Special Sabbath School Offering to be gathered next week for the General Conference Canvassing Department. Your offerings will be a great help in training the young people to become successful colporteurs, as well as to pay for travel to different countries for canvassing seminars. “There is much to be done to advance the work of God. I have been instructed that the canvassing work is to be revived, and that it is to be carried forward with increasing success. It is the Lord’s work, and a blessing will attend those who engage in it with earnestness and diligence.” —(Review and Herald, January 20, 1903) *Colporteur Ministry*, pp. 17, 18.

The testimony of Jesus says: “Our hearts must be filled with unselfishness before we can enter the city of God. God’s people should bring their offerings to Him in much greater abundance, and with much more cheerfulness.” —*Review and Herald*, November 26, 1901.

We wish you the Lord’s abundant blessings! May He bless all of the canvassing leaders, colporteurs, young people, and believers!

—Joel N. Barnedo

General Conference Canvassing Department Leader

SPECIAL SABBATH SCHOOL OFFERING FOR
The General Conference Canvassing Department

GOD BLESS YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS!

10

Sabbath, September 7, 2019

I Love Your Law

“In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then ‘the righteousness of the law’ will ‘be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ Romans 8:4. And the language of the soul will be, ‘O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day.’ Psalm 119:97.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 468.

SORROW FOR VIOLATING GOD’S SACRED LAW

- 1. What great sorrow did the psalmist experience when he witnessed those who did not honor God’s law? What did he plead with God to do?**

Psalm 119:136, 126, 139 *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law....* ¹²⁶*It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law....* ¹³⁹*My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.*

“Like David, we may now pray, ‘It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law.’ Psalm 119:126. Men have gone on in disobedience to God’s law until they have reached a point of insolence that is unparalleled. Men are training in disobedience, and are fast approaching the limit of God’s forbearance and love.... Will God’s commandment-keeping people be carried away with the prevailing iniquity? Will they be tempted, because universal scorn is placed upon the law of God, to think less of that law which is the foundation of His government both in heaven and in earth? No. To His church His law becomes more precious, holy, honorable, as men cast upon it scorn and contempt. Like David they can say, ‘They have made void Thy law. Therefore I love Thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.’ Psalm 119:126-128.” —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 21.

- 2. What was the psalmist’s attitude toward the law of the Lord, in contrast to many in our days who consider it an unbearable yoke?**

Psalm 119:24, 47, 92, 113, 163 *Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counselors....* ⁴⁷*And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved....* ⁹²*Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction....* ¹¹³*I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love....* ¹⁶³*I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.*

“Where there is not only a belief in God’s Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God. And the heart that in its unrenewed state is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, now delights in its holy precepts, exclaiming with the psalmist, ‘O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day.’ Psalm 119:97. And the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, ‘who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ Romans 8:1.” —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 90.

“Some have not the love of God in the heart, softening, molding, and ennobling the life. The psalmist declares of the good man, ‘His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night.’ Referring to his own experience, he exclaims, ‘O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day.’ ‘Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in Thy word.’ Psalm 1:2; 119:97, 148.” —*Gospel Workers* (1892), p. 27.

THE LAW IS TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

3. What outstanding features can be seen in the law of the Lord? What positive effects does it have on the humble person who is willing to learn and follow the divine way?

Psalms 111:7, 8; 119:142; 19:7, 8; 119:96, 18 *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....* ^{119:142}*Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth....* ^{19:7}*The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.* ⁸*The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes....* ^{119:96}*I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad....* ¹⁸*Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*

“The character of God is righteousness and truth, and such is the nature of His law. The psalmist says, ‘Thy law is the truth’; ‘all Thy commandments are righteousness.’ Psalm 119:142, 172. And the apostle Paul declares, ‘The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.’ Romans 7:12. Such a law, an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 467.

“... The psalmist says: ‘Thy law is the truth.’ Psalm 119:142. By the Word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is ‘holy, and just, and good’ (Romans 7:12), a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says: ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ ‘I do always those things that please Him.’ John 15:10; 8:29. The followers of Christ are to become like Him—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law.” —*Maranatha*, p. 231.

4. For the inspired psalmist, are the teachings of the divine precepts something to practice occasionally or a path to walk in steadily and perseveringly? How?

Psalm 119:27, 32, 35 *Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works....³²I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart....³⁵Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.*

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

"The God of heaven has placed a benediction upon them that keep the commandments of God. Shall we stand as a peculiar people of God, or shall we trample upon the law of God and say it is not binding? God might just as well have abolished Himself....

"We gain ... strength by walking in the light, that we may have energy to run in the way of God's commandments. We may gain an increase of strength at every step we advance heavenward." —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 95.

BLESSINGS FOR THOSE WHO WALK IN THE LAW OF THE LORD

5. How did the psalmist describe those who walk in the divine law with all their hearts?

Psalms 119:1, 2; 128:1 *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.²Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart....^{128:1}Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.*

"Often He was asked, Why are you bent on being so singular, so different from us all? It is written, He said, 'Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways.' Psalm 119:1-3." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 89.

"God declares, 'I will put My laws in their minds.' David's prayer expresses this same precious assurance: 'Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity, they walk in His way. Thou hast commanded me to keep Thy precepts diligently.... Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all Thy commandments. I will praise Thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned Thy righteous judgments.... Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word. With my whole heart have I sought Thee; O, let me not wander from Thy commandments.' Psalm 119:1-10." —*The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters*, p. 4.

6. What value did he recognize in the holy commandments? What was his deep interest and great desire?

Psalm 119:40, 72, 97, 34, 35, 60 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.... ⁷²The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.... ⁹⁷O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.... ³⁴Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. ³⁵Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.... ⁶⁰I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

"The psalmist's words, 'The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver' (Psalm 119:72), state that which is true from other than a religious point of view. They state an absolute truth.... Even in this age of passion for money getting,... it is still widely acknowledged that ... integrity, diligence, temperance, purity, and thrift constitute a better capital than any amount of mere money." —*Education*, p. 137.

"Where there is not only a belief in God's Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God. And the heart that in its unrenewed state is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, now delights in its holy precepts, exclaiming with the psalmist, 'O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.' Psalm 119:97. And the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, 'who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' Romans 8:1." —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 90.

HOPE FOR SALVATION ONLY BY GRACE

7. Although he loved the law with all his heart and rejoiced in its observance, how did he view his own ability to obey it? What was his sole Source of hope for meeting its requirements?

Psalms 84:11; 109:26; 119:41; 69:16; 119:29 For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.... ^{109:26}Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy.... ^{119:41}Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord, even thy salvation, according to thy word.... ^{69:16}Hear me, O Lord; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.... ^{119:29}Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.

"All heaven is interested in our salvation." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253.

"His thoughts are thoughts of mercy, love, and tenderest compassion. He says, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.' 'I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins.' Isaiah 55:7; 44:22." —*Steps to Christ*, p. 53.

"Those who trust wholly in the righteousness of Christ, looking to Him in living faith, know the Spirit of Christ and are known of Christ. Simple faith enables the believer to reckon himself dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We are saved by grace through our faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God." —*Faith and Works*, p. 91.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"How, then, are we to be saved? 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,' so the Son of man has been lifted up, and everyone who has been deceived and bitten

by the serpent may look and live. 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' John 3:14; 1:29. The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ. The heart, the mind, are created anew in the image of Him who works in us to subdue all things to Himself. Then the law of God is written in the mind and heart, and we can say with Christ, 'I delight to do Thy will, O my God.' Psalm 40:8." —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 175, 176.

The incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which through faith is imputed to His people, and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God. Before the veil of the most holy place, was an altar of perpetual intercession, before the holy, an altar of continual atonement. By blood and by incense, God was to be approached—symbols pointing to the great Mediator, through whom sinners may approach Jehovah, and through whom alone mercy and salvation can be granted to the repentant, believing soul." —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 197.

* * *

11

Sabbath, September 14, 2019

Clean and White As Snow

"It is peace that you need—Heaven's forgiveness and peace and love in the soul. Money cannot buy it, intellect cannot procure it, wisdom cannot attain to it; you can never hope, by your own efforts, to secure it. But God offers it to you as a gift, 'without money and without price.' Isaiah 55:1. It is yours if you will but reach out your hand and grasp it. The Lord says, 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Isaiah 1:18. 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.' Ezekiel 36:26." —*A Call to Stand Apart*, p. 29.

AS DIRTY RAGS

1. What is clearly visible in human nature? To what do the Holy Scriptures compare man's human nature?

Isaiah 64:6 *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

Job 15:14 *What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?*

"The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden.... But when sin entered, they severed their connec-

tion with God, and the light that had encircled them departed.... Nothing can man devise to supply the place of his lost robe of innocence.... Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul,... This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. 'All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' Isaiah 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God 'was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.' 1 John 3:5...." —*Maranatha*, p. 78.

2. How possible is it for us, being unclean by nature, to change that nature by ourselves? Furthermore, how capable are we of giving birth to righteous children?

Jeremiah 13:23 *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.*

Job 25:4; 14:4 *How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?... ^{14:4}Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.*

"If you see your sinfulness, do not wait to make yourself better. How many there are who think they are not good enough to come to Christ. Do you expect to become better through your own efforts?... There is help for us only in God. We must not wait for stronger persuasions, for better opportunities, or for holier tempers. We can do nothing for ourselves. We must come to Christ just as we are.

"Yield yourself to Christ without delay; He alone, by the power of His grace, can redeem you from ruin. He alone can bring your moral and mental powers into a state of health." —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 133.

DEEP LONGING OF THE REPENTANT SOUL

3. What is the deep wish and prayer of the sincere soul who recognizes his sinful nature and is sorry for his unseemly behavior?

Psalms 51:2, 7, 10 *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.... ⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.... ¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*

"Do not listen to the enemy's suggestion to stay away from Christ until you have made yourself better, until you are good enough to come to God. If you wait until then you will never come. When Satan points to your filthy garments, repeat the promise of the Saviour, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' John 6:37. Tell the enemy that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. Make the prayer of David your own: 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' Psalm 51:7." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 320.

"The hyssop used in sprinkling the blood was the symbol of purification, being thus employed in the cleansing of the leper and of those defiled by contact with the dead. In the psalmist's prayer also its significance is seen: 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' Psalm 51:7." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 277.

4. On the other hand, what does the Lord feel for fallen man? What does He want to do with man's transgression?

Isaiah 43:25; 41:14 *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins....* ^{41:14}*Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.*

"There is forgiveness with God; there is acceptance full and free through the merits of Jesus, our crucified and risen Lord. Isaiah heard the Lord declaring to His chosen ones: 'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put Me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.' 'Thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.' Isaiah 43:25, 26; 60:16." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 723.

"The moment you grasp God's promises by faith and say, I am the lost sheep that Jesus came to save, a new life will take possession of you, and you will receive strength to resist the tempter. But faith to grasp the promises does not come by feeling. 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' Romans 10:17. You must not look for some great change to take place; you must not expect to feel some wonderful emotion...." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 116.

5. For the very reason that He is fully aware of man's situation, what does the Lord invite everyone to do? What hope of forgiveness is there if one's sins are "red like crimson"?

Isaiah 1:18; 43:4 *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool....* ^{43:4}*Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.*

"Christ was manifested as the Saviour of men. The people were not to trust in their own works, in their own righteousness, or in themselves in any way, but in the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. In Him the Advocate with the Father was revealed. Through Him the invitation was given, 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Isaiah 1:18. This invitation comes sounding down along the lines to us today. Let not pride, or self-esteem, or self-righteousness keep any one from confessing his sins, that he may claim the promise: 'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.' Proverbs 28:13. Keep nothing back from God, and neglect not the confession of your faults to the brethren when they have a connection with them." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 239.

NOT REDEEMED WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS

6. What made it possible for the Saviour to bring about man's rescue? What immense suffering and sacrifice did He go through to forgive man's transgression and heal his wounds?

Isaiah 53:5 *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

1 Peter 1:18, 19 *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; ¹⁹But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

“What a theme for meditation is the sacrifice that Jesus made for lost sinners! ‘He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.’ Isaiah 53:5. How shall we estimate the blessings thus brought within our reach? Could Jesus have suffered more? Could He have purchased for us richer blessings? Should it not melt the hardest heart when we remember that for our sakes He left the happiness and glory of heaven and suffered poverty and shame, cruel affliction and a terrible death? Had He not by His death and resurrection opened for us the door of hope, we should have known nothing but the horrors of darkness and the miseries of despair. In our present state, favored and blessed as we are, we cannot realize from what depths we have been rescued. We cannot measure how much deeper our afflictions would have been, how much greater our woes, had not Jesus encircled us with His human arm of sympathy and love, and lifted us up.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 316.

7. Having blotted out all of man’s transgressions in Jesus Christ, what does the Lord offer to all who wish to follow Him?

Isaiah 44:22; 46:13; 51:5 *I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.... ^{46:13}I bring near my righteousness: it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.... ^{51:5}My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.*

“Christ dying upon the cross of Calvary is drawing his attention. Why did Christ die? Because it was the only means for man to be saved,... He took upon Himself our sins that He might impute His righteousness to all who believe in Him.... The goodness and the love of God lead the sinner to repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The awakened sinner ... is pointed to the law he has transgressed. It calls to him to repent, yet there is no saving quality in law to pardon the transgression of law, and his case seems hopeless. But the law draws him to Christ. However deep are his sins of transgression, the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse him from all sin....” —*Our High Calling*, p. 141.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“The Christian’s godly life and holy conversation are a daily testimony against sin and sinners. But he must present Christ, not self. Christ is the great remedy for sin. Our compassionate Redeemer has provided for us the help we need. He is waiting to impute His righteousness to the sincere penitent, and to kindle in his heart such divine love as only our gracious Redeemer can inspire. Then let us who profess to be His witnesses on earth, His ambassadors from the court of heaven, glorify Him whom we represent, by being faithful to our trust as light bearers to the world.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 314.

* * *

He Will Justify Many

“The grace of Christ and the law of God are inseparable. In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. In His life and character He not only reveals the character of God, but the possibility of man.... Through the cross the sinner was drawn from the stronghold of sin, from the confederacy of evil, and at every approach to the cross his heart relents and in penitence he cries, ‘It was my sins that crucified the Son of God.’ At the cross he leaves his sins, and through the grace of Christ his character is transformed. The Redeemer raises the sinner from the dust, and places him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As the sinner looks upon the Redeemer, he finds hope, assurance, and joy. Faith takes hold of Christ in love. Faith works by love, and purifies the soul.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 349.

HE WILL GROW UP LIKE A TENDER PLANT

- 1. With what beautiful comparison do the prophetic writings represent the appearance and development of the Lord’s Servant? Let us seriously consider how we estimate His value.**

Isaiah 52:13, first part; 53:2, 3 *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently....^{53:2} For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. ³He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

“Throughout His [Christ’s] childhood and youth, He manifested the perfection of character that marked His after life. He grew in wisdom and knowledge. As He witnessed the sacrificial offerings, the Holy Spirit taught Him that His life was to be sacrificed for the life of the world. He grew up as a tender plant, not in the large and noisy city, that is full of confusion and strife, but in the retired valleys among the hills. He was guarded from His earliest years by heavenly angels, yet His life was one long struggle against the powers of darkness. Satanic agencies combined with human instrumentalities to make His life one of temptation and trial. Through supernatural agencies, His words, which were life and salvation to all who receive and practice them, were perverted and misinterpreted.” —*Signs of the Times*, August 6, 1896.

- 2. What griefs and sorrows did He carry? For whose transgressions and iniquities was He wounded?**

Isaiah 53:4, 5 *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

"While as a member of the human family He was mortal, as God He was the fountain of life for the world. He could have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but voluntarily He laid down His life, that He might bring life and immortality to light. He bore the sin of the world, endured its curse, yielded up His life as a sacrifice, that men might not eternally die. 'Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.' Isaiah 53:4." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 484.

"In coming to the world in human form, in becoming subject to the law, in revealing to men that He bore their sickness, their sorrow, their guilt, Christ did not become a sinner. He was pure and uncontaminated by any disease. Not one stain of sin was found upon Him.... He stood before the world the spotless Lamb of God. When suffering humanity pressed about Him, He who was in the health of perfect manhood was as one afflicted with them. This was essential, that He might express His perfect love in behalf of humanity...." —*That I May Know Him*, p. 67.

ALL HAVE GONE ASTRAY

3. What path does every person take before his conversion? What picture do the holy writings give of every person's deep spiritual problem and its divine solution?

Isaiah 53:6 *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

1 Peter 2:25 *For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*

"When all hope was excluded from Adam and Eve in consequence of transgression and sin, when justice demanded the death of the sinner, Christ gave Himself to be a sacrifice for the sin of the world. The world was under condemnation. Christ became substitute and surety for man. He would give His life for the world, which is represented as the one lost sheep that had strayed from the fold, whose guilt as well as helplessness was charged against them and stood in the way, hindering their return. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins.'... Every son and daughter of God, if they have an abiding Saviour will act out Christ. Every soul that has not an abiding Saviour will reveal the same in unchristlikeness in character. Love is not cherished and put in exercise. 'Lift Him up, the risen Saviour,' in our words, in our conversation, in our dealing with the erring." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 283, 284.

4. What did the Son of God do when He was led to the slaughter? How severe were His sufferings to pay for our sins?

Isaiah 53:7, 8 *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. ⁸He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

"The cross of Calvary appeals to us in power, affording a reason why we should love our Saviour, and why we should make Him first and last and best in every-

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

5. While we all have seriously fallen short, what can we say about Him and what He suffered? For what reason did He sacrifice Himself?

Isaiah 53:9, 10 *And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.*

"How much has God loved the race of men? Look to Calvary. As you behold Jesus upon the cross, does not the heinous character of sin appear? It was sin that caused the death of God's dear Son, and sin is the transgression of the law. Says the prophet: '... It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin.... By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.' Isaiah 53: 10, 11, When the sinner realizes that Christ died for him, that He might impute His righteousness unto him, he magnifies the love of God in providing the plan of salvation." —*Signs of the Times*, February 27, 1893.

"The Majesty of heaven pleased not Himself. Whatever He did was in reference to the salvation of man. Selfishness in all its forms stood rebuked in His presence. He assumed our nature that He might suffer in our stead, making His soul an offering for sin." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 418.

THE RIGHTEOUS SERVANT WILL JUSTIFY MANY

6. Concerning what do the Scriptures say that He was satisfied? How sufficient was His sacrifice to justify and redeem man, and how is this possible?

Isaiah 53:11 *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

Romans 5:19 *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

"The hour has come when Christ occupies His rightful position and is glorified above principalities and powers and every name that is named. It was for the joy that was set before Him—that He might bring many sons unto glory—that He endured the cross and despised the shame. And inconceivably great as was the sorrow and the shame, yet greater is the joy and the glory. He looks upon the redeemed, renewed in His own image, every heart bearing the perfect impress of

the divine, every face reflecting the likeness of their King. He beholds in them the result of the travail of His soul, and He is satisfied. Then, in a voice that reaches the assembled multitudes of the righteous and the wicked, He declares: 'Behold the purchase of My blood! For these I suffered, for these I died, that they might dwell in My presence throughout eternal ages.' And the song of praise ascends from the white-robed ones about the throne: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power....' Revelation 5:12." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 671.

7. What was His reward for laying down His life for sinners? In addition to giving up His life, what other great work did the Lamb of God carry out?

Isaiah 53:12 *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

Romans 8:34 *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

"... By beholding the cross men may see and know God and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. In beholding God we behold the One who poured out His soul unto death. In beholding the cross the view is extended to God, and His hatred of sin is discerned. But while we behold in the cross God's hatred of sin, we also behold His love for sinners, which is stronger than death. To the world the cross is the incontrovertible argument that God is truth and light and love." —*Our High Calling*, p. 45.

"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.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"When, in consequence of transgression, Adam and Eve were cut off from all hope, when justice demanded the death of the sinner, Christ gave Himself as a sacrifice. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' 'All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' 1 John 4:10; Isaiah 53:6." —*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 268, 269.

"Henceforth you are not your own; you are bought with a price. 'Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold;... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' 1 Peter 1:18, 19. Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son." —*A Call to Stand Apart*, p. 30.

* * *

I Will Give You a New Heart

“Every time a soul is converted, and learns to love God and keep His commandments, the promise of God is fulfilled, ‘A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.’ Ezekiel 36:26. The change in human hearts, the transformation of human characters, is a miracle that reveals an ever-living Saviour, working to rescue souls. A consistent life in Christ is a great miracle. In the preaching of the Word of God, the sign that should be manifest now and always is the presence of the Holy Spirit, to make the Word a regenerating power to those that hear. This is God’s witness before the world to the divine mission of His Son.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 407.

1. What amazing promises did the Lord give to His people many years ago? What special work of purification has been promised since then?

Ezekiel 36:24, 25 *For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. ²⁵Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.*

Jeremiah 33:8 *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.*

“The Lord says, ‘Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God.’ ‘Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you.’... Jeremiah 3:13; Ezekiel 36:25.

“But we must have a knowledge of ourselves, a knowledge that will result in contrition, before we can find pardon and peace.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 158.

“If the world is to be convinced of sin as transgressors of God’s law, the agency must be the Holy Spirit working through human instrumentalities. The church needs now to shake off her deathlike slumber; for the Lord is waiting to bless His people who will recognize the blessing when it comes, and diffuse it in clear, strong rays of light. ‘Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean....’ Ezekiel 36:25, 26.” —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 340.

A NEW HEART

2. What do we know about the human heart in its natural condition? Nevertheless, what does the Lord promise?

Jeremiah 17:9 *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

Matthew 15:19 *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.*

Ezekiel 36:26 *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*

“One of the most earnest prayers recorded in the Word of God is that of David when he pleaded, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God.’ Psalm 51:10. God’s response to such a prayer is, A new heart will I give you. This is a work that no finite man can do. Men and women are to begin at the beginning, seeking God most earnestly for a true Christian experience. They are to feel the creative power of the Holy Spirit. They are to receive the new heart, that is kept soft and tender by the grace of heaven. The selfish spirit is to be cleansed from the soul. They are to labor earnestly and with humility of heart, each one looking to Jesus for guidance and encouragement. Then the building, fitly framed together, will grow into a holy temple in the Lord.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 159.

3. Besides a new heart, what does the Lord promise to put within His people? What does the presence of the Holy Spirit accomplish in one who pleads for grace, salvation, and an obedient heart?

Ezekiel 36:27; 11:19, 20 *And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them....^{11:19} And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: ²⁰That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.*

“When one who has been controlled by a stubborn, wayward will is set free, and yields himself wholeheartedly to the drawing of God’s heavenly agencies, a miracle is wrought; so also when a man who has been under strong delusion comes to understand moral truth. Every time a soul is converted, and learns to love God and keep His commandments, the promise of God is fulfilled, ‘A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.’ Ezekiel 36:26. The change in human hearts, the transformation of human characters, is a miracle that reveals an ever-living Saviour, working to rescue souls. A consistent life in Christ is a great miracle. In the preaching of the word of God, the sign that should be manifest now and always is the presence of the Holy Spirit, to make the word a regenerating power to those that hear.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 407.

4. Through the prophet Jeremiah, what other special promises did the Lord give to His people? Why was He not satisfied with the results of the covenant that He made with Israel at Mount Sinai?

Jeremiah 31:31, 32 *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ³²Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord.*

Hebrews 8:9 *Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.*

"The 'new covenant' was established upon ... the promise of forgiveness of sins, and of the grace of God to renew the heart, and bring it into harmony with the principles of God's law....

"The atoning sacrifice is full and sufficient. It is the new covenant, sealed with His blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins. This Christ declared at the Last Supper. In this cup there is to those who drink in faith, peace-making, soul-cleansing efficacy. It is the balm of Gilead, which God has provided to restore health and soundness to the sin-stricken soul." —*The Faith I Live by*, pp. 78, 301.

THE LAW WRITTEN IN HEART AND MIND

5. Under the new covenant, instead of abolishing the law, as many believe, where will the Lord write it? What does this mean?

Jeremiah 31:33 *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

Hebrews 8:10 *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.*

"When the law of God is written in the heart it will be exhibited in a pure and holy life. The commandments of God are no dead letter. They are spirit and life, bringing the imaginations and even the thoughts into subjection to the will of Christ. The heart in which they are written will be kept with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. All who love Jesus and keep the commandments will seek to avoid the very appearance of evil; not because they are constrained thus to do, but because they are copying a pure model, and feel averse to everything contrary to the law written in their hearts. They will not feel self-sufficient, but their trust will be in God, who alone is able to keep them from sin and impurity. The atmosphere surrounding them is pure; they will not corrupt their own souls or the souls of others. It is their pleasure to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God." —*This Day with God*, p. 146.

6. What wonderful knowledge does one receive by having the Holy Spirit in him and the divine law written in his heart and mind?

Jeremiah 31:34 *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

"The blessings of the new covenant are grounded purely on mercy in forgiving unrighteousness and sins. The Lord specifies, I will do thus and thus unto all who turn to Me, forsaking the evil and choosing the good. 'I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.' Hebrews 8:12. All who humble their hearts, confessing their sins, will find mercy and grace and assurance.

"Has God, in showing mercy to the sinner, ceased to be just? Has He dishonored His holy law, and will He henceforth pass over the violation of it? God is true. He changes not. The conditions of salvation are ever the same." —*That I May Know Him*, p. 299.

7. When one has a new heart and a new spirit, what effect will that have on his attitude toward and obedience to the law of the Lord? With whom will he be connected?

Ezekiel 11:19, 20 *And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: ²⁰That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.*

Jeremiah 31:34 *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

“The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth ‘the fruits of the Spirit.’ Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts. Having the Spirit of Christ, we shall walk even as He walked. Through the prophet He declared of Himself, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.’ Psalm 40:8. And when among men He said, ‘The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.’ John 8:29.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 372.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“Where there is not only a belief in God’s Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God. And the heart that in its unrenewed state is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, now delights in its holy precepts, exclaiming with the psalmist, ‘O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day.’ Psalm 119:97. And the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, ‘who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ Romans 8:1.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 137.

“The words ‘A new heart will I give you,’ mean ‘A new mind will I give you.’ This change of heart is always attended by a clear conception of Christian duty, an understanding of truth. The clearness of our view of truth will be proportionate to our understanding of the Word of God. A person who gives the Scriptures close, prayerful attention will gain clear comprehension and sound judgment, as if in turning to God he or she had reached a higher grade of intelligence.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 351.

* * *

Vision of the High Priest Joshua's Experience

"In the beautiful parabolic prophecy of Zechariah, the high priest Joshua, standing clothed in filthy garments before the angel of the Lord, represents the sinner. And the word is spoken by the Lord, 'Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.... So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments.' Zechariah 3:4, 5. Even so God will clothe you with 'the garments of salvation,' and cover you with 'the robe of righteousness.' Isaiah 61:10." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 206.

1. What vision did the prophet Zechariah record? Who was standing nearby to condemn the high priest? Could he defend himself or his people?

Zechariah 3:1 *And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.*

Revelation 12:10 *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

"In vision the prophet beholds 'Joshua the high priest,' 'clothed with filthy garments' (Zechariah 3:1, 3), standing before the Angel of the Lord, entreating God's mercy in behalf of his afflicted people. As he pleads for the fulfillment of God's promises, Satan stands up boldly to resist him. He points to the transgressions of Israel as a reason why they should not be restored to the favor of God. He claims them as his prey, and demands that they be given into his hands.

"The high priest cannot defend himself or his people from Satan's accusations. He does not claim that Israel is free from fault. In filthy garments, symbolizing the sins of the people, which he bears as their representative, he stands before the Angel, confessing their guilt, yet pointing to their repentance and humiliation, and relying upon the mercy of a sin-pardoning Redeemer. In faith he claims the promises of God." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 583, 584.

THE ACCUSER AND THE DEFENDER

2. Who was the true defender of Joshua the high priest? How did the Lord rebuke the accuser?

Zechariah 3:2 *And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*

Jude 1:9 *Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*

"Then the Angel, who is Christ Himself, the Saviour of sinners, puts to silence the accuser of His people, declaring, 'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' Verse 2. Long had Israel remained in the furnace of affliction. Because of their sins they had been well-nigh consumed in the flame kindled by Satan and his agents for their destruction, but God had now set His hand to bring them forth." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 584.

"The course of Christ in dealing even with the adversary of souls should be an example to us in all our intercourse with others never to bring a railing accusation against any; much less should we employ harshness or severity toward those who may be as anxious to know the right way as we are ourselves." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 240.

3. What was the condition of the high priest's garments when he stood before the Son of God?

Zechariah 3:3 *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.*

Matthew 22:11, 12 *And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: ¹²And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.*

"The people of God are here represented as a criminal on trial. Joshua, as high priest, is seeking for a blessing for his people, who are in great affliction. While he is pleading before God, Satan is standing at his right hand as his adversary. He is accusing the children of God, and making their case appear as desperate as possible. He presents before the Lord their evil doings and their defects. He shows their faults and failures, hoping they will appear of such a character in the eyes of Christ that He will render them no help in their great need. Joshua, as the representative of God's people, stands under condemnation, clothed with filthy garments. Aware of the sins of his people, he is weighed down with discouragement. Satan is pressing upon his soul a sense of guiltiness that makes him feel almost hopeless. Yet there he stands as a suppliant, with Satan arrayed against him." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 166, 167.

THE INIQUITY REMOVED

4. What command did the Lord give to those who stood before Him? What did this mean?

Zechariah 3:4 *And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.*

Luke 15:22, first part *But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him;...*

"Notwithstanding the defects of the people of God, Christ does not turn away from the objects of His care. He has the power to change their raiment. He removes the filthy garments, He places upon the repenting, believing ones His own robe of righteousness, and writes pardon against their names on the records of

heaven. He confesses them as His before the heavenly universe. Satan their adversary is shown to be an accuser and deceiver. God will do justice for His own elect.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 169, 170.

“Who can comprehend the nature of that righteousness which makes the believing sinner whole, presenting him to God without spot or wrinkle or any such thing? We have the pledged word of God that Christ is made unto us righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. God grant that we may rely upon His word with implicit trust, and enjoy His richest blessing. ‘For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.’ John 16:27.” —*Faith and Works*, pp. 108, 109.

5. What other part of the high priestly garments did Joshua receive? What did this part of his clothing signify?

Zechariah 3:5 *And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by.*

Exodus 28:36 *And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.*

Leviticus 8:9 *And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his forehead, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the Lord commanded Moses.*

“As the intercession of Joshua is accepted, the command is given, ‘Take away the filthy garments from him;’ and to Joshua the Angel says, ‘Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.’ ‘So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments.’ Verses 4, 5. His own sins and those of his people were pardoned. Israel was clothed with ‘change of raiment’—the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. The miter placed upon Joshua’s head was such as was worn by the priests, and bore the inscription, ‘Holiness to the Lord’ (Exodus 28:36), signifying that notwithstanding his former transgressions, he was now qualified to minister before God in His sanctuary.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 584.

OBEDIENCE AND HONOR

6. What promise did the Angel of the Lord make to the high priest, who was now dressed in spotless garments? What conditions were attached to the promise?

Zechariah 3:6, 7 *And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, ‘Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.*

“If obedient, he should be honored as the judge, or ruler, over the temple and all its services; he should walk among attending angels, even in this life; and at last he should join the glorified throng around the throne of God.” —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 584, 585.

“God waits to bestow the blessing of forgiveness of sins, of pardon for iniquity, of the gift of righteousness upon all who will believe in His love, and accept of His

salvation. Christ is ready to say to the repenting sinner, '... Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee....' Zechariah 3:4-7. Christ is the connecting link between God and man. The blood of Jesus Christ is the eloquent plea that speaks in behalf of sinners." —*Our High Calling*, p. 38.

7. What other promise did the Angel of the Lord give? How long does it take for the Lord to remove His people's iniquity?

Zechariah 3:8-10 *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. ⁹For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. ¹⁰In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.*

Jeremiah 23:5 *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*

"In the Branch, the Deliverer to come, lay the hope of Israel. It was by faith in the coming Saviour that Joshua and his people had received pardon. Through faith in Christ they had been restored to God's favor. By virtue of His merits, if they walked in His ways and kept His statutes, they would be 'men wondered at,' honored as the chosen of Heaven among the nations of the earth." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 585.

"Now is reached the complete fulfillment of those words of the Angel.... Christ is revealed as the Redeemer and Deliverer of His people. Now indeed are the remnant 'men wondered at,' as the tears and humiliation of their pilgrimage give place to joy and honor in the presence of God and the Lamb. 'In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely.... And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy.' Isaiah 4:2, 3." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 476; *Lift Him up*, p. 377.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"The scene of Satan's accusation was presented before the prophet. He says, 'He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.' Jesus is our great High Priest in heaven. And what is He doing? He is making intercession and atonement for His people who believe in Him. Through His imputed righteousness, they are accepted of God as those who are manifesting to the world that they acknowledge allegiance to God, keeping all His commandments." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 37.

"Standing before the broken law of God, the sinner cannot cleanse himself; but, believing in Christ, he is the object of His infinite love and clothed in His spotless righteousness. For those who believe in Christ, Jesus prayed: 'Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth:.... that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one.' John 17:17-22." —*Faith and Works*, p. 108.

* * *

The Gospel and the Law

“Paul had ever exalted the divine law. He had shown that in the law there is no power to save men from the penalty of disobedience. Wrongdoers must repent of their sins and humble themselves before God, whose just wrath they have incurred by breaking His law, and they must also exercise faith in the blood of Christ as their only means of pardon. The Son of God had died as their sacrifice and had ascended to heaven to stand before the Father as their Advocate. By repentance and faith they might be freed from the condemnation of sin and through the grace of Christ be enabled henceforth to render obedience to the law of God.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 393.

1. What was the good news that Jesus proclaimed at the very beginning and all during His ministry?

Matthew 4:23 *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.*

Mark 1:14, 15 *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,¹⁵ And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

“Jesus Christ ... came from heaven to awaken a desire and to give the bread of life to all who hunger for spiritual knowledge. Inspiration declared that His mission was to preach the gospel to the poor, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 221.

“Christ ... chose ... to take the gospel to the poor. He went from place to place, that those in the highways and byways might catch the words of the gospel of truth. He labored in the way in which He desires His workers to labor today. By the sea, on the mountainside, in the streets of the city, His voice was heard explaining the Old Testament Scriptures.... With clearness and power He proclaimed the gospel message.” —*Evangelism*, p. 54.

“He healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, and preached the gospel to the poor. His words were simple and direct.... A child could comprehend His teaching. And as He did His work, so are we to do ours, following His example.” —*Signs of the Times*, July 8, 1889.

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

2. In their preaching, with whom did the apostles always connect the gospel?

Mark 1:1 *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

Romans 1:9; 15:29 *For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;...*

^{15:29} *And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*

“‘With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.’ Acts 4:33. Under their labors were added to the church chosen men, who, receiving the word of truth, consecrated their lives to the work of giving to others the hope that filled their hearts with peace and joy.... The Lord spoke through them, and as they went from place to place, the poor had the gospel preached to them, and miracles of divine grace were wrought....

“While Jerusalem was filled with these strangers, the apostles preached Christ with unflinching courage, though they knew that in so doing they were placing their lives in constant jeopardy. The Spirit of God set its seal upon their labors; many converts to the faith were made....

“Wherever they went, the sick were healed, and the poor had the gospel preached unto them.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 48, 165, 106.

3. What responsibility did the Lord entrust to Paul when He called him to be His apostle?

Galatians 1:15, 16 *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, ¹⁶To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.*

Romans 1:1-5 *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, ²(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) ³Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; ⁴And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: ⁵By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name.*

“... In Thessalonica, in Corinth, in Ephesus, and in other important centers, Paul and his companions in labor preached the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 174.

“Paul regarded the occasion of his formal ordination as marking the beginning of a new and important epoch in his lifework. It was from the time of this solemn ceremony, when, just before he was to depart on his first missionary journey, he was ‘separated unto the gospel of God,’ that he afterward dated the beginning of his apostleship in the Christian church.” —(Review and Herald, May 11, 1911) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1067.

“All should learn their lesson from this, that they are individually amenable to God. When they love God with all their hearts, they will be wise unto salvation.... The solemn work rests upon every soul to consider that he is a servant of Jesus Christ, solemnly pledged by his baptismal vows to clothe himself with the righteousness of Christ.” —*This Day with God*, p. 128.

THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD

4. How did the apostle define the gospel of Jesus Christ? What did the Lord include in His gospel?

Romans 1:16, 17 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

Luke 24:47 *And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

"The Son of God alone can do the great work of illuminating the soul. No wonder Paul exclaims, 'For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' Romans 1:16." –*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, p. 66.

"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. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.' It is of this gospel of Christ, equally efficacious for Jew and Gentile, that Paul in his epistle to the Romans declared he was not ashamed." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 380.

5. List other concepts included in the "gospel of Jesus Christ." According to the gospel, only in whom are justification and salvation found?

Acts 20:24 *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

Ephesians 1:13 *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.*

Acts 13:39; 4:12 *And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses....^{4:12} Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, where-by we must be saved.*

"The only remedy for the sins and sorrows of men is Christ. The gospel of His grace alone can cure the evils that curse society. The injustice of the rich toward the poor, the hatred of the poor toward the rich, alike have their root in selfishness, and this can be eradicated only through submission to Christ. He alone, for the selfish heart of sin, gives the new heart of love. Let the servants of Christ preach the gospel with the Spirit sent down from heaven and work as He did for the benefit of men. Then such results will be manifest in the blessing and uplifting of mankind as are wholly impossible of accomplishment by human power." –*Christ's Object Lessons* (1900), p. 254.

6. Therefore, what is the great message that we have to preach in all world?

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.*

Mark 16:15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

"In order to destroy sin and its results He gave His best Beloved, and He has put it in our power, through cooperation with Him, to bring this scene of misery to an end. 'This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.' Matthew 24:14.

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature’ (Mark 16:15), is Christ’s command to His followers. Not that all are called to be ministers or missionaries in the ordinary sense of the term; but all may be workers with Him in giving the ‘glad tidings’ to their fellow men. To all, great or small, learned or ignorant, old or young, the command is given.”—*Education*, pp. 263, 264.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOSPEL AND THE LAW

7. While Jesus preached the gospel on one hand, what did He clearly teach about the law? Therefore, how closely connected are the law and the gospel in the teachings of Jesus and His apostles?

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.*

Romans 3:31 *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*

“... Concerning the law of Ten Commandments the psalmist declares, ‘Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven.’ Psalm 119:89. And Christ Himself says, ‘Think not that I am come to destroy the law.... Verily I say unto you’—making the assertion as emphatic as possible—‘Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.’ Matthew 5:17, 18. Here He teaches ... that these claims should hold as long as the heavens and the earth remain. The law of God is as immutable as His throne. It will maintain its claims upon mankind in all ages.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 365.

“The grace of Christ and the law of God are inseparable. In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”—*Select-ed Messages*, book 1, p. 349.

“The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. ‘Believe, believe,’ is their cry; ‘only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do.’ While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God.”—*The Faith I Live by*, p. 93.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“... While Christ saves the sinner, He does not do away with the law which condemns the sinner.... The law shows us our sins,...” —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 55.

“The law reveals to man his sin.... The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 20.

“It is not the province of law to save, but to condemn; not to pardon, but to convict.... The law cannot save those whom it condemns; it cannot rescue the perishing....” —*Signs of the Times*, November 10, 1890.

“He [Christ] saves men, not in sin, but from sin.” —*Review and Herald*, July 14, 1910.

“The gospel ... the very gospel ... saves our own souls.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 51, 52.

“The theme of redemption will bear the most concentrated study, and its depth will never be fully explored. You need not fear that you will exhaust this wonderful theme. Drink deep of the well of salvation. Go to the fountain for yourself, that you may be filled with refreshment, that Jesus may be in you a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life.... ‘Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price.’ And what a price! Not ‘with corruptible things, as silver and gold,... but with the precious blood of Christ.’ When man was lost, the Son of God said, I will redeem him, I will become his surety and substitute. He laid aside His royal robes, clothed His divinity with humanity, stepped down from the royal throne, that He might reach the very depth of human woe and temptation, lift up our fallen natures, and make it possible for us to be overcomers, the sons of God, the heirs of the eternal kingdom.” —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 127.

* * *

16

Sabbath, October 19, 2019

The Gospel—God’s Power for Salvation

“‘The gospel,’ he declared, ‘is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.’ It is of this gospel of Christ, equally efficacious for Jew and Gentile, that Paul in his epistle to the Romans declared he was not ashamed.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 380.

1. What do the Scriptures say about one who claims that he has not sinned? What is the truth about everyone in the world?

Ecclesiastes 7:20 *For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*

1 John 1:8 *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

Romans 5:12 *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

“There is no one, however earnestly he may be striving to do his best, who can say, ‘I have no sin.’ He who would say this would be under a dangerous deception. ‘If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’ 1 John 1:8. How then can we escape the charge, ‘Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting’? We are to look to Christ. At infinite cost, He has covenanted to be our representative in the heavenly courts, our Advocate before God.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 53.

TEMPTATION AND INNER WEAKNESS

2. How does temptation gain a foothold in the human mind and heart? How insidiously does sin work, even in the smallest thing?

James 1:14, 15 *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

Romans 6:21 *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.*

“The sin of evilspeaking begins with the cherishing of evil thoughts. Guile includes impurity in all its forms. An impure thought tolerated, an unholy desire cherished, and the soul is contaminated, its integrity compromised. ‘Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.’ James 1:15. If we would not commit sin, we must shun its very beginnings. Every emotion and desire must be held in subjection to reason and conscience. Every unholy thought must be instantly repelled. To your closet, followers of Christ. Pray in faith and with all the heart. Satan is watching to ensnare your feet. You must have help from above if you would escape his devices.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 177.

“The natural, inherited tendencies, if erratic, will be, by the obedient, corrected by the Word; they will not be cherished as virtues....” —*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, p. 287.

3. What occurs when sin gets established in a person? What is the ultimate consequence of sin?

Romans 7:14; 6:16; 7:24 *For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.... ^{6:16}Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?... ^{7:24}O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

“Very many who profess to be servants of Christ are none of His. They are deceiving their souls to their own destruction. While they profess to be servants of Christ, they are not living in obedience to His will. ‘Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?’ Romans 6:16. Many, while professing to be servants of Christ, are obeying another master, working daily against the Master whom they profess to serve. ‘No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.’ Matthew 6:24.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 442.

PAYMENT WITH HIS PURE, HOLY LIFE

4. With one’s own strength and capacity, how possible is it to get untangled from sin? Who laid down His life to free man from sin and its disastrous consequences?

Romans 5:6, 8 *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.... ⁸But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

1 John 3:16 *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

"The Lord Jesus will receive all who come unto Him. He died for the ungodly and every man who will come, may come." —*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 315.

"When we consider that Christ died for the ungodly while they were yet sinners, we are led to realize how willing and even anxious He is to bless us, that we may be a blessing to others." —*Lift Him up*, p. 353.

"Have you forgotten the scenes of Gethsemane? Christ passed through His last terrible trial in order that you might not perish, but have eternal life. 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.' 1 John 3:16." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, p. 94.

5. How do the Scriptures define the great work of the gospel? What special power does it implant in the heart? What does the gift of God accomplish in the converted heart?

Romans 1:16, 17 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

1 Corinthians 1:18 *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*

Romans 6:23, last part ... *The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

"The gospel is the power of God and the wisdom of God." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 245.

"There is no defect in God's plan for the salvation of men. If the gospel is not to every soul the power of God unto salvation, it is not because the gospel is at fault, but because men are not practical believers, practical receivers of the grace and righteousness of Christ.... The professed believers do not take Christ as their personal Saviour, but follow Jesus a great way off. One reason for this lack of personal religion is that they have not been educated in these vital principles." —*This Day with God*, p. 18.

6. How high is the cost of man's redemption? What should the fact that the Son of God had to sacrifice His holy, pure life for our redemption cause us to do?

1 Peter 1:18, 19 *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; ¹⁹But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

"Jesus is our atoning sacrifice. We can make no atonement for ourselves; but by faith we can accept the atonement that has been made. 'For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.' 1 Peter 3:18. 'Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' 1 Peter 1:18, 19. It was through infinite sacrifice and inexpressible suffering that our Redeemer placed redemption within our reach.... Innocent, yet offering Himself as a substitute for the transgressor. The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the world's Redeemer. The evil thoughts, the evil words, the evil deeds of

every son and daughter of Adam, called for retribution upon Himself; for He had become man's substitute. Though the guilt of sin was not His, His spirit was torn and bruised by the transgressions of men, and He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 321, 322.

JUSTIFIED AND REDEEMED FREELY

7. How much must one pay for this great redemption? What will be the natural, generous response to such supreme love and the Saviour's spotless sacrifice?

Romans 3:24 *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 2:8, 9 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Galatians 5:6 *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*

"The sinner cannot depend upon his own good works as a means of justification. He must come to the point where he will renounce all his sin, and embrace one degree of light after another, as it shines upon his pathway. He simply grasps by faith the free and ample provision made in the blood of Christ. He believes the promises of God which through Christ are made unto him sanctification and righteousness and redemption.

"And if he follows Jesus, he will walk humbly in the light, rejoicing in the light, and diffusing that light to others. Being justified by faith, he carries cheerfulness with him in his obedience in all his life. Peace with God is the result of what Christ is to him. The souls who are in subordination to God, who honor Him, and are doers of His Word, will receive divine enlightenment. In the precious Word of God, there is purity and loftiness as well as beauty that, unless assisted by God, the highest powers of man cannot attain to." —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 78.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"By faith and prayer all may meet the requirements of the gospel. No man can be forced to transgress. His own consent must be first gained; the soul must purpose the sinful act before passion can dominate over reason or iniquity triumph over conscience. Temptation, however strong, is never an excuse for sin. 'The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers.' 1 Peter 3:12. Cry unto the Lord, tempted soul. Cast yourself, helpless, unworthy, upon Jesus, and claim His very promise. The Lord will hear. He knows how strong are the inclinations of the natural heart, and He will help in every time of temptation." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 177.

"He who repents of his sin and accepts the gift of the life of the Son of God, cannot be overcome. Laying hold by faith of the divine nature, he becomes a child of God. He prays, he believes. When tempted and tried, he claims the power that Christ died to give, and overcomes through His grace. This every sinner needs to understand. He must repent of his sin, he must believe in the power of Christ, and accept that power to save and to keep him from sin. How thankful ought we to be for the gift of Christ's example." —*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 356.

* * *

Justification by Grace through Faith

“Here the truth is laid out in plain lines. This mercy and goodness is wholly undeserved. The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on his part. Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is no more to doubt God’s forgiving grace.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 290.

“The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken.” —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 111.

1. Considering what the Scriptures say about the condition of every human being, does anyone have something to boast about? Who can hope for justification by virtue of his own works?

Romans 3:19, 20 *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

“We have transgressed the law of God, and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. The best efforts that man in his own strength can make, are valueless to meet the holy and just law that he has transgressed; but through faith in Christ he may claim the righteousness of the Son of God as all-sufficient. Christ satisfied the demands of the law in His human nature. He bore the curse of the law for the sinner, made an atonement for him, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Genuine faith appropriates the righteousness of Christ, and the sinner is made an overcomer with Christ; for he is made a partaker of the divine nature, and thus divinity and humanity are combined.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 363, 364.

GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS MANIFESTED

2. Despite man’s horrible condition, what righteousness does the Lord demonstrate? Who bore witness of this revelation? How alone can one receive God’s righteousness?

Romans 3:21, 22 *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; ²²Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.*

"None of the apostles or prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God had honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their own nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ. So will it be with all who behold Christ.

"The righteousness of Christ, as a pure white pearl, has no defect, no stain, no guilt. This righteousness may be ours. Salvation, with its blood-bought, inestimable treasures, is the pearl of great price." —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 111.

UNDESERVED GRACE

3. What is the only way for a person to be justified? Who made justification and redemption possible, and how?

Romans 3:23, 24 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; ²⁴Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

"'Being justified freely by His grace,' the apostle Paul says, 'through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' Romans 3:24-26.

"Here the truth is laid out in plain lines. This mercy and goodness is wholly undeserved. The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on His part. Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is no more to doubt God's forgiving grace." —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 78.

4. Who established the propitiation for man to be rescued through faith in Jesus' blood? Who, then, gives justification through Jesus?

Romans 3:25, 26 *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; ²⁶To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

"Abundant grace has been provided that the believing soul may be kept free from sin; for all heaven, with its limitless resources, has been placed at our command. We are to draw from the well of salvation. Christ is the end of law for righteousness to everyone who believeth. In ourselves we are sinners; but in Christ we are righteous. Having made us righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, God pronounces us just, and treats us as just. He looks upon us as His dear children. Christ works against the power of sin, and where sin abounded, grace much more abounds. 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' Romans 5:1, 2." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 394.

FAITH THAT WORKS BY LOVE

5. Explain in your own words the meaning of what the apostle Paul says about where justification comes from. According to the apostle, what kind of faith is effective through Jesus Christ?

Romans 3:27, 28 *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. ²⁸Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

Galatians 5:6 *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*

“Without the grace of Christ, the sinner is in a hopeless condition; nothing can be done for him; but through divine grace, supernatural power is imparted to the man and works in mind and heart and character. It is through the impartation of the grace of Christ that sin is discerned in its hateful nature and finally driven from the soul temple. It is through grace that we are brought into fellowship with Christ, to be associated with Him in the work of salvation.” —*Faith and Works*, p. 100.

“Genuine faith is the faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. A living faith will be a working faith. Should we go into the garden and find that there was no sap in the plants, no freshness in the leaves, no bursting buds or blooming flowers, no signs of life in stalk or branches, we would say, ‘The plants are dead. Uproot them from the garden; for they are a deformity to the beds.’ So it is with those who profess Christianity, and have no spirituality. If there are no signs of religious vigor, if there is no doing of the commandments of the Lord, it is evident that there is no abiding in Christ, the living vine.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 21.

6. Why is the argument that Jews were saved by works and non-Jews were saved by grace not correct or logical?

Romans 3:29, 30 *Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: ³⁰Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.*

“In his Epistle to the Romans, Paul set forth the great principles of the gospel which he hoped to present in person. He stated his position on the questions which were agitating the Jewish and Gentile churches, and showed that the hopes and promises which once belonged especially to the Jews were now offered to the Gentiles. With great clearness and power he presented the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ. While addressing the Roman Christians, Paul designed to instruct other churches also.” —*Life Sketches from the Life of Paul*, p. 187.

“Justification by faith is to many a mystery. A sinner is justified by God when he repents of his sins. He sees Jesus upon the cross of Calvary. Why all this suffering? The law of Jehovah has been broken. The law of God’s government in heaven and earth has been transgressed, and the penalty of sin is pronounced to be death. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Oh, what love, what matchless love! Christ, the Son of God, dying for guilty man!” —*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 193, 194.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ESTABLISHES THE LAW

7. Is the fact that justification does not result from the works of the law a concept that weakens or even abolishes the law? How did the apostle affirm the inviolability of the law and the necessity of coming into harmony with the holy commandments through the indwelling Christ?

Romans 3:31 *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*

1 Corinthians 7:19 *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.*

Romans 6:15 *What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

“There are many who cry, ‘Believe, only believe.’ Ask them what you are to believe. Are you to believe the lies forged by Satan against God’s holy, just, and good law? God does not use His great and precious grace to make of none effect His law, but to establish His law. What is the decision of Paul? He says: ‘What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law.... For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and [the commandment then ended? No.] I [Paul] died.... Wherefore the law is [standing directly in the way of my having liberty and peace? No.] holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.’ Romans 7:7-12.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 347.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“Through Satan’s temptations the whole human race have become transgressors of God’s law, but by the sacrifice of His Son a way is opened whereby they may return to God. Through the grace of Christ they may be enabled to render obedience to the Father’s law. Thus in every age, from the midst of apostasy and rebellion, God gathers out a people that are true to Him—a people ‘in whose heart is His law.’ Isaiah 51:7.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 338.

“He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure. If a man could save himself by his own works, he might have something in himself in which to rejoice. The effort that man makes in his own strength to obtain salvation, is represented by the offering of Cain. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin; but that which is wrought through faith is acceptable to God. When we seek to gain heaven through the merits of Christ, the soul makes progress. Looking unto Jesus, the author and Finisher of our faith, we may go on from strength to strength, from victory to victory; for through Christ the grace of God has worked out our complete salvation.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 364.

* * *

Missionary Report from the European Division

To be read on Sabbath, October 26, 2019
The Special Sabbath School Offering will be gathered
on Sabbath, November 2, 2019

"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Acts 16: 9.

Europe covers an area of 10,180,000 square kilometers (3,930,520 square miles), and the population is 742,452,000. There are 50 countries on the continent, and more than 37 languages are spoken, which is a huge challenge for communication and missionary work in different countries. In all of Europe, 75% are Christian, 8% are Muslim, 17% are atheist, and less than 1% are Jewish.

Christianity reached Europe very soon after the apostle Paul began his missionary trips.

The Protestant Reformation gained great impetus in Europe in the Sixteenth Century. Before that, millions of sincere Christians who were persecuted by the Catholic Church gave up their lives for the love of God and His word. Great Reformers were born here, including John Wycliffe, John Huss, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and other prominent Reformers, who established Protestant churches. Because of persecution, many Protestants left Europe and settled in the Americas, playing a main role in the establishment of the United States of America.

In the early Twentieth Century, the International Missionary Society of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, formed among the Seventh-day Adventist people following World War I and the crisis that was precipitated at the beginning of the war in 1914. Shortly after the organization of the church, missionaries such as Carlos Kozel were sent to plant the seeds of the Reform Movement in other continents. After World War II, Elders Siegmund Gutknecht, Simon Schmidt, and others carried the message to many countries around the world.

Now we live in the last phase of the spread of Heaven's message. According to the prophecy of Revelation 18:1-4, the last warning will be given by God's faithful remnant under the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we need deep spiritual preparation and complete devotion to God so He can use us in His closing work.

"I was pointed down to the time when the third angel's message was closing. The power of God had rested upon His people; they had accomplished their work and were prepared for the trying hour before them. They had received the latter rain, or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the living testimony had been revived. The last great warning had sounded everywhere, and it had stirred up and enraged the inhabitants of the earth who would not receive the message." —*Early Writings*, p. 279.

The European Division Committee is working according to a missionary plan. We have many projects, and a lot of money is needed for their implementation.

- A decision was made in September 2018 to open a missionary school in Tortoreto, Italy.

- There is also a decision to establish an retirement home in Portugal, where older brothers and sisters from that country and others will be able to spend the last years of their lives.

- We need to prepare missionary material in different languages in Europe.

- We also have a project to begin missionary activities in new fields.
- We ask all the brothers, sisters, and friends of the church to give generously next Sabbath in support of God's work in Europe. Let us remember that "he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." 2 Corinthians 9:6.
- God bless His work in Europe and all over the world.

—Committee of the European Division

SPECIAL SABBATH SCHOOL OFFERING FOR

The European Division

MAY GOD'S ABUNDANT GRACE ACCOMPANY YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS!

18

Sabbath, November 2, 2019

The Gospel and Peace with God

"The human family have all transgressed the law of God, and as transgressors of the law, man is hopelessly ruined; for he is the enemy of God, without strength to do any good thing. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' Romans 8:7. Looking into the moral mirror—God's holy law—man sees himself a sinner, and is convicted of his state of evil, his hopeless doom under the just penalty of the law. But he has not been left in a state of hopeless distress in which sin has plunged him; for it was to save the transgressor from ruin that He who was equal with God offered up His life on Calvary. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' John 3:16." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 321.

MAN'S NATURAL CONDITION

1. **According to the Scriptures, what is the condition of the natural man? What is he like in his dealings with others, and even in his relationship with God?**

Titus 3:3 *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*

Colossians 1:21 *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.*

Romans 5:10, first part *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son....*

“Such is the grace of God, such the love wherewith He hath loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, enemies in our minds by wicked works, serving divers lusts and pleasures, the slaves of debased appetites and passion, servants of sin and Satan. What depth of love is manifested in Christ, as He becomes the propitiation for our sins. Through the ministration of the Holy Spirit souls are led to find forgiveness of sins.” *—Lift Him up*, p. 297.

2. Although we were previously rebels and enemies against God, what does the gospel bring about in our relationship with Him? Who makes it possible for a person to have a proper relationship with the heavenly Father?

Romans 5:1 *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Ephesians 2:14 *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.*

“Christ is ‘the Prince of Peace’ (Isaiah 9:6), and it is His mission to restore to earth and heaven the peace that sin has broken. ‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ Romans 5:1. Whoever consents to renounce sin and open his heart to the love of Christ, becomes a partaker of this heavenly peace.

“There is no other ground of peace than this. The grace of Christ received into the heart, subdues enmity; it allays strife and fills the soul with love. He who is at peace with God and his fellow men cannot be made miserable. Envy will not be in his heart; evil surmisings will find no room there; hatred cannot exist. The heart that is in harmony with God is a partaker of the peace of heaven and will diffuse its blessed influence on all around. The spirit of peace will rest like dew upon hearts weary and troubled with worldly strife.” *—Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 27, 28.

3. To what do we have access now by faith? Being at peace with God and with His law, what then is in our hearts?

Romans 5:2-5 *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; ⁴And patience, experience; and experience, hope: ⁵And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

“We learn a lesson in these trials.... ‘Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;...’ Romans 5:1-3. But many are inclined to think, as these temptations fall upon us, that we must give up in discouragement, that we have no power to overcome. This is unbelief. We become weak because we fall under temptation and sin against God with our lips in talking discouragements and doubts, and talk on the off side and not on the side of hope and faith. You know Christ has had all these temptations. He was tempted in all points as we are. Christ says: ‘For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.’ John 14:30....” *—The Upward Look*, p. 282.

4. What was our spiritual condition when the Redeemer died for us? How do we know that He gave His life for people who were sinful and ungodly?

Romans 5:6-8 *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. ⁸But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

“Not because we first loved Him did Christ love us; but ‘while we were yet sinners’ He died for us. He does not treat us according to our desert. Although our sins have merited condemnation, He does not condemn us. Year after year He has borne with our weakness and ignorance, with our ingratitude and waywardness. Notwithstanding our wanderings, our hardness of heart, our neglect of His Holy Word, His hand is stretched out still.

“Grace is an attribute of God exercised toward undeserving human beings. We did not seek for it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow His grace upon us, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our only claim to His mercy is our great need.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 161.

5. Who took away from man the curse and sentence of the law? If the judgment of the law fell upon Him, are we still under the condemnation of the law?

Galatians 3:10, 13 *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.... ¹³Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

Isaiah 53:5 *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

“The broken law of God demanded the life of sinners. In all the universe there was but One who could, in behalf of humanity, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen humans from the curse of the law and bring them again into harmony with Heaven. Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin—sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 30.

“The law has no power to pardon the transgressor, but it points him to Christ Jesus, who says to him, I will take your sin and bear it Myself, if you will accept Me as your substitute and surety. Return to your allegiance, and I will impute to you My righteousness.” —(Review and Herald, May 7, 1901) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1109.

6. Is one who is justified still under condemnation? From what does God save those who are justified by the blood of Christ?

Romans 8:1; 5:9 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit....*^{5:9}*Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

"It is the privilege of everyone to so live that God will approve and bless him. You may be hourly in communion with Heaven; it is not the will of your heavenly Father that you should ever be under condemnation and darkness. It is not pleasing to God that you should demerit yourself.... It is not an evidence of true humility that you go with your head bowed down, and your heart filled with thoughts of self. It is your privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame and remorse." —(Review and Herald, March 27, 1888) *Daughters of God*, p. 142.

"How shall we estimate the blessings thus brought within our reach? Could Jesus have suffered more? Could He have purchased for us richer blessings? Should it not melt the hardest heart when we remember that for our sakes He left the happiness and glory of heaven and suffered poverty and shame, cruel affliction and a terrible death?... In our present state, favored and blessed as we are, we cannot realize from what depths we have been rescued. We cannot measure how much deeper our afflictions would have been, how much greater our woes, had not Jesus encircled us with His human arm of sympathy and love, and lifted us up." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 316.

7. If the Lord reconciled us by His Son when we were His enemies, what will our life be like in the future if we are justified?

Romans 5:10, 11 *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*¹¹*And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.*

"What greater assurance can we have of the willingness, yea, the longing, of Christ to have all come unto Him and believe in Him that they may have eternal life! O, when we see the sorrows and suffering of loved ones, shall we turn away from Christ dissatisfied, murmuring, and complaining? No; that is the time to come close to the only One who can be our helper in every time of need. You have no time for repining, no time for unbelief, no time to let go of Jesus. When trial comes, press closer to His bleeding side. When the whole world was under condemnation, Christ took upon Himself the guilt of the sinner; He bore the wrath of God for the transgressor, and thus suffering the penalty of sin, He ransoms the sinner." —*Review and Herald*, September 1, 1891.

"In the atonement made for him the believer sees such breadth, and length, and height, and depth of efficiency—sees such completeness of salvation, purchased at such infinite cost, that his soul is filled with praise and thanksgiving. He sees as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and is changed into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord." —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 105.

8. If we have peace with the Lord, who justifies us, can human accusation and condemnation endanger our relationship with Him?

Romans 8:31-34 *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? ³²He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? ³³Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. ³⁴Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

"Jesus says, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' Matthew 28:20.... He knows how to succor those that are tempted. Now He is at the right hand of God, He is in heaven as our Advocate, to make intercession for us. We must always take comfort and hope as we think of this. He is thinking of those who are subject to temptations in this world. He thinks of us individually, and knows our every necessity. When tempted, just say, He cares for me, He makes intercession for me, He loves me, He has died for me. I will give myself unreservedly to Him. We grieve the heart of Christ when we go mourning over ourselves as though we were our own saviour. No; we must commit the keeping of our souls to God as unto a faithful Creator. He ever lives to make intercession for the tried, tempted ones. Open your heart to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and let not one breath of doubt, one word of unbelief, escape your lips, lest you sow the seeds of doubt. There are rich blessings for us; let us grasp them by faith." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 391.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"Our crucified Lord is pleading for us in the presence of the Father at the throne of grace. His atoning sacrifice we may plead for our pardon, our justification, and our sanctification. The lamb slain is our only hope. Our faith looks up to Him, grasps Him as the One who can save to the uttermost, and the fragrance of the all-sufficient offering is accepted of the Father.... Christ's glory is concerned in our success. He has a common interest in all humanity. He is our sympathizing Saviour." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 71.

"No one who believes in Jesus Christ is under bondage to the law of God; for His law is a law of life, not of death, to those who obey its precepts. All who comprehend the spirituality of the law, all who realize its power as a detector of sin, are in just as helpless a condition as is Satan himself, unless they accept the atonement provided for them in the remedial sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is our atonement-at-one-ment with God.

"Through faith in Christ obedience to every principle of the law is made possible." —(Manuscript 122, 1901) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1077.

* * *

Dead to Sin and Alive to God through Christ

“Has the gospel lost its power to impress hearts? Is it because the regenerating influence of the Spirit of Christ has died away that hearts are not purified, sanctified, and prepared for the Holy Spirit? No; the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of the living God, is with us yet; but it must be wielded with earnestness. Let us use it as did God’s sanctified ones of old. By its living, quickening power it will cut its way to hearts....”
—*The Upward Look*, p. 16.

1. **Why is it necessary for the old man to be crucified with Jesus and buried with Him in baptism? When one accepts burial with Him, what comes next?**

Romans 6:2, second part, 4, 6-8 ... *How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? ⁴Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.... ⁶Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. ⁷For he that is dead is freed from sin. ⁸Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.*

“Conversion is a work that most do not appreciate. It is not a small matter to transform an earthly, sin-loving mind and bring it to understand the unspeakable love of Christ, the charms of His grace, and the excellency of God, so that the soul shall be imbued with divine love and captivated with the heavenly mysteries. When he understands these things, his former life appears disgusting and hateful. He hates sin, and, breaking his heart before God, he embraces Christ as the life and joy of the soul. He renounces his former pleasures. He has a new mind, new affections, new interest, new will; his sorrows, and desires, and love are all new.”
—*The Faith I Live by*, p. 139.

“The new birth is a rare experience in this age of the world. This is the reason why there are so many perplexities in the churches. Many, so many, who assume the name of Christ are unsanctified and unholy. They have been baptized, but they were buried alive. Self did not die, and therefore they did not rise to newness of life in Christ.” —(Manuscript 148, 1897) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1075.

NO ROOM FOR SIN

2. **If his old man dies with Christ, how will a person react when he is tempted to sin? Is it possible for sin to continue ruling over him and to use his members as instruments of sin?**

Romans 6:11-13 *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. ¹²Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. ¹³Neither yield ye your*

members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

"It is a sacred work in which we are engaged. The apostle Paul exhorts his brethren: 'Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' It is a sacred duty that we owe to God to keep the spirit pure, as a temple for the Holy Ghost. If the heart and mind are devoted to the service of God, obeying all His commandments, loving Him with all the heart, might, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves, we shall be found loyal and true to the requirements of heaven.

"Again the apostle says: 'Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.' He also urges his brethren to earnest diligence and steady perseverance in their efforts for purity and holiness of life, in these words: 'And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.' 1 Corinthians 9:25." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 33.

3. When does sin have no more dominion over the sinner? What does it mean to be under grace and not under the law?

Romans 6:14, 15 *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. ¹⁵What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

"The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin." —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 35, 36. [See End Note 1]

"Our condition through sin is unnatural, and the power that restores us must be supernatural, else it has no value. There is but one power that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is the power of God in Jesus Christ. Only through the blood of the Crucified One is there cleansing from sin. His grace alone can enable us to resist and subdue the tendencies of our fallen nature." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 428.

"In His [Jesus'] name, through His grace, man may be an overcomer, even as Christ was an overcomer." —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 24.

"The grace of Christ can accomplish for us that which all our efforts will fail to do. Those who love and fear God may be surrounded with a multitude of cares, and yet not falter or make crooked paths for their feet. God takes care of you in the place where it is your duty to be. But be sure, as often as possible, to go where prayer is wont to be made." —*Counsels on Health*, p. 424.

SERVANTS TO THE ONE WHOM WE OBEY

4. When the Lord used so much grace to forgive our sins and free us from condemnation, can we possibly think that it is beneficial to continue living in sin? In such a case, what kind of service would we be giving, and who would be our master?

Romans 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

“Very many who profess to be servants of Christ are none of His. They are deceiving their souls to their own destruction. While they profess to be servants of Christ, they are not living in obedience to His will. ‘Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?’ Romans 6:16. Many, while professing to be servants of Christ, are obeying another master, working daily against the Master whom they profess to serve. ‘No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.’ Matthew 6:24.”
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 442.

5. How grateful should we be for the freedom that Jesus has won for and given to us? When we are freed from the bondage of sin, whose servants do we become?

Romans 6:17, 18 *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. ¹⁸Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.*

“Had you improved the light that has been given,... you would now be far in advance of what you are in the divine life. Both of you are vain and proud. You have not felt that you must give an account of your stewardship. You are accountable to God for all your privileges and for all the means which pass through your hands. You have sought your own pleasure and selfish gratification at the expense of conscience and the approval of God. You do not act like servants of Christ, who are responsible to the Saviour who has bought you with His own precious blood.”
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 82.

COMMITTED TO THE SERVICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

6. Giving up all impure and wicked works, to whose service will we commit with all our hearts?

Romans 6:19-21 *I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. ²⁰For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. ²¹What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.*

“We are commanded to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. How shall we do it? Shall we inflict pain on the body? No; but put to death the temptation to sin. The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. All animal propensities are to be subjected to the higher powers of the soul. The love of God must reign supreme; Christ must occupy an undivided throne. Our bodies are to be regarded as His purchased possession. The members of the body are to become the instruments of righteousness.”
—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 127, 128.

7. What fruit will we produce as the Lord's servants? Can anything else compare with God's wonderful gift?

Romans 6:22, 23 *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. ²³For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

"... We must be assured of the malignity of a disease before we feel our need of a cure. Those who do not realize the sinfulness of sin are not able to appreciate the value of the atonement and the necessity of being cleansed from all sin. The sinner measures himself by himself and by those who like himself are sinners. He does not look at the purity and holiness of Christ. But when the law of God brings conviction to his heart, he says with Paul, 'I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' Romans 7:9." —*The Upward Look*, p. 16.

"... Christ is represented in the Scriptures as a gift. He is a gift, but only to those who give themselves, soul, body, and spirit, to Him without reserve. We are to give ourselves to Christ, to live a life of willing obedience to all His requirements. All that we are, all the talents and capabilities we possess, are the Lord's, to be consecrated to His service. When we thus give ourselves wholly to Him, Christ, with all the treasures of heaven, gives Himself to us. We obtain the pearl of great price." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 116.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"You are professedly the servants of Christ. Do you then yield to Him ready and willing obedience? Do you earnestly inquire how you shall best please Him who has called you to be soldiers of the cross of Christ? Do you both lift the cross and glory in it? Answer these questions to God. All your acts, however secret you may think they have been, are open to your heavenly Father. Nothing is hidden, nothing covered. All your acts and the motives which prompt them are open to His sight. He has full knowledge of all your words and thoughts. It is your duty to control your thoughts. You will have to war against a vain imagination." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 82.

"All who receive Christ as a personal Saviour are to demonstrate the truth of the gospel and its saving power upon the life. God makes no requirement without making provision for its fulfillment. Through the grace of Christ we may accomplish everything that God requires. All the riches of heaven are to be revealed through God's people. 'Herein is My Father glorified,' Christ says, 'that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.' John 15:8." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 301.

"If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, 'I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.' Hebrews 10:16." —*Steps to Christ*, p. 60.

* * *

Free from Condemnation

“The law reveals to man his sins, but it provides no remedy. While it promises life to the obedient, it declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. He must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed; and faith in Christ, His atoning sacrifice. Thus he obtains ‘remission of sins that are past’ and becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is a child of God, having received the spirit of adoption, whereby he cries: ‘Abba, Father!’” —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 47.

1. What fundamental knowledge does the righteous law impart? Is this just for the sake of information, or does it impact one’s eternal destiny?

Romans 7:7; 3:19 *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....* ^{3:19}*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

James 2:12 *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.*

“The will of God is the law of heaven. As long as that law was the rule of life, all the family of God were holy and happy. But when the divine law was disobeyed, then envy, jealousy, and strife were introduced, and a part of the inhabitants of heaven fell. As long as God’s law is revered in our earthly homes, the family will be happy.” —*Child Guidance*, p. 79.

“The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgment. Says the wise man: ‘Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment.’ Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14. The apostle James admonishes his brethren: ‘So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.’ James 2:12.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 482.

THE LAW’S DOMINION

2. According to the apostle Paul, what is the law’s relationship to man? For how long is this the case?

Romans 7:1 *Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?*

“The same great laws that guide alike the star and the atom control human life. The laws that govern the heart’s action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul....

“To him who learns thus to interpret its teachings, all nature becomes illuminated; the world is a lesson book, life a school. The unity of man with nature and with God, the universal dominion of law, the results of transgression, cannot fail of impressing the mind and molding the character.” —*Education*, pp. 99, 100. [See End Note 2]

3. What impact does this have on the relationship between husband and wife? For how long does this last?

Romans 7:2 *For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.*

1 Corinthians 7:39 *The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will.*

“The marriage vow ... links the destinies of the two individuals with bonds which nought but the hand of death should sever.” —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 253.

“My dear brother and sister: You have united in a life-long covenant. Your education in married life has begun. The first year of married life is a year of experience, a year in which husband and wife learn each other’s different traits of character, as a child learns lessons in school. In this, the first year of your married life, let there be no chapters that will mar your future happiness.

“To gain a proper understanding of the marriage relation is the work of a lifetime.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 45.

4. What happens if a man or woman marries another person while his or her spouse is still living? Does the law allow a widow or widower to remarry? Does the marriage of a widow change the law?

Romans 7:3 *So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.*

Leviticus 20:10 *And the man that committeth adultery with another man’s wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.*

Deuteronomy 25:5 *If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband’s brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband’s brother unto her.*

“... Any woman who will allow the addresses of another man than her husband, who will listen to his advances, and whose ears will be pleased with the outpouring of lavish words of affection,... of endearment, is an adulteress....” —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 434, 435.

DEAD TO THE CONDEMNATION OF THE LAW

5. What does it mean that, through the body of Christ, believers are made dead to the law? If the condemnation of our sin falls upon Jesus, does the law still have the right to judge and condemn us to death? Does our death in Christ by faith involve the abolition or end of the law? What fruit will appear in the believer after he dies to sin and is free from the condemnation of the law?

Romans 7:4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

Galatians 5:22, 23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

“God is calling upon all to behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Christ lifts the guilt of sin from the sinner, standing Himself under the condemnation of the Lawgiver. He came to this world to live the law in humanity, that Satan’s charge that human beings cannot keep the law of God might be demonstrated as false.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 279.

“Paul calls the attention of his hearers to the broken law, and shows them wherein they are guilty. He instructs them as a schoolmaster instructs his scholars, and shows them the way back to their loyalty to God.” —*Review and Herald*, April 5, 1898. [See End Note 3]

6. What is our spiritual condition like when the impulses of the flesh control us? In the natural sinful condition of our flesh, what do our sinful actions under the law ultimately lead to?

Romans 8:3, first part; 7:5; 6:6 *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh.... ^{7:5}For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.... ^{6:6}Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

“The apostle Paul clearly presents the relation between faith and the law under the new covenant. He says: ‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ ‘Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.’ ‘For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh’—it could not justify man, because in his sinful nature he could not keep the law—‘God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ Romans 5:1; 3:31; 8:3, 4.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 140.

SERVING CONFIDENTLY

7. But when we are free from the burden and threat of condemnation, with what spirit will we serve God? [See End Note 3]

Romans 7:6; 6:14; 5:1, 2 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.... ^{6:14}For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.... ^{5:1}Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: ²By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

"Sin did not kill the law, but it did kill the carnal mind in Paul. 'Now we are delivered from the law,' he declares, 'that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.' Romans 7:6. 'Was that then which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.' Romans 7:13. 'Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.' Romans 7:12." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 212, 213.

"In the Word of God the honest seeker for truth will find the rule for genuine sanctification. The apostle says: 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.... For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us....' Romans 8:1, 3, 4." —*Faith and Works*, p. 97.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"Is he now free to transgress God's law? Says Paul: 'Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.' Romans 3:31. 'How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' Chap. 6:2. And John declares: 'This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.' 1 John 5:3. In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then 'the righteousness of the law' will 'be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' Romans 8:4. And the language of the soul will be: 'O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day.' Psalm 119:97." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 468.

* * *

Life through the Spirit

“The refining influence of the grace of God changes the natural disposition of man. Heaven would not be desirable to the carnal-minded; their natural, unsanctified hearts would feel no attraction toward that pure and holy place, and if it were possible for them to enter, they would find there nothing congenial. The propensities that control the natural heart must be subdued by the grace of Christ before fallen man is fitted to enter heaven and enjoy the society of the pure, holy angels. When man dies to sin and is quickened to new life in Christ, divine love fills his heart; his understanding is sanctified; he drinks from an inexhaustible fountain of joy and knowledge, and the light of an eternal day shines upon his path, for with him continually is the Light of life.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 273.

1. Does condemnation remain upon those who are in Christ? What happens through the work of the Holy Spirit?

Romans 8:1, 2 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

“While the Christian’s life will be characterized by humility, it should not be marked with sadness and self-depreciation. It is the privilege of everyone so to live that God will approve and bless him. It is not the will of our heavenly Father that we should be ever under condemnation and darkness. There is no evidence of true humility in going with the head bowed down and the heart filled with thoughts of self. We may go to Jesus and be cleansed, and stand before the law without shame and remorse. ‘There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ Romans 8:1.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 477.

RIGHTEOUSNESS FULFILLED IN MAN

2. How does the Lord bring about what was impossible for the law to do? What then becomes a part of us?

Romans 8:3, 4 *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: ⁴That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

“‘Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.’ Romans 3:31. ‘How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?’ Chap. 6:2. And John declares: ‘This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.’ 1 John 5:3. In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death

unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then 'the righteousness of the law' will 'be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' Romans 8:4. And the language of the soul will be: 'O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day.' Psalm 119:97." —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 47.

3. What is the inclination of all who are carnally minded? On the other hand, how do those live whose minds are focused on that which the Holy Spirit desires?

Romans 8:5, 6 *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

"We cannot use the Holy Spirit; the Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit, God works in His people 'to will and to do of His good pleasure.' Philippians 2:13. But many will not submit to be led. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 672.

"The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. Those only who are thus taught of God, those only who possess the inward working of the Spirit, and in whose life the Christ-life is manifested, can stand as true representatives of the Saviour...." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 212.

4. What relationship do carnal men have with God? Do they submit to His law? Can they please the Lord?

Romans 8:7, 8 *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. ⁸So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

"We sometimes hear the questions: Am I never to do as I please? Am I never to have my own way? Am I always to be restrained? Can I never act in accordance with my inclinations?

"The less you follow natural inclinations, the better it will be for yourself and for others. The natural inclinations have been perverted, the natural powers misapplied. Satan has brought man into collision with God. He works continually to destroy the divine image in man. Therefore we must place a restraint on our words and actions....

"The natural man is not subject to the law of God; neither, indeed, of himself, can he be. But by faith he who has been renewed lives day by day the life of Christ. Day by day he shows that he realizes that he is God's property." —*Messages to Young People*, p. 68.

CHRIST WITHIN

5. If Christ lives in us, how will our body react to the snares of sin? What will our spirit be like if God's Spirit is living in us?

Romans 8:9-11 *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. ¹⁰And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

“When you respond to the drawing of Christ, and join yourself to Him, you manifest saving faith. To talk of religious things in a casual way, to pray for spiritual blessings without real soul hunger and living faith, avails little. The wondering crowd that pressed close about Jesus realized no accession of vital power from the contact. But when the poor, suffering woman, who for twelve years had been an invalid, in her great need put forth her hand and touched the hem of His garment, she felt the healing virtue. Hers was the touch of faith, and Christ recognized that touch.... The faith which avails to bring us in vital contact with Christ expresses on our part supreme preference, perfect reliance, entire consecration. This faith works by love and purifies the soul. It works in the life of the follower of Christ true obedience to God’s commandments; for love to God and love to man will be the result of vital connection with Christ. ‘If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.’ Romans 8:9.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 334.

6. What will naturally happen if we live according to our sinful natures? To be alive spiritually, how will we deal with our carnal tendencies?

Romans 8:12, 13 *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. ¹³For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*

“Thus Paul presents the conditions which God imposes upon every soul who enlists in His service. The apostle fears for himself, lest he shall fail of bearing the examination test, and be found wanting, and he places himself under severe training. So the Christian today needs to keep strict guard over his appetite. He needs to subject himself to severe training, that he may not run uncertainly or at random, without seeing his standard and striving to reach it. He must obey the laws of God. The physical, mental, and moral powers must be kept in the most perfect condition if he would obtain the approval of God. ‘I keep under my body,’ the apostle says. This means literally to beat back its desires and impulses and passions by severe discipline, even as did those competing for an earthly prize.” —(Manuscript 93, 1899) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1089.

SHARING CHRIST’S GLORY

7. What benefits do we enjoy when we request the Lord’s Spirit to guide us? At the same time, if we share Christ’s sufferings, what will we share with Him in the future?

Romans 8:14-17 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. ¹⁵For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. ¹⁶The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

“God is love. He has a care for the creatures He has formed. ‘Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.’ Psalm 103:13. ‘Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.’ 1 John 3:1. What a precious privilege is this, that we may be sons and daughters of the Most High, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Then let us not mourn and grieve because in this life we are not free from disappointments and afflictions. If in the providence of God we are called upon to endure trials, let us accept the cross and drink the bitter cup, remembering that it is a Father’s hand that holds it to our lips. Let us trust Him in the darkness as well as in the day. Can we not believe that He will give us everything that is for our good?” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 315, 316.

“To what greater honor could we aspire than to be called the children of God? What greater rank could we hold, what greater inheritance could we find, than that which comes to those who are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ?” —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 15.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. The word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude. This is what it means to live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ Matthew 4:4. This is eating the Bread that comes down from heaven.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 391.

* * *

22

Sabbath, November 30, 2019

The Law Leads Man to Christ

“When the mind is drawn to the cross of Calvary, Christ by imperfect sight is discerned on the shameful cross. Why did He die? In consequence of sin. What is sin? The transgression of the law. Then the eyes are open to see the character of sin. The law is broken but cannot pardon the transgressor. It is our schoolmaster, condemning to punishment. Where is the remedy? The law drives us to Christ, who was hanged upon the cross that He might be able to impart His righteousness to fallen, sinful man and thus present men to His Father in His righteous character.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 341.

- 1. What does the psalmist say about a person to whom the Lord teaches the principles of His law? On the other hand, can a person expect to be justified by obeying the law?**

Psalm 94:12 *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.*

Galatians 2:16; 3:11 *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. ^{3:11}But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.*

“Nothing but the righteousness of Christ can entitle us to one of the blessings of the covenant of grace. There are many who have long desired and tried to obtain these blessings, but have not received them, because they have cherished the idea that they could do something to make themselves worthy of them. They have not looked away from self, believing that Jesus is an all-sufficient Saviour. We must not think that our own merits will save us; Christ is our only hope of salvation. ‘For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.’ Acts 4:12.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 431.

THE LAW VERSUS THE PROMISE MADE TO ABRAHAM

2. Did the laws given at Sinai annul or somehow contradict the previous promise and covenant of blessing given to Abraham?

Romans 3:1, 2; 9:4 *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.*

Galatians 3:17 *And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.*

“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.

“For the disheartened there is a sure remedy—faith, prayer, work. Faith and activity will impart assurance and satisfaction that will increase day by day. Are you tempted to give way to feelings of anxious foreboding or utter despondency? In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, fear not. Have faith in God. He knows your need. He has all power. His infinite love and compassion never weary. Fear not that He will fail of fulfilling His promise. He is eternal truth. Never will He change the covenant He has made with those who love Him. And He will bestow upon His faithful servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands.” —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 164, 165.

3. Was the Lord’s promise of the inheritance to Abraham based on the law or human merit, or was it founded on His promise of grace?

Genesis 22:16-18 *And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: ¹⁷That 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; ¹⁸And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Galatians 3:18 *For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.*

"We must learn in the school of Christ. Nothing but His righteousness can entitle us to one of the blessings of the covenant of grace. We have long desired and tried to obtain these blessings but have not received them because we have cherished the idea that we could do something to make ourselves worthy of them. We have not looked away from ourselves, believing that Jesus is a living Saviour. We must not think that our own grace and merits will save us; the grace of Christ is our only hope of salvation.... We must believe the naked promise, and not accept feeling for faith. When we trust God fully, when we rely upon the merits of Jesus as a sin-pardoning Saviour, we shall receive all the help that we can desire." —*Gospel Workers* (1892), p. 412.

4. If Israel was already heir of the promise made to Abraham, why were the Ten Commandments given at Sinai? What could be better understood when given in a concrete form?

Galatians 3:19, first part *Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made....*

Romans 5:20; 7:13, second part *Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:.... ^{7:13}... But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.*

"In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God's great standard of righteousness. It is a mirror which shows the perfection of a righteous character and enables him to discern the defects in his own." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 467.

"The law reveals to man his sin.... It declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. He must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed; and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice...." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 20.

THE PROMISE RECEIVED BY FAITH

5. If all are under sin, does anyone possess personal merits that he can present to God for justification? How can anyone receive the promised blessings of justification and redemption?

Galatians 3:20-22 *Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? ²¹God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. ²²But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.*

"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, pp. 320, 321.

"We are justified by faith. The soul who understands the meaning of these words will never be self-sufficient. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves.... When we think ourselves capable of molding our own experience, we make a great mistake. We can never of ourselves obtain the victory over temptation. But those who have genuine faith in Christ will be worked by the Holy Spirit." —(Manuscript 8, 1900) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1109.

6. How did the apostle describe the condition of the believers who were waiting for the coming of the Messiah? What function did the law have after His coming?

Galatians 3:23, 24 *But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. ²⁴Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

"As the sinner looks into the great moral looking glass, he sees his defects of character. He sees himself just as he is, spotted, defiled, and condemned. But he knows that the law cannot in any way remove the guilt or pardon the transgressor. He must go farther than this. The law is but the schoolmaster to bring him to Christ. He must look to his sin-bearing Saviour....

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.' Galatians 3:24. In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ....

"I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 213, 234, 233.

CESSATION OF THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

7. Ever since Jesus came, what do all who accept His sacrifice by faith become? Since justification occurred through the blood of Jesus, what happened to the sacrifices that pointed to Christ as the Messiah?

Galatians 3:25-29 *But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. ²⁶For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

"When type met antitype in the death of Christ, the sacrificial offering ceased. The ceremonial law was done away." —*Evangelism*, p. 598.

"Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. The death of Abel was in consequence of Cain's refusing to accept God's plan in the school of obedience to be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ typified by the sacrificial offerings pointing to Christ. Cain refused the shedding of blood which symbolized the blood of Christ to be shed for the world.... This is the beginning of its work as the schoolmaster to bring sinful human agents to a consideration of Christ the Foundation of the whole Jewish economy." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 233.

8. What functions have the Ten Commandments continued to serve? What does God's holy word say about this?

Romans 3:20, last part; 13:9, 10 ... *By the law is the knowledge of sin....* ^{13:9}*For 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.* ¹⁰*Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

"But by the crucifixion the law of Ten Commandments was established. The gospel has not abrogated the law, nor detracted one tittle from its claims. It still demands holiness in every part. It is the echo of God's own voice, giving to every soul the invitation, Come up higher. Be holy, holier still." —*Evangelism*, p. 598.

"We are to raise the banner on which is inscribed, 'The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Obedience to God's law is the great issue. Let it not be put out of sight. We must strive to arouse church members, and those who make no profession, to see and obey the claims of the law of Heaven. We are to magnify this law and make it honorable." —*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 403.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"The law has no power to pardon the transgressor, but it points him to Christ Jesus, who says to him, I will take your sin and bear it Myself, if you will accept Me as your substitute and surety." —(Review and Herald, May 7, 1901) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1109.

"There is no safety nor repose nor justification in transgression of the law. Man cannot hope to stand innocent before God, and at peace with Him through the merits of Christ, while he continues in sin. He must cease to transgress, and become loyal and true. As the sinner looks into the great moral looking glass, he sees his defects of character. He sees himself just as he is, spotted, defiled, and condemned. But he knows that the law cannot in any way remove the guilt or pardon the transgressor. He must go farther than this. The law is but the schoolmaster to bring him to Christ. He must look to his sin-bearing Saviour. And as Christ is revealed to him upon the cross of Calvary, dying beneath the weight of the sins of the whole world, the Holy Spirit shows him the attitude of God to all who repent of their transgressions. 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' John 3:16." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 213.

* * *

Two Ministries Compared

"The greatest difficulty Paul had to meet arose from the influence of Judaizing teachers. These made him much trouble by causing dissension in the church at Corinth. They were continually presenting the virtues of the ceremonies of the law, exalting these ceremonies above the gospel of Christ, and condemning Paul because he did not urge them upon the new converts.

"Paul met them on their own ground. 'If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious,' he said, 'so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.' 2 Corinthians 3:7-9." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 236.

THE BEST POSSIBLE LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

- 1. In carrying out His ministry among the believers, what did the apostle Paul present to them? But what did he consider more exalted than this?**

2 Corinthians 3:1-3 *Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? ²Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: ³Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.*

"It is not enough for you to avoid the appearance of evil; you must go farther than this; you must 'learn to do well.' Isaiah 1:17. You must represent Christ to the world. It must be your daily study how you can learn to work the works of God. His followers are to be living epistles, 'known and read of all men.' 2 Corinthians 3:2." —*Messages to Young People*, p. 348.

"We are ambassadors for Christ, and we are to live, not to save our reputation, but to save perishing souls from perdition. Our daily endeavor should be to show them that they may gain truth and righteousness. Instead of trying to elicit sympathy for ourselves by giving others the impression that we are not appreciated, we are to forget self entirely; and if we fail to do this, through want of spiritual discernment and vital piety, God will require at our hands the souls of those for whom we should have labored. He has made provision that every worker in His service may have grace and wisdom, that he may become a living epistle, known and read of all men." —*Counsels on Health*, p. 560.

- 2. What ministers presented letters of recommendation to the people they met? What would be the result of any ministry that preached salvation through human works, even if they were based on the letter of the law? Without Christ, can the letter of the law justify or save anyone?**

2 Corinthians 3:4-6 *And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: ⁵Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; ⁶Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*

Romans 3:20 *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.*

"The law of God, spoken in awful grandeur from Sinai, is the utterance of condemnation to the sinner. It is the province of the law to condemn, but there is in it no power to pardon or to redeem. It is ordained to life; those who walk in harmony with its precepts will receive the reward of obedience. But it brings bondage and death to those who remain under its condemnation." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 236, 237.

"We should consider earnestly and continually the excellence of the character of Jesus Christ, and we may impart His blessings, and lead men to follow in His footsteps. If the ministers of Christ would do this, there would be no reason for deploring their inefficiency. If they came to the people filled with the meekness and lowliness of Christ, knowing what it is to grow up into the full stature of men in Christ Jesus, power would attend their labors, and people would receive impressions from their association with them that would be of eternal benefit.... 'Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart....' 2 Corinthians 3:3. The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." —*Signs of the Times*, July 10, 1893.

3. Why did the apostle call the ministration of the law engraved in stones the ministration of death? If someone were to preach only the law, could he hope to receive justification and salvation by doing this? What kind of a ministry would that be?

2 Corinthians 3:7, 8 *But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: ⁸How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?*

"So sacred and so glorious is the law, that when Moses returned from the holy mount, where he had been with God, receiving from His hand the tables of stone, his face reflected a glory upon which the people could not look without pain, and Moses was obliged to cover his face with a veil.

"The glory that shone on the face of Moses was a reflection of the righteousness of Christ in the law. The law itself would have no glory, only that in it Christ is embodied. It has no power to save. It is lusterless only as in it Christ is represented as full of righteousness and truth....

"The ministration of the law, written and engraved in stone, was a ministration of death. Without Christ, the transgressor was left under its curse, with no hope of pardon. The ministration had of itself no glory, but the promised Saviour, revealed in the types and shadows of the ceremonial law, made the moral law glorious." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 237.

4. Why did the apostle Paul call the sacrificial system a ministry of condemnation? What ended when Jesus died and the veil in the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom?

2 Corinthians 3:9-11 *For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. ¹⁰For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. ¹¹For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.*

Galatians 5:4 *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*

Ephesians 2:7, 8 *That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

"The types and shadows of the sacrificial service, with the prophecies, gave the Israelites a veiled, indistinct view of the mercy and grace to be brought to the world by the revelation of Christ. To Moses was unfolded the significance of the types and shadows pointing to Christ. He saw to the end of that which was to be done away when, at the death of Christ, type met antitype. He saw that only through Christ can man keep the moral law. By transgression of this law man brought sin into the world, and with sin came death. Christ became the propitiation for man's sin. He proffered His perfection of character in the place of man's sinfulness. He took upon Himself the curse of disobedience. The sacrifices and offerings pointed forward to the sacrifice He was to make. The slain lamb typified the Lamb that was to take away the sin of the world.

"It was seeing the object of that which was to be done away, seeing Christ as revealed in the law, that illumined the face of Moses." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 237.

"Then the veil of the temple was rent in twain, showing that the sacredness and significance of the sacrificial service had departed. The time had come for the earthly sacrifice and oblation to cease." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 233.

5. Rejecting salvation by grace and also the Redeemer who suffered for them, what happened in the minds of many Jews? Whom should they have acknowledged so the veil could be removed?

2 Corinthians 3:12-14 *Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: ¹³And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: ¹⁴But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ.*

"Paul declared, 'Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: but their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.' 2 Corinthians 3:12-16.

"The Jews refused to accept Christ as the Messiah, and they cannot see that their ceremonies are meaningless, that the sacrifices and offerings have lost their significance." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 238, 239.

AN OBSTACLE AND THE SOLUTION

- 6. Although the Jewish leaders read the prophecies telling that the Messiah would be sacrificed as the Lamb of God, what still remains in the minds of many Jews? But what can be said about many Christians who claim to accept Jesus while denying the validity of God's holy law?**

2 Corinthians 3:15, 16 *But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. ¹⁶Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.*

"The veil drawn by themselves [the Jews] in stubborn unbelief is still before their minds. It would be removed if they would accept Christ, the righteousness of the law.

"Many in the Christian world also have a veil before their eyes and heart. They do not see to the end of that which was done away. They do not see that it was only the ceremonial law which was abrogated at the death of Christ. They claim that the moral law was nailed to the cross. Heavy is the veil that darkens their understanding. The hearts of many are at war with God. They are not subject to His law. Only as they shall come into harmony with the rule of His government, can Christ be of any avail to them. They may talk of Christ as their Saviour; but He will finally say to them, I know you not. You have not exercised genuine repentance toward God for the transgression of His holy law, and you cannot have genuine faith in Me, for it was My mission to exalt God's law." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 239.

- 7. If we look to men's ideas and opinions, will we be able to find the right way? Whom should we constantly keep before our eyes? What will happen if we behold Him in His glory?**

2 Corinthians 3:17, 18 *Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. ¹⁸But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

"Beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, he finds the peace of Christ; for pardon is written against his name, and he accepts the Word of God, 'Ye are complete in Him.' Colossians 2:10. How hard is it for humanity, long accustomed to cherish doubt, to grasp this great truth! But what peace it brings to the soul, what vital life! In looking to ourselves for righteousness, by which to find acceptance with God, we look to the wrong place, 'for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' Romans 3:23. We are to look to Jesus; for 'we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.' 2 Corinthians 3:18. You are to find your completeness by beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." —*Faith and Works*, p. 108.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“It is not by looking away from Him that we imitate the life of Jesus, but by talking of Him, by dwelling upon His perfections, by seeking to refine the taste and elevate the character, by trying, through faith and love, and by earnest, persevering effort, to approach the perfect Pattern. By having a knowledge of Christ—His words, His habits, and His lessons of instruction—we borrow the virtues of the character we have so closely studied, and become imbued with the spirit we have so much admired. Jesus becomes to us ‘the chiefest among ten thousand,’ the One ‘altogether lovely.’ —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 235.

“Affection may be as clear as crystal and beauteous in its purity, yet it may be shallow because it has not been tested and tried. Make Christ first and last and best in everything. Constantly behold Him, and your love for Him will daily become deeper and stronger as it is submitted to the test of trial. And as your love for Him increases, your love for each other will grow deeper and stronger. ‘We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.’ 2 Corinthians 3:18.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 46.

* * *

24

Sabbath, December 14, 2019

Christ, the Purpose of the Law

“The righteousness of God was revealed in the gospel. In it was made known the method by which man was to be reconciled to God. Notwithstanding the justice of God, and the guilt of the transgressor of His holy law, a way was devised whereby satisfaction could be made to the law by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. The typical offerings of the old dispensation pointed men forward to the Lamb of God that should die on Calvary’s cross, when type would meet antitype in the death of God’s dear Son. From Adam’s time through successive generations the sacrificial offerings were pointing forward to Christ, and men’s faith was fixed on an offering of infinite value. By faith, patriarchs and prophets depended upon God, who was dealing with them through Christ.” —*Signs of the Times*, August 5, 1889.

THE GOSPEL AND GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS

1. How did the apostle Paul define the gospel of Jesus Christ? What is revealed in it?

Romans 1:16, 17 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

“The law reveals to man his sins, but it provides no remedy. While it promises life to the obedient, it declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The

gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. He must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed; and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice. Thus he obtains 'remission of sins that are past' and becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is a child of God, having received the spirit of adoption, whereby he cries: 'Abba, Father!'" —*The Great Controversy*, pp. 467, 468.

2. Is justification a personal achievement coming from one's own merits, or is it the pure gift of God's grace? If it is by grace, why is it impossible for it to come from one's own works or human merit?

Romans 3:24; 11:6 *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus....^{11:6}And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.*

"Here the truth is laid out in plain lines. This mercy and goodness is wholly undeserved. The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on his part. Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is no more to doubt God's forgiving grace." —*Our Father Cares*, p. 290.

ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES' SEARCH FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

3. Did Israel, which received the law and knew God's will, attain to righteousness? What about the Gentiles, who had not received the written law? Did they receive the righteousness of Jesus by faith?

Romans 9:30, 31 *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. ³¹But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.*

"At His baptism the heavens were opened, and the glory of God in the similitude of a dove like burnished gold hovered over the Saviour, and a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' But the nation to whom Christ came, though professing to be the peculiar people of God, did not recognize the heavenly treasure in the person of Jesus Christ. They had had light upon light, evidence upon evidence.... 'Esaia is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me. But to Israel He saith, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.' Romans 10:20, 21." —*The Youth's Instructor*, August 22, 1895.

4. Why did Israel not receive the true righteousness given by God? What obstacles hindered both the people and the rulers from receiving the gift of righteousness?

Romans 9:32, 33 *Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; ³³As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

"A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an abomination in the sight of God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposing sacrifice, proclaim that the doer of these things regards himself as righteous, and as entitled to heaven; but it is all a deception. Our own works can never purchase salvation." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 280.

"While we are to be in harmony with God's law, we are not saved by the works of the law, yet we cannot be saved without obedience. The law is the standard by which character is measured. But we cannot possibly keep the commandments of God without the regenerating grace of Christ. Jesus alone can cleanse us from all sin. He does not save us by law, neither will He save us in disobedience to law." —*Faith and Works*, pp. 95, 96.

5. In trying to establish their own righteousness, what mistake did the Jews make? Although they had zeal for the Lord, what did they lose?

Romans 10:1-3 *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. ²For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. ³For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*

"As a nation, the people of Israel, while desiring the advent of the Messiah, were so far separated from God in heart and life that they could have no true conception of the character or mission of the promised Redeemer. Instead of desiring redemption from sin, and the glory and peace of holiness, their hearts were fixed upon deliverance from their national foes, and restoration to worldly power. They looked for Messiah to come as a conqueror, to break every yoke, and exalt Israel to dominion over all nations. Thus Satan had succeeded in preparing the hearts of the people to reject the Saviour when He should appear. Their own pride of heart, and their false conceptions of His character and mission, would prevent them from honestly weighing the evidences of His Messiahship." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 709, 710.

THE AIM OF THE LAW

6. Was the purpose of the law to put man in a position to achieve righteousness by his own works or to guide him to Christ, who would give man His own perfect righteousness by faith?

Romans 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*

Galatians 3:24; 2:16 *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.... ^{2:16}Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

"Christ is the end, or purpose, of the law. The law condemns the sinner, and thus drives him to Christ for righteousness." —*Signs of the Times*, August 5, 1889.

The Greek word *telos* in some versions of Romans 10:4 is translated “termination”; in other translations, “end,” which in English may indicate “termination” or “goal.” In other versions in various languages, *telos* is translated “goal,” meaning that Christ is the “goal” or “intent” of the law. Because the term *telos* may have more than one meaning, in every case it is necessary to understand the word in the light of the Biblical context. What is Jesus teaching regarding the law—that He is its termination? No! Matthew 5:17; Luke 16:17. This shows that Jesus is not the termination of the law, but its goal, the One who carries it out with complete obedience (cf. Matthew 3:15) and through His example helps others to reach the same goal.

“The law given upon Sinai was the enunciation of the principle of love, a revelation to earth of the law of heaven.... God had revealed the purpose of the law when He declared to Israel, ‘Ye shall be holy men unto Me.’ Exodus 22:31.” —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 46.

PROPHECY OF THE RIGHTEOUS SERVANT

7. How did the prophets point out that righteousness would come from the “righteous Servant”? Since the law is unable to justify anyone, to whom must we turn for justification?

Psalm 143:2 *And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.*

Isaiah 53:11 *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

Acts 13:37-39 *But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. ³⁸Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: ³⁹And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

“Ever before Him, Christ saw the result of His mission. His earthly life, so full of toil and self-sacrifice, was cheered by the thought that He would not have all this travail for nought. By giving His life for the life of men, He would restore in humanity the image of God. He would lift us up from the dust, reshape the character after the pattern of His own character, and make it beautiful with His own glory.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 504.

“What sustained the Son of God during His life of toil and sacrifice? He saw the results of the travail of His soul, and was satisfied. Looking into eternity, He beheld the happiness of those who through His humiliation had received pardon and everlasting life. His ear caught the shout of the redeemed. He heard the ransomed ones singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 601.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“When the law was proclaimed from Sinai, God made known to men the holiness of His character, that by contrast they might see the sinfulness of their own. The law was given to convict them of sin, and reveal their need of a Saviour. It would do this as its principles were applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit. This work it is still to do.

In the life of Christ the principles of the law are made plain; and as the Holy Spirit of God touches the heart, as the light of Christ reveals to men their need of His cleansing blood and His justifying righteousness, the law is still an agent in bringing us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 308.

"The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 235.

"As received in Christ, it [God's law] works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages." —*The Faith I Live by*, p. 83.

* * *

25

Sabbath, December 21, 2019

The Law is Like a Mirror

"God's law is the mirror presenting a complete reflection of the man as he is, and holding up before him the correct likeness. Some will turn away and forget this picture, while others will employ abusive epithets against the law, as though this would cure their defects of character. Still others who are condemned by the law will repent of their transgressions and, through faith in Christ's merits, will perfect Christian character." —*Faith and Works*, p. 31.

KNOWN AND SECRET SINS

- 1. While everything is open as a book to the Lord, what danger do human beings face? Therefore, what did the psalmist especially pray for?**

Job 13:23 *How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*

Psalms 19:12 *Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

"The law of God, as presented in the Scriptures, is broad in its requirements. Every principle is holy, just, and good. The law lays men under obligation to God; it reaches to the thoughts and feelings; and it will produce conviction of sin in every one who is sensible of having transgressed its requirements. If the law extended to the outward conduct only, men would not be guilty in their wrong thoughts, desires, and designs. But the law requires that the soul itself be pure and the mind holy, that the thoughts and feelings may be in accordance with the standard of love and righteousness." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 211.

2. What blessing makes it possible for a person to recognize his own sins? How did the apostle Paul become aware that certain of his actions were deplorable?

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.*

Galatians 3:19, first part *Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made;...*

“Sin does not appear as sinful, unless viewed in the truthful mirror God has given them as a test of character. When men and women acknowledge the claims of the law of God, and plant their feet upon this platform of eternal truth, they will stand where the Lord can give them moral power to let their light so shine before men that they may see their good works, and glorify our Father who is in Heaven.”
—*Review and Herald*, March 8, 1870.

3. After many years of neglect, what did the high priest Hilkiah discover in the temple in the time of King Josiah (ca. B.C. 638-608)?

2 Kings 22:8, 9, first part, 10 *And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord.⁹And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the scribe came to the king,...¹⁰And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.*

“In the eighteenth year of Josiah’s reign, God chose him to superintend the repairing of the temple. It was as this work was being done that the book of the law was found. Through some mismanagement it had been lost, and the people had been deprived of its instruction. Brethren, have any of you lost the book of the law? Have not many of us lost sight of the precepts that are in the holy Book?”
—*General Conference Bulletin*, April 1, 1903.

BLESSINGS FROM READING THE LAW AND TAKING ACTION

4. What immediate effect did the reading of the book of the law have on King Josiah as he grasped the meaning of what he heard?

2 Kings 22:11-13 *And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.¹²And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king’s, saying,¹³Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.*

“The reading of the book of the law, so long forgotten, made a deep impression upon the king’s mind. He realized that something must be done to bring this law to the attention of the people, and to lead them to conform their lives to its teachings. By his own course of action, he designed to show his respect for the law. He humbled himself before God, rending his clothes.

"In his position as king, it was the work of Josiah to carry out in the Jewish nation the principles taught in the book of the law. This he endeavored to do faithfully. In the book of the law itself he found a treasure of knowledge, a powerful ally in the work of reform." —*General Conference Bulletin*, April 1, 1903.

5. Decades later, after the exiles returned to Jerusalem, what kind of meeting took place outdoors? For about many hours did Ezra read to the people from the book of the law?

Nehemiah 8:1-3 *And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. ²And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. ³And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.*

"There is no safety nor repose nor justification in transgression of the law. Man cannot hope to stand innocent before God, and at peace with Him through the merits of Christ, while he continues in sin. He must cease to transgress, and become loyal and true. As the sinner looks into the great moral looking glass, he sees his defects of character. He sees himself just as he is, spotted, defiled, and condemned. But he knows that the law cannot in any way remove the guilt or pardon the transgressor. He must go farther than this. The law is but the school-master to bring him to Christ. He must look to his sin-bearing Saviour. And as Christ is revealed to him upon the cross of Calvary, dying beneath the weight of the sins of the whole world, the Holy Spirit shows him the attitude of God to all who repent of their transgressions. 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' John 3:16." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 213.

READING AND UNDERSTANDING THE LAW

6. Who helped in the explanation so that the assembled multitude could understand the true meaning of the law?

Nehemiah 8:5-8 *And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: ⁶And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. ⁷Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. ⁸So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*

"Here is a work for man to do. He must face the mirror, God's law, discern the defects in his moral character, and put away his sins, washing his robe of character in the blood of the lamb. Envy, pride, malice, deceit, strife, and crime will be cleansed from the heart that is a recipient of the love of Christ and that cherishes the hope of being made like Him when we shall see Him as He is. The religion of

Christ refines and dignifies its possessor, whatever his associations or station in life may be. Men who become enlightened Christians rise above the level of their former character into greater mental and moral strength. Those fallen and degraded by sin and crime may, through the merits of the Saviour, be exalted to a position but little lower than that of the angels." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 232.

"The Bible is God's voice speaking to us just as surely as though we could hear Him with our ears. The word of the living God is not merely written, but spoken. Do we receive the Bible as the oracle of God? If we realized the importance of this Word, with what awe would we open it, and with what earnestness would we search its precepts. The reading and contemplating of the Scriptures would be regarded as an audience with the Most High." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 134.

7. What happened when the people realized how far they had strayed away from the Lord's will? Thus, what is the effect of the law when one earnestly seeks to understand and obey it?

Nehemiah 9:1-3 *Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. ²And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. ³And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God.*

Psalms 66:18 *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.*

Proverbs 28:9 *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.*

Romans 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*

"A great work must be done for us all before we will have perfection of Christian character. The law of God is the standard of righteousness. This is the mirror into which we are to look to discern the defects of our character. When we look in a common mirror, it points out to us the defects upon our person, but it does not remove one stain; we must go and wash if we would become clean. So it is with the law of God. It is God's great mirror, or moral detector of sin; but there is no saving quality in law; it has no power to pardon the transgressor. There is a provision made for the sinner: 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' Then what is the work before the sinner? It is to exercise repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. In His precious blood the stains of sin may all be washed away. There is a fountain open for Judah and Jerusalem, and the defilement of sin may be removed if they will only wash in this fountain." —*Present Truth*, November 3, 1885.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

"Let those who feel inclined to make a high profession of holiness look into the mirror of God's law. As they see its far-reaching claims, and understand its work as a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, they will not boast of sinlessness. 'If we,' says John, not separating himself from his brethren, 'say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' 'If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.' 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' 1 John 1:8, 10, 9." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 562.

“By the law is the knowledge of sin.’ Romans 3:20. In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God’s great standard of righteousness. It is a mirror which shows the perfection of a righteous character and enables him to discern the defects of his own. The law reveals to man his sin.... It declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. He must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed; and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice....” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 20.

* * *

Please read the Missionary Report from the General Conference
Health Department on page 117.

26

Sabbath, December 28, 2019

The Law Is Spiritual

“Through faith in Christ obedience to every principle of the law is made possible. Thus Paul learned that ‘the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.’ For our benefit, he questions, ‘Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.’ Romans 7:13, 14.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 98.

THE GOLDEN RULE

1. What great principle that impacts human behavior characterizes the law and the writings of the prophets?

Matthew 7:12 *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*

“The Saviour taught this principle [the golden rule] to make mankind happy, not unhappy; for in no other way can happiness come. God desires men and women to live the higher life. He gives them the boon of life, not to enable them merely to gain wealth, but to improve their higher powers by doing the work He has entrusted to mankind—the work of searching out and relieving the necessities of their fellow men. Man should not work for his own selfish interest, but for the interest of every one about him, blessing others by his influence and kindly deeds. This purpose of God is exemplified in Christ’s life.” —*My Life Today*, p. 165.

2. In His teaching, did Jesus diminish the value of the letter of His commandments? What did the depth and spiritual explanation that He gave for the sixth commandment reveal?

Matthew 5:21-24 *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: ²²But I say*

unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. ²³*Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;* ²⁴*Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

"The righteousness which Christ taught is conformity of heart and life to the revealed will of God. Sinful men can become righteous only as they have faith in God and maintain a vital connection with Him. Then true godliness will elevate the thoughts and ennoble the life. Then the external forms of religion accord with the Christian's internal purity....

"Jesus takes up the commandments separately, and explains the depth and breadth of their requirement. Instead of removing one jot of their force, He shows how far-reaching their principles are, and exposes the fatal mistake of the Jews in their outward show of obedience. He declares that by the evil thought or the lustful look the law of God is transgressed. One who becomes a party to the least injustice is breaking the law and degrading his own moral nature. Murder first exists in the mind. He who gives hatred a place in his heart is setting his feet in the path of the murderer, and his offerings are abhorrent to God." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 310.

THE LAW TOUCHES DESIRES AND FEELINGS

3. According to His explanation, what does the law forbid in addition to outward actions?

Matthew 5:27, 28 *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: ²⁸But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

"The law of Jehovah is exceedingly broad. Jesus ... plainly declared to His disciples that this holy law of God may be violated in even the thoughts and feelings and desires, as well as in the word and deed. The heart that loves God supremely will not in any way be inclined to narrow down His precepts to the very smallest possible claims, but the obedient, loyal soul will cheerfully render full spiritual obedience when the law is seen in its spiritual power. Then will the commandments come home to the soul in their real force. Sin will appear exceedingly sinful....

"Many are deceiving their own souls today. They restrict the injunctions of God to condemn outward acts alone, and do not consider it sin to dishonor God in thoughts and affections. They flatter themselves that they are keeping the law of Jehovah while their life and character as daguerreotypes [photographed] in the books of heaven reveal them as venturing to see how far they can go in the direction of wrongdoing without being branded as transgressors of God's law...." —*Our High Calling*, p. 140.

4. Going beyond the direct actions condemned by common laws, what deep spiritual meaning does the Tenth Commandment reveal?

Exodus 20:17 *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*

"The last commandment condemns covetousness. Every selfish desire, every degree of discontent, every act of overreaching, every selfish gratification works to the strengthening and developing of a character which will destroy the Christ-likeness of the human agent, and close the gates of the city of God against him....

"The tenth commandment strikes at the very root of all sins, prohibiting the selfish desire, from which springs the sinful act. He who in obedience to God's law refrains from indulging even a sinful desire for that which belongs to another, will not be guilty of an act of wrong toward his fellow creatures." —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 65.

5. Because of its depth and spirituality, what does God's law help man to discover and discern?

Romans 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.*

"The soul must first be convicted of sin before the sinner will feel a desire to come to Christ. 'Sin is the transgression of the law.' 1 John 3:4. 'I had not known sin, but by the law.' Romans 7:7. When the commandment came home to Saul's conscience, sin revived, and he died. He saw himself condemned by the law of God. The sinner cannot be convinced of his guilt unless he understands what constitutes sin. It is impossible for an individual to experience Bible sanctification while he holds that if he believes in Christ it is immaterial whether he obeys God's law or disobeys it." —*Faith and Works*, p. 31.

"No one who believes in Jesus Christ is under bondage to the law of God; for His law is a law of life, not of death, to those who obey its precepts. All who comprehend the spirituality of the law, all who realize its power as a detector of sin, are in just as helpless a condition as is Satan himself, unless they accept the atonement provided for them in the remedial sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is our atonement—at-one-ment with God." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 98.

THE LAW IS SPIRITUAL

6. Thus, what is unique about the law? What does this mean for us?

Romans 7:13, 14 *Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. ¹⁴For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

"Through faith in Christ obedience to every principle of the law is made possible. Thus Paul learned that 'the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.' For our benefit, he questions, 'Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.' Romans 7:13, 14." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 98.

7. Since the law is spiritual, what enormous value comes from conforming to it? What does love for one's neighbor depend on?

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.*

Matthew 22:36-40 *Master, which is the great commandment in the law? ³⁷Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

“The law of God, from its very nature, is unchangeable. It is a revelation of the will and the character of its Author. God is love, and His law is love. Its two great principles are love to God and love to man. ‘Love is the fulfilling of the law.’ Romans 13:10. The character of God is righteousness and truth; such is the nature of His law. Says the psalmist: ‘Thy law is the truth’; ‘all thy commandments are righteousness.’ Psalm 119:142, 172. And the apostle Paul declares: ‘The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.’ Romans 7:12. Such a law, being an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 467.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

“The requirement of God to us is, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.’ Luke 10:27. On these two principles hang all the law and the prophets; and it is for our present and eternal interest to have a proper understanding of the far-reaching principles of the law of God. ‘By the law is the knowledge of sin,’ and ‘sin is the transgression of the law.’ Romans 3:20; 1 John 3:4. Sinners must know what is sin before they can have a desire to be rid of sin. It is a matter of eternal interest that we do not misconceive this vital question. When appeals are made in the pulpits of our land, and sinners are invited to repent and to be converted, it is the privilege of the sinner to inquire, What is sin? This we must know, for it is at the peril of our souls that we continue in sin. The apostle gives us light on this subject, and says, ‘Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.’

“Christ was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him was no sin. But were the law abolished, as some claim, we would have no need of a Saviour to take away sin, for ‘where there is no law, there is no transgression.’” —*Signs of the Times*, October 1, 1894.

* * *

Missionary Report from the General Conference Health Department and Help Ministry

To be read on Sabbath, December 28, 2019
The Special Sabbath School Offering will be gathered
on Sabbath, January 4, 2020

Dear brothers, sisters, and friends of God's people around the world, greetings from the General Conference Health Department and Help Ministry.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Galatians 6:10. "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.

The importance of the work of the Health Department at all levels of the church organization in the preaching of the gospel and the salvation of souls cannot be over-emphasized, for "True religion and the laws of health go hand in hand. It is impossible to work for the salvation of men and women without presenting to them the need of breaking away from sinful gratifications, which destroy the health, debase the soul, and prevent divine truth from impressing the mind." — *Counsels on Health*, p. 505; *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, p. 31

The servant of the Lord declares: "The principles of health reform are found in the Word of God. The gospel of health is to be firmly linked with the ministry of the Word. It is the Lord's design that the restoring influence of health reform shall be a part of the last great efforts to proclaim the gospel message." — *Medical Ministry*, p. 259; *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, p. 8.

"As a means of overcoming prejudice and gaining access to minds, medical missionary work must be done, not in one or two places only, but in many places where the truth has not yet been proclaimed. We are to work as gospel medical missionaries, to heal the sin-sick souls by giving them the message of salvation. This work will break down prejudice as nothing else can." — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 211; *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, p. 8.

"Christ was the Saviour of the world. During His life on earth, the sick and afflicted were objects of His special compassion. When He sent out His disciples, He commissioned them to heal the sick as well as to preach the gospel. When He sent forth the seventy, He commanded them to heal the sick, and next to preach that the kingdom of God had come nigh unto them. Their physical health was to be first cared for, in order that the way might be prepared for the truth to reach their minds.

"The Saviour devoted more time and labor to healing the afflicted of their maladies than to preaching." — *Counsels on Health*, pp. 33, 34.

The vision of the General Conference Health Department is to have a worldwide membership that is well informed, knowledgeable, healthy, and well established in the principles and practices of health reform, as outlined in the holy Scriptures and the Spirit of prophecy. The mission of the Health Department is to work together with all levels and departments of the worldwide church to restore the character of God in His people and to help advance and finish His work on earth in the final days of human probation—through medical missionary work.

In carrying out its mandate, the General Conference Health Department faces several significant challenges. These include: the lack of adequate financial resources; shortage of qualified medical/health professionals in the church who are available to work for the General Conference Health Department on a voluntary basis; the need to prepare and publish new, attractive health publications, including small health books and magazines for the canvassing and evangelism work around the world; and the need to establish many standardized, properly-resourced and -operated health clinics operated by church members who are well trained, experienced, knowledgeable, and competent health practitioners who practice in harmony with the teachings of the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy—focusing on proven natural remedies and healing therapies.

Many of our members (including missionary workers) lack adequate knowledge of infectious diseases, nutrition and proper combination and preparation of foods, food safety, hygiene, basic human physiology, and the pathophysiology and prevention of common chronic diseases (e.g., heart disease, stroke, diabetes, hypertension, and cancer (breast, cervical, prostate, colorectal, etc.)). The members also need to be educated about the dangers of disease vectors, such as flies, mosquitos, rodents, and farm and domesticated animals, as well as water-borne diseases such as cholera and typhoid. The Health Department also needs to educate people about the importance of preventing falls and injuries associated with the physiological and cognitive changes that accompany the aging process.

The August 8 to September 2, 2018, International Health Conference held in the African countries of Ghana, Uganda, and Zimbabwe was attended by representatives from the neighboring countries of Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, DR Congo, South Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, Lesotho, and South Africa. A total of about 600 people attended the Sabbath services, and the health lectures and workshops were well received by those who attended the conference.

Unfortunately, the healthcare systems in many of these countries are woefully inadequate, unreliable, expensive, and dependent on ineffective pharmaceuticals/drugs. There is a great and urgent need for proper health clinics to be established especially in South Sudan, DR Congo, Benin, Ivory Coast, Togo, Uganda, Nigeria, and Ghana. In fact, ALL of these countries need urgent help and support to advance the medical missionary work in their respective fields. Some of these countries have no IMS-operated clinics at all. Not even one! In many of the French-speaking West African countries, teaching the health message and providing natural healing to the people is the most effective method of winning souls and establishing and advancing the church of God.

While visiting Ghana and Zimbabwe, our medical missionary team was privileged to visit some private health clinics operated by a few of our church members and to see the impressive work being done despite the lack of necessary resources and basic diagnostic equipment. The need for health clinics in Africa is grave, and the potential for helping the sick, spreading the present truth, and winning souls for Jesus is tremendous. But, in addition to prayer, financial support is urgently needed.

As the worldwide people of God, we cannot allow the medical missionary work to continue to languish. I appeal to each member and friend of God's people to come to the Lord's help and unselfishly support the work of the General Conference Health Department and Help Ministry!

The following are the primary objectives of the General Conference Health Department

- Educate the church members and gospel workers in basic human physiology and pathophysiology and encourage them to identify and use natural remedies/therapies to help prevent and treat diseases.

- Utilize the knowledge and expertise of health professionals who are members to educate members and the public in the laws of health, prevention of disease, and natural remedies.

- Research and publish Position Papers (PPs) on chocolate, dairy products, veganism, pharmaceuticals, vaccination, cannabis, contraceptives, and other topics of interest.

- Work toward the establishment of a certified online course for educating and training medical missionary workers and health professionals—in harmony with the principles outlined in the Scriptures and the Spirit of prophecy—with focus on the prevention and healing of diseases utilizing natural remedies, agents, and therapies.

- Create and publish an indexed Encyclopedia of Natural Remedies for most of the common diseases/illnesses and health challenges that affect people around the world.

- Create standards/guidelines for the establishment and satisfactory operation of affiliated health clinics worldwide in harmony with the teachings of the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy.

- Work with the union and field leaders and the Health Department and Good Samaritan Department leaders in the various fields to help the church members who live in poor countries to plan and start self-supporting mini-projects, including local health clinics, to generate meaningful employment and income for church members.

“Many who profess the name of Christ, are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; they put forth no personal effort to save others, neither do they deny self that they may give of the means which God has entrusted to them, that they may be a blessing to their fellowmen, that those who are willing may go forth to advance the interests of Christ’s kingdom in the world.” —The Medical Missionary, September 1, 1892.

Dear brothers and sisters around the world, the most effective and successful method of advancing the work of God in Africa and throughout the world is to combine medical missionary work with the preaching of the everlasting gospel. Next Sabbath, please give sacrificially to the General Conference Health Department and Help Ministry with willing, happy hearts! Your sacrifice will bear fruit to the glory of God and the salvation of souls!

—Morris M. Lowe
General Conference Health Department Leader
and Help Ministry Director

END NOTES

Note 1

"Law cannot save a sinner, nor can law put an end to sin or its dominion. Law reveals sin (Romans 3:20), and because of the sinfulness of the man, law, as it were, causes transgression to increase. Romans 5:20. Law cannot forgive sin, nor can law provide any power to overcome it. The sinner who seeks to be saved under law will find only condemnation and deeper enslavement to sin. Wherever the principle is held that man can save himself by his own works, there is no effective barrier against sin (The Desire of Ages, pp. 35, 36)." —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 541 (comments on Romans 6:14.)

The true Christian believer "acknowledges that he is a transgressor of the divine law, that in his own strength he is wholly incapable of fulfilling its requirements, that he justly deserves to be under its condemnation, and surrenders himself through faith in Christ to the grace and mercy of God. Then, by the grace of God, his sinful past is forgiven and he receives divine power to walk in newness of life. When a man is 'under law,' despite his best efforts sin continues to have dominion over him, because the law cannot set him free from the power of sin. Under grace, however, the struggle against sin is no longer a forlorn hope, but a certain triumph." —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 541 (comments on Romans 6:14).

Note 2

"To Paul, being under the dominion of law is equivalent to being under the dominion of sin. The reason for this is that law merely reveals the standard of right. It cannot remove the guilt or the dominion of sin. It requires complete obedience to its precepts, but offers the sinner no enabling power for obedience. Grace, on the other hand, does the things that law is powerless to perform. It both cancels the guilt of sin and imparts power to overcome it. Thus Paul regards being under law as being under sin, and dying to law as the equivalent of dying to sin." —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 546 (comments on Romans 7:1).

Note 3

"Paul now applies the illustration from marriage law to the experience of the Christian. His major point is that death dissolves legal obligation. Therefore, as death frees the wife from the claims of the marriage law, so that she may properly marry another, so the Christian's crucifixion with Christ releases him from the dominion of sin and law, so that he may enter into a new spiritual union with the risen Saviour....

"In the illustration it was the death of the husband that freed the wife from the law. In the application it is the death of the old sinful self that releases the believer from the condemnation and dominion of the law and frees him to be joined to Christ." —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 547 (comments on Romans 7:4).

GENERAL CONFERENCE

CANVASSING DEPARTMENT



EUROPEAN DIVISION



GENERAL CONFERENCE

HEALTH DEPARTMENT