
youth
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LESSONS OF FAITH

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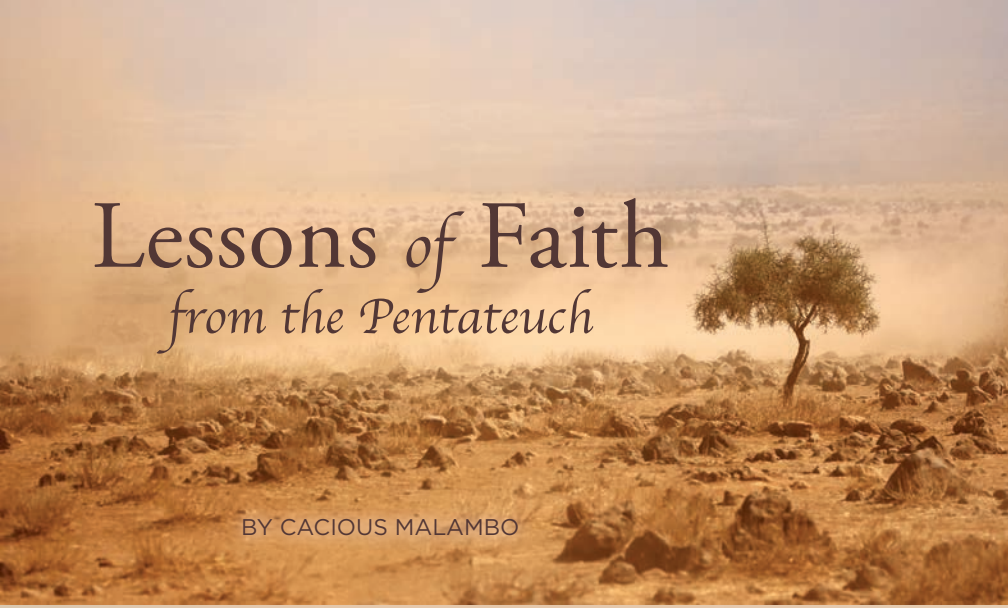
LEARNING SOMETHING REAL

One of my favorite chapters in the Bible is Hebrews 11, which begins with the expression of a paradox, the very definition of FAITH. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). It's a paradox in the sense that logically, one cannot give evidence of something that doesn't exist. Even more so when something one wants to present an evidence of has NEVER existed.

The best example of the exercise of such faith, for me, is Noah. His evidence in support of the coming of a flood was . . . FAITH. That evidence would never be accepted by a judge in a court of law today, unless, of course, the judge is God. You see? When you are fascinated by a subject, a short editorial can easily become a long article. So, I will let you enjoy the articles of this magazine, hoping that every word written by their authors is a statement of their own faith in the creative power of God who promises to give each one of us a new heart, when we truly BELIEVE.

—Adrian Finaru





Lessons *of* Faith
from the Pentateuch

BY CACIOUS MALAMBO

A SILENT FACT

It is worthy of note that nearly all of us as human beings have some faith. For example, before this rainy season (which here in Zambia is from around October–April), we saw people preparing fields as early as August, despite experiencing the most devastating drought ever remembered in our country. People have incredible faith and resilience.

This applies to many other aspects of life as well. This is why the apostle James said, "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:13, 14). For an action to be made there must be some faith on the part of the actor.

FAITH A NECESSITY

Throughout human history, our life has been marked with actions of faith. If we are to be in harmony and in favor with our Creator we need much faith, for "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). To have a rewarding experience, we need to exercise faith.

In the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), we are able to extract many lessons of faith and we're encouraged therewith.

AFTER THE FALL

After the fall of man, God gave our first parents the promise of deliverance through Christ. "And I will put enmity between thee

and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). "This sentence, uttered in the hearing of our first parents, was to them a promise. "Faithfully [Adam] sought to stem the tide of evil. He had been commanded to instruct his posterity in the way of the Lord."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pp. 65, 66, 82. This faithful teaching reproduced in Enoch a character fit for heaven.

"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Genesis 5:24).

AFTER THE FLOOD

Rain had never been seen before, "for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground" (Genesis 2:5, 6). Because sin later increased, God told Noah of the imminent destruction that was to occur by a flood:

"Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. . . . And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die." Genesis 6:14, 17. Faithfully Noah executed the instructions.

ABRAHAM

There are many notable actions exhibiting faith and a perfect conviction about the knowledge of God by Abraham, starting with his call to leave his native country in Genesis 12.

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11:8). Without questioning, Abraham—with tokens of God's approval—moved from place to place.

ABRAHAM IN RELATION TO CHRIST

Like Adam, Abraham also looked for the coming of Christ and His mission and enjoyed great blessing to himself personally, too. It is said in the scripture that Jesus was to be a Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6). When coming from the battle, Abraham met him and faithfully fulfilled his obligation: "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all" (Genesis 14:18–20).

When God said, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 26:4), just as to Adam in Genesis 3:15, Abraham saw Christ to come as a Redeemer. Jesus told the Hebrews of His day: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56).

FRUITION OF FAITH

We see this with God's demand on the promised child, Isaac: "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Genesis 22:2). It was faith in God that made him act. It is confirmed what was in his mind, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Hebrews 11:17–19). Incredible faith stronger than death!

JACOB

The faith of Jacob is admirable, his understanding clear, and his experience very deep. When asked of his age, it was like calling him back to recount of his life's struggles, experience and faith. "And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage" (Genesis 47:9). What a life—difficult, but admirable!

HE SAW CHRIST

Jacob was clear about Christ, and even His lineage—from among which of the patriarch's children Jesus would come. He declares, "Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." "But unto the Son [God the Father] saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom" (Genesis 49:9, 10; Hebrews 1:8.) So Jacob died with this faith.

A CONTEMPORARY OF MOSES

Job, who lived at the same time as Moses, declared by faith: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25–27). They both looked to the future and both saw Christ's day and were glad (John 8:56).

It is said that faith produces wonders and marvelous things only when we are wholly given to it. Yielding completely. Yes, with no reservations. Only this way can we feel and witness the effect of our faith.

I have nursed many patients. One enduring thing that is really touching is the experience when nursing a dying patient. Nursing has also has an interesting part of its definition given by Virginia Herndeson, where it is referred to as "the act of helping people perform activities that contribute to their health or recovery, or to a peaceful death." It's interesting to understand how someone can accept the situation at hand. He or she is made aware to realize that life is truly ending soon (in a minute, an hour or few days time) and that person accepts it! With no panic throughout the whole being, the patient gives the last breath. . . . He/she accepts the reality without reservation and with understanding. Nothing remains; everything of "I am" is gone, perfectly gone. This demands much faith. Faith is effective much more after you've given your whole being as though dying! Yes, truly dying from sin and being alive for Christ.

True faith is perfect; it has no reservations. The heart/minds must be made to understand and accept. You only have this time; you and I only have this single life. Accept to die completely from the enemy and be alive for Christ. God says, "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" (Deuteronomy 30:15). The appeal is made: Choose life. It will be wise for you to give to the Lord your all.

"There is danger of your slighting [God] too long. Your time is taken up with the vanities of the world, and you seldom retain thoughts that you have a soul to save or lose. Have you forgotten that there is one who was wounded for your transgressions and bruised for your iniquities? One who is now pleading with his Father, and presenting His wounded hands and feet, and pierced side and spilt blood, and pleads with Him to spare you a little longer; for He hung upon the cross to redeem you. O, what love! what unbounded love and condescension the Son of God manifested for us. He died to give life to those who were his enemies!"—*The Youth's Instructor,* January 1, 1854.

CONCLUSION

My dear brothers and sisters, friends, so many times the following words apply to us: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke 9:55). We must be of the Spirit of Chris— opposite to this. Galatians 4:6.

May the Lord help us!



Lessons *of* Faith

from Historical Books of the Bible

by Stephen Jacobs

"Faith in action is mighty. When we cherish the faith that works by love, we shall value aright the love of Him who gave His life to save a perishing world."—*Letters and Manuscripts,* vol. 18, Lt 112, 1903.

The word "faith" is not specifically found in the Old Testament. When Christ came to be with man, He mentioned faith throughout His engagements with those who were with Him. If they needed healing, they needed faith. To receive the reward of salvation, they needed faith.

In the Old Testament, faith was more practical. This applies to the actions by people and the interventions of God. As we read above, "faith in action is mighty."

Today, in the world—and sadly in the church—faith has become passive. "There are souls perplexed with doubt, burdened with infirmities, **weak in faith**, and unable to grasp the Unseen."—*The Desire of Ages,* p. 297. "Every one of us will be tried; and unless we are closely connected with God, the trials that will come upon us will weaken **our already weak faith**, and we shall become the sport of Satan's temptations."—*Letters and Manuscripts,* vol. 4, Ms 4, 1885.

To have an Old Testament faith, let us look at experiences from the historical books of the Bible.





witness, served the satanic powers in complete rebellion. And they carried the disappointed congregation with them, in that they believed their interpretation of the land. The congregation took the wrong side, and, inspired by satanic agencies, they cried out against the faithful spies, and bade them stone Joshua and Caleb who dared to bear the truthful representation in regard to the land."—*Manuscript Releases,* vol. 15, p. 290.

JOSHUA

Joshua is introduced in the book of Numbers as one of the spies who was sent to Jericho and gather information about the fortified city. (See Numbers chapters 13 and 14.)

Upon returning, Joshua and Caleb gave their report and believed that the city could be conquered. "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30). "If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey" (Numbers 14:8).

They spoke by faith and were ready to act with the help of God.

The Israelites unfortunately rebelled and God sent them back into the desert. Let us get the right perspective here: Out of a million people or so (Exodus 12:37), only 2 had faith!

"Those who bore the discouraging report and brought discouragement to the whole camp of Israel, when opposed because of their unfaithful

In the book of Joshua, the Israelites were given a second opportunity to conquer Jericho, and once again their faith was tested. "When Joshua went forth in the morning before the taking of Jericho, there appeared before him a warrior fully equipped for battle. And Joshua asked, 'Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?' and he answered, 'As Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.' If the eyes of Joshua had been opened as were the eyes of the servant of Elisha at Dothan, and he could have endured the sight, he would have seen the angels of the Lord encamped about the children of Israel; for the trained army of heaven had come to fight for the people of God, and the Captain of the Lord's host was there to command. When Jericho fell, no human hand touched the walls of

the city, for the angels of the Lord overthrew the fortifications, and entered the fortress of the enemy. It was not Israel, but the Captain of the Lord's host that took Jericho. But Israel had their part to act to show their faith in the Captain of their salvation.

"Battles are to be fought every day. A great warfare is going on over every soul, between the prince of darkness and the Prince of life. There is a great battle to be fought, that the inhabitants of the world may be warned of the great day of the Lord, that the strongholds of the enemy may be entered, and that all who love the Lord may be gathered under the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel, but you are not to do the main fighting here. As God's agents you are to yield yourselves to Him, that He may plan and direct and fight the battle for you, with your cooperation. The Prince of life is at the head of His work. He is to be with you in your daily battle with self, that you may be true to principle; that passion, when warring for the mastery, may be subdued by the grace of Christ; that you come off more than conqueror through Him that hath loved us. Jesus has been over the ground. He knows the power of every temptation. He knows just how to meet every emergency, and how to guide you through every path of danger. Then why not trust Him? Why not commit the keeping of your soul unto God, as unto a faithful Creator?"—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 2, pp. 994, 995.

"The strong barriers of prejudice that have been built up will just as surely come down as did the walls of Jericho before the armies of Israel. There must be continual faith and trust in the Captain of our salvation. We must obey His orders. The walls of Jericho came down as a result of obeying orders."—Ibid., p. 996.

"The [remnant's] only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast."—*Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 5, p. 473.

JUDGES

The book of Judges presents us with a time where God used individuals to represent Him and through whom He performed miracles to prove His love to Israel.

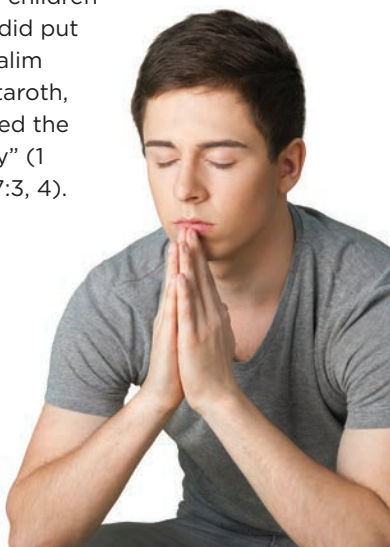
A familiar story is that of Gideon, in the book of Judges, chapters 6–8. "Again war was declared between Israel and the Philistines. 'The Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem,' on the northern edge of the plain of Jezreel; while Saul and his forces encamped but a few miles distant, at the foot of Mount Gilboa, on the southern border of the plain. It was on this plain that Gideon, with three hundred men, had put to flight the hosts of Midian. But the spirit that inspired Israel's deliverer was widely different from that which now stirred the heart of the king. Gideon went forth strong in faith in the mighty God of Jacob; but Saul felt himself to be alone and defenseless, because God had forsaken him. As he looked abroad upon the Philistine host, 'he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.' "—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* p. 675.

Why did God choose Gideon? "The experience of Gideon and his army, was designed to teach a lesson of simplicity and faith. The leader whom God had chosen occupied no prominent position in Israel. He was not a ruler, a Levite, or a priest. He thought himself the least in his father's house. Human wisdom would not have selected him; but God saw in Gideon a man of integrity and moral courage. He was distrustful of self, and willing to listen to the teachings of God, and carry out His purposes."—*The Signs of the Times,* June 30, 1881.

"We are altogether too faithless, and too narrow in our views. Gideon's army prevailed, not because of their numbers, but because in living faith they followed the special directions of God."—*Pacific Union Recorder,* June 22, 1905.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL

Israel was blessed by Samuel who was a prophet, judge, and priest. God used Samuel to anoint the kings of Isreal and reform the nation in a time of spiritual decline, "And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only" (1 Samuel 7:3, 4).



However, it was the faith of his mother in requesting from God a son that had given Israel this prophet, judge, and priest!

"And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head." (1 Samuel 1:10, 11).

"Hannah was a woman of fervent piety and lofty faith." —*From Eternity Past,* p. 411.

"What a reward was Hannah's! and what an encouragement to faithfulness is her example! There are opportunities of inestimable worth, interests infinitely precious, committed to every mother. The humble round of duties which women have come to regard as a wearisome task should be looked upon as a grand and noble work. It is the mother's privilege to bless the world by her influence, and in doing this she will bring joy to her own heart. She may make straight paths for the feet of her children, through sunshine and shadow, to the glorious heights above. But it is only when she seeks, in her own life, to follow the teachings of Christ that the mother can hope to form the character of her children after the divine pattern. The world teems with corrupting influences. Fashion and custom exert a strong power over the young. If the mother fails in her duty to instruct, guide, and restrain, her children will naturally accept the evil, and turn from the good. Let every mother go often to her Saviour with the prayer, 'Teach us, how shall we order the child, and what shall we do unto him?' Let her heed the instruction which God has given in His word, and wisdom will be given her as she shall have need."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pp. 572, 573.

THE BOOKS OF KINGS

"Naaman's servants entreated him to carry out Elisha's directions: 'If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing,' they urged, 'wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?' The faith of Naaman was being tested, while pride struggled for the mastery. But faith conquered, and the haughty Syrian yielded his pride of heart and bowed in submission to the revealed will of Jehovah. Seven times he dipped himself in Jordan, 'according to the saying of the man of God.' And his faith was honored; 'his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.' " —*Prophets and Kings,* p. 249.

"Today in every land there are those who are honest in heart, and upon these the light of heaven is shining. If they continue faithful in following that which they understand to be duty, they will be given increased light, until, like Naaman of old, they will be





constrained to acknowledge that 'there is no God in all the earth,' save the living God, the Creator." —Ibid., p. 253.

THE BOOKS OF CHRONICLES

"Jehoshaphat was a man of courage and valor. For years he had been strengthening his armies and his fortified cities. He was well prepared to meet almost any foe; yet in this crisis he put not his trust in the arm of flesh. Not by disciplined armies and fenced cities, but by a living faith in the God of Israel, could he hope to gain the victory over these heathen who boasted of their power to humble Judah in the eyes of the nations."—Ibid., pp. 198, 199.

"In safeguarding the rights and liberties of his subjects, Jehoshaphat emphasized the consideration that every member of the human family receives from God, who rules over all. Those who are appointed to act as judges under Him are to 'defend the poor and fatherless,' and 'do justice to the afflicted and needy.' Psalm 82:3."—*From Splendor to Shadow,* p. 104.

NEHEMIAH

One of the last historical books give us the history of Nehemiah. He was a cupbearer to King Artaxerxes. After Israel had been captives for close to 100 years, God used him to revive the faith of Israel and prepare the way for their return to Jerusalem. "And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of the king Darius" (Ezra 6:15).

"By faith taking fast hold of the divine promise, Nehemiah laid down at the footstool of heavenly mercy his petition that God would maintain the cause of His penitent people, restore their strength, and build up their waste places. God had been faithful to His threatenings when His people separated from Him; He had scattered them abroad among the nations, according to His Word. And Nehemiah found in this very fact an assurance that He would be equally faithful in fulfilling His promises."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1136.

"The success attending Nehemiah's efforts, shows what prayer, faith, and wise, energetic action, will accomplish. Living faith will prompt to energetic action. The spirit manifested by the leader

will be, to a great extent, reflected by the people. If the leaders professing to believe the solemn, important truths that are to test the world at this time, manifest no ardent zeal to prepare a people to stand in the day of God, we must expect the church to be careless, indolent, and pleasure-loving." —*Christian Service,* p. 177.

"I again urge you for the truth's sake, for Christ's sake . . . There must be a waking up among believers. Each may be so imbued with the spirit of the work that he will be a Nehemiah, possessing holy energy and faith and hope, thus strengthening one another's hands, depending wholly on God, the great and mighty Worker." —*Manuscript Releases,* vol. 11, p. 12.

CONCLUSION

"We are not out of danger even now. Every soul who engages to give to the world the message of warning will be sorely tempted to pursue such a course in life as will deny his faith. It is Satan's studied plan to make the workers weak in prayer, weak in power, and weak in influence, because of their defects of character."—*Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 5, p. 592.

From the historical books of the Bible, we can learn that God wants to have a strong faith in Him—a personal relationship. A strong faith in leadership like Gideon, Nehemiah and Samuel. A strong faith in the Lord like Naaman when it comes to our health. We also find examples of strong faith in God which is needed in our relationships (marriage and parenthood) represented by Hannah, Eli, Samson. A strong faith in our career like Nehemiah and Daniel.

"Every one of us will be tried; and unless we are closely connected with God, the trials that will come upon us will weaken our already weak faith, and we shall become the sport of Satan's temptations. But if we are connected with Christ and draw close to Jesus when these trials come, He will draw nigh to us. Satan will have no victory over us. 'Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.' We must commit the keeping of our souls to God as unto a faithful Creator. —*Letters and Manuscripts,* vol. 4, Ms 4, 1885.

"The faith of Abraham is needed in our churches today, to lighten the darkness that gathers around them, shutting out the sweet sunlight of God's love, and dwarfing spiritual growth. Our faith should be prolific of good works; for faith without works is dead. Every duty performed, every sacrifice made in the name of Jesus, brings an exceeding great reward. In the very act of duty, God speaks, and gives His blessing. But He requires of us an entire surrender of the faculties. The mind and heart, the whole being, must be given to His service; or we fall short of becoming true Christians."—*The Signs of the Times,* June 2, 1887.

May God help us to be faithful!

Amen.

Lessons of Faith

from the Poetic Books of the Bible

By Gomolemo Manana

The Bible is a treasure trove of inspiration, guidance, and wisdom. It is the voice of God speaking to us, and it is our privilege to listen to its words. The poetic books found therein stand out as timeless masterpieces. These books—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon—are rich with lessons for young people who are navigating the challenges and opportunities of life. They offer counsel on how to live wisely, find joy, and remain faithful to God.

THE MEANING OF LIFE

Ecclesiastes explores life's purpose, pointing out the vanity of worldly pursuits and the importance of a life lived for God. Solomon concludes with the powerful truth, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Therefore, there is no need for us to ever question our purpose, since God has a work for us to do that no other can accomplish. As young people seeking to understand our role in the world, it is important that we always are cognizant of the words echoed by Solomon.

PURE LOVE AND A LOVE SONG FROM THE FATHER OF LIGHTS

Often considered a poetic celebration of love, Song of Solomon also symbolizes Christ's love for His church. The beauty of the language, such as "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine" (Song of Solomon 6:3), teaches us about the sacredness of love and relationships. "True love is a high and holy principle, altogether different in

character from that love which is awakened by impulse and which suddenly dies when severely tested."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* p. 176. For young people, this is a reminder to approach love with purity and intention, reflecting Christ's love in their relationships.

SONGS FOR THE SOUL

The collection of prayers, hymns, and meditations in the Psalms express the full range of human emotions—joy, sorrow, gratitude, and despair. King David's heartfelt cries, such as "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1), remind us of God's unfailing care. We should meditate on these verses as often as possible for "As we meditate upon the perfections of the Saviour, we shall desire to be wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity." —*Steps to Christ,* p. 89.

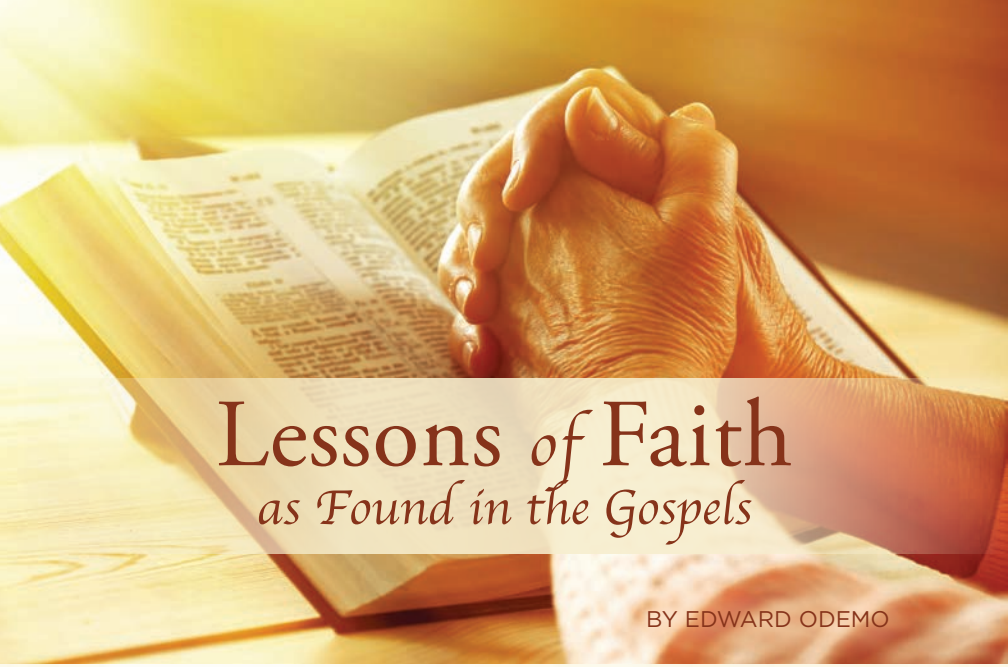
The Psalms and Proverbs offer a wealth of wisdom for everyday life. They are a language for our prayers and praises, and give us practical guidance on how to live a virtuous and successful life.

The Psalms are a treasury of sacred song, and the Proverbs a treasure-house of divine wisdom.

The Proverbs are also practical advice, offering wisdom on topics like work, relationships, and integrity. Solomon's words, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7), remind us that true wisdom starts with a reverence for God. We are thus reminded that "the work of education and the work of redemption are one."—*Education,* p. 30. This helps us make wise choices and build a life centered on Godly principles.

A CALL TO YOUTH

All these poetic books of the Bible are not just ancient texts; they are a wellspring of wisdom, encouragement, and spiritual guidance. "The Bible was not written for the scholar alone; on the contrary, it was designed for the common people"—*Steps to Christ,* p. 89. Let these books inspire you to deepen your relationship with God, navigate life with wisdom, and find joy even in challenges. Remember, the Creator of all poetry invites you to be part of His grand story—a life filled with purpose, love, and faith.



Lessons *of* Faith
as Found in the Gospels

BY EDWARD ODEMO

Since the fall of man, it has been God's plan to restore man to His eternal kingdom. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:16–18).

This good news had been preached to Adam immediately after the fall and he believed and offered sacrifice as a sign and figure of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. So faith in the son of God brings us eternal redemption.

WHAT IS FAITH?

"Faith in general is the persuasion of the mind that a certain statement is true (Philippians 1:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:13). Its primary idea is trust. A thing is true, and therefore worthy of trust. It admits of many degrees up to full assurance of faith, in accordance with the evidence on which it rests." *—Easton's Bible Dictionary.*

"Faith is trusting God—believing that He loves us and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His righteousness. Our lives, ourselves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership and accepts its blessing. Truth, uprightness, purity, have been

pointed out as secrets of life's success. It is faith that puts us in possession of these principles."—*Education,* p. 253.

The primary idea of faith is trust. A thing is true, and therefore worthy of trust, based on the evidence on which it rests. We need it in order to be saved for eternity through God's gift of grace. Derived from God, it is nonetheless, a human act, certain, active in love, growth-oriented, and a taste of heaven.

TYPES OF FAITH

In our Bibles, we can identify four distinct types of faith—some good, some bad:

Dead faith: faith without works is dead (James 2:17) if your faith is real, you will produce good fruits. A dead faith is one that cannot produce genuine fruits, but will be full of selfish thoughts, cruel words, and immoral deeds.

Demonic faith: The demons fully believe that Jesus is the Son of the living God, but they rebelliously choose to serve a different master. (James 2:19.) Satan is actually a diligent Bible student, and his theology is more thoroughly known to him than yours or mine. He has crystal clear knowledge of Christ's death and resurrection, but all this knowledge cannot save him. In other words, mere possession of technically accurate theology is meaningless if we cannot put it into practice and live by it in our daily transactions.

Vain faith: In Matthew 7:21–23, we hear dreadful words that shock believers in the Gospel. This leaves us wondering where we stand. . . . Is my faith vain? Our Saviour's plea is that we should not be among the people who complete all kinds of religious milestones, only to cry out on the final day, "Lord! Lord! . . . in your name we preached, traveled extensively, healed, and moved the crowds," finally to hear the dreadful words, "I never knew you; depart from me." (See Matthew 7:22, 23.)

Saving faith: If we consider carefully, we'll understand that the three types of faith above, cannot save; they are merely straw. The purpose of faith is to bring us to an expected end, a hope and a joyful future—that joy of seeing our Saviour coming in the clouds and our eyes glued to that beautiful scene. The smiles will never fade as we pass through unfallen worlds, Jesus leading us to the Father. Those angelic chorales, that music full of beauty and pathos, eating special fruits that Adam left in Eden and now with a full and perfect knowledge that fear, death, and decay will no longer exist. Can you visualize that? This is the kind of faith that Heaven wants us to have—a saving faith! Ultimately, we are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8).

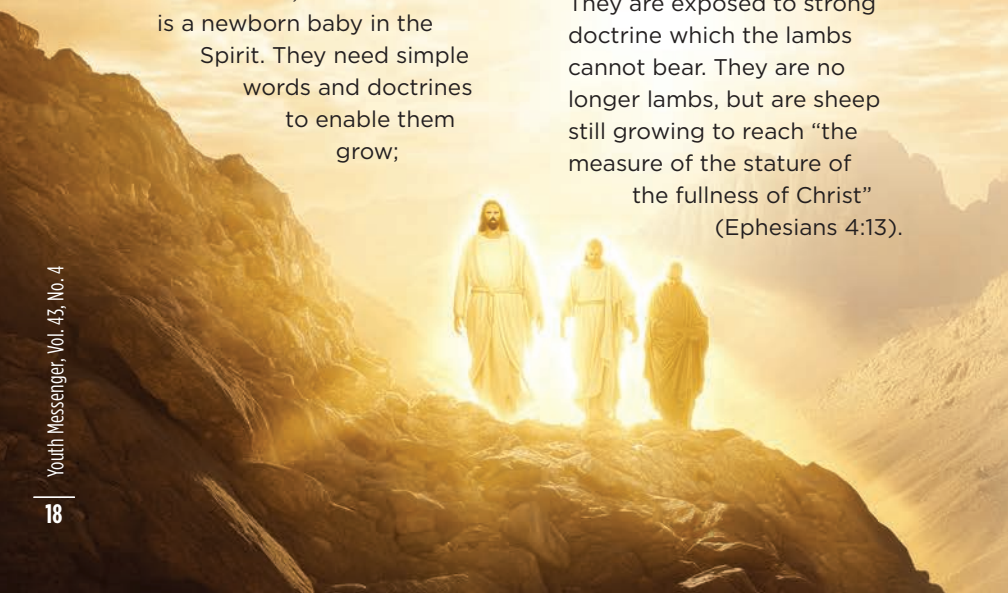
And as we live by saving faith, we are provided with Heaven-sent strength to produce good fruit. This is evidence that we are no longer slaves to sin but are made to do good works and point people to the Saviour.

"Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver. The grace of Christ in the soul is like a spring in the desert, welling up to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish eager to drink of the water of life."—*The Desire of Ages,* p. 195.

Let us consider how faith grows:

- MILK (BEGINNER'S FAITH): "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2). Just like a baby in the natural world, a new believer is a newborn baby in the Spirit. They need simple words and doctrines to enable them grow; they cannot be like other members of the church who have grown. Instead, they are learning from other experienced brethren; they are but lambs.
- STRONG MEAT (a grownup's faith): "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:12–14).

  These have been weaned and have become members of the church, believing and practicing the gospel truth. They are exposed to strong doctrine which the lambs cannot bear. They are no longer lambs, but are sheep still growing to reach "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).



- A SPECIAL GROUP: There's also another group with a higher calibre of faith—those men of strong faith. Even among the apostles, there were three with especially strong faith; Christ was exclusively with them on three special occasions, namely:

  1. **In the house of Jairus**
     "And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James" (Mark 5:37).

  2. **On the mount of transfiguration**
     "And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus" (Mark 9:2–4).

  3. **In Gethsemane**
     "And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch" (Mark 14:32–34).

"God is testing the motives and principles of men and women. Strong faith and much prayer will bring heavenly angels to our side. By patient continuance in well-doing, we become channels of light."—*The Australasian Union Recorder,* March 1, 1901.

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Timothy 2:20, 21).

"There are men and women whom the Lord, through peculiar circumstances, will bring to the front in His work. These will be men and women who have consecrated themselves to Him. As they walk before Him in faith and trust, He will lead them to places of usefulness and honour. To those who rely upon Him He is a present help in every time of need. Those who honour His name He will qualify for important and perilous service. They may not have time to obtain all the education they desire, but the great Teacher understands. What He calls for is the willing devotion of heart and mind. When this is given Him, He will fit the givers for His service, in spite of apparent

difficulties and obstacles. In His name and in His strength they will go forth to conquer."—Ibid.

The question is: where do I belong right now?

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL ITSELF?

The Gospel is the good news of Christ's kingdom in all of its glorious facets. See Acts 20:24; Matthew 4:23; Romans 1:16; Ephesians 1:13; 6:15.

We also need to be aware that Satan, too, has his gospel preached by his ministers and is supported by his angels as the Bible tells: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Corinthians 11:14, 15).

LESSONS ON FAITH

Faith in the true Gospel is the good news and assurance or belief that Christ died for our sins to make it possible for us to be counted righteous with God and enjoy eternal life in heaven and the new earth. This includes:

Belief in Jesus Christ: Believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

Trusting in Jesus Christ: Trusting in Jesus Christ and what He says, and knowing that He has the power to keep His promises.

Repentance: Accepting and applying Jesus Christ's atonement and teachings, which includes repenting of our sins.

Faithful actions: Taking outward actions that align with what one ought to do.

Relational trust: Accepting a message alongside personal trust.

THE GOSPEL IS THE GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM.

While many people wrote gospel books, only four were consistently considered inspired to be approved for inclusion in the New Testament canon. And each of these four writers views Jesus from a different perspective. Nevertheless, there are many lessons we can derive from them.

From Matthew, Mark, Luke and John there are rich jewels of truth and facts revealed for our learning. The first three gospel books (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are often referred to as synoptic gospels, since they look at things and tell their stories in a similar way.

We have full assurance that these servants of God believed the gospel and wrote it in their own words, having been inspired by the Spirit of God. And whatever is entailed in them is very necessary for our salvation if we believe, learn and practice it. To God be the glory also for gifting us with the Spirit of Prophecy to expound to us the hidden meaning of words and illustrations used in the Bible.

"When the truth is received into the heart, the habits and customs are conformed to Christ. The learner feels bound to uplift the Saviour. The truth works by love and purifies the soul, and he regards God's commands, not as being abrogated, but as unchangeable truth which was given to the world in the beginning. He presents the treasures of God's Word in a fresh and agreeable way, because the truth has taken possession of his mind, his heart, his entire being." —*The Signs of the Times,* March 1, 1899.

Matthew begins with genealogy, tracing Jesus' lineage through Abraham and King David thus proving His royalty, affirming His rightful place as the Messiah (Matthew 1:1–17) and the One who fulfills Old Testament prophecies. It gives a rich account of Jesus Christ's life, teachings, death, and resurrection.

In Jewish culture, women were marginalized, yet Matthew recognized and included them in his testament.

From Rahab's inclusion in the genealogy of Christ we can learn that:

- The transformative power of faith is stronger than past mistakes—growing from a sinner to the family of Christ.
- God can use anyone willing for His eternal and redemptive purposes.
- God's redemptive plan extends beyond the boundaries of Israel, even to the believing Gentile.



- God honors and rewards faith. Rahab protected the Israelite spies and expressed her belief in their God (Joshua 2:11) and was not disappointed.

We have Ruth, the Moabite woman, who clung to her mother-in-law Naomi and was very kind to her. Here we can learn that:

- God can use anyone to accomplish His eternal and redemptive purposes regardless of their past.
- God rewards & honors faith; Ruth chose the God of the Israelites to be her God (Ruth 1:16).
- God's redemptive plan is not limited within the boundaries of Israel, but goes beyond reaching even the believing Gentile in full measure.
- God not only redeems individuals but also restores relationships.

Also included is Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Her relationship with King David was deeply rooted in sin (2 Samuel 11:2–5). Yet, her inclusion in the

genealogy of Christ shows that:

- God can bring good from human sin and failure.
- God's plan of redemption is available to all humanity upon condition of repentance, regardless of one's past.
- God is faithful to His covenant promises. He promised that Christ would be born in the house of Judah and this happened perfectly.

The Great Commission is a call to all believers to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19, 20), by precept and example, prayers and means.

Mark, beginning with the ministry of John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus, emphasizes the Lord's actions over His teachings, as well as His authority and servanthood. Mark also emphasized miracles, casting out demons, healing the sick, and performing acts of compassion, thereby highlighting Christ's authority and divine power (Mark 1:1–45). He highlights Jesus' humanity, showing His emotions and struggles, particularly in Gethsemane (Mark 14:32–42). The passion narrative details Jesus' betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and ultimate resurrection (Mark 15:16).

Luke was not a Jew, but a Gentile physician and a companion of Paul. He gives a detailed account of Jesus' life, teachings, and miracles, focusing significantly on His interactions with marginalized people like women, the poor, and sinners. The book emphasizes the compassion of Jesus and His mission to save the lost.

Using the parable of the prodigal son as an illustration, we can learn that:

- God welcomes back sinners with open arms.
- God's grace supersedes human judgment. No one is beyond the reach of His grace, regardless of past transgressions.
- True repentance involves a change of heart and direction.
- Repentance leads to the restoration of a relationship with God.
- There is a caution given against self-righteousness and envy, a lack of understanding of grace and forgiveness.
- Believers should possess a heart of compassion rather than judgment.
- There is value in the role of free will, even if our choices lead us away from God.
- God's unwavering desire is to bring His children back into a relationship with Him.

He reminds us that Jesus' mission is to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10) and this should be our mission as well.

John's gospel was called the spiritual gospel because it tells the story of Jesus in symbolic ways that differ from the other

three. His narrative is not bent towards the Jews, but further away from them as he views their culture as cruel. He begins his gospel with the pre-existent Christ—the "Word," the unique Son of God who became human and made God the Father known to us. He presents a profound account of Jesus' life and ministry, emphasizing His divine nature as the Son of God. Christ is the life that brings light to humanity. This light shines in darkness, signifying the hope and salvation that Jesus brings.



THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

In Matthew 24:14, the prophecy on Olivet emphasized the significance of preaching the gospel extensively. For this determines when the end shall come, *i.e.,* the entire world must have an idea of what the gospel entails as a witness against them if they disobey—and an entrance into the kingdom of God if they receive and obey it.

"Every true Christian will be a missionary; for he will look upon himself as the servant of Christ. In that wonderful prayer of Christ recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, the Saviour prayed, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." As Christ was a missionary from a higher world to this, so His followers are to be missionaries, teaching the truth of the gospel by precept and example, showing men and women how to live righteous and godly lives in this present evil world."—*The Review and Herald,* April 16, 1908.

SUMMARY:

Faith in the good news of the gospel will help us to understand that, hanging upon the cross, Christ was the gospel. It was first preached to Adam and by faith, the first man saw Christ hanging on the cross carrying the burden of his sin and guilt when he sacrificed the lamb for his transgression (Revelation 13:8). And this faith echoed down through the ages to his son Abel, his great grandsons Noah, Enoch, and beyond. The Levitical priesthood and sanctuary services ended in the aborted sacrifice of the lamb when the curtain in the sanctuary was torn apart and the lamb ran away, giving way to the real Passover, Christ, the Lamb of God hanging on the cross. The Gospel condemns

outward PROPAGATION but promotes inward EDIFICATION by bringing a transformation of character to those who believe and are committed to the call. It also brings condemnation, peace and comfort. Since time is short, faithful men and women are needed to lead in this special work. And for them to be tactful, both young and old need training. This great COMMISSION needs both human and material resources. (Matthew 28:19, 20).

"Every truth received is a refining power. By the God of heaven the mind and heart of the receiver are imbued with a power corresponding to the heavenly origin and importance of the truth. By the death of Christ on the cross, human beings have been raised in the scale of moral value. [John 3:16 quoted.]"—*Letters and Manuscripts,* vol. 13, Ms 88, 1898.

CONCLUSION

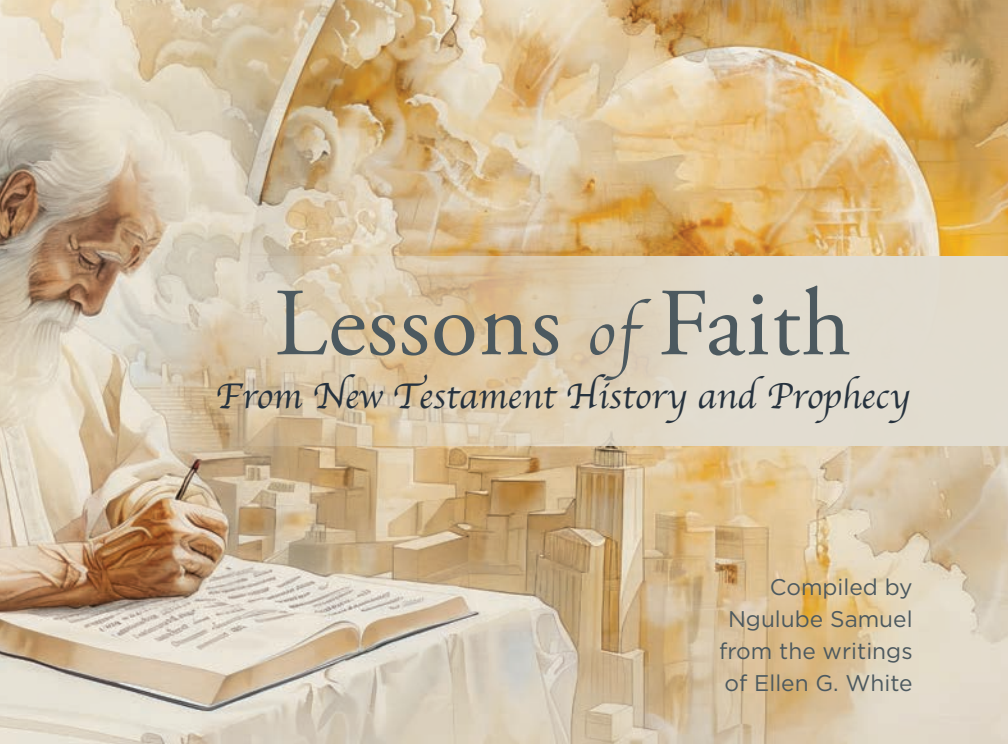
"The gospel is not merely the New Testament. It is the Old as well as the New. The one is not complete without the other. Christ declared that the truths of the Old Testament are just as valuable as those of the New. Christ was just as much man's Redeemer in the beginning of the world as He is today. No one has ever been saved except by faith in Him. In the Old Testament dispensation, as well as in the New, He was the only one who could speak pardon to the sons and daughters of Adam."—Ibid.



THE LIFEWORK OF THREE LEADING CHARACTERS

PETER

"With clearness and power Peter bore witness of the death and resurrection of Christ: 'Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.'



Lessons *of* Faith

From New Testament History and Prophecy

Compiled by
Ngulube Samuel
from the writings
of Ellen G. White

"Peter did not refer to the teachings of Christ to prove his position, because he knew that the prejudice of his hearers was so great that his words on this subject would be of no effect. Instead, he spoke to them of David, who was regarded by the Jews as one of the patriarchs of their nation. 'David speaketh concerning Him,' he declared: 'I foresaw the Lord always before My face, for He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did My heart rejoice, and My tongue was glad; moreover also My flesh shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.'"—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pp. 41, 42.

"After Christ's resurrection the priests had spread far and near the lying report that His body had been stolen by the disciples while the Roman guard slept. It is not surprising that they were displeased when they hear Peter and John preaching the resurrection of the One they had murdered. The Sadducees especially were greatly aroused. They felt that their most cherished doctrine was in danger, and their reputation at stake.

"Converts to the new faith were rapidly increasing, and both Pharisees and Sadducees agreed that if these new teachers were suffered to go unchecked, their own influence would be in greater danger than when Jesus was upon the earth."—Ibid., pp. 60, 61.

JAMES

The disciple James, one of the sons of Zebedee whom Christ referred to as "sons of thunder," underwent an amazing transformation of character. We read of an early incident in his walk with Jesus:

"The disciples knew that it was the purpose of Christ to bless the Samaritans by His presence; and the coldness, jealousy, and disrespect shown to their Master filled them with surprise and indignation. James and John especially were aroused. That He whom they so highly reverenced should be thus treated, seemed to them a wrong too great to be passed over without immediate punishment. In their zeal they said, 'Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?' referring to the destruction of the Samaritan captains and their companies sent out to take the prophet Elijah. They were surprised to see that Jesus was pained by their words, and still more surprised as His rebuke fell upon their ears: 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.' Luke 9:54–56."—Ibid., pp. 540, 541.

Later in life, this lesson from the Master clearly had an impact on James. Instead of thinking to slay others, he himself ended up with the honor of being the first martyr for his Lord.

PAUL

"Boldly [Paul] declared Jesus of Nazareth to be the long-looked-for Messiah, who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures; . . . was buried, and . . . rose again the third day,' after which He was seen by the Twelve and by others. 'And last of all,' Paul added, 'He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.' 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4, 8. His arguments from prophecy were so conclusive, and his efforts were so manifestly attended by the power of God, that the Jews were confounded and unable to answer him.

"Paul had formerly been known as a zealous defender of the Jewish religion and an untiring persecutor of the followers of Jesus. Courageous, independent, persevering, his talents and training would have enabled him to serve in almost any capacity. He could reason with extraordinary clearness, and by his withering sarcasm could place an opponent in no enviable light. And now the Jews saw this young man of unusual promise united with those whom he formerly persecuted, and fearlessly preaching in the name of Jesus."—Ibid., pp. 123, 124.

"As verily as had Cephas, James, John, or any others of the disciples, [Paul] had seen and talked with [Jesus]. The Voice had bidden him proclaim the gospel of a risen Saviour, and how could he disobey? In Damascus, in Jerusalem, throughout all Judea, and in the regions afar off, he



had borne witness of Jesus the Crucified, showing all classes 'that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

" 'For these causes,' the apostle declared, 'the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.' "—Ibid., pp. 436, 437.

FACING TRIALS

"Our lives will not be all sunshine; there will be trials. 'In the world ye shall have tribulation,' says Christ: but in me ye shall have peace. But the trials are for a purpose. Pride, selfishness, evil passions, and love of worldly pleasures, must all be overcome; therefore afflictions come to test and prove us, and show that these evils exist in the character. We must overcome them through divine strength and grace, that we may become like Jesus, our perfect pattern. Afflictions, crosses, temptations, adversity—all our varied trials—are God's workmen to refine and sanctify us, and make us channels of light to the world. And 'our light affliction,' says Paul, 'which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' "—*Bible Echo,* July 15, 1892.

Let us unashamedly, boldly, and zealously proclaim to this sinful, passing world the good news of our highly, loving and caring risen Saviour—until the sinners and the enemies of our King, cry, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also . . . and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus" (Acts 17:7).

PROPHECY—FALSE AND TRUE

"The Saviour foretold that in the latter days false prophets would appear, and draw away disciples after them; and also that those who in this time of peril should stand faithful to the truth that is specified in the book of Revelation, would have to meet doctrinal errors so specious that, if it were possible, the very elect would be deceived."—*Christ in His Sanctuary,* p. 15.

THE MYSTERY OF THE SEVEN

Christ instructed John the Revelator: "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches" (Revelation 1:19, 20).

"The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* p. 585.

THE GLORIFIED CHRIST

"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.' 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. Out of His mouth issues a sharp, two-edged sword, an emblem of the power of His word.

"John, who has so loved his Lord, and who has steadfastly adhered to the truth in the face of imprisonment, stripes, and threatened death, cannot endure the excellent glory of Christ's presence, and falls to the earth as one stricken dead. Jesus then lays His hand upon the prostrate form of His servant, saying, 'Fear not; . . . I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore' (Revelation 1:17, 18). John was strengthened to live in the presence of his glorified Lord, and then were presented before him in holy vision the purposes of God for future ages. The glorious attractions of the heavenly home were made known to him. He was permitted to look upon the throne of God, and to behold the white-robed throng of redeemed ones. He heard the music of heavenly angels, and the songs of triumph from those who had overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony."—*The Sanctified Life,* pp. 77, 78.



THE BOOK CONTAINING THE PRESENT TRUTH

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the New Testament scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many, so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study. But Christ through His servant John has here declared what shall be in the last days, and He says, 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.'

" 'This is life eternal,' Christ said, 'that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' John 17:3. Why is it that we do not realize the value of this knowledge? Why are not these glorious truths glowing in our hearts, trembling upon our lips, and pervading our whole being?" —*Christ's Object Lessons,* p. 133.

"There are lessons, deep, earnest, and all-important lessons, to be learned from the book of God."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education,* p. 85.

A BOOK WITH SERIOUS PROMISES

"If Paul, in saying that the Scriptures are to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, meant that nothing more should be written by inspiration, why was he at that moment adding to those Scriptures? At least why did he not drop the pen as soon as that sentence was written? And why did John, thirty years afterward, write the book of Revelation? This book contains another text which is quoted to prove the abolition of spiritual gifts.

" 'For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from



the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.' Revelation 22:18, 19.

"From this text it is claimed that God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, and, in the commencement of the gospel day, by Jesus and His apostles, has hereby solemnly promised never to communicate anything more to man in that way. Therefore all prophesying after this date must be false. This, it is said, closes the canon of inspiration. If so, why did John write his gospel after his return from Patmos to Ephesus? In doing so did he add to the words of the prophecy of that book written in the isle of Patmos? It is evident, from the text, that the caution against adding to, or taking from, refers not to the Bible as we have the volume compiled, but to the separate book of Revelation, as it came from the hand of the apostle. Yet no man has a right to add to, or subtract from, any other book written by inspiration of God. Did John, in writing the book of Revelation, add anything to the book of Daniel's prophecy? Not at all. A prophet has no right to alter the word of God. But the visions of John corroborate those of Daniel and give much additional light upon the subjects there introduced. I conclude, then, that the Lord has not bound Himself to keep silence, but is still at liberty to speak. Ever be it the language

of my heart, Speak, Lord, through whom Thou wilt; Thy servant heareth.' "—*Early Writings,* pp. 136, 137.

CONCLUSION

The One who has stood as our Intercessor; who hears all penitential prayers and confessions; who is represented with a rainbow, the symbol of grace and love, encircling His head, is soon to cease His work in the heavenly sanctuary. Grace and mercy will then descend from the throne, and justice will take their place. He for whom His people have looked will assume His right—the office of Supreme Judge. . . .

"There is not a second probation for anyone. Now is probationary time, before the angel shall fold her golden wings, the angel of mercy, and shall step down from the throne, and mercy, mercy is gone forever. . . .

"Letters have come to me asking me if I have any special light as to the time when probation will close; and I answer that I have only this message to bear, that it is now time to work while the day lasts, for the night cometh in which no man can work. Now, just now, it is time for us to be watching, working, and waiting. . . .

"[Revelation 22:13–17 quoted.] Here we have the Alpha of Genesis and the Omega of Revelation. The blessing is promised to all those who keep the commandments of God, and who cooperate with Him in the proclamation of the third angel's message. . . .

"None who have had the light of truth will enter the city of God as commandment breakers. His law lies at the foundation of His government in earth and in heaven. If they have knowingly trampled upon and despised His law on the earth, they will not be taken to heaven to do the same work there; there is no change of character when Christ comes. The character building is to go on during the hours of probation. Day by day their actions are registered in the books of heaven, and they will, in the great day of God, be rewarded as their works have been. It will then be seen who receives the blessing. 'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.' "—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, pp. 989, 990.

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That I May KNOW HIM

by Emma G. Dietrick

I would know thee, O my Saviour,
With a faith sublime and true;
I would copy thee, my Master,
In each little thing I do;
Growing daily in thy likeness
Till my life shall touch thine own,
And a tender, Christlike living
Prove me truly thine alone.

I would rise by daily trials,
Putting self beneath my feet,
Gladly bearing every burden
That thy grace shall see is meet.
I would leave behind the old things,
Pressing on to those more true,
Till I reach at last the measure
Of thy fullness fresh and new.

Keep me near thee, O my Master,
Hold me with thy loving hand,
Where thou leadest I would follow,
Where thou place me gladly stand.
But my human heart grows weary,
And my eyes too dim to see,
Hold me closely, O my Saviour,
Bring me when thou wilt to thee.

