

SABBATH BIBLE LESSONS
Senior Division



Symbols From the
Sanctuary Service
TREASURES OF TRUTH (III)

Vol. 99, No. 3

July–September 2023

Contents

1. The Origin and the End of Sin	5
2. Sin: Its Entrance and Its Eradication ...	10
3. The New and Living Way.....	15
4. Hope for the Sinner	20
5. The Blotting Out of Sin	25
6. The Heavenly Ministry Overshadowed	31
7. “Then Shall the Sanctuary Be Cleansed”	36
8. The Ultimate Sacrifice	41
9. The Duty of the Congregation	46
10. Dietary Considerations	52
11. Dietetic History	57
12. Inspired Prophets	62
13. Testing the Prophets.....	67
14. The Testimony of Jesus	72

Sabbath Bible Lessons, a daily study program, is based solely on the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy without additional comments. The quotations are as brief as possible to provide concise, direct thoughts. Brackets [] are supplied in some cases to ensure clarity, proper context, and smooth readability. Further study in the source materials is strongly recommended.

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Foreword

Most of us are visual learners. When we see a pattern or chart of something, it is usually easier to grasp and remember the concept of it. God knew this when He provided the sanctuary service to our ancient forefathers. The service and its symbols help us understand the solemn work which Christ, our great High Priest, is performing on our behalf in heaven at this very moment.

Therefore, for the next 3 months, Sabbath school students worldwide will study the vital topic, *Symbols From the Sanctuary Service*. This is the third part of a year-long series entitled Treasures of Truth, to equip us in preparing for eternity.

“The condition of the unbelieving Jews illustrates the condition of the careless and unbelieving among professed Christians, who are willingly ignorant of the work of our merciful High Priest. In the typical service, when the high priest entered the most holy place, all Israel were required to gather about the sanctuary and in the most solemn manner humble their souls before God, that they might receive the pardon of their sins and not be cut off from the congregation. How much more essential in this antitypical Day of Atonement that we understand the work of our High Priest and know what duties are required of us.”—*Christ in His Sanctuary*, p. 161.

“Could the veil which separates the visible from the invisible world be swept back, and the children of men behold an angel recording every word and deed, which they must meet again in the judgment, how many words that are daily uttered would remain unspoken, how many deeds would remain undone. . . .

“Sad is the record which angels bear to heaven. Intelligent beings, professed followers of Christ, are absorbed in the acquirement of worldly possessions or the enjoyment of earthly pleasures. Money, time, and strength are sacrificed for display and self-indulgence; but few are the moments devoted to prayer, to the searching of the Scriptures, to humiliation of soul and confession of sin.

“Satan invents unnumbered schemes to occupy our minds, that they may not dwell upon the very work with which we ought to be best acquainted. The archdeceiver hates the great truths that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful mediator. He knows that with him everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 487, 488.

“Every day renewed efforts in restraining and denying self are needed. Every day there are new battles to fight and victories to be gained. Every day the soul should be called out in earnest pleading with God for the mighty victories of the cross.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 429.

It is our prayer that we all may be strengthened by this quarter’s *Sabbath Bible Lessons*, gazing with the eye of faith to our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary!

The General Conference Sabbath School Department

First Sabbath Offering for the Missionary School of the Southern African Region

The Zambia Union Mission of the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement was organized in 2012. Not long afterwards, an important aim was envisioned in harmony with the following words of Inspiration:

“There should be decided advancement in the matter of special preparatory work. In all our conferences there should be well-organized plans for the instruction and training of those who desire to give themselves to the work of God. Our city missions afford favorable opportunities for education in missionary labor; but these are not enough. There ought to be connected with our schools the best possible facilities for the preparation of laborers for both home and foreign fields.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 75.

By the grace of God, in 2021 the Education Department of the General Conference came to help build a missionary training center in Lusaka, Zambia. This helps to serve all the East African countries, since Zambia is centrally located.

In 2022, the Zambia Union Mission purchased a plot of 16.2 hectares to be used for the construction of a chapel and missionary school. The land is fully paid for and owned by the Zambia Mission Union. By having the school here, enough land will be available for students to grow their own vegetables.

“The students are in our schools for a special training to become acquainted with all lines of work that should they go out as missionaries they could be self-reliant and able, through their educated ability, to furnish themselves with necessary conveniences and facilities. . . . They should be familiar with agriculture and with mechanical pursuits.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 208.

Building plans for the school project have already been prepared, consisting of two classrooms, a library, principal’s office, kitchen, dining hall, dormitories for 20 students, laundry facilities and teachers’ accommodations. However, the Union Mission does not have enough money to advance the construction project. It is estimated that it will cost about \$236,000 (US Dollars) to complete. We are therefore appealing to you, our brothers and sisters from all over the world, to help us realize this project. We pray that God will richly bless you as you give generously for the Zambia Union Mission School Project.

Your brothers and sisters in the Southern African Region



The Origin and the End of Sin

MEMORY TEXT: “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way” (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

“The harmony of creation depends upon the perfect conformity of all beings, of everything, animate and inanimate, to the law of the Creator.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 52.

Suggested Reading: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 492–504.

Sunday

June 25

1. THE CHARACTER OF GOD

- a. How does God’s character stand in contrast to sin—and what does this mean for us? Daniel 9:7; Matthew 5:48.

“God will accept only those who are determined to aim high. He places every human agent under obligation to do his best. Moral perfection is required of all. Never should we lower the standard of righteousness in order to accommodate inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong-doing. We need to understand that imperfection of character is sin. All righteous attributes of character dwell in God as a perfect, harmonious whole, and every one who receives Christ as a personal Saviour is privileged to possess these attributes.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 330.

- b. Since God is the ultimate in perfection, what are the only type of commands He can give? Psalm 119:172; Romans 7:12; James 1:13.

“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. . . . 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.

2. HARMONY IN GOD'S GOVERNMENT

- a. What is the relationship between the members of the Godhead? John 17:21.
-

“The most convincing argument we can give to the world of Christ’s mission is to be found in perfect unity. Such oneness as exists between the Father and the Son is to be manifest among all who believe the truth. Those who are thus united in implicit obedience to the word of God will be filled with power.”—*Bible Training School*, February 1, 1906.

“Have you thought of what this means to us; that in this prayer is included every son and daughter of Adam who will believe in Christ as a personal Saviour, and take the requisite steps [of] repentance, conversion, faith, and baptism? We are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and these three great, infinite Powers are unitedly pledged to work in our behalf if we will cooperate with them.”—*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 2, p. 167.

- b. What principles form the basis of God’s government? 1 John 4:16, 19; 5:3.
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“ ‘God is love.’ 1 John 4:16. His nature, His law, is love. It ever has been; it ever will be. ‘The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,’ whose ‘ways are everlasting,’ changeth not. With Him ‘is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning.’ Isaiah 57:15; Habakkuk 3:6; James 1:17.

“Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 33.

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

“The soul that is in love with God and His work will be as candid as the day. There will be no quibbling, no evading the true bearing of scripture. God’s word is our foundation of all doctrine. Some think it is a mark of intelligence and smart in them to get up side issues, and they twist the scriptures in a certain way which covers over the truth.”—*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 46.

3. WHERE DID SIN ORIGINATE?

- a. How do we know the following passage of Scripture is not speaking of the literal king of Tyre? Ezekiel 28:11–15.
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(1) If this were speaking of the actual human king and not as a symbol, what type of person would he be since he would have been born of a woman? Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:23.

(2) Who was the only other being brought to view in the Garden of Eden that was once perfect and then became sinful? Revelation 12:9; Genesis 3:14.

“The first sinner was one whom God had greatly exalted. He is represented under the figure of the prince of Tyrus flourishing in might and magnificence. Little by little Satan came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. . . . Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. And coveting the glory with which the infinite Father has invested His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power that was the prerogative of Christ alone.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1162.

- b. What special role did Lucifer have in the government of God before his fall? Ezekiel 28:14 (compare the sanctuary service in Exodus 25:10–22).
- c. What shows that he had special musical talent—and how does he skillfully use this in his work of deception? Ezekiel 28:13; Daniel 3:5–7.

“I feel alarmed as I witness everywhere the frivolity of young men and young women who profess to believe the truth. God does not seem to be in their thoughts. Their minds are filled with nonsense. Their conversation is only empty, vain talk. They have a keen ear for music, and Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind so that Christ is not desired. The spiritual longings of the soul for divine knowledge, for a growth in grace, are wanting.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 407.

4. THE ROOT OF EVIL

- a. **What was the original cause of Lucifer's fall if we compare Ezekiel's and Isaiah's descriptions of that event? Ezekiel 28:16–19; Isaiah 14:12–20.**
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“Little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. The Scripture says, ‘Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.’ Ezekiel 28:17. . . . Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. And coveting the glory with which the infinite Father had invested His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power that was the prerogative of Christ alone.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

- b. **What warnings can we personally take from this experience? Proverbs 16:18; 1 Corinthians 10:12.**
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“Had Lucifer really desired to be like the Most High, he would never have deserted his appointed place in heaven; for the spirit of the Most High is manifested in unselfish ministry. Lucifer desired God's power, but not His character. He sought for himself the highest place, and every being who is actuated by his spirit will do the same.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 435, 436.

“Whenever pride and ambition are indulged, the life is marred, for pride, feeling no need, closes the heart against the infinite blessings of Heaven.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 60.

- c. **How did the heavenly host eliminate this note of disunity from its ranks? Revelation 12:7–9.**
-

“It was the highest crime to rebel against the government of God. All Heaven seemed in commotion. The angels were marshaled in companies, each division with a higher commanding angel at their head. Satan was warring against the law of God, because ambitious to exalt himself, and unwilling to submit to the authority of God's Son, Heaven's great commander.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 22.

5. THE END OF EVIL

- a. **How did Satan degenerate even further after being expelled from heaven? John 8:44.**

“Satan, who is the father of lies, deceived Adam . . . , telling him that he need not obey God, that he would not die if he transgressed the law. But Adam fell, and by his sin he opened the floodgates of woe upon our world. Again, Satan told Cain that he need not follow expressly the command of God in presenting the slain lamb as an offering. Cain obeyed the voice of the deceiver. . . .

“We need to know for ourselves what voice we are heeding, whether it is the voice of the true and living God or the voice of the great apostate.”—*Evangelism*, p. 598.

- b. **How and why will this root of evil finally be destroyed? Hebrews 2:14; Malachi 4:1–3; 2 Peter 3:9–14.**

“The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God’s unchanging love.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 33.

- c. **Although it seems that evil is not being punished quickly, what promise does God give about its total elimination? Ecclesiastes 8:11; Nahum 1:9.**

“The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 678.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What type of character does God possess?
2. How do the three persons in the Godhead work harmoniously?
3. Under what illustration does Ezekiel describe the origin of sin?
4. What is one of the hardest sins to overcome, being the origin of iniquity?
5. How and why does evil finally come to an end?

Sin: Its Entrance and Its Eradication

MEMORY TEXT: “And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8).

“Through long intercourse with idolaters the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 364.

Suggested Reading: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 343–358.

Sunday

July 2

1. IN THE BEGINNING

a. **What kind of world did God create in the very beginning? Genesis 1:31; Ecclesiastes 7:29.**

b. **Although God intended for the human race to live forever, why were two trees placed in the Garden of Eden? Genesis 2:9.**

“When our first parents were placed in the beautiful garden of Eden, they were tested in regard to their loyalty to God. They were free to choose the service of God, or by disobedience to ally themselves with the enemy of God and man. If they would abstain from that which God had forbidden, they might keep possession of their beautiful Eden home, and remain in the favor of God, but if they disregarded God’s commands, and listened to the voice of Satan, as he spoke through the serpent, they would not only forfeit their claim to Eden, but to life itself. The penalty for sin had been set before them, and they were informed as to the tremendous issues depending on their action in obeying or disobeying the requirements of God.”—*The Signs of the Times*, May 12, 1890.

c. **When humanity disobeyed, how was that shown to be sin? Romans 5:12, 19.**

“The Lord requires at this time just what He required of Adam in Eden—perfect obedience to the law of God.”—*Faith and Works*, p. 89.

2. AFTER SIN

- a. **Why is it that there was no way of escaping the death sentence? Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23; 7:5.**

“The result of the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man’s experience. There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist.”—*Education*, p. 29.

- b. **Why is it that the natural result of sin is death? Ezekiel 18:20 (first part); 1 John 5:12.**

“Satan’s rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages, a perpetual testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. The working out of Satan’s rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God’s government and His law is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin and suffering its punishments.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 499.

- c. **What causes separation from God, i.e., separation from life? Isaiah 59:2.**

“By sin man was shut out from God. Except for the plan of redemption, eternal separation from God, the darkness of unending night, would have been his. Through the Saviour’s sacrifice, communion with God is again made possible. We may not in person approach into His presence; in our sin we may not look upon His face; but we can behold Him and commune with Him in Jesus, the Saviour.”—*Education*, p. 28.

“Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering that sin has caused our Creator. All heaven suffered in Christ’s agony; but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God. Every departure from the right, every deed of cruelty, every failure of humanity to reach His ideal, brings grief to Him.”—*Ibid.*, p. 263.

- d. **What is sin—and have any been exempt from it? 1 John 3:4; Romans 3:23.**

3. A WAY OF ESCAPE

- a. **Who is the real serpent and what has he done to the entire world? Revelation 12:9; 2 Peter 2:19; Romans 8:22.**

“There is in human nature, when separated from the Source of truth, a continual opposition to God’s will and ways. The physical, mental, and moral being are all under the control of rash impulses. The affections are depraved, and every faculty intrusted to man for wise improvement is demoralized. The man is dead in trespasses and sins. Inclination moves, a passion holds the control, and his appetites are under the sway of a power of which he is not aware. He talks of liberty, of freedom of action, while he is in most abject slavery. He is not his own. He is not allowed to see the beauty of the truth; for the carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to His law. He views truth as falsehood, and falsehood as truth. The mind controlled by Satan is weak in moral power.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 17, 1891.

- b. **What causes us to remain in slavery? Romans 6:16; 8:5.**

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- c. **How was the plan of redemption first introduced to this universe and who is the seed of the woman? Genesis 3:14, 15; 22:18; Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.**

“The instant Adam yielded to Satan’s temptation, and did the very thing which God had said he should not do, Christ, the Son of God, stood between the living and the dead, saying: ‘Let the punishment fall on Me. I will stand in man’s place. Give him another trial.’ Transgression placed the whole world under the death sentence. But in heaven there was heard a voice saying, ‘I have found a ransom.’ ”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 27, 1900.

- d. **How is that “enmity” (Genesis 3:15) which is introduced into every believer described by Paul? Romans 12:2.**

“Nothing more quickly inspires faith than the exercise of faith.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 351.

“Faith that enables us to receive God’s gifts is itself a gift, of which some measure is imparted to every human being. It grows as exercised in appropriating the word of God. In order to strengthen faith, we must often bring it in contact with the word.”—*Education*, pp. 253, 254.

4. BLOOD SACRIFICE

- a. Why is Bible study vital in the plan of redemption? Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 4:2.
- b. When and why did Christ choose to come to have His heel bruised (Genesis 3:14, 15)? Hebrews 2:14, 15; Romans 8:2, 3; 16:25, 26; Revelation 13:8.

“The covenant of grace is not a new truth, for it existed in the mind of God from all eternity. This is why it is called the everlasting covenant.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 77.

“The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1132.

- c. Why was a blood sacrifice necessary? Hebrews 9:22.

“Fallen man, because of his guilt, could no longer come directly before God with his supplications; for his transgression of the divine law had placed an impassable barrier between the holy God and the transgressor. But a plan was devised that the sentence of death should rest upon a Substitute. In the plan of redemption there must be the shedding of blood, for death must come in consequence of man’s sin. The beasts for sacrificial offerings were to prefigure Christ. In the slain victim, man was to see the fulfillment for the time being of God’s word, ‘Thou shalt surely die.’ And the flowing of the blood from the victim would also signify an atonement. There was no virtue in the blood of animals; but the shedding of the blood of beasts was to point forward to a Redeemer who would one day come to the world and die for the sins of men. And thus Christ would fully vindicate His Father’s law.”—*Confrontation*, pp. 21, 22.

5. SYMBOLS

- a. Why was an animal sacrifice introduced? Genesis 3:21; Hebrews 2:14, 15.

“To Adam, the offering of the first sacrifice was a most painful ceremony. His hand must be raised to take life, which only God could give. It was the first time he had ever witnessed death, and he knew that had he been obedient to God, there would have been no death of man or beast. As he slew the innocent victim, he trembled at the thought that his sin must shed the blood of the spotless Lamb of God. This scene gave him a deeper and more vivid sense of the greatness of his transgression, which nothing but the death of God’s dear Son could expiate. And he marveled at the infinite goodness that would give such a ransom to save the guilty. A star of hope illumined the dark and terrible future and relieved it of its utter desolation.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 68.

- b. Why was it a lamb that was sacrificed and how was this made into an entire ceremonial service? Genesis 4:2–4; John 1:29; Exodus 25:8.

“During his stay in the mount, Moses received directions for the building of a sanctuary in which the divine presence would be specially manifested. . . .

“Henceforth the people were to be honored with the abiding presence of their King.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 313, 314.

- c. Why was a tabernacle used to symbolize God’s presence? Revelation 21:3, 4.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why were two trees placed in the garden of Eden?
2. Why is it that death is the natural result of transgressing against God’s will and ways?
3. What in reality is the enmity that was miraculously introduced into the human family?
4. How important is a right blood sacrifice in the restoration of humanity?
5. Why is a lamb a central symbol of salvation and in all the ceremonial services?

The New and Living Way

MEMORY TEXT: “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” (Romans 5:10).

“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. . . . By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 391.

Suggested Reading: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 383–394.

Sunday

July 9

1. THE ROCK OF AGES

- a. What illustration is used to depict the strength of the foundation of the Christian faith? Exodus 17:5, 6; Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Corinthians 3:11; 10:4.

“That rock was a symbol of Him who by His death would cause living streams of salvation to flow to all who are athirst. Christ’s words were the water of life. . . . In smiting Christ, Satan thought to destroy the Prince of life; but from the smitten rock there flowed living water.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 454.

- b. How did Jesus choose to come into this world—and why? Luke 2:9–12.

“It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man’s nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 48, 49.

2. WORKING MIRACLES

- a. **What should we realize about the one who was to prepare the way for the Messiah—and how did his work relate to miracles? Malachi 4:5; Matthew 11:14; Luke 7:28; John 10:41.**

“John [the Baptist] separated himself from friends and from the luxuries of life. The simplicity of his dress, a garment woven of camel’s hair, was a standing rebuke to the extravagance and display of the Jewish priests, and of the people generally. His diet, purely vegetable, of locusts and wild honey, was a rebuke to the indulgence of appetite and the gluttony that everywhere prevailed. . . . Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent. The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 62.

- b. **What activities of Jesus often led people to trust Him as the Messiah? John 6:2, 26, 30.**

- c. **What is our danger if we trust in miracles as the foundation of our faith? Matthew 24:24; Revelation 16:13, 14; 13:11–14.**

“It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended. . . . Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. God’s people will not find their safety in working miracles, for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 16.

“Many will be confronted by the spirits of devils personating beloved relatives or friends and declaring the most dangerous heresies. These visitants will appeal to our tenderest sympathies and will work miracles to sustain their pretensions. We must be prepared to withstand them with the Bible truth that the dead know not anything and that they who thus appear are the spirits of devils.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 560.

“No mere impostures are here foretold. Men are deceived by the miracles which Satan’s agents have power to do, not which they pretend to do.”—*Ibid.*, p. 553.

3. CALVARY

- a. **What crisis of faith would eventually lead Jesus to the cross? John 6:51–53; Matthew 27:22.**

“The prejudice of the Pharisees lay deeper than their questions would indicate; it had its root in the perversity of their hearts. Every word and act of Jesus aroused antagonism in them; for the spirit which they cherished could find in Him no answering chord.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 387.

“The unbelieving Jews refused to see any except the most literal meaning in the Saviour’s words. By the ritual law they were forbidden to taste blood, and they . . . construed Christ’s language into a sacrilegious speech, and disputed over it among themselves.”—*Ibid.*, p. 390.

- b. **For what purpose did Jesus choose to die? Hebrews 9:22; Revelation 7:14.**

“The provision has been made for us to wash. The fountain has been prepared at infinite expense, and the burden of washing rests upon us, who are imperfect before God. The Lord does not propose to remove these spots of defilement without our doing anything on our part. We must wash our robes in the blood of the Lamb. We may lay hold of the merits of the blood of Christ by faith, and through His grace and power we may have strength to overcome our errors, our sins, our imperfections of character, and come off victorious, having washed our robes in the blood of the Lamb.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 183.

- c. **Did Christ’s death lead people to trust Him as Saviour? Luke 24:2, 3, 21.**

“Trouble seemed crowding upon trouble. On the sixth day of the week they had seen their Master die; on the first day of the next week they found themselves deprived of His body, and they were accused of having stolen it away for the sake of deceiving the people. They despaired of ever correcting the false impressions that were gaining ground against them.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 794.

“After the death of Christ the disciples were well-nigh overcome by discouragement. Their Master had been rejected, condemned, and crucified. The priests and rulers had declared scornfully, ‘He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.’ Matthew 27:42. The sun of the disciples’ hope had set, and night settled down upon their hearts. Often they repeated the words, ‘We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel.’ Luke 24:21.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 25.

4. RESURRECTION

- a. What type of foundation is Jesus to the believer? Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:19, 20; 1 Peter 2:5, 6.
- b. How important is a living Saviour to our faith? 1 Corinthians 15:12–20.
- c. The death of Christ brings reconciliation; what does His resurrection bring? Romans 5:8–10; John 11:25, 26.

“The Waldenses longed to break to these starving souls the bread of life, to open to them the messages of peace in the promises of God, and to point them to Christ as their only hope of salvation. The doctrine that good works can atone for the transgression of God’s law they held to be based upon falsehood. Reliance upon human merit intercepts the view of Christ’s infinite love. Jesus died as a sacrifice for man because the fallen race can do nothing to recommend themselves to God. The merits of a crucified and risen Saviour are the foundation of the Christian’s faith. The dependence of the soul upon Christ is as real, and its connection with Him must be as close, as that of a limb to the body, or of a branch to the vine.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 73.

“Over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, Christ had proclaimed in triumph, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life.’ These words could be spoken only by the Deity. All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life. Only He who is one with God could say, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. In His divinity, Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 785.

“The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life. [John 11:25, 26 quoted.] Christ here looks forward to the time of His second coming. Then the righteous dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the living righteous shall be translated to heaven without seeing death. The miracle which Christ was about to perform, in raising Lazarus from the dead, would represent the resurrection of all the righteous dead. By His word and His works He declared Himself the Author of the resurrection. He who Himself was soon to die upon the cross stood with the keys of death, a conqueror of the grave, and asserted His right and power to give eternal life.”—*Ibid.*, p. 530.

“By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey.”—*Ibid.*, p. 24.

5. HEAVENLY MINISTRY

- a. To what does faith in a living Saviour lead us? Romans 5:11; Hebrews 8:1, 2, 6, 9–11; 1 Peter 1:3, 4.

“When the disciples went back to Jerusalem, the people looked upon them with amazement. After the trial and crucifixion of Christ, it had been thought that they would appear downcast and ashamed. Their enemies expected to see upon their faces an expression of sorrow and defeat. Instead of this there was only gladness and triumph. Their faces were aglow with a happiness not born of earth. They did not mourn over disappointed hopes, but were full of praise and thanksgiving to God. With rejoicing they told the wonderful story of Christ’s resurrection and His ascension to heaven, and their testimony was received by many.

“The disciples no longer had any distrust of the future. They knew that Jesus was in heaven, and that His sympathies were with them still. They knew that they had a friend at the throne of God, and they were eager to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 832, 833.

- b. What must we do in order to have our conscience purged from the memory of sin? Matthew 21:42, 44; Hebrews 10:16, 19, 20.

“Just as soon as you commit sin, you should flee to the throne of grace, and tell Jesus all about it. You should be filled with sorrow for sin, because through sin you have weakened your own spirituality, grieved the heavenly angels, and wounded and bruised the loving heart of your Redeemer. When you have asked Jesus in contrition of soul for His forgiveness, believe that He has forgiven you. Do not doubt His divine mercy or refuse the comfort of His infinite love.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 196.

- c. Why did we need our living Saviour to first live as a human being upon the earth? Hebrews 2:17, 18; 4:14–16; Romans 8:34.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is Christ’s birth in a manger insufficient to save humanity?
2. Why are the miracles of Christ insufficient for salvation?
3. How important for our reconciliation with God is the death of Christ?
4. Why is the resurrection the key to salvation?
5. Where does a living Saviour point the believer?

Hope for the Sinner

MEMORY TEXT: “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins” (Isaiah 43:25).

“As the will of man cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 333.

Suggested Reading: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 479–491.

Sunday

July 16

1. JUDGMENT

- a. **How do the choices we make in life affect our ultimate outcome?** Ecclesiastes 11:9.

- b. **Are only open, wicked things being judged—and are there any exceptions?** Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Romans 14:12.

“The law of God condemns not only what we have done but what we have not done. We will, in the day of final accounts, find a register of the sins of omission as well as the sins of commission. God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing. It is not enough that by your own measurement of character you prove you have done no positive wrong. The fact that one has done no positive good will be enough to condemn him as a wicked and slothful servant.”—*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 374.

“Every man’s work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven-sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 482.

2. TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS

- a. **Are some actions of individuals judged before others or are all of them judged at the same time? 1 Timothy 5:24; 1 Peter 4:17.**

“In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 480.

- b. **Who is assisting Christ in His mediatorial work in heaven and from where did they come? Revelation 4:4; 5:8, 9; Ephesians 4:8; Matthew 27:52, 53.**

“As Christ arose, He brought from the grave a multitude of captives. The earthquake at His death had rent open their graves, and when He arose, they came forth with Him. They were those who had been collaborators with God, and who at the cost of their lives had borne testimony to the truth. Now they were to be witnesses for Him who had raised them from the dead.

“During His ministry, Jesus had raised the dead to life. He had raised the son of the widow of Nain, and the ruler’s daughter and Lazarus. But these were not clothed with immortality. After they were raised, they were still subject to death. But those who came forth from the grave at Christ’s resurrection were raised to everlasting life. They ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave. These, said Christ, are no longer the captives of Satan; I have redeemed them. I have brought them from the grave as the first fruits of My power, to be with Me where I am, nevermore to see death or experience sorrow.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

“Those who had been raised were to be presented to the universe as a pledge of the resurrection of all who believe in Christ as their personal Saviour. The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Christ, as His bride, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the heavenly courts, the world above. The victory of the sleeping saints will be glorious on the morning of the resurrection. Satan’s triumph will end, while Christ will triumph in glory and honor.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 305, 306.

- c. **Where and with whom are these occupied in their work? Revelation 4:1–3, 8; Psalm 11:4; Daniel 7:9–11.**

3. THE TYPE OF SENTENCE NEEDED

- a. By what are we judged by and how is the verdict determined? James 2:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10.
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- b. What type of character is needed to pass this kind of judgment? Matthew 5:48; Revelation 22:14.
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“The transgression of God’s commandments deprived man of all right to the tree of life. Christ died, that by virtue of His blood, obedience to God’s law might make man worthy of the heavenly benediction, and grant him a right again to the tree of life.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 88.

“How can we reach the perfection specified by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—our Great Teacher? Can we meet His requirement and attain to so lofty a standard? We can, else Christ would not have enjoined us to do so. He is our righteousness. In His humanity He has gone before us and wrought out for us perfection of character. We are to have the faith in Him that works by love and purifies the soul. Perfection of character is based upon that which Christ is to us. If we have constant dependence on the merits of our Saviour, and walk in His footsteps, we shall be like Him, pure and undefiled.”—*That I May Know Him*, p. 130.

“Angels were all about us as we marched over the sea of glass to the gate of the city. Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, ‘You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in.’ We all marched in and felt that we had a perfect right in the city.”—*Early Writings*, p. 17.

“When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin; for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes, but we will hate the sin that caused the sufferings of the Son of God. A door has been opened, and no man can close it, neither the highest powers nor the lowest; you alone can close the door of your heart, so that the Lord cannot reach you. You have been having light from heaven for the past year and a half, that the Lord would have you bring into your character and weave into your experience.”—*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 545.

- c. What is the main problem with the character of humanity? Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:10.
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4. HOPE FOR SINNERS

a. What promise is given, showing there is hope for sinners? Isaiah 43:25.

“Jesus is in His holy temple and will now accept our sacrifices, our prayers, and our confessions of faults and sins and will pardon all the transgressions of Israel, that they may be blotted out before He leaves the sanctuary. When Jesus leaves the sanctuary, then they who are holy and righteous will be holy and righteous still; for all their sins will then be blotted out, and they will be sealed with the seal of the living God. But those that are unjust and filthy will be unjust and filthy still; for then there will be no Priest in the sanctuary to offer their sacrifices, their confessions, and their prayers before the Father’s throne. Therefore what is done to rescue souls from the coming storm of wrath must be done before Jesus leaves the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.”—*Early Writings*, p. 48.

b. Comparing the ceremonial law with the ministry of Christ, how do we see that actual cleansing is possible? Hebrews 10:1, 2; Revelation 19:8.

“The palm branch in their hands is a symbol of their triumph, the white robe an emblem of the spotless righteousness of Christ which now is theirs.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 665.

“In the typical service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So Christ, at the close of His work as mediator, will appear, ‘without sin unto salvation’ (Hebrews 9:28), to bless His waiting people with eternal life. As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. . . . Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God’s people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth, which will then be desolate, without inhabitant, and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked. Thus the great plan of redemption will reach its accomplishment in the final eradication of sin and the deliverance of all who have been willing to renounce evil.”—*Ibid.*, p. 485.

“Each of us has a case pending in the court of heaven. We are individually to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. In the typical service, when the work of atonement was performed by the high priest in the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary, the people were required to afflict their souls before God, and confess their sins, that they might be atoned for and blotted out. Will any less be required of us in this antitypical day of atonement, when Christ in the sanctuary above is pleading in behalf of His people, and the final, irrevocable decision is to be pronounced upon every case?”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 125.

5. FORGETTING SIN

- a. What needs to occur in order for sins to be blotted out? Acts 3:19.

“All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 483.

“Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The subjects of the kingdom were made up. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.”—*Early Writings*, p. 280.

“Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 620.

- b. What parable did Jesus use to show that forgiveness is not the same as blotting out or forgetting? Matthew 18:23–35.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who and what is to be judged in the pre-Advent judgment?
2. With what are the 24 elders involved with and what prepared them?
3. What kind of sentence is needed and why is character so important?
4. As sinners, what is our only hope and how can this be achieved?
5. What parable clearly shows the difference between forgiveness and blotting out of sins?

The Blotting Out of Sins

MEMORY TEXT: “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:8).

“The intercession of Christ in man’s behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 489.

Suggested Reading: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 423–432.

Sunday

July 23

1. THE TIME OF BLOTTING OUT OF SINS

- a. In relationship to the time of the apostles, when is the blotting out of sins to take place? Acts 3:19, 20.

“The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. Since the dead are to be judged out of the things written in the books, it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 485.

- b. What is happening on earth in preparation for the second coming while our sins are being blotted out of the books of heaven? Ephesians 5:25–27; 1 John 3:2, 3.

“Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God’s people upon earth.”—*Ibid.*, p. 425.

2. THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

a. How does Daniel describe the judgment scene? Daniel 7:9, 10.

“[Daniel 7:9, 10 quoted.] Thus was presented to the prophet’s vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth, and to every man should be rendered ‘according to his works.’ The Ancient of Days is God the Father. . . . It is He, the source of all being, and the fountain of all law, that is to preside in the judgment. And holy angels as ministers and witnesses, in number ‘ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,’ attend this great tribunal.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 479.

b. Who joins in this judgment? Daniel 7:13, 14; Hebrews 9:24.

“The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the earth. He comes to the Ancient of Days in heaven to receive dominion and glory and a kingdom, which will be given Him at the close of His work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not His second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man—to perform the work of investigative judgment and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.”—*Ibid.*

“[The righteous dead] will not be present in person at the tribunal when their records are examined and their cases decided.

“Jesus will appear as their advocate, to plead in their behalf before God.”—*Ibid.*, p. 482.

c. How do we know that this coming of Christ is somewhere in heaven rather than to this earth? Psalm 11:4.

“From the Holy of Holies, there goes on the grand work of instruction. The angels of God are communicating to men. Christ officiates in the sanctuary. We do not follow Him into the sanctuary as we should. Christ and angels work in the hearts of the children of men. The church above, united with the church below, is warring the good warfare upon the earth. There must be a purifying of the soul here upon the earth, in harmony with Christ’s cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven. There we shall see more clearly as we are seen. We shall know as we are known.”—*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 27.

3. PRIOR TO THE COMING OF CHRIST

- a. Does the marriage of Christ to His kingdom take place before or after His return to earth? What symbolism is used to represent the church? Revelation 21:2; Luke 12:35, 36; Revelation 19:9.

“The coming of the bridegroom, here brought to view, takes place before the marriage. The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which is the capital and representative of the kingdom, is called ‘the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ Said the angel to John: ‘Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ ‘He carried me away in the spirit,’ says the prophet, ‘and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.’ Revelation 21:9, 10. Clearly, then, the bride represents the Holy City, and the virgins that go out to meet the bridegroom are a symbol of the church. In the Revelation the people of God are said to be the guests at the marriage supper. Revelation 19:9. If *guests*, they cannot be represented also as the *bride*. Christ, as stated by the prophet Daniel, will receive from the Ancient of Days in heaven, ‘dominion, and glory, and a kingdom;’ He will receive the New Jerusalem, the capital of His kingdom, ‘prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.’ Daniel 7:14; Revelation 21:2. Having received the kingdom, He will come in His glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to ‘sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,’ at His table in His kingdom (Matthew 8:11; Luke 22:30), to partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 426, 427.

- b. In what role does Jesus come the second time? Revelation 17:14; 19:16.

“Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a ‘Man of Sorrows,’ to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. ‘Faithful and True,’ ‘in righteousness He doth judge and make war.’ And ‘the armies which were in heaven’ (Revelation 19:11, 14) follow Him. With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms—‘ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.’ No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendor. . . . As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head; but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun. ‘And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, *King of kings, and Lord of lords.*’ ”—*Ibid.*, p. 641.

4. THE REWARD DETERMINED

- a. **When is the reward for the saints determined and when is it actually given? Revelation 11:18; 22:12; 2 Timothy 4:7, 8.**
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“By the king’s examination of the guests at the feast is represented a work of judgment. The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples. Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, ‘to give every man according as his work shall be.’ Revelation 22:12. Before His coming, then, the character of every man’s work will have been determined, and to every one of Christ’s followers the reward will have been apportioned according to his deeds.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 310.

- b. **Since people are judged by the law, what needed to be revealed prior to the commencement of the judgment? Revelation 11:19; Acts 17:30; James 4:17.**

“Said the angel: ‘If light come, and that light is set aside or rejected, then comes condemnation and the frown of God; but before the light comes, there is no sin, for there is no light for them to reject.’ ”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 116.

- c. **What is inside the ark of the covenant and how do we learn about the heavenly sanctuary? Hebrews 9:4; 8:5.**
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“In the holiest I saw an ark; on the top and sides of it was purest gold. On each end of the ark was a lovely cherub, with its wings spread out over it. Their faces were turned toward each other, and they looked downward. Between the angels was a golden censer. Above the ark, where the angels stood, was an exceeding bright glory, that appeared like a throne where God dwelt. Jesus stood by the ark, and as the saints’ prayers came up to Him, the incense in the censer would smoke, and He would offer up their prayers with the smoke of the incense to His Father. In the ark was the golden pot of manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of stone which folded together like a book. Jesus opened them, and I saw the ten commandments written on them with the finger of God.”—*Early Writings*, p. 32.

5. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

- a. Describe the day of atonement in the Levitical system and explain how the blotting out of sins was symbolized in it. Leviticus 16:29, 30; 23:27, 30.

“The actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation—a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to his works. Revelation 22:12.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 421, 422.

- b. How should knowing this reality affect our daily choice? 2 Corinthians 6:2.

“Those who are quieting a guilty conscience with the thought that they can change a course of evil when they choose, that they can trifle with the invitations of mercy, and yet be again and again impressed, take this course at their peril. They think that after casting all their influence on the side of the great rebel, in a moment of utmost extremity, when danger compasses them about, they will change leaders. But this is not so easily done. The experience, the education, the discipline of a life of sinful indulgence, has so thoroughly molded the character that they cannot then receive the image of Jesus. Had no light shone upon their pathway, the case would have been different. Mercy might interpose, and give them an opportunity to accept her overtures; but after light has been long rejected and despised, it will be finally withdrawn.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 269.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do we know that the time for the blotting out of sins must take place prior to the second coming of Jesus?
2. How do we know that the coming of Christ in Daniel 7 is in the most holy place in the temple in heaven rather than to this earth?
3. Explain how the marriage symbolizes Christ accepting His kingdom rather than a marriage to His church.
4. How only can one be judged fairly, thus showing the need to have the most holy place revealed before the judgment?
5. What event in the Old Testament typified the blotting out of sins?

First Sabbath Offering for the GC Education Department

Now, more than ever, there is a need to invest in the education of our children. Bombarded as these young ones are from every corner by the things of this world, it is increasingly difficult to protect them from the wiles of the enemy. What was once limited in its accessibility is now literally attached to our children through “smart” phones and other devices. How can we be fitted for the work of evangelism when our own children cannot be prepared for it?



“True education is missionary training. Every son and daughter of God is called to be a missionary; we are called to the service of God and our fellow men; and to fit us for this service should be the object of our education.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 395.

Increasingly, educational institutions have moved away from teaching fundamentals to becoming indoctrination centers for worldliness and worse. Many concerned parents have realized just how much influence schooling has on their children and have reached out, asking how they can have materials to assist them in educating their children for the honor and glory of God. Therefore, the General Conference Education Department is in the process of creating an entire curriculum with this very aim as its focus. Partnering with our educators and with the contribution of the various unions and field conferences, the work of preparing a Kindergarten–12th grade curriculum is well underway.

At the same time, this project is larger than the sums available. We need your generous contributions to this offering to do three things: Prepare the materials by capable individuals, translate the materials, and make them available even to those in places of poverty.

Your support makes it possible for us to prepare materials of the highest caliber so the students using them in our church schools and home schools will be “qualified for usefulness in this life and for the service of God throughout eternity.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 495.

We understand this project is large, but it is well worth it. And we know that with your generous support we will produce materials from math to language to social sciences that will equip the youngest among us to give the gospel message to all the world.

Thank you in advance, and may God bless the gifts and givers.

General Conference Education Department

The Heavenly Ministry Overshadowed

MEMORY TEXT: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

“The intercession of Christ in our behalf is that of presenting His divine merits in the offering of Himself to the Father as our substitute and surety; for He ascended up on high to make an atonement for our transgressions.”—*Faith and Works*, p. 105.

Suggested Reading: *Faith and Works*, pp. 105–108.

Sunday

July 30

1. MESSAGES THROUGH THE PROPHETS

- a. How does God reveal His will to mankind and what message is especially designed for the last days? Numbers 12:6; Daniel 8:1, 2.

“Read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust. God alone is represented as great. In the vision of the prophet He is seen casting down one mighty ruler, and setting up another. He is revealed as the monarch of the universe, about to set up His everlasting kingdom—the Ancient of days, the living God, the Source of all wisdom, the Ruler of the present, the Revealer of the future. Read, and understand how poor, how frail, how short-lived, how erring, how guilty is man in lifting up his soul unto vanity.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1166.

“Ministers and people declared that the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation were incomprehensible mysteries. But Christ directed His disciples to the words of the prophet Daniel concerning events to take place in their time, and said: ‘Whoso readeth, let him *understand*.’ Matthew 24:15. And the assertion that the Revelation is a mystery, not to be understood, is contradicted by the very title of the book: ‘The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass. . . . *Blessed* is he that *readeth*, and they that *hear* the words of this prophecy, and *keep* those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.’ ”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 341.

2. THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT

- a. **What does the ram symbolize and how was that prophecy fulfilled? Daniel 8:3, 4, 20; Esther 1:1.**
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“While the nations rejected God’s principles, and in this rejection wrought their own ruin, it was still manifest that the divine, overruling purpose was working through all their movements. . . .

“Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that it might be seen whether it would fulfill the purpose of ‘the Watcher and the Holy One.’ Prophecy has traced the rise and fall of the world’s great empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with nations of less power, history repeated itself. Each had its period of test, each failed, its glory faded, its power departed, and its place was occupied by another.”—*Education*, pp. 176, 177.

- b. **What does the very great he-goat symbolize and how was that fulfilled? Daniel 8:5–8, 21, 22.**
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“Alexander found it much easier to subdue kingdoms than to rule his own spirit. After conquering nations, this so-called great man fell through the indulgence of appetite—a victim of intemperance.”—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 29.

- c. **Although the Bible relates with unerring accuracy the history of the world’s empires, what words of Christ should we ever keep in mind? John 18:36.**
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“It is acquaintance that awakens sympathy, and sympathy is the spring of effective ministry. To awaken in the children and youth sympathy and the spirit of sacrifice for the suffering millions in the ‘regions beyond,’ let them become acquainted with these lands and their peoples. In this line much might be accomplished in our schools. Instead of dwelling on the exploits of the Alexanders and Napoleons of history, let the pupils study the lives of such men as the apostle Paul and Martin Luther, as Moffat and Livingstone and Carey, and the present daily-unfolding history of missionary effort. Instead of burdening their memories with an array of names and theories that have no bearing upon their lives, and to which, once outside the schoolroom, they rarely give a thought, let them study all lands in the light of missionary effort and become acquainted with the peoples and their needs.”—*Education*, p. 269.

3. THE MIGHTY LITTLE HORN

- a. **What does the mighty little horn represent and how was that fulfilled? Daniel 8:9–12.**

“The crown removed from Israel passed successively to the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. God says, ‘It shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.’ ”—*Education*, p. 179.

“Alexander and Caesar found it easier to subdue a world than to subdue themselves.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 96.

- b. **How are the words “great,” “very great,” and “exceeding great” used to illustrate the vast comparisons of each of the kingdoms? Daniel 8:4, 8, 9. What is the meaning of standing up against the host of heaven and the stars? Daniel 8:10; Genesis 37:9–11.**

“ ‘These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand.’ Revelation 2:1. These words are spoken to the teachers in the church—those entrusted by God with weighty responsibilities. The sweet influences that are to be abundant in the church are bound up with God’s ministers, who are to reveal the love of Christ. The stars of heaven are under His control. He fills them with light. He guides and directs their movements. If He did not do this, they would become fallen stars. So with His ministers. They are but instruments in His hands, and all the good they accomplish is done through His power. Through them His light is to shine forth. The Saviour is to be their efficiency. If they will look to Him as He looked to the Father they will be enabled to do His work. As they make God their dependence, He will give them His brightness to reflect to the world.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 586, 587.

“John calls to remembrance the wonderful incidents that he has witnessed in the life of Christ. In imagination he again enjoys the precious opportunities with which he was once favored, and is greatly comforted. Suddenly his meditation is broken in upon; he is addressed in tones distinct and clear. He turns to see from whence the voice proceeds, and, lo! he beholds his Lord, whom he has loved, with whom he has walked and talked, and whose sufferings upon the cross he has witnessed. But how changed is the Saviour’s appearance! He is no longer ‘a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief’ (Isaiah 53:3). He bears no marks of His humiliation. His eyes are like a flame of fire; His feet like fine brass, as it glows in a furnace. The tones of His voice are like the musical sound of many waters. His countenance shines like the sun in its meridian glory. In His hand are seven stars, representing the ministers of the churches.”—*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 77, 78.

4. AN IMPOSTER AS PRIEST

- a. **Who is the prince of the host and how did the little horn magnify itself against Him? Daniel 8:11, 25; Revelation 19:16; 17:14.**
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“The line of prophecy in which these symbols are found begins with Revelation 12, with the dragon that sought to destroy Christ at His birth. The dragon is said to be Satan (Revelation 12:9); he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian Era was the Roman Empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. Thus while the dragon, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 438.

- b. **Since Christ did not complete the final work of atonement on the cross (Romans 5:8–11), what work did Jesus continue as an atonement in the heavenly sanctuary? Hebrews 3:1; 8:1, 2; 9:8, 9, 21–26.**
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“Our great High Priest completed the sacrificial offering of Himself when He suffered without the gate. Then a perfect atonement was made for the sins of the people. Jesus is our Advocate, our High Priest, our Intercessor.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 913.

- c. **After the fall of imperial Rome, how did the papacy transfer the intercessory ministration of the heavenly sanctuary to its own institutions on earth? 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4; 1 Timothy 2:5.**
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“The incense that is offered now by men, the masses that are said for the deliverance of souls from purgatory, are not of the least avail with God. All the altars and sacrifices, the traditions and inventions whereby men hope to earn salvation are fallacies. No sacrifices are to be offered without; for the great High Priest is performing His work in the holy place. . . .

“In His intercession as our Advocate Christ needs no man’s virtue, no man’s intercession. Christ 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 holy place. . . .

“The so-called intercession of the saints is the greatest falsehood that can be invented. Priests and rulers have no right to interpose between Christ and the souls for whom He has died, as though invested with the Saviour’s attributes, and able to pardon transgression and sin. They themselves are sinners.”—*Ibid.*

5. THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY CLEANSED

- a. How does Daniel's prophecy foretell that the daily ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary was to be hidden and marred? Daniel 8:11, 12.
- b. How long was this revolt—the same revolting spirit that attempted to become equal to God originally in heaven (Isaiah 14:12–14)—to continue and overshadow the atoning ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary? Daniel 8:13, 14.

“Lucifer in heaven desired to be first in power and authority; he wanted to be God, to have the rulership of heaven; and to this end he won many of the angels to his side. When with his rebel host he was cast out from the courts of God, the work of rebellion and self-seeking was continued on earth.”—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 51.

“The Saviour gathered His disciples about Him, and said to them, ‘If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.’ . . . The strife for the highest place was the outworking of that same spirit which was the beginning of the great controversy in the worlds above, and which had brought Christ from heaven to die. . . . Had Lucifer really desired to be like the Most High, he would never have deserted his appointed place in heaven; for the spirit of the Most High is manifested in unselfish ministry. Lucifer desired God's power, but not His character. He sought for himself the highest place, and every being who is actuated by his spirit will do the same. Thus alienation, discord, and strife will be inevitable. Dominion becomes the prize of the strongest. The kingdom of Satan is a kingdom of force; every individual regards every other as an obstacle in the way of his own advancement, or a steppingstone on which he himself may climb to a higher place.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 435, 436.

- c. What will we understand when we know the end of the 2300 days? Isaiah 43:25; Revelation 14:6, 7.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How can we identify true prophets with a message from God?
2. Describe the meaning of the ram and he-goat.
3. Distinguish between great, very great, and exceeding great in this prophecy.
4. What earthly power sought to usurp Christ's work in the sanctuary above?
5. What was to occur at the termination of the 2300 days?

“Then Shall the Sanctuary Be Cleansed”

MEMORY TEXT: “And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (Daniel 8:14).

“Through the suffering and death of the Son of man, the salvation of man was made possible. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit God designs that His image shall be restored in humanity, that a new and living principle of life shall be introduced into the minds that have become defiled by sin. . . . The cross of Christ must be studied. It must rivet the attention and hold the affections. The blood which there was shed for sins will purify and cleanse mind and heart from every species of selfishness.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 377, 378.

Suggested Reading: *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 681–702.

Sunday

August 6

1. IN PRAYER WITH FASTING

- a. Show how Daniel, a highly honored prophet of God, did not consider himself beyond the need of studying the writings of other prophets. Daniel 9:2; Jeremiah 29:10.

“Burdened in behalf of Israel, Daniel studied anew the prophecies of Jeremiah.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 554.

- b. What must we be willing to do in order to understand the writings of God’s appointed messengers? Daniel 8:27; 9:3; 10:1–3.

“This test would reveal the strength of those who with real faith had obeyed what they believed to be the teaching of the word and the Spirit of God. It would teach them, as only such an experience could, the danger of accepting the theories and interpretations of men, instead of making the Bible its own interpreter. To the children of faith the perplexity and sorrow resulting from their error would work the needed correction. They would be led to a closer study of the prophetic word. They would be taught to examine more carefully the foundation of their faith, and to reject everything, however widely accepted by the Christian world, that was not founded upon the Scriptures of truth.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 354.

2. TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED DAYS

- a. **What showed that the angel Gabriel came to enlighten Daniel concerning an explanation of a vision previously given that the prophet had not understood? Daniel 9:20–23, 26, 27.**
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“Through another vision further light was thrown upon the events of the future; and it was at the close of this vision that Daniel heard ‘one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision?’ Daniel 8:13. The answer that was given, ‘Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed’ (verse 14), filled him with perplexity. Earnestly he sought for the meaning of the vision. He could not understand the relation sustained by the seventy years’ captivity, as foretold through Jeremiah, to the twenty-three hundred years that in vision he heard the heavenly visitant declare should elapse before the cleansing of God’s sanctuary. The angel Gabriel gave him a partial interpretation; yet when the prophet heard the words, ‘The vision . . . shall be for many days,’ he fainted away.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 554.

“It was Gabriel, the angel next in rank to the Son of God, who came with the divine message to Daniel.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 234.

- b. **What command previously given to the prophet was yet incomplete and with what did the unfinished explanation concern? Daniel 8:16, 14.**
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“The angel had been sent to Daniel for the express purpose of explaining to him the point which he had failed to understand in the vision of the eighth chapter, the statement relative to time—‘unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.’ ”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 326.

“As a people, we should be earnest students of prophecy; we should not rest until we become intelligent in regard to the subject of the sanctuary, which is brought out in the visions of Daniel and John. This subject sheds great light on our present position and work, and gives us unmistakable proof that God has led us in our past experience. It explains our disappointment in 1844, showing us that the sanctuary to be cleansed was not the earth, as we had supposed, but that Christ then entered into the most holy apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, and is there performing the closing work of His priestly office, in fulfillment of the words of the angel to the prophet Daniel, ‘Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.’ ”—*Evangelism*, pp. 222, 223.

3. THE DAY-FOR-A-YEAR PRINCIPLE

- a. How are we to understand a prophetic day? Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:33, 34.
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“A day in prophecy stands for a year. See Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 698.

- b. How do we know that the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 are a part of the 2300 days of Daniel 8, aside of the reason given in the questions above and what was to be accomplished during this time period? Daniel 9:24–27.
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“After bidding Daniel ‘understand the matter, and consider the vision,’ the very first words of the angel are: ‘Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy Holy City.’ The word here translated ‘determined’ literally signifies ‘cut off.’ Seventy weeks, representing 490 years, are declared by the angel to be cut off, as specially pertaining to the Jews. But from what were they cut off? As the 2300 days was the only period of time mentioned in chapter 8, it must be the period from which the seventy weeks were cut off; the seventy weeks must therefore be a part of the 2300 days, and the two periods must begin together. The seventy weeks were declared by the angel to date from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. If the date of this commandment could be found, then the starting point for the great period of the 2300 days would be ascertained.”— *The Great Controversy*, p. 326.

“The plan of salvation had its place in the counsels of the Infinite from all eternity. The gospel is the revelation of God’s love to men, and means everything that is essential to the happiness and well-being of humanity. The work of God in the earth is of immeasurable importance, and it is Satan’s special object to crowd it out of sight and mind, that he may make his specious devices effectual in the destruction of those for whom Christ died. It is his purpose to cause the discoveries of men to be exalted above the wisdom of God. When the mind is engrossed with the conceptions and theories of men to the exclusion of the wisdom of God, it is stamped with idolatry. Science, falsely so called, has been exalted above God, nature above its Maker, and how can God look upon such wisdom?”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 186.

4. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

- a. How was the phrase “make an end of sin,” or “sin offerings” as the original implies, fulfilled? Hebrews 9:24–26; 7:26, 27.

“Then, said the angel, ‘He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [seven years].’ For seven years after the Saviour entered on His ministry, the gospel was to be preached especially to the Jews; for three and a half years by Christ Himself, and afterward by the apostles. ‘In the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.’ Daniel 9:27. In the spring of A.D. 31, Christ, the true Sacrifice, was offered on Calvary. Then the veil of the temple was rent in twain, showing that the sacredness and significance of the sacrificial service had departed.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 699.

“With the great sacrifice offered upon Calvary, ended that system of offerings which for four thousand years had pointed forward to the Lamb of God. Type had met antitype, and all the sacrifices and oblations of the ceremonial system were there to cease.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 327, 328.

- b. How was reconciliation made for iniquity? 2 Corinthians 5:19, 20.

“Jesus paid an infinite price to redeem the world, and the race was given into His hands; they became His property. He sacrificed His honor, His riches, and His glorious home in the royal courts and became the son of Joseph and Mary. Joseph was one of the humblest of day laborers. Jesus also worked; he lived a life of hardship and toil. When His ministry commenced, after His baptism, He endured an agonizing fast of nearly six weeks. It was not merely the gnawing pangs of hunger which made His sufferings inexpressibly severe, but it was the guilt of the sins of the world which pressed so heavily upon Him. He who knew no sin was made sin for us. With this terrible weight of guilt upon Him because of our sins He withstood the fearful test upon appetite, and upon love of the world and of honor, and pride of display which leads to presumption. Christ endured these three great leading temptations and overcame in behalf of man, working out for him a righteous character, because He knew man could not do this of himself. He knew that upon these three points Satan was to assail the race. He had overcome Adam, and he designed to carry forward his work till he completed the ruin of man. Christ entered the field in man’s behalf to conquer Satan for him because He saw that man could not overcome on his own account. Christ prepared the way for the ransom of man by His own life of suffering, self-denial, and self-sacrifice, and by His humiliation and final death. He brought help to man that he might, by following Christ’s example, overcome on his own account, as Christ has overcome for him.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 372.

5. THE HEAVENLY MINISTRATION BEGUN

a. How was everlasting righteousness assured? Nahum 1:9.

“The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the word of God: ‘Affliction shall not rise up the second time.’ Nahum 1:9. The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 504.

“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.’ Sin is defined to be ‘the transgression of the law.’ 1 John 3:5, 4. But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.’ Psalm 40:8. When on earth, He said to His disciples, ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ John 15:10. By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 311, 312.

b. Before the earthly sanctuary could begin its ministry, the tabernacle had to be anointed (Exodus 40:9). What did Jesus need to undergo before the 70 weeks were finished in order to begin the ministration of the heavenly sanctuary? Daniel 9:24; Matthew 3:13–17; John 19:28–30; Hebrews 8:1–5; 9:8, 9.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What self-denial should we be willing to exercise in order to understand the important prophecies for our time?
2. How do we know that the prophecies of Daniel 9 are clearly connected to Daniel chapter 8 and especially the explanation of verse 14?
3. When studying prophecies, what do we need to realize about time periods?
4. Explain some things to be fulfilled during the 70-week period of time.
5. What had to occur before Jesus could begin His heavenly ministration?

The Ultimate Sacrifice

MEMORY TEXT: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times” (Daniel 9:25).

“The blood of Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner from the condemnation of the law, was not to cancel the sin; it would stand on record in the sanctuary until the final atonement; so in the type the blood of the sin offering removed the sin from the penitent, but it rested in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 357.

Suggested Reading: *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 607–627.

Sunday

August 13

1. THE BEGINNING OF THE PROPHECY

- a. When does the entire 70-week prophecy begin? Daniel 9:25.

- b. What other decrees were made that did not fulfill the conditions of the prophecy? Ezra 1:1–4; 6:1–12; Nehemiah 2:1–8.

- c. Which is the only decree that fulfills the condition to restore the entire system of Judaea—including the religious and judicial authority, plus financing? Ezra 7:11–26.

“In the seventh chapter of Ezra the decree is found. Verses 12–26. In its completest form it was issued by Artaxerxes, king of Persia, 457 B.C. But in Ezra 6:14 the house of the Lord at Jerusalem is said to have been built ‘according to the commandment [‘decree,’ margin] of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.’ These three kings, in originating, reaffirming, and completing the decree, brought it to the perfection required by the prophecy to mark the beginning of the 2300 years. Taking 457 B.C., the time when the decree was completed, as the date of the commandment, every specification of the prophecy concerning the seventy weeks was seen to have been fulfilled.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 326, 327.

2. THE MESSIAH REVEALED

- a. **When did the Messiah reveal Himself, showing that the 70th week had begun—and how old was Jesus when this timeline began?** John 1:29, 41; Matthew 3:16, 17; Acts 10:38; Luke 3:23.

“ ‘From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks’—namely, sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years. The decree of Artaxerxes went into effect in the autumn of 457 B.C. From this date, 483 years extend to the autumn of A.D. 27. . . . At that time this prophecy was fulfilled. The word ‘Messiah’ signifies ‘the Anointed One.’ In the autumn of A.D. 27 Christ was baptized by John and received the anointing of the Spirit. The apostle Peter testifies that ‘God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.’ Acts 10:38. . . . After His baptism He went into Galilee, ‘preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, *The time is fulfilled.*’ Mark 1:14, 15.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 327.

- b. **How did Jesus reveal this prophecy as a key aspect of His ministry (Daniel 8 and 9) and of the everlasting gospel?** Mark 1:14, 15; Hebrews 4:15, 16.

“Christ Himself had sent [the disciples] forth with the message: ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.’ Mark 1:15. That message was based on the prophecy of Daniel 9.”—*Ibid.*, p. 345.

“At the expiration of ‘the time’—the sixty-nine weeks of Daniel 9, which were to extend to the Messiah, ‘the Anointed One’—Christ had received the anointing of the Spirit after His baptism by John in Jordan. And the ‘kingdom of God’ which they had declared to be at hand was established by the death of Christ. This kingdom was not, as they had been taught to believe, an earthly empire. Nor was it that future, immortal kingdom which shall be set up when ‘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,’ that everlasting kingdom, in which ‘all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’ Daniel 7:27. As used in the Bible, the expression ‘kingdom of God’ is employed to designate both the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory. . . . The throne of grace represents the kingdom of grace; for the existence of a throne implies the existence of a kingdom. In many of His parables Christ uses the expression ‘the kingdom of heaven’ to designate the work of divine grace upon the hearts of men.”—*Ibid.*, p. 347.

3. THE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY

- a. With what was Jesus concerned throughout His ministry and what occurred exactly at the appointed time? John 7:6–8; 19:16–18, 28–30; 20:30, 31.
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“The time of the first advent and of some of the chief events clustering about the Saviour’s lifework was made known by the angel Gabriel to Daniel. ‘Seventy weeks,’ said the angel, ‘are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.’ Daniel 9:24.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 698.

“Christ had come at the exact time and in the manner foretold by prophecy. The testimony of Scripture had been fulfilled in every detail of His ministry. He had preached the message of salvation, and ‘His word was with power.’ The hearts of His hearers had witnessed that it was of Heaven. The word and the Spirit of God attested the divine commission of His Son.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 346.

- b. How does this prophecy likewise reveal the exact year of fulfillment for the rest of the 2300 days? Daniel 9:24.
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“The death of Christ—the very event which the disciples had looked upon as the final destruction of their hope—was that which made it forever sure. While it had brought them a cruel disappointment, it was the climax of proof that their belief had been correct. The event that had filled them with mourning and despair was that which opened the door of hope to every child of Adam, and in which centered the future life and eternal happiness of all God’s faithful ones in all the ages.”—*Ibid.*, p. 348.

“Thus far every specification of the prophecies is strikingly fulfilled, and the beginning of the seventy weeks is fixed beyond question at 457 B.C., and their expiration in A.D. 34. From this data there is no difficulty in finding the termination of the 2300 days. The seventy weeks—490 days—having been cut off from the 2300, there were 1810 days remaining. After the end of 490 days, the 1810 days were still to be fulfilled. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. Consequently the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 terminate in 1844. At the expiration of this great prophetic period, upon the testimony of the angel of God, ‘the sanctuary shall be cleansed.’ Thus the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary—which was almost universally believed to take place at the second advent—was definitely pointed out.”—*Ibid.*, p. 328.

4. RIGHTFUL ENTRANCE

- a. **What is needed in order to enter the Holy City? Revelation 21:27; 22:14.**

“The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God. The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. The gift of God in His beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of His law, and still save the transgressor. Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of His shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin. There are many who will be lost, because they depend on legal religion, or mere repentance for sin. But repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul. Man cannot be saved by his own works. Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God; and heaven can never be gained by an imperfect obedience; for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion.”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889.

- b. **What will be the condition of all who enter the Holy City? Ephesians 5:27; Isaiah 43:25.**

5. THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT IS PART OF THE GOSPEL

- a. How is the message about the 2300 days and the investigative judgment a part of the gospel message to present to the world? Revelation 14:6, 7, 12.

“The work of judgment which began in 1844 must continue until the cases of all are decided, both of the living and the dead; hence it will extend to the close of human probation. That men may be prepared to stand in the judgment, the message commands them to ‘fear God, and give glory to Him,’ ‘and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.’ . . . In order to be prepared for the judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. That law will be the standard of character in the judgment.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 435, 436.

- b. How does the beginning of the judgment in the autumn of 1844 show the fulfillment of the cleansing of the sanctuary? Daniel 8:14.

“The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but this message is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed only in the last days, for only then would it be true that the hour of judgment *had come*.”—*Ibid.*, p. 356.

- c. What should we do in light of the solemnity of the times in which we live? Mark 13:33; Revelation 3:3; 22:11.

“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review.

“When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death.”—*Ibid.*, p. 490.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why does the year 457 B.C. mark the beginning of the 70 weeks?
2. How do we know that Christ’s baptism marked the start of the 70th week?
3. How do the events of the 70th week determine the end of the 2300 days?
4. What type of character do we need to form to enter the New Jerusalem?
5. Name an essential part of the everlasting gospel message to share today.

The Duty of the Congregation

MEMORY TEXT: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25).

“Every failure on the part of the children of God is due to their lack of faith.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 657.

Suggested Reading: *Christian Service*, pp. 211–214.

Sunday

August 20

1. REQUIREMENTS

- a. On the day of atonement in the typical system, how do we know that the people were not judged as a group, but individually? Leviticus 23:29, 30.
 - b. How are we able to participate in this service when the ministration of Christ is in the heavenly sanctuary? Hebrews 11:6; 1 John 5:4.
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- c. What must happen to this kind of faith? Romans 3:31; James 2:17.
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“God requires the homage of a sanctified soul, which has prepared itself, by the exercise of the faith that works by love, to serve Him. He holds up before us the highest ideal, even perfection. He asks us to be absolutely and completely for Him in this world as He is for us in the presence of God.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 566.

“By the miracle of divine grace, many may be fitted for lives of usefulness. Despised and forsaken, they have become utterly discouraged; they may appear stoical and stolid. But under the ministration of the Holy Spirit, the stupidity that makes their uplifting appear so hopeless will pass away. The dull, clouded mind will awake. The slave of sin will be set free. Vice will disappear, and ignorance will be overcome. Through the faith that works by love, the heart will be purified and the mind enlightened.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 169.

- d. Name the specific things that had to be done on the day of atonement. Leviticus 23:27–30.

2. PURIFICATION

- a. **Because our High Priest is actively working in heaven (Hebrews 10:21; 3:1), what kind of people are now needed on earth? Hebrews 10:22; Titus 2:14.**

“Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God’s people upon earth.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 425.

- b. **What is our natural tendency when we are without church fellowship? Deuteronomy 12:8; Judges 17:6; Proverbs 12:15.**

“When our brethren voluntarily absent themselves from religious meetings, when God is not thought of and revered, when He is not chosen as their counselor and their strong tower of defense, how soon secular thoughts and wicked unbelief come in, and vain confidence and philosophy take the place of humble, trusting faith.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 426, 427.

“Never entertain the thought that you can be Christians and yet withdraw within yourselves. Each one is a part of the great web of humanity, and the nature and quality of your experience will be largely determined by the experiences of those with whom you associate.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 190.

- c. **How are we cleansed and why is there such power in that cleansing agent? John 15:3. Explain how this occurs. Revelation 1:5; 7:14.**

“In heaven there is perfect order, perfect obedience, perfect peace and harmony. Those who have had no respect for order or discipline in this life would have no respect for the order which is observed in heaven. They can never be admitted into heaven, for all worthy of an entrance there will love order and respect discipline. The characters formed in this life will determine the future destiny. When Christ shall come, He will not change the character of any individual. Precious, probationary time is given to be improved in washing our robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. To remove the stains of sin requires the work of a lifetime. Every day renewed efforts in restraining and denying self are needed.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 429.

3. A HOLY CONVOCATION

a. What is the purpose of religious gatherings? Hebrews 10:23, 24.

“Especially have you lost much by not taking your place in religious assemblies, placing yourself under the most healthful influences, in the channel of light. The precious opportunities for witnessing for Christ ought never to seem unessential. Do you know that when the people of God assemble to worship Him, as earnest active witnesses, they receive a rich blessing. They are Christ’s representatives and He is in their midst to bless.”—*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1683.

“Think of the Lord Jesus, and His merits and His love, but do not seek to find the defects and dwell upon the mistakes that others have made. Call to your mind the things worthy of your recognition and your praise; and if you are sharp to discern errors in others, be more sharp to recognize the good and praise the good. You may, if you criticize yourselves, find things just as objectionable as that which you see in others. Then let us work constantly to strengthen one another in the most holy faith.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 232.

b. When are gatherings of like believers most urgently needed? Hebrews 10:25.

“Labor for those who are loitering away their lives, accomplishing only half of what they might for the Master. Strive to arouse them to a sense of their responsibility. Pray for and exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. Let brother say to brother and sister to sister, ‘Come, my fellow laborer, let us put all earnestness into our work; for the night is at hand, wherein no man can work.’ Let no one lose minutes by talking when he should be working.”—*Evangelism*, p. 653.

c. With whom should we be meeting and for what purpose? Matthew 18:19, 20; Jude 3.

“Those to whom the message of truth is spoken seldom ask, ‘Is it true?’ but, ‘By whom is it advocated?’ Multitudes estimate it by the numbers who accept it; and the question is still asked, ‘Have any of the learned men or religious leaders believed?’ Men are no more favorable to real godliness now than in the days of Christ. They are just as intently seeking earthly good, to the neglect of eternal riches; and it is not an argument against the truth, that large numbers are not ready to accept it, or that it is not received by the world’s great men, or even by the religious leaders.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 459, 460.

4. AFFLICTING THE SOUL

- a. **What is the only way that we can endure affliction in this world? Hebrews 12:2; 3:1.**

“ ‘Well,’ says one, ‘I will let go. I will step out, and someone else can come in my place.’ Better not do this unless you have fully decided that you will not maintain a close connection with God. If you leave space for Satan to come in between you and Jesus, Satan will be fruitful in suggestions. There will be an abundance of machinery and a trusting in the mechanical operations but leaving out the only One who can infuse you with His Holy Spirit and in times of danger lift up a standard for you against the enemy. It will not do to depend on your finite wisdom, for you have a limited experience at best, and do not know half as much in regard to the safe and wise management of the work in your hands as you think you do.”—*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 932.

- b. **How do we know that the affliction of soul in Leviticus 23 is a day of fasting on the day of atonement? Leviticus 23:28, 29; Nehemiah 9:1, 2; Esther 4:3; Joel 2:12, 13.**

“The whole ceremony was designed to impress the Israelites with the holiness of God and His abhorrence of sin; and, further, to show them that they could not come in contact with sin without becoming polluted. Every man was required to afflict his soul while this work of atonement was going forward. All business was to be laid aside, and the whole congregation of Israel were to spend the day in solemn humiliation before God, with prayer, fasting, and deep searching of heart.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 419.

- c. **How important is it to keep the body under control, even with such things as fasting? James 3:2; Romans 6:12; 1 Corinthians 9:27.**

“The apostle compared himself to a man running in a race, straining every nerve to win the prize. . . . That he might not run uncertainly or at random in the Christian race, Paul subjected himself to severe training. The words, ‘I keep under my body,’ literally mean to beat back by severe discipline the desires, impulses, and passions.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 314.

“We are under solemn obligations to God to keep the spirit pure and the body healthy, that we may be a benefit to humanity and render to God perfect service.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 123.

5. FASTING IN THE END TIMES

- a. Describe the great need of God's church in the last days. Matthew 17:19–21; Joel 2:15.

“[The disciples’] faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit’s aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 431.

“God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God, so that when the testing time shall come, and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith, they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 299.

- b. Of which day is Joel specifically speaking? Joel 2:28–32. Although partially fulfilled in the days of the apostles, how is it referring to the time of the end? Acts 2:17, 20.

“May 19, 1780, stands in history as ‘The Dark Day.’ Since the time of Moses no period of darkness of equal density, extent, and duration, has ever been recorded. The description of this event, as given by eyewitnesses, is but an echo of the words of the Lord, recorded by the prophet Joel, twenty-five hundred years previous to their fulfillment: [Joel 2:31 quoted].”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 308.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is a personal experience necessary as we approach the final end?
2. As the purification of the sanctuary is going on in heaven, what corresponding work is taking place among God’s true people on earth?
3. Why is the gathering of like believers important as we near the end?
4. Why is the control of the body associated with Christian growth?
5. Why are we to associate appropriate fasting with prayer?

First Sabbath Offering for Rampart View Ranch, Colorado, USA

Rampart View Ranch (RVR) is located an hour from Denver, Colorado, USA. The city of Denver rises out of the broad, flat expanse of the Great Plains and is nestled against the front range of the Rocky Mountains. Known as the “Mile-High City” with an elevation of 1609 meters above sea level greater Denver has a population of over 3 million. Given its



central North American location and a large well-traveled international airport, it is an easily reached and popular global travel destination.

RVR sits high atop the Colorado Rocky Mountains and is a true blessing for our church in the North American region. Over the years, this facility has hosted multiple youth conventions, marriage retreats, and canvassing projects as well as conferences and workers’ meetings. The beautiful property provides unparalleled seclusion and tranquility with nearly 200 acres of mountain terrain, all made possible through the Lord’s faithful guidance and amazing providence.

“Repeatedly the Lord has instructed us that we are to work the cities from outpost centers. In these cities we are to have houses of worship, as memorials for God; but institutions for the publication of our literature, for the healing of the sick, and for the training of workers, are to be established outside the cities. Especially is it important that our youth be shielded from the temptations of city life.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 358.

RVR was purchased from United States government land holdings through a process that took nearly a decade to accomplish. The land contained acres of rock formations, trees, and wilderness, but no structures or roads. Over the years, with the help of God and the generous work of volunteers, RVR has grown to its current capacity for service. A chapel and dining structure are now prominent on the property, along with cabins and dormitories. Despite the improvements made, RVR suffers shortages in fresh water supply. The property’s capacity to serve and expand is limited by a lack of water. We know that the Lord still has great plans for this property to bless His church and the world around us. With your generous help and God’s grace, we can raise the funds to drill a new well, allowing this facility to serve generations to come. May God bless the gift and the giver!

Your brethren from the Central U.S. Field

Dietary Considerations

MEMORY TEXT: “Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord” (Leviticus 23:27).

“The true fasting which should be recommended to all, is abstinence from every stimulating kind of food, and the proper use of wholesome, simple food, which God has provided in abundance. Men need to think less about what they shall eat and drink, of temporal food, and much more in regard to the food from heaven, that will give tone and vitality to the whole religious experience.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 90.

Suggested Reading: *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, pp. 117–121.

Sunday

August 27

1. THAT DAY

- a. What special day is identified in prophecy? Isaiah 22:12, 20, 22.

- b. How does the New Testament shed light on that day, relating it to the events just prior to Christ’s second coming? Revelation 3:7–11.

“[Revelation 3:7, 8 quoted.] Christ had opened the door, or ministration, of the most holy place, light was shining from that open door of the sanctuary in heaven, and the fourth commandment was shown to be included in the law which is there enshrined.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 435.

“As Satan accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. . . .

“If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture or death; but should they prove unworthy, and lose their lives because of their own defects of character, then God’s holy name would be reproached.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 618, 619.

2. THE ANTITYPICAL DAY OF ATONEMENT

- a. **As we read the context of the open door, how do we know it is related to the temple of God in heaven? Revelation 3:12.**

“I saw that Jesus had shut the door of the holy place, and no man can open it; and that He had opened the door into the most holy, and no man can shut it (Revelation 3:7, 8); and that since Jesus has opened the door into the most holy place, which contains the ark, the commandments have been shining out to God’s people, and they are being tested on the Sabbath question.”—*Early Writings*, p. 42.

- b. **Since Christ brings a reward with Him at His coming as a result of the investigative judgment (Revelation 22:12; 11:18), what must be opened in heaven, showing the authority of the Ten Commandments? Revelation 11:19.**

“I saw that the present test on the Sabbath could not come until the mediation of Jesus in the holy place was finished and He had passed within the second veil; therefore Christians who fell asleep before the door was opened into the most holy, when the midnight cry was finished, at the seventh month, 1844, and who had not kept the true Sabbath, now rest in hope; for they had not the light and the test on the Sabbath which we now have since that door was opened. I saw that Satan was tempting some of God’s people on this point. Because so many good Christians have fallen asleep in the triumphs of faith and have not kept the true Sabbath, they were doubting about its being a test for us now.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 42, 43.

- c. **What type of restrictions in diet do we see during this antitypical day of atonement? Isaiah 22:12, 13.**

“Again and again I have been shown that God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to his original design—that man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth. Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat-eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to work steadily toward it. I cannot think that in the practice of flesh-eating we are in harmony with the light which God has been pleased to give us. All who are connected with our health institutions especially should be educating themselves to subsist on fruits, grains, and vegetables. If we move from principle in these things, if we as Christian reformers educate our own taste, and bring our diet to God’s plan, then we may exert an influence upon others in this matter, which will be pleasing to God.”—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 119.

3. ABSTINENCE

- a. Besides the type of food we eat, what are some other considerations as we prepare for the second advent? Luke 21:34–36.

“Ministers, teachers, and students do not become as intelligent as they should in regard to the necessity of physical exercise in the open air. They neglect this duty, which is most essential for the preservation of health. They closely apply their minds to books, and eat the allowance of a laboring man. Under such habits, some grow corpulent, because the system is clogged. Others become lean, feeble, and weak, because their vital powers are exhausted in throwing off the excess of food; the liver becomes burdened and unable to throw off the impurities in the blood, and sickness is the result. If physical exercise were combined with mental exertion, the blood would be quickened in its circulation, the action of the heart would be more perfect, impure matter would be thrown off, and new life and vigor would be experienced in every part of the body.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 572.

“We should not provide for the Sabbath a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food than for other days. Instead of this the food should be more simple, and less should be eaten, in order that the mind may be clear and vigorous to comprehend spiritual things. Overeating befogs the brain. The most precious words may be heard and not appreciated, because the mind is confused by an improper diet. By overeating on the Sabbath, many have done more than they think to dishonor God.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 532.

- b. How are overeating and drunkenness associated in the Bible? Proverbs 23:20, 21, 31, 32.

“Many mothers who deplore the intemperance which exists everywhere do not look deep enough to see the cause. They are daily preparing a variety of dishes and highly seasoned food which tempt the appetite and encourage overeating. . . . Whoever will indulge appetite in eating too often, and food not of a healthful quality, is weakening his power to resist the clamors of appetite and passion in other respects in proportion as he has strengthened the propensity to incorrect habits of eating. Mothers need to be impressed with their obligation to God and to the world to furnish society with children having well-developed characters. Men and women who come upon the stage of action with firm principles will be fitted to stand unsullied amid the moral pollutions of this corrupt age. It is the duty of mothers to improve their golden opportunities to correctly educate their children for usefulness and duty.”—*Counsels on Health*, pp. 606, 607.

4. CHRIST OVERCAME

a. How was diet involved in the sin in Eden? Genesis 2:16, 17; 3:1–6.

“[Satan in the form of the serpent] exulted that Adam and Eve in Eden could not resist his insinuations when he appealed to their appetite. The inhabitants of the old world he overcame in the same manner, through the indulgence of lustful appetite and corrupt passions. Through the gratification of appetite he had overthrown the Israelites. . . . David and Solomon, who had been especially favored of God, he had induced through the indulgence of appetite and passion to incur God’s displeasure. And he boasted that he could yet succeed in thwarting the purpose of God in the salvation of man through Jesus Christ.”—*Confrontation*, pp. 33, 34.

b. On what point was Christ similarly tested and how did He decidedly overcome? Matthew 4:3, 4.

“The strength of the temptation to indulge appetite can be measured only by the inexpressible anguish of our Redeemer in that long fast in the wilderness. He knew that the indulgence of perverted appetite would so deaden man’s perceptions that sacred things could not be discerned. Adam fell by the indulgence of appetite; Christ overcame by the denial of appetite. And our only hope of regaining Eden is through firm self-control. If the power of indulged appetite was so strong upon the race, that, in order to break its hold, the divine Son of God, in man’s behalf, had to endure a fast of nearly six weeks, what a work is before the Christian! Yet, however great the struggle, he may overcome. By the help of that divine power which withstood the fiercest temptations that Satan could invent, he too may be entirely successful in his warfare with evil, and at last may wear the victor’s crown in the kingdom of God.”—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 54.

“In the wilderness of temptation, Christ was without food forty days. Moses had on especial occasions been thus long without food. But he felt not the pangs of hunger. He was not tempted and harassed by a vile and powerful foe as was the Son of God.”—*Confrontation*, p. 34.

“Man now has the advantage over Adam in his warfare with Satan; for he has Adam’s experience in disobedience and his consequent fall to warn him to shun his example. Man also has Christ’s example in overcoming appetite and the manifold temptations of Satan, and in vanquishing the mighty foe upon every point and coming off victor in every contest. If man stumbles and falls under the temptations of Satan, he is without excuse; for he has the disobedience of Adam as a warning, and the life of the world’s Redeemer as an example of obedience and self-denial.”—*Ibid.*, p. 64.

5. CLEANSING

- a. **What happens if we are still using flesh foods and consuming alcoholic beverages on the modern day of atonement? Isaiah 22:14.**

“When the message comes to those who have not heard the truth for this time, they see that a great reformation must take place in their diet. They see that they must put away flesh food, because it creates an appetite for liquor, and fills the system with disease. By meat eating, the physical, mental, and moral powers are weakened. Man is built up from that which he eats. Animal passions bear sway as the result of meat eating, tobacco using, and liquor drinking. The Lord will give His people wisdom to prepare from that which the earth yields, foods that will take the place of flesh meat. Simple combinations of nuts and grains and fruits, manufactured with taste and skill, will commend themselves to unbelievers. But as a usual thing, too many nuts are used in the combinations made.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 268, 269.

“A positive injury is done to the system by continuous meat-eating. There is no excuse for it but a depraved, perverted appetite. You may ask, would you do away entirely with meat-eating? I answer, it will eventually come to this, but we are not prepared for this step just now. Meat-eating will eventually be done away. The flesh of animals will no longer compose a part of our diet; and we shall look upon a butcher’s shop with disgust. Again and again I have been shown that God is bringing His people back to His original design, that is not to subsist upon the flesh of dead animals.”—*Testimony Studies on Diet and Foods*, p. 69.

- b. **What will happen to us if we comply with God’s conditions on the day of atonement? Leviticus 16:29, 30.**
- c. **What final pronouncement is made to the faithful just before Jesus comes—and to what should that lead us? Revelation 22:11–14; 2 Peter 1:10.**

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do we relate Isaiah 22 with the day of atonement?
2. What happened when Jesus opened the door into the most holy place?
3. Why is controlling our body so important, including eating and drinking?
4. Why did Christ have to be tempted and overcome on the point of appetite?
5. How do we know that flesh food cannot be a part of the diet of God’s people who are waiting for the second coming of Christ?

Dietetic History

MEMORY TEXT: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 2).

“When men yield their hearts to unbelief, they place themselves under the control of Satan, and none can tell to what lengths he will lead them.”—*The Review and Herald*, October 29, 1903.

Suggested Reading: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 293–297, 377–382.

Sunday

September 3

1. RESTORATION

- a. How do we know that before Christ comes there must be a restoration of principles as given in the beginning? Acts 3:20, 21; Jeremiah 6:16.
- b. What was the original diet and why did herbs become necessary? Genesis 1:29; 3:17, 18; Psalm 104:14.

“We must study God’s original plan for man’s diet. He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food. [Genesis 1:29 quoted.] Upon leaving Eden to gain his livelihood by tilling the earth under the curse of sin, man received permission to eat also ‘the herb of the field.’ Genesis 3:18.

“Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 295, 296.

- c. How do we know it was not God’s will to permit flesh foods? Ezekiel 20:24, 25; Deuteronomy 12:20; Psalm 106:14, 15; Romans 7:7.

“By departing from the plan divinely appointed for their diet, the Israelites suffered great loss.”—*Ibid.*, p. 312.

- d. Why did God prohibit the eating of fat and blood? Leviticus 3:17; 17:11; Acts 15:20.

2. READY FOR JESUS?

- a. Why were so many of the Hebrew people destroyed in the wilderness? 1 Corinthians 10:5–10; Hebrews 3:19.

“The watchmen upon the walls of Zion should have been the first to catch the tidings of the Saviour’s advent, the first to lift their voices to proclaim Him near, the first to warn the people to prepare for His coming. But they were at ease, dreaming of peace and safety, while the people were asleep in their sins. Jesus saw His church, like the barren fig tree, covered with pretentious leaves, yet destitute of precious fruit. There was a boastful observance of the forms of religion, while the spirit of true humility, penitence, and faith—which alone could render the service acceptable to God—was lacking. Instead of the graces of the Spirit there were manifested pride, formalism, vainglory, selfishness, oppression. A backsliding church closed their eyes to the signs of the times. God did not forsake them, or suffer His faithfulness to fail; but they departed from Him, and separated themselves from His love. As they refused to comply with the conditions, His promises were not fulfilled to them.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 315, 316.

“Let us remember that time is short. Tell the people that golden opportunities for service are being neglected. All nations are to be warned and instructed to seek the Lord without delay; for that mighty angel who deceived so many of the angelic host is working untiringly to set in operation his seductive wiles, with which he has deceived millions, and through which he desires to deceive the whole world. The work of which the prophet Zechariah writes is a type of the spiritual restoration to be wrought for Israel before the end of time.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 315.

- b. How does that apply to us in preparing for the advent? 1 Corinthians 10:11.

“To prepare a people to stand in the day of God, a great work of reform was to be accomplished. God saw that many of His professed people were not building for eternity, and in His mercy He was about to send a message of warning to arouse them from their stupor and lead them to make ready for the coming of the Lord.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 311.

“The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the past experience of the Adventist body. God led His people in the advent movement, even as He led the children of Israel from Egypt. In the great disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had they still trusted to the guiding hand that had been with them in their past experience, they would have seen the salvation of God.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 457, 458.

3. THE POT OF MANNA

- a. Upon leaving Egypt, for what did the Hebrews soon clamor and what did God do about it? Exodus 16:3, 13–15.

“The Israelites, during their bondage in Egypt, had been compelled to subsist on the plainest and simplest food; but then keen appetite induced by privation and hard labor had made it palatable. Many of the Egyptians, however, who were now among them, had been accustomed to a luxurious diet; and these were the first to complain. At the giving of the manna, just before Israel reached Sinai, the Lord had granted them flesh in answer to their clamors; but it was furnished them for only one day.

“God might as easily have provided them with flesh as with manna, but a restriction was placed upon them for their good. It was His purpose to supply them with food better suited to their wants than the feverish diet to which many had become accustomed in Egypt. The perverted appetite was to be brought into a more healthy state, that they might enjoy the food originally provided for man—the fruits of the earth, which God gave to Adam and Eve in Eden. It was for this reason that the Israelites had been deprived, in a great measure, of animal food.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 377, 378.

- b. How did the angels prepare a better diet for them? Psalm 78:25.

“For forty years they were daily reminded by this miraculous provision, of God’s unfailing care and tender love. In the words of the psalmist, God gave them ‘of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels’ food’ (Psalm 78:24, 25)—that is, food provided for them by the angels.”—*Ibid.*, p. 297.

- c. How was this food memorialized? Exodus 16:32, 33; Hebrews 9:4.

“In the holiest I saw an ark; on the top and sides of it was purest gold. On each end of the ark was a lovely cherub, with its wings spread out over it. Their faces were turned toward each other, and they looked downward. Between the angels was a golden censer. Above the ark, where the angels stood, was an exceeding bright glory, that appeared like a throne where God dwelt. Jesus stood by the ark, and as the saints’ prayers came up to Him, the incense in the censer would smoke, and He would offer up their prayers with the smoke of the incense to His Father. In the ark was the golden pot of manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of stone which folded together like a book. Jesus opened them, and I saw the ten commandments written on them with the finger of God.”—*Early Writings*, p. 32.

4. THE FLESH POTS OF EGYPT

- a. **Who were the first to complain about their diet? What was the specific type of flesh and how do we know that they did not long for just the side dishes that were prepared with it? Numbers 11:4–6, 9–13.**
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“[The Hebrews] became weary of the food prepared for them by angels, and sent to them from Heaven. They knew it was just the food God wished them to have, and that it was healthful for them and their children. Notwithstanding their hardships in the wilderness, there was not a feeble one in all their tribes. Satan, the author of disease and misery, will approach God’s people where he can have the greatest success. He has controlled the appetite in a great measure from the time of his successful experiment with Eve, in leading her to eat the forbidden fruit. He came with his temptations first to the mixed multitude, the believing Egyptians, and stirred them up to seditious murmurings. They would not be content with the healthful food which God had provided for them. Their depraved appetites craved a greater variety, especially flesh-meats.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 281.

- b. **How did God comply with their request, and what was the result this time as they were better instructed than when they first left Egypt? Numbers 11:18–20, 33; Psalm 78:27–31.**
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“In this instance the Lord gave the people that which was not for their best good, because they would have it. They would not submit to receive from the Lord only those things which would prove for their good. They gave themselves up to seditious murmurings against Moses, and against the Lord, because they did not receive those things which would prove an injury to them. Their depraved appetites controlled them, and God gave them flesh-meats, as they desired, and let them suffer the results of gratifying their lustful appetites. Burning fevers cut down very large numbers of the people. Those who had been the most guilty in their murmurings, were slain as soon as they tasted the meat for which they had lusted. If they had submitted to have the Lord select their food for them, and had been thankful, and satisfied with food of which they could eat freely without injury, they would not have lost the favor of God, and then been punished for their rebellious murmurings, by great numbers of them being slain.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 284, 285.

- c. **What are we to call this deliberate act of rebellion? Psalm 78:17, 32.**
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5. WRITTEN FOR OUR TIME

- a. How do we know this warning about the spiritual consequences was written specifically for us today? 1 Corinthians 10:11; Psalm 106:14, 15.

“We need to beware lest we suffer the same fate as did ancient Israel. The history of their disobedience and downfall has been recorded for our instruction, that we may avoid doing as they did. It has been written ‘for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.’ If we pass by these cautions and warnings, developing the same traits of character developed by the Israelites, what excuse can we plead?”—*The Review and Herald*, July 10, 1900.

- b. When preparing to enter the earthly Canaan, it was a sin for them to desire flesh meats. Contrast this to life in the new earth. Isaiah 11:6; 65:25.

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- c. What opportunity did God give on the border of the promised land and how many actually entered there? Deuteronomy 30:19; Numbers 26:63–65.

“The God who in the wilderness gave the children of Israel manna from heaven still lives and reigns. . . .

“We need to look heavenward in faith. We are not to be discouraged because of apparent failure, nor should we be disheartened by delay. We should work cheerfully, hopefully, gratefully, believing that the earth holds in her bosom rich treasures for the faithful worker to garner, stores richer than gold or silver. The mountains and hills are changing; the earth is waxing old like a garment; but the blessing of God, which spreads for His people a table in the wilderness, will never cease.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 200.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why does God want His people to restore life to the way of Eden?
2. How does the Hebrews' experience in the wilderness relate to us now?
3. Why did God memorialize the manna in the ark?
4. What happens when we deliberately go against God's revealed will?
5. How do we know it is a sin to insist on eating flesh foods in these last days?

Inspired Prophets

MEMORY TEXT: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Hebrews 1:1, 2).

“Of special value to God’s church on earth today—the keepers of His vineyard—are the messages of counsel and admonition given through the prophets who have made plain His eternal purpose in behalf of mankind. In the teachings of the prophets His love for the lost race and His plan for their salvation are clearly revealed.”—*My Life Today*, p. 40.

Suggested Reading: *The Great Controversy*, pp. v–xii.

Sunday

September 10

1. COMMUNICATING WITH HUMANITY

- a. How did God communicate with humanity after sin came? Hebrews 1:1, 2.

“Before the entrance of sin, Adam enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but since man separated himself from God by transgression, the human race has been cut off from this high privilege. By the plan of redemption, however, a way has been opened whereby the inhabitants of the earth may still have connection with heaven.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. v.

- b. How did God communicate personally to humanity? 1 Timothy 3:16; Colossians 2:9.

“Ever since Adam’s sin, the human race had been cut off from direct communion with God; the intercourse between heaven and earth had been through Christ; but now that Jesus had come ‘in the likeness of sinful flesh’ (Romans 8:3), the Father Himself spoke. He had before communicated with humanity *through* Christ; now He communicated with humanity *in* Christ.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 116.

- c. What was needed after Jesus went back to the Father and what was His purpose? John 14:6, 26; 15:26; 16:7, 12–14; Acts 2:16–18.
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2. THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

- a. **Until Christ's return, how vital are all spiritual gifts? 1 Corinthians 1:4–8.**
 - b. **What identifies God's final church and its gift of the testimony of Jesus? Revelation 12:17; 19:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:2–5, 19–21.**
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“Perilous times are before us. Every one who has a knowledge of the truth should awake, and place himself, body, soul, and spirit, under the discipline of God. The enemy is on our track. We must be wide awake, on our guard against him. We must put on the whole armor of God. We must follow the directions given through the Spirit of prophecy. We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. God has spoken to us through His word. He has spoken to us through the testimonies to the church, and through the books that have helped to make plain our present duty and the position we should now occupy. The warnings that have been given, line upon line, precept upon precept, should be heeded. If we disregard them, what excuse can we offer?”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 308.

- c. **Instead of going to false mediums, where should we turn? Isaiah 8:16, 19.**

“[In God's providence] are revealed the snares and devices of Satan, the importance of perfecting Christian character, and the means by which this result may be obtained. Thus God indicates what is necessary to secure His blessing. There is a disposition on the part of many to let rebellious feelings arise if their peculiar sins are reproved. The spirit of this generation is: ‘Speak unto us smooth things.’ But the spirit of prophecy speaks only the truth. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many who profess to follow Christ waxes cold. They are blind to the wickedness of their own hearts and do not feel their weak and helpless condition. God in mercy lifts the veil and shows them that there is an eye behind the scenes that discerns their hidden guilt and the motives of their actions.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 13.

“In His providence the Lord has seen fit to teach and warn His people in various ways. By direct command, by the sacred writings, and by the spirit of prophecy has He made known unto them His will.

“In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the Testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue.”—*My Life Today*, p. 40.

3. TESTED BY SCRIPTURE

a. What is the basic test of a true prophet? Isaiah 8:20.

“The *Testimonies* are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it and attract minds to it.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 665.

b. What are we to do if one is proven a false prophet? Deuteronomy 13:1–5; Romans 16:17; 2 John 1:9–11.

“[God] has given us a message to bear to His people. For thirty years we have been receiving the words of God and speaking them to His people. We have trembled at the responsibility, which we have accepted with much prayer and meditation. We have stood as God’s ambassadors, in Christ’s stead beseeching souls to be reconciled to God. We have warned of danger as God has presented before us the perils of His people. Our work has been given us of God. What, then, will be the condition of those who refuse to hear the words which God has sent them, because they cross their track or reprove their wrongs? . . . God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 229, 230.

“[The prince of evil] is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 593.

c. How are all new prophets tested and why? 1 Corinthians 14:32; John 10:27.

“Some who profess to make the word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the word that they have neglected to follow.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 663.

“Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the *Testimonies* simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse.”—*Ibid.*, p. 665.

4. THE KINGDOM WITHIN

- a. **Why is it important to believe in a personal Saviour in our life right now, not just a historic figure? Explain.** 1 John 4:1–3; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:27; John 15:4, 5.
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“Christ was teaching, and, as usual, others besides His disciples had gathered about Him. He had been speaking to the disciples of the scenes in which they were soon to act a part. They were to publish abroad the truths He had committed to them, and they would be brought in conflict with the rulers of this world. For His sake they would be called into courts, and before magistrates and kings. He had assured them of wisdom which none could gainsay. His own words, that moved the hearts of the multitude, and brought to confusion His wily adversaries, witnessed to the power of that indwelling Spirit which He had promised to His followers.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 252.

“The indwelling of the Spirit will be shown by the outflowing of heavenly love. The divine fullness will flow through the consecrated human agent, to be given forth to others.”—*Ibid.*, p. 419.

“One sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man’s ideas or arguments. Those who refuse to follow God’s way will finally receive the sentence, ‘Depart from Me.’ But when we submit to God’s way, the Lord Jesus guides our minds and fills our lips with assurance. We may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Receiving Christ, we are clothed with power. An indwelling Saviour makes His power our property. The truth becomes our stock in trade. No unrighteousness is seen in the life. We are able to speak words in season to those who know not the truth. Christ’s presence in the heart is a vitalizing power, strengthening the entire being.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 71.

- b. **How did Moses recognize the need of the personal presence of Christ? Exodus 33:13–16.**
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“Moses had a deep sense of the personal presence of God. He was not only looking down through the ages for Christ to be made manifest in the flesh, but he saw Christ in a special manner accompanying the children of Israel in all their travels. God was real to him, ever present in his thoughts. When misunderstood, when called upon to face danger and to bear insult for Christ’s sake, he endured without retaliation. Moses believed in God as one whom he needed and who would help him because of his need. God was to him a present help.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 651.

5. STRAIGHT TESTIMONY

- a. **What is God's perspective regarding worldliness? 1 John 4:5; James 4:4.**

"The world must not be introduced into the church, and married to the church, forming a bond of unity. Through this means the church will become indeed corrupt."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 265.

"The question may be asked, Are we to have no union whatever with the world? The word of the Lord is to be our guide. Any connection with infidels and unbelievers that would identify us with them, is forbidden by the Word. We are to come out from among them, and be separate. In no case are we to link ourselves with them in their plans of work. But we are not to live reclusive lives. We are to do worldlings all the good we possibly can."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 394

- b. **Why is unity with the world an impossibility—and what is the purpose of a prophet in this regard? 2 Corinthians 6:14–18; Ezekiel 44:23.**

"The question now to be asked is, Are the professed followers of Christ complying with the conditions upon which the blessing is pronounced? Are they separating in spirit and practice from the world? How hard to come out and be separate from worldly habits and customs. But let us look well to it that Satan does not allure and deceive us through false representations. Eternal interests are here involved. God's claims should come first; His requirements should receive our first attention. Every child of fallen Adam must, through the transforming grace of Christ, become obedient to all God's requirements. Many close their eyes to the plainest teachings of His word because the cross stands directly in the way. If they lift it, they must appear singular in the eyes of the world; and they hesitate, and question, and search for some excuse whereby they may shun the cross. Satan is ever ready, and he presents plausible reasons why it would not be best to obey the word of God just as it reads. Thus souls are fatally deceived."—*The Review and Herald*, August 25, 1885.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **Why is communication so important in the life of a believer?**
2. **What is the purpose of the spirit of prophecy?**
3. **How do we test the prophets and how are we to deal with the results?**
4. **How does an indwelling Christ affect our Christian experience?**
5. **How do God's true prophets teach His people to separate from the world?**

Testing the Prophets

MEMORY TEXT: “And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved” (Hosea 12:13).

“Preaching is a small part of the work to be done for the salvation of souls. God’s Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and He places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 69.

Suggested Reading: *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 227–246.

Sunday

September 17

1. PERSECUTION AND SACRIFICE

a. What must true prophets endure and why? James 5:10; 1 Kings 18:17, 18.

“Isaiah, who was permitted by the Lord to see wonderful things, was sawn asunder, because he faithfully reproved the sins of the Jewish nation. The prophets who came to look after the Lord’s vineyard, were indeed beaten and killed. “They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented”—men of whom the world was not worthy. They were cruelly treated, and banished from the world.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1137.

b. What confirms the existence of true prophets until the end of time and how must they be tested? Matthew 7:15–20; 1 John 2:4.

c. Why is a true prophet a blessing in the church? Ephesians 4:8, 11–16.

“A union of believers with Christ will as a natural result lead to a union with one another, which bond of union is the most enduring upon earth. . . . It is only by personal union with Christ, by communion with Him daily, hourly, that we can bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 47, 48.

“Unity is the sure result of Christian perfection.”—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 85.

2. WORKING OF MIRACLES

- a. **Are working miracles a test of a true prophet? Luke 7:26–28; John 10:41.**

“By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth. And Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. God’s people will not find their safety in working miracles, for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought. God’s tried and tested people will find their power in the sign spoken of in Exodus 31:12–18. They are to take their stand on the living word: ‘It is written.’ This is the only foundation upon which they can stand securely. Those who have broken their covenant with God will in that day be without God and without hope.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 16.

- b. **Who will make the most of working miracles in the last days? Revelation 19:20; 13:14.**

“Satan closely watches events, and when he finds one who has a specially strong spirit of opposition to the truth of God he will even reveal to him unfulfilled events, that he may more firmly secure himself a seat in his heart. He who did not hesitate to brave a conflict with Him who holds creation as in His hand, has malignity to persecute and deceive. He holds mortals in his snare at the present time.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 171, 172.

- c. **Why are we to make so many tests today? 2 Corinthians 11:14.**

“As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 588.

“We are living in perilous times, and it does not become us to accept everything claimed to be truth without examining it thoroughly; neither can we afford to reject anything that bears the fruits of the Spirit of God; but we should be teachable, meek and lowly of heart. There are those who oppose everything that is not in accordance with their own ideas, and by so doing they endanger their eternal interest as verily as did the Jewish nation in their rejection of Christ.”—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 35, 36.

3. PROPHECIES FULFILLED

a. How does God speak to human beings? Numbers 12:6.

“During the first twenty-five hundred years of human history, there was no written revelation. Those who had been taught of God, communicated their knowledge to others, and it was handed down from father to son, through successive generations. The preparation of the written word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years—from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel. . . .

“Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony.

“As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind—a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. v–vi.

b. What are we to expect when a prophet makes a prediction? Jeremiah 28:9. As we see Protestantism and Catholicism unite today, what prediction is now fulfilling that was made over a century ago?

“When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this three-fold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 451.

4. THE PURPOSE OF THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

- a. What are we to expect as we approach the end of time—and how are we to deal with these dangers? 2 Timothy 3:1; Isaiah 59:19, 20.
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“We are living in perilous times. Amidst the changing scenes, with heresy and false doctrines coming in that will test the faith of all, the house built on the solid rock cannot be shaken. But when storm and tempest come, the house built on the sand will fall, and great will be the fall of it.

“Let us take heed, then, how we build. Let no one build unwisely. The word of God is our only foundation. Every semblance of error will come upon us. Some of these errors will be very specious and attractive, but if received, they would remove the pillars of the foundation that Christ has established and set up a structure of man’s building. . . . Under Satan’s guidance they prepare false foundations for human minds.”
—*Medical Ministry*, p. 87.

- b. How do prophets help the church? 2 Kings 6:8–12; 1 Corinthians 14:22; Ephesians 4:12.
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“God has given me a marked, solemn experience in connection with His work; and you may be assured that so long as my life is spared, I shall not cease to lift a warning voice as I am impressed by the Spirit of God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. I have no special wisdom in myself; I am only an instrument in the Lord’s hands to do the work He has set for me to do. The instructions that I have given by pen or voice have been an expression of the light that God has given me. I have tried to place before you the principles that the Spirit of God has for years been impressing upon my mind and writing on my heart.

“And now, brethren, I entreat you not to interpose between me and the people, and turn away the light which God would have come to them. Do not by your criticisms take out all the force, all the point and power, from the *Testimonies*. Do not feel that you can dissect them to suit your own ideas, claiming that God has given you ability to discern what is light from heaven and what is the expression of mere human wisdom. If the *Testimonies* speak not according to the word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be united. For Christ’s sake do not confuse the minds of the people with humans sophistry and skepticism, and make of none effect the work that the Lord would do. Do not, by your lack of spiritual discernment, make of this agency of God a rock of offense whereby many shall be caused to stumble and fall.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 691.

5. IN THE BEGINNING

a. Who is to test the prophets? 1 Corinthians 12:28.

b. Can the same prophet be both true and false? Explain. James 3:11.

“There are some professed believers who accept certain portions of the *Testimonies* as the message of God, while they reject those portions that condemn their favorite indulgences. Such persons are working contrary to their own welfare and the welfare of the church. It is essential that we walk in the light while we have the light. Those who claim to believe in health reform, and yet work counter to its principles in the daily life practice, are hurting their own souls and are leaving wrong impressions upon the minds of believers and unbelievers.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 154.

c. What are we to do when we recognize a prophet to be sent by God? 2 Chronicles 20:20; Hosea 12:13; Psalm 34:8.

“God has given sufficient evidence, so that all who desire to do so may satisfy themselves as to the character of the *Testimonies*; and, having acknowledged them to be from God, it is their duty to accept reproof, even though they do not themselves see the sinfulness of their course. If they fully realized their condition, what would be the need of reproof? Because they know it not, God mercifully sets it before them, so that they may repent and reform before it shall be too late.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 682.

“My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 230.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is it that those who teach the pure truth often face persecution?
2. Why are miracles not a testing point in these last days?
3. What method does God use to communicate to prophets?
4. Why do we need the spirit of prophecy today?
5. What are we to do when we recognize a prophet from God?

The Testimony of Jesus

MEMORY TEXT: “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” (Revelation 12:17).

“The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. It is the knowledge that works transformation of character. This knowledge, received, will re-create the soul in the image of God. It will impart to the whole being a spiritual power that is divine.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 425.

Suggested Reading: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 593–602.

Sunday

September 24

1. COMMUNICATION

- a. How did God communicate with mankind in the beginning and what caused this to stop? Genesis 3:8–10; Isaiah 59:2. Why is it important? John 17:3.
- b. How has God given messages for prophets to deliver—and why are these needed? Genesis 18:18, 19; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Corinthians 1:18–24.

“The Bible unfolds truth with a simplicity and a perfect adaptation to the needs and longings of the human heart, that has astonished and charmed the most highly cultivated minds, while it enables the humble and uncultured to discern the way of salvation. And yet these simply stated truths lay hold upon subjects so elevated, so far-reaching, so infinitely beyond the power of human comprehension, that we can accept them only because God has declared them. Thus the plan of redemption is laid open to us so that every soul may see the steps he is to take in repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be saved in God’s appointed way; yet beneath these truths, so easily understood, lie mysteries which are the hiding of His glory—mysteries which overpower the mind in its research, yet inspire the sincere seeker for truth with reverence and faith. The more he searches the Bible, the deeper is his conviction that it is the word of the living God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 700.

- c. How many of God’s people should have been prophets? Numbers 11:24–29.

2. MOUNT SINAI

- a. **When it came time to deliver the law to the Israelites, how did God communicate with them? Deuteronomy 5:22–24.**

“[God] did not even then trust His precepts to the memory of a people who were prone to forget His requirements, but wrote them upon tables of stone. He would remove from Israel all possibility of mingling heathen traditions with His holy precepts, or of confounding His requirements with human ordinances or customs. But He did not stop with giving them the precepts of the Decalogue. The people had shown themselves so easily led astray that He would leave no door of temptation unguarded. Moses was commanded to write, as God should bid him, judgments and laws giving minute instruction as to what was required. These directions relating to the duty of the people to God, to one another, and to the stranger were only the principles of the Ten Commandments amplified and given in a specific manner, that none need err. They were designed to guard the sacredness of the ten precepts engraved on the tables of stone.

“If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God’s law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 364.

- b. **Where was the law to dwell? Deuteronomy 5:29; 6:5; 2 Corinthians 3:3.**
- c. **What did the people fail to realize in the law? Exodus 20:13; 1 John 3:15.**

“In consequence of continual transgression, the moral law was repeated in awful grandeur from Sinai. Christ gave to Moses religious precepts which were to govern everyday life. These statutes were explicitly given to guard the ten commandments. They were not shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ. They were to be binding upon men in every age as long as time should last. These commands were enforced by the power of the moral law, and they clearly and definitely explained that law.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1104.

3. MORE PROPHETS

- a. **Why were the Israelites continually needing more prophets? Judges 6:7–10.**

“Until the generation that had received instruction from Joshua became extinct, idolatry made little headway; but the parents had prepared the way for the apostasy of their children. The disregard of the Lord’s restrictions on the part of those who came in possession of Canaan sowed seeds of evil that continued to bring forth bitter fruit for many generations. The simple habits of the Hebrews had secured them physical health; but association with the heathen led to the indulgence of appetite and passion, which gradually lessened physical strength and enfeebled the mental and moral powers. By their sins the Israelites were separated from God; His strength was removed from them, and they could no longer prevail against their enemies. Thus they were brought into subjection to the very nations that through God they might have subdued. . . .

“Yet He did not utterly forsake His people. There was ever a remnant who were true to Jehovah; and from time to time the Lord raised up faithful and valiant men to put down idolatry and to deliver the Israelites from their enemies. But when the deliverer was dead, and the people were released from his authority, they would gradually return to their idols. And thus the story of backsliding and chastisement, of confession and deliverance, was repeated again and again.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 544, 545.

- b. **What happened when they went too deep into apostasy—and why? Ezekiel 3:4–7; 1 Samuel 28:6; 2 Chronicles 36:14–16; Luke 11:47–51.**

“The Lord never turned away a soul that came to Him in sincerity and humility. Why did he turn Saul away unanswered? The king had by his own act forfeited the benefits of all the methods of inquiring of God. He had rejected the counsel of Samuel the prophet; he had exiled David, the chosen of God; he had slain the priests of the Lord. Could he expect to be answered by God when he had cut off the channels of communication that Heaven had ordained? He had sinned away the Spirit of grace, and could he be answered by dreams and revelations from the Lord? Saul did not turn to God with humility and repentance. It was not pardon for sin and reconciliation with God, that he sought, but deliverance from his foes. By his own stubbornness and rebellion he had cut himself off from God.”—*Ibid.*, p. 676.

- c. **What did the last Old Testament prophet prophesy and how was that partially fulfilled after a period of nearly 400 years without a prophet? Malachi 4:5, 6; Matthew 11:11, 14.**

4. THE NEW TESTAMENT

- a. Why was there no need for the usual kind of prophets when Jesus was on earth? Hebrews 1:1, 2; 1 Timothy 3:16; Matthew 1:23.
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“The priest did not think that this babe was the One of whom Moses had written, ‘A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you.’ Acts 3:22. He did not think that this babe was He whose glory Moses had asked to see. But One greater than Moses lay in the priest’s arms; and when he enrolled the child’s name, he was enrolling the name of One who was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. That name was to be its death warrant; for the system of sacrifices and offerings was waxing old; the type had almost reached its antitype, the shadow its substance.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 52.

“Before this the Spirit had been in the world; from the very beginning of the work of redemption He had been moving upon men’s hearts. But while Christ was on earth, the disciples had desired no other helper. Not until they were deprived of His presence would they feel their need of the Spirit, and then He would come.”—*Ibid.*, p. 669.

- b. How do we compare the New Testament with the Old and what should we do about it? 2 Corinthians 3:8; Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:16–18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19, 20.
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“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. . . .

“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*, bk. 1, p. 237.

5. THE LAST DAYS

- a. How do we know that Joel was speaking of God's final remnant and how does the New Testament reinforce the need of the spirit of prophecy? Joel 2:32; Revelation 12:17; 19:10.

“God has given us, as His servants, our work. He has given us a message to bear to His people. For thirty years we have been receiving the words of God and speaking them to His people. We have trembled at the responsibility, which we have accepted with much prayer and meditation. We have stood as God's ambassadors, in Christ's stead beseeching souls to be reconciled to God. We have warned of danger as God has presented before us the perils of His people. Our work has been given us of God. What, then, will be the condition of those who refuse to hear the words which God has sent them, because they cross their track or reprove their wrongs? If you are thoroughly convinced that God has not spoken by us, why not act in accordance with your faith and have no more to do with a people who are under so great a deception as this people are? If you have been moving according to the dictates of the Spirit of God you are right and we are wrong. God is either teaching His church, reproofing their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil. In arraying yourself against the servants of God you are doing a work either for God or for the devil. ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ What stamp does your work bear? It will pay to look critically at the result of your course.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 229, 230.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is it so urgent that we have communication with God?
2. How was God's intention revealed that the people should understand a deeper meaning than just the basic written words of the law?
3. At what point did God send more information through the prophets and what happened when they kept rejecting it?
4. How is the New Testament to be received in comparison to the glorious manifestation of God in the Old Testament?
5. What are we to expect from God in the days just before the end of the world?

Note

First Sabbath Offerings



JULY 1

for the Missionary School of the
Southern African Region

(see p. 4.)

AUGUST 5

for the GC Education
Department

(see p. 30.)



SEPTEMBER 2

for Rampart View Ranch,
Colorado, USA

(see p. 51.)