

**THE SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST BIBLE
COMMENTARY,
VOLUME 7A**

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Chapter 1

Genesis

Chapter 1

1-3 (Psalm 33:6, 9). A Reservoir of Means.—God spoke, and His words created His works in the natural world. God's creation is but a reservoir of means made ready for Him to employ instantly to do His pleasure (Letter 131, 1897).

26 (Ephesians 3:15). A Larger Family.—Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences (MS 78, 1901).

27. Man, a New and Distinct Order.—All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator's design that they should populate the earth (The Review and Herald, February 11, 1902).

29 (Psalm 104:14). Fruit in Our Hands.—

The Lord has given His life to the trees and vines of His creation. His word can increase or decrease the fruit of the land. If men would open their understanding to discern the relation between nature and nature's God, faithful acknowledgments of the Creator's power would be heard. Without the life of God, nature would die. His creative works are dependent on Him. He bestows life-giving properties on all that nature produces. We are to regard the trees laden with fruit as the gift of God, just as much as though He placed the fruit in our hands (MS 114, 1899).

Chapter 2

2 (Exodus 20:8-11). Seven Literal Days.—

The weekly cycle of seven literal days, six for labor, and the seventh for rest, which has been preserved and brought down through Bible history, originated in the great fact of the first seven days (Spiritual Gifts 3:90).

7 (1 Corinthians 3:9; Acts 17:28). Man Under God's Supervision.—The physical organism of man is under the supervision of God; but it is not like a clock, which is set in operation, and must go of itself. The heart beats, pulse succeeds pulse, breath succeeds breath, but the entire being is under the supervision of God. “Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.” In God we live and move and have our being. Each heart-beat, each breath, is the inspiration of Him who breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life,—the inspiration of the ever-present God, the Great I AM (The Review and Herald, November 8, 1898).

(2 Peter 1:4). Partakers of God's Nature.—The Lord created man out of the dust of the earth. He made Adam a partaker of His life, His nature. There was breathed into him the breath of the Almighty, and he became a living soul. Adam was perfect in form—strong, comely, pure, bearing the image of his Maker (MS 102, 1903).

Physical Power Long Preserved.—Man came

from the hand of his Creator perfect in organization and beautiful in form. The fact that he has for six thousand years withstood the ever-increasing weight of disease and crime is conclusive proof of the power of endurance with which he was first endowed (Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 7).

8. Adam Crowned King in Eden.—Adam was crowned king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of His hands. Man, made in the divine image, could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature (Redemption; or the Temptation of Christ, page 7).

15. Eden, Heaven in Miniature.—Adam had themes for contemplation in the works of God in Eden, which was heaven in miniature. God did not form man merely to contemplate His glorious works; therefore, He gave him hands for labor, as

well as a mind and heart for contemplation. If the happiness of man consisted in doing nothing, the Creator would not have given Adam his appointed work. Man was to find happiness in labor, as well as in meditation (Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 7, 8).

16, 17 (Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 43:6, 7). To Repopulate Heaven After Test.—God created man for His own glory, that after test and trial the human family might become one with the heavenly family. It was God's purpose to re-populate heaven with the human family, if they would show themselves obedient to His every word. Adam was to be tested, to see whether he would be obedient, as the loyal angels, or disobedient. If he stood the test, his instruction to his children would have been only of loyalty. His mind and thoughts would have been as the mind and thoughts of God. He would have been taught by God as His husbandry and building. His character would have been moulded in accordance with the character of God (Letter 91, 1900).

17 (John 8:44; Genesis 3:4). Seeds of Death Satan's Work.—Christ never planted the seeds of death in the system. Satan planted these seeds when he tempted Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge which meant disobedience to God (MS 65, 1899) [published in F. D. Nichol, Ellen G. White and Her Critics].

(Revelation 13:8). Death Penalty Not Enforced at Once.—Adam listened to the words of the tempter, and yielding to his insinuations, fell into sin. Why was not the death penalty at once enforced in his case?—Because a ransom was found. God's only begotten Son volunteered to take the sin of man upon Himself, and to make an atonement for the fallen race. There could have been no pardon for sin had this atonement not been made. Had God pardoned Adam's sin without an atonement, sin would have been immortalized, and would have been perpetuated with a boldness that would have been without restraint (The Review and Herald, April 23, 1901).

Chapter 3

1-6. A Succession of Falls.—If the race had ceased to fall when Adam was driven from Eden, we should now be in a far more elevated condition physically, mentally, and morally. But while men deplore the fall of Adam, which has resulted in such unutterable woe, they disobey the express injunctions of God, as did Adam, although they have his example to warn them from doing as he did in violating the law of Jehovah. Would that man had stopped falling with Adam. But there has been a succession of falls. Men will not take warning from Adam's experience. They will indulge appetite and passion in direct violation of the law of God, and at the same time continue to mourn Adam's transgression, which brought sin into the world.

From Adam's day to ours there has been a succession of falls, each greater than the last, in every species of crime. God did not create a race of beings so devoid of health, beauty, and moral power as now exists in the world. Disease of every

kind has been fearfully increasing upon the race. This has not been by God's especial providence, but directly contrary to His will. It has come by man's disregard of the very means which God has ordained to shield him from the terrible evils existing (The Review and Herald, March 4, 1875).

1. Satan Uses Instruments.—In Eden Satan used the serpent as his instrument. Today he makes use of the members of the human family, striving by means of every species of cunning and deception to hedge up the path of righteousness cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in (Letter 91, 1900).

5. No Change in Satan's Propaganda.—God does not consult our opinions or preferences. He knows what human beings do not know,—the future results of every movement, and therefore our eyes should be directed to Him, and not to the worldly advantages presented by Satan. Satan tells us that if we give heed to him, we shall reach great heights of knowledge. Ye shall be as gods, he said to Eve, if you eat of the tree forbidden by God. The

test given to Adam and Eve was very light, but they could not bear it. They disobeyed God, and this transgression opened the floodgates of woe on our world (MS 50, 1893).

6. Mildest Test Given.—With what intense interest the whole universe watched the conflict that was to decide the position of Adam and Eve. How attentively the angels listened to the words of Satan, the originator of sin, as he placed his own ideas above the commands of God, and sought to make of none effect the law of God through his deceptive reasoning! How anxiously they waited to see if the holy pair would be deluded by the tempter, and yield to his arts! They asked themselves, Will the holy pair transfer their faith and love from the Father and Son to Satan? Will they accept his falsehoods as truth? They knew that they might refrain from taking the fruit, and obey the positive injunction of God, or they might violate the express command of their Creator.

The mildest test was given them that could be given; for there was no need of their eating of the

forbidden tree; everything that their wants required had been provided (BE July 24, 1899).

Gained Only a Knowledge of Sin and Its Results.—If Adam and Eve had never touched the forbidden tree, the Lord would have imparted to them knowledge,—knowledge upon which rested no curse of sin, knowledge that would have brought them everlasting joy. The only knowledge they gained by their disobedience was a knowledge of sin and its results ((Australasian) Union Conference Record, March 1, 1904).

Adam's Fall Inexplainable.—In what consisted the strength of the assault made upon Adam, which caused his fall? It was not indwelling sin; for God made Adam after His own character, pure and upright. There were no corrupt principles in the first Adam, no corrupt propensities or tendencies to evil. Adam was as faultless as the angels before God's throne. These things are inexplainable, but many things which now we cannot understand will be made plain when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are

known (Letter 191, 1899).

(Ecclesiastes 1:13-18).—Age after age, the curiosity of men has led them to seek for the tree of knowledge; and often they think they are plucking fruit most essential, when, like Solomon's research, they find it altogether vanity and nothingness in comparison with that science of true holiness which will open to them the gates of the city of God. The human ambition has been seeking for that kind of knowledge that will bring to them glory and self-exaltation and supremacy. Thus Adam and Eve were worked upon by Satan until God's restraint was snapped asunder, and their education under the teacher of lies began in order that they might have the knowledge which God had refused them,—to know the consequence of transgression (MS 67, 1898).

Fall Broke Golden Chain of Obedience.—Adam yielded to temptation and as we have the matter of sin and its consequence laid so distinctly before us, we can read from cause to effect and see the greatness of the act is not that which constitutes

sin; but the disobedience of God's expressed will, which is a virtual denial of God, refusing the laws of His government....

The fall of our first parents broke the golden chain of implicit obedience of the human will to the divine. Obedience has no longer been deemed an absolute necessity. The human agents follow their own imaginations which the Lord said of the inhabitants of the old world was evil and that continually (MS 1, 1892).

Adam: Temptation Removed as Far as Possible.—The plan of salvation was so arranged that when Adam was tested, temptation was removed from him as far as possible. When Adam was tempted, he was not hungry (The Signs of the Times, April 4, 1900).

Man a Free Agent.—God had power to hold Adam back from touching the forbidden fruit; but had He done this, Satan would have been sustained in his charge against God's arbitrary rule. Man would not have been a free moral agent, but a mere

machine (The Review and Herald, June 4, 1901).

Every Inducement to Remain Loyal.—It certainly was not God's purpose that man should be sinful. He made Adam pure and noble, with no tendency to evil. He placed him in Eden, where he had every inducement to remain loyal and obedient. The law was placed around him as a safeguard. (Ibid.).

7. Fig Leaves Will Not Cover Sin.—Adam and Eve both ate of the fruit, and obtained a knowledge which, had they obeyed God, they would never have had,—an experience in disobedience and disloyalty to God,—the knowledge that they were naked. The garment of innocence, a covering from God, which surrounded them, departed; and they supplied the place of this heavenly garment by sewing together fig-leaves for aprons.

This is the covering that the transgressors of the law of God have used since the days of Adam and Eve's disobedience. They have sewed together fig-

leaves to cover their nakedness, caused by transgression. The fig-leaves represent the arguments used to cover disobedience. When the Lord calls the attention of men and women to the truth, the making of fig-leaves into aprons will be begun, to hide the nakedness of the soul. But the nakedness of the sinner is not covered. All the arguments pieced together by all who have interested themselves in this flimsy work will come to naught (The Review and Herald, November 15, 1898).

10, 11. Drew on Robes of Ignorance.—Had Adam and Eve never disobeyed their Creator, had they remained in the path of perfect rectitude, they could have known and understood God. But when they listened to the voice of the tempter, and sinned against God, the light of the garments of heavenly innocence departed from them; and in parting with the garments of innocence, they drew about them the dark robes of ignorance of God. The clear and perfect light that had hitherto surrounded them had lightened everything they approached; but deprived of that heavenly light, the posterity of Adam could

no longer trace the character of God in His created works (The Review and Herald, March 17, 1904).

15. Adam Knew Original Law.—Adam and Eve at their creation had knowledge of the original law of God. It was imprinted upon their hearts, and they were acquainted with the claims of law upon them. When they transgressed the law of God, and fell from their state of happy innocence, and became sinners, the future of the fallen race was not relieved by a single ray of hope. God pitied them, and Christ devised the plan for their salvation by Himself bearing the guilt. When the curse was pronounced upon the earth and upon man, in connection with the curse was a promise that through Christ there was hope and pardon for the transgression of God's law. Although gloom and darkness hung, like the pall of death, over the future, yet in the promise of the Redeemer, the Star of hope lighted up the dark future. The gospel was first preached to Adam by Christ. Adam and Eve felt sincere sorrow and repentance for their guilt. They believed the precious promise of God, and were saved from utter ruin (The Review and

Herald, April 29, 1875).

Christ the Immediate Surety.—As soon as there was sin, there was a Saviour. Christ knew that He would have to suffer, yet He became man's substitute. As soon as Adam sinned, the Son of God presented Himself as surety for the human race, with just as much power to avert the doom pronounced upon the guilty as when He died upon the cross of Calvary (The Review and Herald, March 12, 1901).

Continent of Heaven.—Jesus became the world's Redeemer, rendering perfect obedience to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. He redeemed Adam's disgraceful fall, uniting the earth, that had been divorced from God by sin, to the continent of heaven [Obviously the word "continent" is here employed in a broader sense than is commonly understood today. It is in keeping with usage now obsolete, which permitted the word "continent" to apply to "the 'solid globe' or orb of the sun or moon" (See Oxford English Dictionary).—Editor.] (Be aug. 6, 1894).

Connected With Sphere of Glory.—Though earth was struck off from the continent of heaven [Obviously the word “continent” is here employed in a broader sense than is commonly understood today. It is in keeping with usage now obsolete, which permitted the word “continent” to apply to “the ‘solid globe’ or orb of the sun or moon” (See Oxford English Dictionary).—Editor.] and alienated from its communion, Jesus has connected it again with the sphere of glory (st nov. 24, 1887).

Instantaneous Substitution.—The instant man accepted the temptations of Satan, and did the very things 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. He shall have another chance” (Letter, February 13, 1900, p. 22).

Christ Placed Feet in Adam’s Steps.—What love! What amazing condescension! The King of glory proposed to humble Himself to fallen humanity! He would place His feet in Adam’s

steps. He would take man's fallen nature, and engage to cope with the strong foe who triumphed over Adam. He would overcome Satan, and in thus doing He would open the way for the redemption from the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall, of all those who would believe on Him (Redemption; or the Temptation of Christ in The Wilderness, 15).

16, 17. Execution of Sentence Withheld.—God forbears, for a time, the full execution of the sentence of death pronounced upon man. Satan flattered himself that he had forever broken the link between heaven and earth. But in this he was greatly mistaken and disappointed. The Father had given the world into the hands of His Son for Him to redeem from the curse and the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall (Redemption; or the Temptation of Christ in The Wilderness, 17).

17, 18. The Curse on All Creation.—All nature is confused; for God forbade the earth to carry out the purpose He had originally designed for it. Let there be no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord. The curse of God is upon all creation. Every

year it makes itself more decidedly felt (MS 76a, 1901).

The first curse was pronounced upon the posterity of Adam and upon the earth, because of disobedience. The second curse came upon the ground after Cain slew his brother Abel. The third most dreadful curse from God, came upon the earth at the Flood (Spiritual Gifts 4a:121).

The land has felt the curse, more and more heavily. Before the Flood, the first leaf which fell, and was discovered decaying upon the ground, caused those who feared God great sorrow. They mourned over it as we mourn over the loss of a dead friend. In the decaying leaf they could see an evidence of the curse, and of the decay of nature (Spiritual Gifts 4a:155).

(Romans 8:22).—The sin of man has brought the sure result,—decay, deformity, and death. Today the whole world is tainted, corrupted, stricken with mortal disease. The earth groaneth under the continual transgression of the inhabitants

thereof (Letter, February 13, 1900, p. 22).

The Lord's curse is upon the earth, upon man, upon beast, upon the fish in the sea, and as transgression becomes almost universal the curse will be permitted to become as broad and as deep as the transgression (Letter 59, 1898).

Tokens of God's Continued Love.—After the transgression of Adam, God might have destroyed every opening bud and blooming flower, or He might have taken away their fragrance, so grateful to the senses. In the earth seared and marred by the curse, in the briars, the thistles, the thorns, the tares, we may read the law of condemnation; but in the delicate color and perfume of the flowers, we may learn that God still loves us, that His mercy is not wholly withdrawn from the earth (The Review and Herald, November 8, 1898).

17-19.—God said to Adam, and to all the descendants of Adam, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread; for from henceforth the earth must be worked under the drawback of transgression.

Thorns and briars shall it produce (MS 84, 1897).

There is no place upon earth where the track of the serpent is not seen and his venomous sting felt. The whole earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof. The curse is increasing as transgression increases (Letter, February 13, 1900, p. 22).

18. Amalgamation Brought Noxious Plants.—Not one noxious plant was placed in the Lord's great garden, but after Adam and Eve sinned, poisonous herbs sprang up. In the parable of the sower the question was asked the Master, "Didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? how then hath it tares?" The Master answered, "An enemy hath done this." All tares are sown by the evil one. Every noxious herb is of his sowing, and by his ingenious methods of amalgamation he has corrupted the earth with tares (MS 65, 1899) [published in F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*].

22-24 (Revelation 22:2, 14). Obedience Is Condition of Eating of Tree.—Transgression of

God's requirements excluded Adam from the Garden of Eden. A flaming sword was placed around the tree of life, lest man should put forth his hand and partake of it, immortalizing sin. Obedience to all the commandments of God was the condition of eating of the tree of life. Adam fell by disobedience, forfeiting by sin all right to use either the life-giving fruit of the tree in the midst of the Garden, or its leaves, which are for the healing of the nations.

Obedience through Jesus Christ gives to man perfection of character and a right to that tree of life. The conditions of again partaking of the fruit of the tree are plainly stated in the testimony of Jesus Christ to John: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and many enter in through the gates into the city" (MS 72, 1901).

24 (Matthew 4:4; 6:63). No Sword Before Our Tree of Life.—The Scriptures, "It is written," is the gospel we are to preach. No flaming sword is placed before this tree of life. All who will may

partake of it. There is no power that can prohibit any soul from taking of the fruit of this tree of life. All may eat and live forever (Letter 20, 1900).

Chapter 4

4. Offering Must Be Sprinkled With Blood.—In every offering to God we are to acknowledge the one great Gift; that alone can make our service acceptable to him. When Abel offered the firstling of the flock, he acknowledged God, not only as the Giver of his temporal blessings, but also as the Giver of the Saviour. Abel's gift was the very choicest he could bring; for it was the Lord's specified claim. But Cain brought only of the fruit of the ground, and his offering was not accepted by the Lord. It did not express faith in Christ. All our offerings must be sprinkled with the blood of the atonement. As the purchased possession of the Son of God, we are to give the Lord our own individual lives (The Review and Herald, November 24, 1896).

(Genesis 2:17). Substitute Accepted for Time

Being.—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, "Ye shall surely die" (Redemption; or the Temptation of Christ, p. 19).

6. God Marks Every Action.—The Lord saw the wrath of Cain, He saw the falling of his countenance. Thus is revealed how closely the Lord marks every action, all the intents and purposes, yes, even the expression of the countenance. This, though man may say nothing, expresses his refusal to do the way and will of God.... Well might the question be asked you of the Lord, when you cannot follow the impulse of your own rebellious heart, and are restrained from doing

your own unrighteous, unsanctified will, “Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?” Such exhibitions reveal that because they cannot do after Satan’s arts and devices they are provoked, and can only manifest a spirit similar to that of Cain (MS 77, 1897).

8. Contention Must Come.—There could be no harmony between the two brothers, and contention must come. Abel could not concede to Cain without being guilty of disobedience to the special commands of God (Letter 16, 1897).

Cain Filled With Doubt and Madness.—Satan is the parent of unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion. He filled Cain with doubt and with madness against his innocent brother and against God, because his sacrifice was refused and Abel’s accepted. And he slew his brother in his insane madness (The Review and Herald, March 3, 1874).

15. Mark of Cain.—God has given to every man his work; and if any one turns from the work that God has given him, to do the work of Satan, to

defile his own body or lead another into sin, that man's work is cursed, and the brand of Cain is placed upon him. The ruin of his victim will cry unto God, as did the blood of Abel (The Review and Herald, March 6, 1894).

Any man, be he minister or layman, who seeks to compel or control the reason of any other man, becomes an agent of Satan, to do his work, and in the sight of the heavenly universe he bears the mark of Cain (MS 29, 1911).

25. Seth More Noble in Stature Than Cain or Abel.—Seth was of more noble stature than Cain or Abel, and resembled Adam more than any of his other sons. The descendants of Seth had separated themselves from the wicked descendants of Cain. They cherished the knowledge of God's will, while the ungodly race of Cain had no respect for God and His sacred commandments (Spiritual Gifts 3:60).

Chapter 5

22-24. Enoch Saw God Only by Faith.—Did he [Enoch] see God by his side? Only by faith. He knew that the Lord was there, and he adhered steadfastly to the principles of truth. We, too, are to walk with God. When we do this, our faces will be lighted up by the brightness of His presence, and when we meet one another, we shall speak of His power, saying, Praise God. Good is the Lord, and good is the word of the Lord (MS 17, 1903).

Christ a Constant Companion.—We can have what Enoch had. We can have Christ as our constant companion. Enoch walked with God, and when assailed by the tempter, he could talk with God about it. He had no “It is written” as we have, but he had a knowledge of his heavenly Companion. He made God his Counsellor, and was closely bound up with Jesus. And Enoch was honored in this course. He was translated to heaven without seeing death. And those who will be translated at the close of time, will be those who commune with God on earth. Those who make

manifest that their life is hid with Christ in God will ever be representing Him in all their life-practices. Selfishness will be cut out by the roots (MS 38, 1897).

Strove to Conform to Divine Likeness.—Let us realize the weakness of humanity, and see where man fails in his self-sufficiency. We shall then be filled with a desire to be just what God desires us to be,—pure, noble, sanctified. We shall hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ. To be like God will be the one desire of the soul.

This is the desire that filled Enoch's heart. And we read that he walked with God. He studied the character of God to a purpose. He did not mark out his own course, or set up his own will, as if he thought himself fully qualified to manage matters. He strove to conform himself to the divine likeness (Letter 169, 1903).

How Enoch Walked With God.—While trusting in your heavenly Father for the help you need, He will not leave you. God has a heaven full

of blessings that He wants to bestow on those who are earnestly seeking for that help which the Lord alone can give. It was in looking in faith to Jesus, in asking of Him, in believing that every word spoken would be verified, that Enoch walked with God. He kept close by the side of God, obeying His every word.... His was a wonderful life of oneness. Christ was his Companion. He was in intimate fellowship with God (MS 111, 1898).

Abode in Pure Atmosphere.—He [Enoch] did not make his abode with the wicked. He did not locate in Sodom, thinking to save Sodom. He placed himself and his family where the atmosphere would be as pure as possible. Then at times he went forth to the inhabitants of the world with his God-given message. Every visit he made to the world was painful to him. He saw and understood something of the leprosy of sin. After proclaiming his message, he always took back with him to his place of retirement some who had received the warning. Some of these became overcomers, and died before the Flood came. But some had lived so long in the corrupting influence

of sin that they could not endure righteousness (MS 42, 1900).

24. No Moral Darkness So Dense.—Enoch walked with God, while of the world around him sacred history records, “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Enoch’s righteous life was in marked contrast with the wicked people around him. His piety, his purity, his unswerving integrity were the result of his walking with God, while the wickedness of the world was the result of their walking with the deceiver of mankind. There never has been and never will be an age when the moral darkness will be so dense as when Enoch lived a life of irreproachable righteousness (MS 43, 1900).

Enoch the First Prophet.—Enoch was the first prophet among mankind. He foretold by prophecy the second coming of Christ to our world, and his work at that time. His life was a specimen of Christian consistency. Holy lips alone should speak forth the words of God in denunciation and

judgments. His prophecy is not found in the writings of the Old Testament. We may never find any books which relate to the works of Enoch, but Jude, a prophet of God, mentions the work of Enoch (Ibid.).

Chapter 6

2. Co-operation With God Avoids Cain-worship.—Had man co-operated with God, there would have been no Cain-worshippers. Abel's example of obedience would have been followed. Men might have worked out the will of God. They might have obeyed His law, and in obedience they would have found salvation. God and the heavenly universe would have helped them to retain the divine likeness. Longevity would have been preserved; and God would have delighted in the work of His hands (The Review and Herald, December 27, 1898).

3 (1 Peter 3:18-21). God Preached Through Methuselah, Noah, and Others.—God granted them one hundred and twenty years of probation,

and during that time preached to them through Methuselah, Noah, and many others of His servants. Had they listened to the testimony of these faithful witnesses, had they repented and returned to their loyalty, God would not have destroyed them (The Review and Herald, April 23, 1901).

Enoch Bore Testimony Unflinchingly.— Before the destruction of the antediluvian world, Enoch bore his testimony unflinchingly (The Review and Herald, November 1, 1906).

Voices of Noah and Methuselah Heard.— God determined to purify the world by a flood; but in mercy and love He gave the antediluvians a probation of one hundred and twenty years. During this time, while the ark was building, the voices of Noah, Methuselah, and many others were heard in warning and entreaty, and every blow struck on the ark was a warning message (The Review and Herald, September 19, 1907).

Some Believed; Some Backslid.—For one

hundred and twenty years Noah proclaimed the message of warning to the antediluvian world; but only a few repented. Some of the carpenters he employed in building the ark believed the message, but died before the Flood; others of Noah's converts backslid (MS 65, 1906).

Many of the believing ones kept the faith, and died triumphant (MS 35, 1906).

Enoch's Experience a Convincing Sermon.— [Jude 14, 15 quoted.] The sermon preached by Enoch, and his translation to heaven was a convincing argument to all living in Enoch's time. It was an argument that Methuselah and Noah could use with power to show that the righteous could be translated (MS 46, 1895).

Association With Unbelievers Caused Loss.—Those who believed when Noah began to build the ark, lost their faith through association with unbelievers who aroused all the old passion for amusement and display (The Review and Herald, September 15, 1904).

(1 John 3:8). Christ in Warfare in Noah's Day.—“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” Christ was engaged in this warfare in Noah's day. It was His voice that spoke to the inhabitants of the old world in messages of warning, reproof, and invitation. He gave the people a probation of one hundred and twenty years, in which they might have repented. But they chose the deceptions of Satan, and perished in the waters of the Flood (The Review and Herald, March 12, 1901).

4. Great Art and Inventions Perished.—There perished in the Flood greater inventions of art and human skill than the world knows of today. The arts destroyed were more than the boasted arts of today (Letter 65, 1898).

How did man gain his knowledge of how to devise?—From the Lord, by studying the formation and habits of different animals. Every animal is a lesson book, and from the use they make of their

bodies and the weapons provided them, men have learned to make apparatus for every kind of work. If men could only know how many arts have been lost to our world, they would not talk so fluently of the dark ages. Could they have seen how God once worked through His human subjects, they would speak with less confidence of the arts of the antediluvian world. More was lost in the Flood, in many ways, than men today know. Looking upon the world, God saw that the intellect He had given man was perverted, that the imagination of his heart was evil and that continually. God had given these men knowledge. He had given them valuable ideas, that they might carry out His plan. But the Lord saw that those whom He designed should possess wisdom, tact, and judgment, were using every quality of the mind to glorify self. By the waters of the Flood, He blotted this long-lived race from the earth, and with them perished the knowledge they had used only for evil. When the earth was repopled, the Lord trusted His wisdom more sparingly to men, giving them only the ability they would need in carrying out His great plan (Letter 175, 1896).

Delusions of Progress.—True knowledge has decreased with every successive generation. God is infinite, and the first people upon the earth received their instructions from that infinite God who created the world. Those who received their knowledge direct from infinite wisdom were not deficient in knowledge.

God instructed Noah how to make that immense ark, for the saving of himself and his family. He also instructed Moses how to make the tabernacle, and the embroidery, and skillful work which was to adorn the sanctuary. The women wrought, with great ingenuity the embroidery of silver and gold. Skillful men were not wanting to accomplish the work of making the ark, the tabernacle, and the vessels of solid gold.

God gave David a pattern of the temple which Solomon built. None but the most skillful men of design and art were allowed to have anything to do with the work. Every stone for the temple was prepared to exactly fill its place, before being

brought to the temple. And the temple came together without the sound of an axe or hammer. There is no such building to be found in the world for beauty, richness and splendor.

There are many inventions and improvements, and labor-saving machines now that the ancients did not have. They did not need them....

The greater the length of time the earth has lain under the curse, the more difficult has it been for man to cultivate it, and make it productive. As the soil has become more barren, and double labor has had to be expended upon it, God has raised up men with inventive faculties to construct implements to lighten labor on the land groaning under the curse. But God has not been in all man's inventions. Satan has controlled the minds of men to a great extent, and has hurried men to new inventions which has led them to forget God.

In strength of intellect, men who now live can bear no comparison to the ancients. There have been more ancient arts lost than the present

generation now possess. For skill and art those living in this degenerate age will not compare with the knowledge possessed by strong men who lived near one thousand years.

Men before the Flood lived many hundreds of years, and when one hundred years old they were considered but youths. Those long-lived men had sound minds in sound bodies. Their mental and physical strength was so great that the present feeble generation can bear no comparison to them. Those ancients had nearly one thousand years in which to acquire knowledge. They came upon the stage of action from the ages of sixty to one hundred years, about the time those who now live the longest have acted their part in their little short life time, and have passed off the stage. Those who are deceived, and flattered on in the delusion that the present is an age of real progress, and that the human race has been in ages past progressing in true knowledge, are under the influence of the father of lies, whose work has ever been to turn the truth of God into a lie (4SG 154-156).

Giants Before the Flood.—At the first resurrection all come forth in immortal bloom, but at the second, the marks of the curse are visible upon all. All come up as they went down into their graves. Those who lived before the Flood, come forth with their giant-like stature, more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and well proportioned. The generations after the Flood were less in stature (Spiritual Gifts 3:84).

5. Degenerated From Lightness to Debasing Sins.—We have the history of the antediluvians, and of the cities of the plain, whose course of conduct degenerated from lightness and frivolity to debasing sins that called down the wrath of God in a most dreadful destruction, in order to rid the earth of the curse of their contaminating influence. Inclination and passion bore sway over reason. Self was their god, and the knowledge of the Most High was nearly obliterated through the selfish indulgence of corrupt passions (Letter 74, 1896).

Perverted What Was Lawful.—The sin of the antediluvians was in perverting that which in itself

was lawful. They corrupted God's gifts by using them to minister to their selfish desires. The indulgence of appetite and base passion made their imaginations altogether corrupt. The antediluvians were slaves of Satan, led and controlled by him (MS 24, 1891).

Corrupted Through Perverted Appetite.—The inhabitants of the Noachian world were destroyed, because they were corrupted through the indulgence of perverted appetite (The Signs of the Times, September 2, 1875).

11. Worshiped Self-indulgence; Fostered Crime.—They worshipped selfish indulgence,—eating, drinking, merry-making,—and resorted to acts of violence and crime if their desires and passions were interfered with.

In the days of Noah the overwhelming majority was opposed to the truth, and enamored with a tissue of falsehoods. The land was filled with violence. War, crime, murder, was the order of the day. Just so will it be before Christ's second

coming (MS 24, 1891).

12, 13. Noah Ridiculed.—Before the destruction of the old world by a flood, there were talented men, men who possessed skill and knowledge. But they became corrupt in their imagination, because they left God out of their plans and councils. They were wise to do what God had never told them to do, wise to do evil. The Lord saw that this example would be deleterious to those who should afterwards be born, and He took the matter in hand. For one hundred twenty years He sent them warnings through His servant Noah. But they used the probation so graciously granted them in ridiculing Noah. They caricatured him and criticized him. They laughed at him for his peculiar earnestness and intense feeling in regard to the judgments which he declared God would surely fulfill. They talked of science and of the laws controlling nature. Then they held a carnival over the words of Noah, calling him a crazy fanatic. God's patience was exhausted. He said to Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them, and,

behold, I will destroy them from the earth” (MS 29, 1890).

17 (2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 14:10). Coal and Oil Agencies in Final Destruction.—Those majestic trees which God had caused to grow upon the earth, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the old world, and which they had used to form into idols, and to corrupt themselves with, God has reserved in the earth, in the shape of coal and oil to use as agencies in their final destruction. As He called forth the waters in the earth at the time of the Flood, as weapons from His arsenal to accomplish the destruction of the antediluvian race, so at the end of the one thousand years He will call forth the fires in the earth as His weapons which He has reserved for the final destruction, not only of successive generations since the Flood, but the antediluvian race who perished by the Flood (Spiritual Gifts 3:87).

Chapter 7

21-23. Kept Through Faith in Christ.—It

was Christ who kept the ark safe amid the roaring, seething billows, because its inmates had faith in His power to preserve them (The Review and Herald, March 12, 1901).

Chapter 8

13. Seeds and Some Plants Preserved.—The beautiful trees and shrubbery bearing flowers were destroyed, yet Noah preserved seed and took it with him in the ark, and God by His miraculous power preserved a few of the different kinds of trees and shrubs alive for future generations. Soon after the Flood trees and plants seemed to spring out of the very rocks. In God's providence seeds were scattered and driven into the crevices of the rocks and there securely hid for the future use of man (Spiritual Gifts 3:76).

Chapter 9

6. God Protects Man's Rights.—How carefully God protects the rights of men! He has attached a penalty to wilful murder. "Whoso

sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." (Genesis 9:6) If one murderer were permitted to go unpunished, he would by his evil influence and cruel violence subvert others. This would result in a condition of things similar to that which existed before the Flood. God must punish murderers. He gives life, and He will take life, if that life becomes a terror and a menace (MS 126, 1901).

12. Bow Shows Christ's Love Which Encircles Earth.—As we look upon this bow, the seal and sign of God's promise to man, that the tempest of His wrath should no more desolate our world by the waters of a flood, we contemplate that other than finite eyes are looking upon this glorious sight. Angels rejoice as they gaze upon this precious token of God's love to man. The world's Redeemer looks upon it; for it was through His instrumentality that this bow was made to appear in the heavens, as a token or covenant of promise to man. God Himself looks upon the bow in the clouds, and remembers His everlasting covenant between Himself and man.

After the fearful exhibition of God's avenging power, in the destruction of the Old World by a flood, had passed, He knew that those who had been saved from the general ruin would have their fears awakened whenever the clouds should gather, the thunders roll, and the lightnings flash; and that the sound of the tempest and the pouring out of the waters from the heavens would strike terror to their hearts, for fear that another flood was coming upon them. But behold the love of God in the promise: [Genesis 9:12-15 quoted].

The family of Noah looked with admiration and reverential awe mingled with joy upon this sign of God's mercy, which spanned the heavens. The bow represents Christ's love which encircles the earth, and reaches unto the highest heavens, connecting men with God, and linking earth with heaven.

As we gaze upon the beautiful sight, we may be joyful in God, assured that He Himself is looking upon this token of His covenant, and that as He looks upon it He remembers the children of earth,

to whom it was given. Their afflictions, perils, and trials are not hidden from Him. We may rejoice in hope, for the bow of God's covenant is over us. He never will forget the children of His care. How difficult for the mind of finite man to take in the peculiar love and tenderness of God, and His matchless condescension when He said, "I will look upon the bow in the cloud, and remember thee" (The Review and Herald, February 26, 1880).

Chapter 11

2-9. Men Resumed Hostility.—But no sooner was the earth re-peopled than men resumed their hostility to God and heaven. They transmitted their enmity to their posterity, as though the art and device of misleading men, and causing them to continue the unnatural warfare, was a sacred legacy (Letter 4, 1896).

3-7. Confederacy Born of Rebellion.—This confederacy was born of rebellion against God. The dwellers on the plain of Shinar established their kingdom for self-exaltation, not for the glory

of God. Had they succeeded, a mighty power would have borne sway, banishing righteousness, and inaugurating a new religion. The world would have been demoralized. The mixture of religious ideas with erroneous theories would have resulted in closing the door to peace, happiness, and security. These suppositions, erroneous theories, carried out and perfected, would have directed minds from allegiance to the divine statutes, and the law of Jehovah would have been ignored and forgotten. Determined men, inspired and urged on by the first great rebel, would have resisted any interference with their plans or their evil course. In the place of the divine precepts they would have substituted laws framed in accordance with the desires of their selfish hearts, in order that they might carry out their purposes (The Review and Herald, December 10, 1903).

Chapter 12

1. Abraham Chosen From Idolatrous Generation.—After the Flood the people once more increased on the earth, and wickedness also

increased. Idolatry became well-nigh universal, and the Lord finally left the hardened transgressors to follow their evil ways, while He chose Abraham, of the line of Shem, and made him the keeper of His law for future generations (MS 65, 1906).

Abraham's Family Touched by False Worship.—In that age, idolatry was fast creeping in and conflicting with the worship of the true God. But Abraham did not become an idolater. Although his own father was vacillating between the true and the false worship, and with his knowledge of the truth false theories and idolatrous practises were mingled, Abraham kept free from this infatuation. He was not ashamed of his faith, and made no effort to hide the fact that he made God his trust. He “buildded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord” (The Youth's Instructor, March 4, 1897).

2, 3 (John 8:56; Galatians 3:8). Abraham Saw Coming Redeemer.—Christ said to the Pharisees, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad” (John 8:56).

How did Abraham know of the coming of the Redeemer? God gave him light in regard to the future. He looked forward to the time when the Saviour should come to this earth, His divinity veiled by humanity. By faith he saw the world's Redeemer coming as God in the flesh. He saw the weight of guilt lifted from the human race, and borne by the divine substitute (MS 33, 1911).

(Ephesians 2:8). Keep Commandments Under Abrahamic Covenant.—If it were not possible for human beings under the Abrahamic covenant to keep the commandments of God, every soul of us is lost. The Abrahamic covenant is the covenant of grace. “By grace ye are saved.” [John 1:11, 12 quoted.] Disobedient children? No, obedient to all His commandments. If it were not possible for us to be commandment-keepers, then why does He make the obedience to His commandments the proof that we love Him? (Letter 16, 1892).

Chapter 13

10, 11. Lot Went in Rich; Came Out With Nothing.—He [Lot] chose a land which was beautiful in situation, which promised great returns. Lot went in rich, and came forth with nothing as the result of his choice. It makes every difference whether men place themselves in positions where they will have the very best help of correct influences, or whether they choose temporal advantages. There are many ways which lead to Sodom. We all need anointed eyesight, that we may discern the way that leads to God (Letter 109, 1899).

Lot Was Convinced of Mistake.—Lot chose Sodom for his home because he saw advantages to be gained there from a worldly point of view. But after he had established himself, and grown rich in earthly treasure, he was convinced that he had made a mistake in not taking into consideration the moral standing of the community in which he was to make his home (The Review and Herald, November 14, 1882).

Chapter 14

18-20. Melchizedek, Christ's Representative.—God has never left Himself without witness on the earth. At one time Melchisedek represented the Lord Jesus Christ in person, to reveal the truth of heaven, and perpetuate the law of God (Letter 190, 1905).

It was Christ that spoke through Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God. Melchisedek was not Christ, but he was the voice of God in the world, the representative of the Father. And all through the generations of the past, Christ has spoken; Christ has led His people, and has been the light of the world. When God chose Abraham as a representative of His truth, He took him out of his country, and away from his kindred, and set him apart. He desired to mold him after His own model. He desired to teach him according to His own plan (The Review and Herald, February 18, 1890).

20 (Genesis 28:22; Leviticus 27:30). Tithing

Goes Back to Days of Adam.—The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes, before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God's requirements they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of His mercies and blessings to them. This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham, who gave tithes to Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God. The same principle existed in the days of Job (The Signs of the Times, April 29, 1875).

Chapter 15

9-11. Let Nothing Mar Your Sacrifice.—Watch as faithfully as did Abraham lest the ravens or any birds of prey alight upon your sacrifice and offering to God. Every thought of doubt should be so guarded that it will not see the light of day by utterance. Light always flees from words which honor the powers of darkness (Letter 7, 1892).

16. God Bore Long for Sake of Good Amorites.—In the days of Abraham the Lord declared, “The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” He would not at that time allow them to be destroyed. In this is revealed the long-sufferance of God. The Amorites were at enmity against His law; they believed not in Him as the true and living God; but among them were a few good persons, and for the sake of these few, He forbore long. Centuries afterward, when the Israelites returned from Egypt to the promised land, the Amorites were “cast out before the children of Israel.” They finally suffered calamity because of continued willful disregard of the law of God (The Review and Herald, July 12, 1906).

(Ecclesiastes 8:11, 12). Rejection of Light Led to Destruction of Amorites.—The Amorites were inhabitants of Canaan, and the Lord had promised the land of Canaan to the Israelites; but a long interval must pass before His people should possess the land. He stated the reason why this interval must pass. He told them that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full, and their expulsion

and extermination could not be justified until they had filled up the cup of their iniquity. Idolatry and sin marked their course, but the measure of their guilt was not such that they could be devoted to destruction. In His love and pity God would let light shine upon them in more distinct rays; He would give them opportunity to behold the working of His wondrous power, that there might be no excuse for their course of evil. It is thus that God deals with the nations. Through a certain period of probation He exercises long-suffering toward nations, cities, and individuals. But when it is evident that they will not come unto Him that they might have life, judgments are visited upon them. The time came when judgment was inflicted upon the Amorites, and the time will come when all the transgressors of His law will know that God will by no means clear the guilty (The Review and Herald, May 2, 1893).

Chapter 18

19. Fulfilling Conditions Brings Blessing.—If parents would fulfill the conditions upon which

God has promised to be their strength, they would not fail of receiving His blessing in their households (The Review and Herald, May 21, 1895).

Chapter 19

12-14. Sodom Passed Boundary of Mercy.—The Sodomites had passed the boundary of mercy, and no more light was granted to them prior to their destruction. Had the warning gone through these cities of the plain, and had they been told just what was to come, who of them would have believed it? They would no more have accepted the message, and God knew it, than the sons-in-law of Lot (MS 19a, 1886).

16. Lot Paralyzed.—Lot was paralyzed by the great calamity about to occur; he was stupefied with grief at the thought of leaving all he held dear on earth (The Review and Herald, November 14, 1882).

Chapter 22

1 (James 1:13). God Permitted Circumstances to Test.—What is temptation?—It is the means by which those who claim to be the children of God are tested and tried. We read that God tempted Abraham, that He tempted the children of Israel. This means that He permitted circumstances to occur to test their faith, and lead them to look to Him for help. God permits temptation to come to His people today, that they may realize that He is their helper. If they draw nigh to Him when they are tempted, He strengthens them to meet the temptation. But if they yield to the enemy, neglecting to place themselves close to their Almighty Helper, they are overcome. They separate themselves from God. They do not give evidence that they walk in God's way (The Signs of the Times, March 12, 1912).

2. Nothing Too Precious to Give to God.—This act of faith in Abraham is recorded for our benefit. It teaches us the great lesson of confidence in the requirements of God, however close and

cutting they may be; and it teaches children perfect submission to their parents and to God. By Abraham's obedience we are taught that nothing is too precious for us to give to God (The Signs of the Times, January 27, 1887).

12. Every Gift Is the Lord's.—Abraham's test was the most severe that could come to a human being. Had he failed under it, he would never have been registered as the father of the faithful. Had he deviated from God's command, the world would have lost an inspiring example of unquestioning faith and obedience. The lesson was given to shine down through the ages, that we may learn that there is nothing too precious to be given to God. It is when we look upon every gift as the Lord's, to be used in His service, that we secure the heavenly benediction. Give back to God your intrusted possession, and more will be intrusted to you. Keep your possessions to yourself, and you will receive no reward in this life, and will lose the reward of the life to come (The Youth's Instructor, June 6, 1901).

Isaac a Figure of Christ.—The offering of Isaac was designed by God to prefigure the sacrifice of His Son. Isaac was a figure of the Son of God, who was offered a sacrifice for the sins of the world. God desired to impress upon Abraham the gospel of salvation to men; and in order to make the truth a reality, and to test his faith, He required Abraham to slay his darling Isaac. All the agony that Abraham endured during that dark and fearful trial was for the purpose of deeply impressing upon his understanding the plan of redemption for fallen man (The Youth's Instructor, March 1, 1900).

Chapter 25

29-34 (Hebrews 12:16, 17). Birthright Lost Value and Sacredness.—Esau had a special, strong desire for a particular article of food, and he had gratified self so long that he did not feel the necessity of turning from the tempting, coveted dish. He thought upon it, and made no special effort to restrain his appetite, until its power bore down every other consideration, and controlled

him, and he imagined he would suffer great inconvenience, and even death, if he could not have that particular dish. The more he thought upon it, the more his desire strengthened, until his birthright, which was sacred, lost its value and its sacredness. He thought, Well, if I now sell it, I can easily buy it back again.... When he sought to purchase it back, even at a great sacrifice on his part, he was not able to do so.... He sought for repentance carefully and with tears. It was all in vain. He had despised the blessing, and the Lord removed it from him forever (The Review and Herald, April 27, 1886).

Esau a Type.—Esau passed the crisis of his life without knowing it. What he regarded as a matter worthy of scarcely a thought was the act which revealed the prevailing traits of his character. It showed his choice, showed his true estimate of that which was sacred and which should have been sacredly cherished. He sold his birthright for a small indulgence to meet his present wants, and this determined the after course of his life. To Esau a morsel of meat was more than

the service of his Master (Letter 5, 1877).

Esau represents those who have not tasted of the privileges which are theirs, purchased for them at infinite cost, but have sold their birthright for some gratification of appetite, or for the love of gain (Letter 4, 1898).

Chapter 28

12. Those Who Mount Must Place Feet Firmly.—Jesus is the ladder to heaven, ...and God calls upon us to mount this ladder. But we cannot do this while we load ourselves down with earthly treasures. We wrong ourselves when we place our convenience and personal advantages before the things of God. There is no salvation in earthly possessions or surroundings. A man is not exalted in God's sight, or accredited by Him as possessing goodness, because he has earthly riches. If we gain a genuine experience in climbing, we shall learn that as we ascend we must leave every hindrance behind. Those who mount must place their feet firmly on every round of the ladder (The Signs of

the Times, February 1, 1899).

12, 13. Christ Bridges the Gulf.—Jacob thought to gain a right to the birthright through deception, but he found himself disappointed. He thought he had lost everything, his connection with God, his home, and all, and there he was a disappointed fugitive. But what did God do? He looked upon him in his hopeless condition, He saw his disappointment, and He saw there was material there that would render back glory to God. No sooner does He see his condition than He presents the mystic ladder, which represents Jesus Christ. Here is man, who had lost all connection with God, and the God of heaven looks upon him and consents that Christ shall bridge the gulf which sin has made. We might have looked and said, I long for heaven but how can I reach it? I see no way. That is what Jacob thought, and so God shows him the vision of the ladder, and that ladder connects earth with heaven, with Jesus Christ. A man can climb it, for the base rests upon the earth and the top-most round reaches into heaven....

Ye inhabitants of the earth, praise Him! And why? Because through Jesus Christ—whose long human arm encircles the race, while with His divine arm He grasps the throne of the Infinite—the gulf is bridged with His own body, and this atom of a world which was separated from the continent of heaven by sin and became an island is again reinstated, because Christ bridged the gulf (MS 5, 1891).

Chapter 31

50. Laban Understood the Wrong of Polygamy.—Laban understood the wrong of polygamy, although it was alone through his artifice that Jacob had taken two wives. He well knew that it was the jealousy of Leah and Rachel that led them to give their maids to Jacob, which confused the family relation, and increased the unhappiness of his daughters. And now as his daughters are journeying at a great distance from him, and their interest is to be entirely separate from his own, he would guard as far as possible their happiness. Laban would not have Jacob bring

still greater unhappiness upon himself and upon Leah and Rachel, by taking other wives (Spiritual Gifts 3:126).

Chapter 32

24. Victory Sure When Self Is Surrendered.—Jacob “had power over the angel, and prevailed.” Through humiliation, repentance, and self-surrender this sinful, erring mortal prevailed with the Majesty of heaven. He has fastened his trembling grasp on the promises of God, and the heart of infinite love could not turn away the sinner’s plea. ...

Let no one despair of gaining the victory. Victory is sure when self is surrendered to God (MS 2, 1903).

26 (Matthew 11:12). Determined Effort and Faith Essential.—Jacob was in fear and distress while he sought in his own strength to obtain the victory. He mistook the divine visitor for an enemy, and contended with him while he had any

strength left. But when he cast himself upon the mercy of God, he found that instead of being in the hands of an enemy, he was encircled in the arms of infinite love. He saw God face to face, and his sins were pardoned. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." This violence takes in the whole heart. To be double minded is to be unstable. Resolution, self-denial and consecrated effort are required for the work of preparation. The understanding and the conscience may be united; but if the will is not set to work, we shall make a failure. Every faculty and feeling must be engaged. Ardor and earnest prayer must take the place of listlessness and indifference. Only by earnest, determined effort and faith in the merits of Christ can we overcome, and gain the kingdom of heaven. Our time for work is short. Christ is soon to come the second time (The Youth's Instructor, May 24, 1900).

Chapter 35

2, 3. Jacob's Efforts to Remove Wrong Accepted.—Jacob was humbled, and required his

family to humble themselves, and to lay off all their ornaments, for he was to make an atonement for their sins, by offering a sacrifice unto God, that He might be entreated for them, and not leave them to be destroyed by other nations. God accepted the efforts of Jacob to remove the wrong from his family, and appeared unto him, and blessed him, and renewed the promise made to him, because His fear was before him (Spiritual Gifts 3:137).

Chapter 37

4. Joseph Illustrates Christ.—Joseph illustrates Christ. Jesus came to His own, but His own received Him not. He was rejected and despised, because His acts were righteous, and His consistent, self-denying life was a continual rebuke upon those who professed piety, but whose lives were corrupt. Joseph's integrity and virtue were fiercely assailed, and she who would lead him astray could not prevail, therefore her hatred was strong against the virtue and integrity which she could not corrupt, and she testified falsely against him. The innocent suffered because of his

righteousness. He was cast into prison because of his virtue. Joseph was sold to his enemies by his own brethren for a small sum of money. The Son of God was sold to His bitterest enemies by one of His own disciples. Jesus was meek and holy. His was a life of unexampled self-denial, goodness, and holiness. He was not guilty of any wrong. Yet false witnesses were hired to testify against Him. He was hated because He had been a faithful reprover of sin and corruption. Joseph's brethren stripped him of his coat of many colors. The executioners of Jesus cast lots for His seamless coat (Spiritual Gifts 3:174).

17-20. Joseph Shrank From Presence of His Brothers.—His [Joseph's] brothers rudely repulsed him. He told them his errand, but they answered him not. Joseph was alarmed at their angry looks. Fear took the place of joy, and he instinctively shrank with dread from their presence. They then took hold of him violently. They taunted him with the admonitions he had given them in the past, accused him of relating his dreams to exalt himself above them in the mind of their father, that

he might love him more than themselves (Spiritual Gifts 3:140).

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

Chapter 39

9. Early Impressions Fortified Heart.—The early impressions made upon his [Joseph's] mind garrisoned his heart in the hour of fierce temptation, and led him to exclaim, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Childhood is the season in which the most abiding impressions may be made....

The seeds sown in infancy by the careful, God-fearing mother will become trees of righteousness, which will blossom and bear fruit; and the lessons given by a God-fearing father by precept and example, will, as in the case of Joseph, yield an abundant harvest by-and-by (HR 1880).

Entire Future Suspended on Moment's Decision.—Few temptations are more dangerous or more fatal to young men than the temptation to sensuality and none if yielded to will prove so decidedly ruinous to soul and body for time and eternity. The welfare of his entire future is suspended upon the decision of a moment. Joseph

calmly casts his eyes to heaven for help, slips off his loose outer garment, leaving it in the hand of his tempter and while his eye is lighted with determined resolve in the place of unholy passion, he exclaims, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” The victory is gained; he flees from the enchanter; he is saved (Letter 3, 1879).

9-19. Providence Will Overrule Enemy’s Devices.—Amidst the snares to which all are exposed, they need strong and trustworthy defenses on which to rely. Many in this corrupt age have so small a supply of the grace of God, that in many instances their defense is broken down by the first assault, and fierce temptations take them captives. The shield of grace can preserve all unconquered by the temptations of the enemy, though surrounded with the most corrupting influences. By firm principle, and unwavering trust in God, their virtue and nobleness of character can shine, and, although surrounded with evil, no taint need be left upon their virtue and integrity. And if like Joseph they suffer calumny and false accusations,

Providence will overrule all the enemy's devices for good, and God will in His own time exalt as much higher, as for a while they were debased by wicked revenge (Spiritual Gifts 3:145, 146).

20 (Lamentations 3:27; Matthew 23:12). Seeming Prosperity of Vice, a Severe Test.—Joseph's faithful integrity led to the loss of his reputation and his liberty. This is the severest test that the virtuous and God-fearing are subjected to, that vice seems to prosper while virtue is trampled in the dust. The seducer was living in prosperity as a model of virtuous propriety, while Joseph, true to principle, was under a degrading charge of crime the most revolting. Joseph's religion kept his temper sweet and his sympathy with humanity warm and strong, notwithstanding all his trials. There are those who if they feel they are not rightly used, become sour, ungenerous, crabbed and uncourteous in their words and deportment. They sink down discouraged, hateful and hating others. But Joseph was a Christian. No sooner does he enter upon prison life, than he brings all the brightness of his Christian principles into active

exercise; he begins to make himself useful to others. He enters into the troubles of his fellow prisoners. He is cheerful, for he is a Christian gentleman. God was preparing him under this discipline for a situation of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness, and he was willing to learn; he took kindly to the lessons the Lord would teach him. He learned to bear the yoke in his youth. He learned to govern by first learning obedience himself. He humbled himself, and the Lord exalted him to special honor (Letter 3, 1879).

Hardships Prepared Joseph for Exalted Position.—The part which Joseph acted in connection with the scenes of the gloomy prison, was that which raised him finally to prosperity and honor. God designed that he should obtain an experience by temptations, adversity, and hardships, to prepare him to fill an exalted position (Spiritual Gifts 3:146).

Chapter 41

38-40. Secret of Fidelity.—Joseph carried his

religion everywhere, and this was the secret of his unwavering fidelity (MS 59, 1897).

38. Men Recognize a Living Connection With God.—He who receives Christ by living faith has a living connection with God, and is a vessel unto honor. He carries with him the atmosphere of heaven, which is the grace of God, a treasure that the world cannot buy. He who is in living connection with God may be in humble stations, yet his moral worth is as precious as was that of Joseph and Daniel, who were recognized by heathen kings as men with whom was the Spirit of God (MS 54, 1894).

Chapter 42

21. Joseph's Brothers Feared Slavery.—They [Joseph's brothers] sold Joseph as a slave, and they were fearful that God designed to punish them by suffering them to become slaves (Spiritual Gifts 3:156).

Chapter 45

5. Minds of Brothers Relieved.—They [Joseph's brothers] humbly confessed their wrongs which they had committed against Joseph, and entreated his forgiveness, and were greatly rejoiced to find that he was alive; for they had suffered remorse, and great distress of mind, since their cruelty toward him. And now as they knew that they were not guilty of his blood, their troubled minds were relieved (Spiritual Gifts 3:167).

Chapter 49

3, 4 (Ch. 39.9). Unstable as Water.—There are those to be met with everywhere who have no fixed principles. It is hard for them to resist temptation. Let it come from what quarter, and in what form it may, and every precaution must be taken to surround them with influences that will strengthen their moral power. Let them be separated from these helpful influences and association, be thrown with a class who are irreligious, and they will soon show that they have

no real hold from above; they trusted in their own strength. They have been praised and exalted when their feet were standing in sliding sand. They are like Reuben, unstable as water, having no inward rectitude, and like Reuben they will never excel. What you need is to see your dependence upon God, and to have a resolute heart. Be a man where you are; show strength of character where you are; be able, through Jesus Christ, to say, “No, I will not do this great wickedness, and sin against God.” That kind of easy good nature which can never nerve itself to give decided refusal to any proposal that would injure his moral and religious influence in the sight of God and of man is always under the control of Satan far more than under the control of the Spirit of God. They are led into evil very easily because they have a very accommodating disposition, and it hurts them to give a square No, “I will not do this wickedness and sin against God.” If invited to take a glass with merry men or women, they are led as an ox to the slaughter, they join with the impious, who laugh at the ready compliance afterwards. There is no interior strength to fall back upon. They do not make God

their trust. They have no high principles of duty
(Letter 48, 1887).

Chapter 2

Exodus

Chapter 1

1. See EGW comment on Deuteronomy 1:1.

8. Egyptians Sinned in Refusing Light.—The sin of the Egyptians was that they had refused the light which God had so graciously sent to them through Joseph (The Youth's Instructor, April 15, 1897).

Chapter 2

10 (Hebrews 11:26, 27). In Egypt Moses Studied Laws of God.—The strength of Moses was his connection with the Source of all power, the Lord God of hosts. He rises grandly above every earthly inducement, and trusts himself wholly to God. He considered that he was the Lord's. While he was connected with the official interests of the king of Egypt, he was constantly

studying the laws of God's government, and thus his faith grew. That faith was of value to him. It was deeply rooted in the soil of his earliest teachings, and the culture of his life was to prepare him for the great work of delivering Israel from bondage. He meditated on these things; he was constantly listening to his commission from God. After slaying the Egyptian, he saw that he had not understood God's plan, and he fled from Egypt and became a shepherd. He was no longer planning to do a great work, but he became very humble; the mists that were beclouding his mind were expelled, and he disciplined his mind to seek after God as his refuge (Letter 21a, 1893).

11 (Acts 7:22). Training for Two Generalships.—Moses was a man of intelligence. In the providence of God he was given opportunity to gain a fitness for a great work. He was thoroughly educated as a general. When he went out to meet the enemy, he was successful; and on his return from battle, his praises were sung by the whole army. Notwithstanding this, he constantly remembered that through him God purposed to

deliver the children of Israel (The Youth's Instructor, January 29, 1903).

Chapter 3

1. Jethro Singled Out.—Jethro was singled out from the darkness of the Gentile world to reveal the principles of heaven. God has ever had appointed agencies, and has ever given abundant evidences that these agencies were heaven-appointed and heaven-sent (Letter 190, 1905).

Moses Transferred to a Private School.—God transferred Moses from the courts of luxury, where his every wish was gratified, to a more private school. Here the Lord could commune with Moses and so educate him that he would obtain a knowledge of the hardships, trials, and perils of the wilderness (The Youth's Instructor, December 13, 1900).

2-5. Burning Bush a Reality.—It will baffle the keenest intellect to interpret the divine manifestation of the burning bush. It was not a

dream; it was not a vision; it was a living reality,— something that Moses saw with his eyes. He heard the voice of God calling to him out of the bush, and he covered his face, realizing that he stood in the immediate presence of God. God was conversing with humanity. Never could Moses describe the impression made upon his mind by the sight he then saw, and by the sound of the voice that spoke to him; but this impression was never effaced. Heaven came very near to him as, with reverent awe, he listened to the words, “I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” What wondrous condescension for God to leave the heavenly courts, and manifest Himself to Moses, talking with him face to face, “as a man speaketh unto his friend” (The Youth’s Instructor, December 20, 1900).

14. God Sees Future as We See Present.—I Am means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike to God. He sees the most remote events of past history, and the far distant future with as clear a vision as we do those things that are transpiring daily. We know not what is

before us, and if we did, it would not contribute to our eternal welfare. God gives us an opportunity to exercise faith and trust in the great I AM (Lt 119, 1895).

20. Plagues a Sign of God's Power Over All.—When the children of Israel were in bondage to the Egyptians, God revealed Himself as a God above all human authority, all human greatness. The signs and miracles He wrought in behalf of His people show His power over nature, and over the greatest among those who worshiped nature, who ignored the power that made nature.

God went through the proud land of Egypt just as He will go through the earth in the last days (The Review and Herald, July 10, 1900).

Chapter 4

10. Fearful of Bringing Self Into Work.—When, after Moses' time of preparation and trial was over, he was once more told to go and deliver Israel, he was self-distrustful, slow of speech,

timid. “Who am I,” he said, “that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” He pleaded as an excuse a lack of ready speech. He had been the general of the armies of Egypt, and he certainly knew how to speak. But he was afraid that he would bring self into his work (MS 11, 1903).

21. Rejection of Light Hardens Heart.—

Pharaoh saw the mighty working of the Spirit of God; he saw the miracles which the Lord performed by His servant; but he refused obedience to God’s command. The rebellious king had proudly inquired, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? ...[Exodus 5:2].” And as the judgments of God fell more and more heavily upon him, he persisted in stubborn resistance. By rejecting light from heaven, he became hard and unimpressible. The providence of God was revealing His power, and these manifestations, unacknowledged, were the means of hardening Pharaoh’s heart against greater light. Those who exalt their own ideas above the plainly specified will of God, are saying as did Pharaoh,

“Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?” Every rejection of light hardens the heart and darkens the understanding; and thus men find it more and more difficult to distinguish between right and wrong, and they become bolder in resisting the will of God (MS 3, 1885).

(Matthew 12:31, 32). God Gave Pharaoh Into Hands of Self.—Every additional evidence of the power of God that the Egyptian monarch resisted, carried him on to a stronger and more persistent defiance of God. Thus the work went on, finite man warring against the expressed will of an infinite God. This case is a clear illustration of the sin against the Holy Ghost. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Gradually the Lord withdrew His Spirit. Removing His restraining power, He gave the king into the hands of the worst of all tyrants,—self (The Review and Herald, July 27, 1897).

(Galatians 6:7). Pharaoh Sowed Obstnacy, Reaped Obstnacy.—“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Pharaoh sowed obstnacy,

and he reaped obstinacy. He himself put this seed into the soil. There was no more need for God by some new power to interfere with its growth, than there is for Him to interfere with the growth of a grain of corn. All that is required is that a seed shall be left to germinate and spring up to bring forth fruit after its kind. The harvest reveals the kind of seed that has been sown (MS 126, 1901).

Rebellion Produces Rebellion.—After the plague was stayed, the king refused to let Israel go. Rebellion produces rebellion. The king had become so hardened with his continual opposition to the will of God, that his whole being rose in rebellion to the awful exhibitions of His divine power (Spiritual Gifts 3:215).

Israel Would Be Preserved, Even if Pharaoh Had to Die.—Pharaoh hardened his heart against the Lord and he ventured, notwithstanding all the signs and mighty wonders he had witnessed, to threaten that if Moses and Aaron appeared before him again they should die. If the king had not become hardened in his rebellion against God, he

would have been humbled under a sense of the power of the living God who could save or destroy. He would have known that He who could do such miracles, and multiply His signs and wonders, would preserve the lives of His chosen servants, even if He should have to slay the king of Egypt (Spiritual Gifts 3:220).

Chapter 7

10-12. Magicians' Work a Counterfeit.—The magicians seemed to perform several things with their enchantments similar to those things which God wrought by the hand of Moses and Aaron. They did not really cause their rods to become serpents, but by magic, aided by the great deceiver, made them to appear like serpents, to counterfeit the work of God. Satan assisted his servants to resist the work of the Most High, in order to deceive the people, and encourage them in their rebellion. Pharaoh would grasp at the least evidence he could obtain to justify himself in resisting the work of God, performed by Moses and Aaron. He told these servants of God that his

magicians could do all these wonders. The difference between the work of God and that of the magicians was, one was of God, and the other of Satan. One was true, the other false (Spiritual Gifts 3:205, 206).

Chapter 8

7. Pharaoh Continued Devotions During Plagues.—During the plagues on Egypt Pharaoh was punctual in his superstitious devotion to the river, and visited it every morning, and as he stood upon its banks he offered praise and thanksgiving to the water, recounting the great good it accomplished, and telling the water of its great power; that without it they could not exist; for their lands were watered by it, and it supplied meat for their tables (4SG 54, 55).

Chapter 9

3. Effect of Plagues Tested.—Those who regarded the word of the Lord gathered their cattle into barns and houses, while those whose hearts

were hardened, like Pharaoh's, left their cattle in the field. Here was an opportunity to test the exalted pride of the Egyptians, and to show the number whose hearts were really affected by the wonderful dealings of God with His people, whom they had despised and cruelly entreated (Spiritual Gifts 3:214).

Chapter 11

1, 8. Moses Fearlessly Met Pharaoh Again.—Notwithstanding Moses had been forbidden to come again into the presence of Pharaoh, for in the day he should see his face he should die, yet he had one more message from God for the rebellious king, and he firmly walked into his presence, and stood fearlessly before him to declare to him the word of the Lord....

As Moses told the king of the plague which would come upon them, more dreadful than any had yet visited Egypt, which would cause all his great counselors to bow down before him, and entreat the Israelites to leave Egypt, the king was

exceedingly angry. He was enraged because he could not intimidate Moses, and make him tremble before his kingly authority. But Moses leaned for support upon a mightier arm than that of any earthly monarch (Spiritual Gifts 3:221, 222).

Chapter 12

31, 32. Pharaoh Brought From Pride to Humility.—When the Egyptians, from the king upon his throne down to the lowliest servant, were afflicted, and their firstborn were slain, then there was wailing throughout all Egypt. Then Pharaoh remembered his proud boast, “Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” He humbled himself and went with his counselors and his rulers to Goshen in haste, and bowed before Moses and Aaron, and bid them go and serve their God. Their flocks and herds should go also as they had requested. They implored them to be gone, fearing if they continued longer, they would be all as dead men. Pharaoh also entreated Moses to bless him, thinking at the time that a blessing from the servant

of God would protect him from the further effects of the dreadful plague (Spiritual Gifts 3:246).

38. Many Egyptians Acknowledged God.—

There was quite a large number of the Egyptians who were led to acknowledge, by manifestations of the signs and wonders shown in Egypt, that the God of the Hebrews was the only true God. They entreated to be permitted to come to the houses of the Israelites with their families, upon that fearful night when the angel of God should slay the firstborn of the Egyptians. They were convinced that their gods whom they had worshiped were without knowledge, and had no power to save or to destroy. And they pledged themselves to henceforth choose the God of Israel as their God. They decided to leave Egypt, and go with the children of Israel to worship their God. The Israelites welcomed the believing Egyptians to their houses (Spiritual Gifts 3:224, 225).

Chapter 14

15, 16, 21, 22. Hand of Christ Rolled Back

Waters.—The mighty hand of Christ rolled back the waters of the Red Sea, so that they stood up like a wall. Thus He made a dry passage through the sea, and Israel passed over dryshod (MS 155, 1899).

23, 26-28. Pursuit of Israel Closed Egyptians' Probation.—When the whole army,—“all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen,”—were in the very bed of the sea, the Lord said unto Moses, “Stretch out thy rod over the sea.” Israel had passed over on dry land, but they heard the shouting of the armies in pursuit. As Moses stretched out his rod over the sea, the embanked waters that had stood as a great wall, rolled on in their natural course. Of all the men of Egypt in that vast army, not one escaped. All perished in their determination to have their own way and to refuse God's way. That occasion was the end of their probation (MS 35, 1906).

25-27. Pharaoh Perished in Red Sea.—The monarch hardened his heart, and went on from one step to another of unbelief, until throughout the

vast realm of Egypt the firstborn, the pride of every household, had been laid low. After this he hurried with his army after Israel. He sought to bring back a people delivered by the arm of Omnipotence. But he was fighting against a Power greater than any human power, and with his host he perished in the waters of the Red Sea (MS 126, 1901).

Chapter 15

23-25 (Jeremiah 8:22). A Balm for Every Wound.—When Moses presented before the Lord the sad difficulties of the children of Israel, He did not present some new remedy, but called their attention to that which was at hand; for there was a bush or shrub which He had created that was to be cast into the water to make the fountain sweet and pure. When this was done, the suffering people could drink of the water with safety and pleasure. God has provided a balm for every wound. There is a balm in Gilead, there is a physician there (Letter 65a, 1894).

Chapter 16

3 (1 Corinthians 6:20). Effects of Appetite in Israel's Experience.—Whenever their appetite was restricted, the Israelites were dissatisfied, and murmured and complained against Moses and Aaron, and against God.... But God was proving His people. In order to develop what was in their hearts, He allowed them to pass through severe trials. When they failed, He brought them around to the same point again, trying them a little more closely and severely

In Egypt their taste had become perverted. God designed to restore their appetite to a pure, healthy state, in order that they might enjoy the simple fruits that were given to Adam and Eve in Eden. He was about to establish them in a second Eden, a goodly land, where they might enjoy the fruits and grains that He would provide for them. He purposed to remove the feverish diet upon which they had subsisted in Egypt; for He wished them to be in perfect health and soundness when they entered the goodly land to which He was leading

them, so that the surrounding heathen nations might be constrained to glorify the God of Israel, the God who had done so wonderful a work for His people. Unless the people who acknowledged Him as the God of heaven were in perfect soundness of health, His name could not be glorified.

If the Israelites had submitted to God's requirements, they would have had a healthy posterity. But they chose to follow their own way, walking after the imagination of their own hearts. They gratified their appetites and consulted their own tastes and wishes. As a result, the wilderness was strewn with their dead bodies. Of all the vast multitude that left Egypt, six hundred thousand mighty men of war, besides women and children, only two entered the promised land (MS 69, 1912).

10. Cost of Disobedience.—If all the teachings given by Christ when enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, had been obeyed, the Jewish nation would have stood forth to glorify God above every nation and people upon the face of the earth. Jerusalem need not have been destroyed. But she disregarded

the commandments of God, while professedly regarding them (Letter 195, 1899).

14, 15. Wilderness Diet Made Israel More Manageable.—If the Israelites had been given the diet to which they had been accustomed while in Egypt, they would have exhibited the unmanageable spirit that the world is exhibiting today. In the diet of men and women in this age there are included many things that the Lord would not have permitted the children of Israel to eat. The human family as it is today is an illustration of what the children of Israel would have been if God had allowed them to eat the food and follow the habits and customs of the Egyptians (Letter 44, 1903).

29 (Ch. 20:8-11). Miracle Preserved Sabbath.—By a miracle God preserved the Sabbath law through the forty years of wilderness wandering (MS 77, 1899).

Chapter 17

14-16 (1 Samuel 15:2, 3). Amalek Doomed to Destruction.—Many years before, God had appointed Amalek to utter destruction. They had lifted up their hands against God, and His throne, and had taken oath by their gods that Israel should be utterly consumed, and the God of Israel brought down so that He would not be able to deliver them out of their hands.

Amalek had made derision of the fears of his people, and made sport of God's wonderful works for the deliverance of Israel performed by the hand of Moses before the Egyptians. They had boasted that their wise men and magicians could perform all those wonders. And if the children of Israel had been their captives, in their power as they were in Pharaoh's, that the God of Israel Himself would not have been able to deliver them out of their hands. They despised Israel, and vowed to plague them until there should not be one left (4SG 72, 73).

God did not wish His people to possess anything which belonged to the Amalekites, for His curse rested upon them and their possessions. He designed that they should have an end, and that His people should not preserve anything for themselves which He had cursed. He also wished the nations to see the end of that people who had defied Him, and to mark that they were destroyed by the very people they had despised. They were not to destroy them to add to their own possessions, or to get glory to themselves, but to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken in regard to Amalek (Spiritual Gifts 3:75).

Chapter 18

13. See EGW comment on Numbers 12:3.

Chapter 19

3. Ancient Instruction to Be Studied.—The instructions given to Moses for ancient Israel, with their sharp, rigid outlines, are to be studied and obeyed by the people of God today (Letter 259,

1903).

Moses and God in Secret Council.—Moses, the visible leader of the Israelites, was admitted into the secret councils of the Most High. The people were given evidence that Moses did indeed talk with God, receiving from Him the instruction given them ((Ibid.).

3-8. God's Covenant Our Refuge.—The covenant that God made with His people at Sinai is to be our refuge and defense. The Lord said to Moses:—

“Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, than ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”

“And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words.”

“And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.”

This covenant is of just as much force today as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel (The Southern Work, March 1, 1904).

7, 8 (quoted) (Isaiah 56:5). A Pledge to the Covenant.—This is the pledge that God’s people are to make in these last days. Their acceptance with God depends on a faithful fulfilment of the terms of their agreement with Him. God includes in His covenant all who will obey Him. To all who will do justice and judgment, keeping their hand from doing any evil, the promise is, “Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off” (The Review and Herald, June 23, 1904).

9. Glory of Cloud Emanated From Christ.—

The cloud that guided Israel, stood over the tabernacle. The glory of the cloud emanated from Jesus Christ, who from the midst of the glory talked with Moses, as He had talked with him from the burning bush. The brightness of God's presence was enshrouded in the darkness of the cloud which He made His pavilion, that the people could endure to look upon the cloud, as seeing Him who is invisible. This was God's plan whereby He might approach man (MS 126, 1901).

Chapter 20

1-17 (Nehemiah 9:6-15). Father by Side of Son in Giving Law.—When the law was spoken, the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, stood by the side of His Son, enshrouded in the fire and the smoke on the mount. It was not here that the law was first given; but it was proclaimed, that the children of Israel, whose ideas had become confused in their association with idolaters in Egypt, might be reminded of its terms, and

understand what constitutes the true worship of Jehovah (The Signs of the Times, October 15, 1896).

Adam and Eve Knew the Law.—Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God. It was printed on their hearts, and they understood its claims upon them (MS 99, 1902).

The law of God existed before man was created. It was adapted to the condition of holy beings; even angels were governed by it. After the fall, the principles of righteousness were unchanged. Nothing was taken from the law; not one of its holy precepts could be improved. And as it has existed from the beginning, so will it continue to exist throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. “Concerning thy testimonies,” says the psalmist, “I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever (The Signs of the Times, April 15, 1886).

Law Suited to Holy Order of Beings.—The Sabbath of the fourth commandment was instituted

in Eden. After God had made the world, and created man upon the earth, He made the Sabbath for man. After Adam's sin and fall nothing was taken from the law of God. The principles of the ten commandments existed before the fall, and were of a character suited to the condition of a holy order of beings. After the fall, the principles of those precepts were not changed, but additional precepts were given to meet man in his fallen state (Spiritual Gifts 3:295).

Worded to Meet Fallen Intelligences.—The law of Jehovah dating back to creation, was comprised in the two great principles, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” These two great principles embrace the first four commandments, showing the duty of man to God, and the last six, showing the duty of man to his fellowman. The principles were more explicitly stated to man after

the fall, and worded to meet the case of fallen intelligences. This was necessary in consequence of the minds of men being blinded by transgression (The Signs of the Times, April 15, 1875 [Reprinted in RH May 6, 1875]).

The law of God existed before the creation of man or else Adam could not have sinned. After the transgression of Adam the principles of the law were not changed, but were definitely arranged and expressed to meet man in his fallen condition. Christ, in counsel with His Father, instituted the system of sacrificial offerings; that death, instead of being immediately visited upon the transgressor, should be transferred to a victim which should prefigure the great and perfect offering of the son of God (The Signs of the Times, March 14, 1878).

Precepts Given to Guard Decalogue.—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 Signs of the Times, April 15, 1875 [Reprinted in The Review and Herald, May 6, 1875]).

(Isaiah 58:13, 14). Every Specification Is God's Character.—The God of heaven has placed a benediction upon them that keep the commandments of God. Shall we stand as a peculiar people of God, or shall we trample upon the law of God and say it is not binding? God might just as well have abolished Himself. In the law every specification is the character of the infinite God (MS 12, 1894).

Law Denounces Slightest Sin.—God has given His law for the regulation of the conduct of nations, of families, and of individuals. There is not one worker of wickedness, though his act be the lightest and the most secret, that escapes the

denunciation of that law (MS 58, 1897).

Holiness Made Known.—Our duty to obey this law is to be the burden of this last message of mercy to the world. God's law is not a new thing. It is not holiness created, but holiness made known. It is a code of principles expressing mercy, goodness, and love. It presents to fallen humanity the character of God, and states plainly the whole duty of man (MS 88, 1897).

(John 14:15). Ten Commandments—Ten Promises.—The ten commandments, Thou shalt, and Thou shalt not, are ten promises, assured to us if we render obedience to the law governing the universe. “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” Here is the sum and substance of the law of God. The terms of salvation for every son and daughter of Adam are here outlined (MS 41, 1896).

The ten holy precepts spoken by Christ upon Sinai's mount were the revelation of the character of God, and made known to the world the fact that

He had jurisdiction over the whole human heritage. That law of ten precepts of the greatest love that can be presented to man is the voice of God from heaven speaking to the soul in promise, “This do, and you will not come under the dominion and control of Satan.” There is not a negative in that law, although it may appear thus. It is DO, and Live (Letter 89, 1898).

(Romans 12:1; 2 Peter 1:4). A Wall of Protection.—In the ten commandments God has laid down the laws of His kingdom. Any violation of the laws of nature is a violation of the law of God.

The Lord has given His holy commandments to be a wall of protection around His created beings, and those who will keep themselves from the defilement of appetite and passion may become partakers of the divine nature. Their perceptions will be clear. They will know how to preserve every faculty in health, so that it may be presented to God in service. The Lord can use them: for they understand the words of the great apostle, “I

beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (MS 153, 1899).

3-17 (Proverbs 4:20-22). Health in Obedience to God’s Law.—The love of Jesus in the soul will banish all hatred, selfishness, and envy; for the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. There is health in obedience to God’s law. The affections of the obedient are drawn out after God. Looking unto the Lord Jesus, we may encourage and serve one another. The love of Christ is shed abroad in our souls, and there is no dissension and strife among us (MS 152, 1901).

No Others Professed to Keep Commandments.—The ancient Jewish church were the highly favored people of God, brought out of Egypt and acknowledged as His own peculiar treasure. The many and exceeding great and precious promises to them as a people, were the hope and confidence of the Jewish church. Herein they trusted, and believed their salvation sure. No

other people professed to be governed by the commandments of God (Redemption: or the First Advent of Christ, p. 35).

3. Self-dependence Is Idolatry.—Idolaters are condemned by the Word of God. Their folly consists in trusting in self for salvation, in bowing down to the works of their own hands. God classes as idolaters those who trust in their own wisdom, their own devising, depending for success on their riches and power, striving to strengthen themselves by alliance with men whom the world calls great, but who fail to discern the binding claims of His law (The Review and Herald, March 15, 1906).

False Conceptions of God Are Idolatry.—Are we worshipers of Jehovah, or of Baal? of the living God, or of idols? No outward shrines may be visible; there may be no image for the eye to rest upon; yet we may be practising idolatry. It is as easy to make an idol of cherished ideas or objects as to fashion gods of wood or stone. Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false God as were the

servants of Baal (The Review and Herald, December 3, 1908).

Satan Plants Throne Between Heaven and Earth.—Satan accomplished the fall of man, and since that time it has been his work to efface in man the image of God, and to stamp upon human hearts his own image. Possessing supremacy in guilt, he claims supremacy for himself, and exercises over his subjects the power of royalty. He cannot expel God from His throne, but through the system of idolatry, he plants his own throne between the heaven and the earth, between God and the human worshiper (The Review and Herald, October 22, 1895).

4-6. Second Commandment and Pictures.—A few condemned pictures, urging that they are prohibited by the second commandment, and that everything of this kind should be destroyed.... The second commandment prohibits image worship; but God himself employed pictures and symbols to represent to His prophets lessons which He would have them give to the people, and which could thus

be better understood than if given in any other way. He appealed to the understanding through the sense of sight. Prophetic history was presented to Daniel and John in symbols, and these were to be represented plainly upon tables, that he who read might understand (Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 212).

8-11 (Genesis 2:9, 16, 17; Exodus 16:29). Sabbath, a Test of Loyalty.—Every man has been placed on trial, as were Adam and Eve in Eden. As the tree of knowledge was placed in the midst of the garden of Eden, so the Sabbath command is placed in the midst of the decalogue. In regard to the fruit of the tree of knowledge, the restriction was made, “Ye shall not eat of it, ...lest ye die” [Genesis 3:3]. Of the Sabbath, God said, Ye shall not defile it, but keep it holy.... As the tree of knowledge was the test of Adam’s obedience, so the fourth command is the test that God has given to prove the loyalty of all His people. The experience of Adam is to be a warning to us so long as time shall last. It warns us not to receive

any assurance from the mouth of men or of angels that will detract one jot or tittle from the sacred law of Jehovah (The Review and Herald, August 30, 1898).

14. False Worship Is Spiritual Adultery.—All false worship is spiritual adultery. The second precept, which forbids false worship, is also a command to worship God, and Him only serve. The Lord is a jealous God. He will not Be trifled with. He has spoken concerning the manner in which He should be worshiped. He has a hatred of idolatry; for its influence is corrupting. It debases the mind, and leads to sensuality and all kinds of sin (MS 126, 1901).

16 (Galatians 6:7). Flippant Speech May Be False Witness.—Slander covers more ground than we suppose. The command, “Thou shalt not bear false witness,” means very much more than we realize. False witness is borne again and again in flippant speech concerning even the workers whom God has sent. The seeds of envy, of evil thinking and evil speaking, germinate and produce a harvest

of their kind, to be garnered by the one who planted the seed. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Letter 9, 1892).

Chapter 21

1-6. Care of the Interests of Servants.—The Lord desired to guard the interests of servants. He commanded the Israelites to be merciful, and to bear in mind that they themselves had been servants. They were directed to be mindful of the rights of their servants. In no case were they to abuse them. In dealing with them they were not to be exacting, as the Egyptian taskmasters had been with them. They were to exercise tenderness and compassion in the treatment of their servants. God desired them to put themselves in the place of the servants, and deal with them as they would wish others to deal with them under the same circumstances.

Because of poverty, some were sold into bondage by their parents. Others who were sentenced for crimes by the judges were sold into

bondage. The Lord specified that even these were not to be held as bond-servants for more than seven years. At the end of that time every servant was given his freedom, or, if he chose, he was allowed to remain with his master. Thus God guarded the interests of the lowly and the oppressed. Thus He enjoined a noble spirit of generosity, and encouraged all to cultivate a love for liberty, because the Lord had made them free. Any one who refused liberty when it was his privilege to have it, was marked. This was not a badge of honor to him, but a mark of disgrace. Thus God encouraged the cultivation of a high and noble spirit, rather than a spirit of bondage and slavery.

God desires Christians to respect the liberty that He has in so marvelous a manner given them. In Christ is vested the ownership of every man. Man should not be another man's property. God has bought mankind. One man's mind, one man's power, should not rule and control another's conscience. In the sight of God wealth and position do not exalt one man above another. Men are free to choose the service of God, to love the Lord, and

to keep all His commandments (MS 126, 1901).

Chapter 23

16 (John 7). Christ's Sacrifice Provides Bounties.—The rivers of blood that flowed at the harvest thanksgiving, when the sacrifices were offered in such large numbers, were meant to teach a great truth. For even the productions of the earth, the bounties provided for man's sustenance, we are indebted to the offering of Christ upon the cross of Calvary. God teaches us that all we receive from Him is the gift of redeeming love (The Review and Herald, November 10, 1896).

Chapter 24

4-8. Ratification of the Covenant.—Preparation was now made for the ratification of the covenant, according to God's directions. ...

Here the people received the conditions of the covenant. They made a solemn covenant with God, typifying the covenant made between God and

every believer in Jesus Christ. The conditions were plainly laid before the people. They were not left to misunderstand them. When they were requested to decide whether they would agree to all the conditions given, they unanimously consented to obey every obligation. They had already consented to obey God's commandments. The principles of the law were now particularized, that they might know how much was involved in covenanting to obey the law; and they accepted the specifically defined particulars of the law.

If the Israelites had obeyed God's requirements, they would have been practical Christians. They would have been happy; for they would have been keeping God's ways, and not following the inclinations of their own natural hearts. Moses did not leave them to misconstrue the words of the Lord or to misapply His requirements. He wrote all the words of the Lord in a book, that they might be referred to afterward. In the mount he had written them as Christ Himself dictated them.

Bravely did the Israelites speak the words promising obedience to the Lord, after hearing His covenant read in the audience of the people. They said, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Then the people were set apart and sealed to God. A sacrifice was offered to the Lord. A portion of the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled upon the altar. This signified that the people had consecrated themselves—body, mind, and soul—to God. A portion was sprinkled upon the people. This signified that through the sprinkled blood of Christ, God graciously accepted them as His special treasure. Thus the Israelites entered into a solemn covenant with God (MS 126, 1901).

Chapter 25

17-22. Living Angels Beside Heavenly Ark.—The ark of the earthly sanctuary was the pattern of the true ark in heaven. There, beside the heavenly ark, stand living angels, each with one wing overshadowing the mercy-seat, and stretching forth on high, while the other wings are folded over

their forms in token of reverence and humility (The Signs of the Times, March 21, 1911).

Chapter 26

31. Temple Vail Renewed Yearly.—At the moment in which Christ died, there were priests ministering in the temple before the vail which separated the holy from the most holy place. Suddenly they felt the earth tremble beneath them, and the vail of the temple, a strong, rich drapery that had been renewed yearly, was rent in twain from top to bottom by the same bloodless hand that wrote the words of doom upon the walls of Belshazzar's palace (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:166, 167).

Chapter 27

1 (Ch. 38:1). Service of Altar Restored.—Directions were given for building an altar for the offering of sacrifices, a service which had been almost wholly discontinued. While in Egyptian bondage the people's ideas of sacrifice had been

largely molded by the ideas of the Egyptians who had themselves learned from Israel when they first went into Egypt, but who had mingled with truth the falsehood of idolatry. They had most indecent practices in connection with the worship at their heathen altars. The law given in Eden and repeated on Sinai was essential for the Israel of God; for during the bondage in Egypt the claims of God and His commandments had been lost sight of. This is why the Lord uttered His holy law with an audible voice in the hearing of all the people. He desired that they should hear His commandments and obey them (MS 58, 1900).

Chapter 31

1-6 (1 Timothy 5:13). Meddling Punished by Death.—The Lord loves to see His work done as perfectly as possible. In the wilderness, the Israelites had to learn to accomplish with exactness and promptness the work connected with the order of the camp and especially the work of the tabernacle, its ornaments, and its service. All had to learn before they could accomplish this, to them

new work. They had to be trained before they could do it as God desired. There were men there ready to give counsel and advice and to meddle with the work of mounting and dismounting the tabernacle; and those who neglected their special work to meddle with the work of others, thinking they had special wisdom and knew how it should be done, were put to death. Each one had to be taught the value of promptness and exactness in every position of trust. The memory had to be taxed, and they had to realize the responsibility of doing everything in due time.

This is the discipline which the Lord anciently gave to His people, and it is the discipline which should exist in our missions, our colleges, our publishing houses, our sanitariums. God likes to see men understand their weak points, and instead of closing their eyes to their defects, they should make persevering efforts to overcome them (MS 24, 1887).

How Could the Work Be Done?—Israel had been held all their days in the bondage of Egypt,

and although there were ingenious men among them, they had not been instructed in the curious arts which were called for in the building of the tabernacle. They knew how to make bricks, but they did not understand how to work in gold and silver. How was the work to be done? Who was sufficient for these things? These were questions that troubled the mind of Moses.

Then God Himself explained how the work was to be accomplished. He signified by name the persons He desired to do a certain work. Bezaleel was to be the architect. This man belonged to the tribe of Judah,—a tribe that God delighted to honor (MS 29, 1908).

2-7. Did Not Depend on Skilled Egyptians.—
In ancient times, the Lord instructed Moses to build Him a sanctuary. The people were to provide the material, and skillful men must be found to handle the precious material. Among the multitude were Egyptians, who had acted as overseers for such work, and thoroughly understood how it should be done. But the work was not dependent upon them.

The Lord united with human agencies, giving them wisdom to work skillfully. [Exodus 31:2-7 quoted.]

Let the workmen in the service of God today pray to Him for wisdom and keen foresight, that they may do their work perfectly (MS 52, 1903).

13 (Ch. 25:8). Sabbath Kept During Construction.—God directed that a tabernacle should be built, where the Israelites, during their wilderness-journeying, could worship Him. Orders from heaven were given that this tabernacle should be built without delay. Because of the sacredness of the work and the need for haste, some argued that the work of the tabernacle should be carried forward on the Sabbath, as well as on the other days of the week. Christ heard these suggestions, and saw that the people were in great danger of being ensnared by concluding that they would be justified in working on the Sabbath that the tabernacle might be completed as quickly as possible. The word came to them, “Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep.” Though the work on the tabernacle must be carried forward with expedition,

the Sabbath must not be employed as a working day. Even the work on the Lord's house must give way to the sacred observance of the Lord's rest day. Thus jealous is God for the honor of His memorial of creation (The Review and Herald, October 28, 1902).

18. Original Law in Heavenly Ark.—I warn you, Do not place your influence against God's commandments. That law is just as Jehovah wrote it in the temple of heaven. Man may trample upon its copy here below, but the original is kept in the ark of God in heaven; and on the cover of this ark, right above that law, is the mercy seat. Jesus stands right there before that ark to mediate for man (MS 6a, 1886).

Law Preserved in Ark.—“And He [Christ] gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communicating with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written by the finger of God.” Nothing written on those tables could be blotted out. The precious record of the law was placed in the ark of the testament and is

still there, safely hidden from the human family. But in God's appointed time He will bring forth these tables of stone to be a testimony to all the world against the disregard of His commandments and against the idolatrous worship of a counterfeit Sabbath (MS 122, 1901).

There are abundant evidences of the immutability of God's law. It was written with the finger of God, never to be obliterated, never to be destroyed. The tables of stone are hidden by God, to be produced in the great judgment-day, just as He wrote them (The Review and Herald, March 26, 1908).

When the judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, and every man shall be judged according to the things written in the books, then the tables of stone, hidden by God until that day, will be presented before the world as the standard of righteousness. Then men and women will see that the prerequisite of their salvation is obedience to the perfect law of God. None will find excuse for sin. By the righteous principles of that law, men

will receive their sentence of life or of death (The Review and Herald, January 28, 1909).

Chapter 32

1, 2. Aaron's Sin, Pacifying.—We repeat the sin of Aaron, pacifying, when the eyesight should be clear to discern evil and state it plainly, even if it places us in an unpleasant position, because our motives may be misapprehended. We must not suffer wrong upon a brother or any soul with whom we are connected. This neglect to stand up firmly for truth was the sin of Aaron. Had he spoken the truth plainly, that golden calf would never have been made. The same spirit that led him to shun to declare the whole truth for fear of offending, led him to act a falsehood in pointing to the golden calf as a representation of the One who brought them from Egypt. Thus one unfaithfulness leads to another (Letter 10, 1896).

4, 5. Idol Proclaimed God.—The result of their murmuring and unbelief was that Aaron made them a golden calf to represent God. He

proclaimed this idol to be God, and a great deal of enthusiasm was created over this false God (The Review and Herald, September 6, 1906).

19. Tables of Law Purposely Broken.—In utter discouragement and wrath because of their great sin, he [Moses] threw down the tables of stone by divine direction purposely to break them in the sight of the people, and thus signify that they had broken the covenant so recently made with God (The Signs of the Times, May 20, 1880).

Chapter 34

28 (Matthew 4:1-11). No Pangs of Hunger.—Moses had, on special occasions, been thus long [forty days] without food. But he felt not the pangs of hunger. He was not harassed and tormented by a vile yet powerful foe. Moses was elevated above the human, and was enshrouded in the glory of God, and was especially sustained of God. The excellent glory inclosed him (Redemption: or the First Advent of Christ, pages 47, 48).

29. Christ Is the Glory of the Law.—The glory that shone on the face of Moses was a reflection of the righteousness of Christ in the law. The law itself would have no glory, only that in it Christ is embodied. It has no power to save. It is lusterless only as in it Christ is represented as full of righteousness and truth (The Review and Herald, April 22, 1902).

29-33 (2 Corinthians 3:13-15). Moses Saw the Day of Christ.—In the mount, when the law was given to Moses, the Coming One was shown to him also. He saw Christ's work, and His mission to earth, when the Son of God should take upon Himself humanity, and become a teacher and a guide to the world, and at last give Himself a ransom for their sins. When the perfect Offering should be made for the sins of men, the sacrificial offerings typifying the work of the Messiah were to cease. With the advent of Christ, the veil of uncertainty was to be lifted, and a flood of light shed upon the darkened understanding of His people.

As Moses saw the day of Christ, and the new and living way of salvation that was to be opened through His blood, he was captivated and entranced. The praise of God was in his heart, and the divine glory that attended the giving of the law was so strikingly revealed in his countenance when he came down from the mount to walk with Israel, that the brightness was painful. Because of their transgressions, the people were unable to look upon his face, and he wore a veil that he might not terrify them....

Had the Israelites discerned the gospel light that was opened to Moses, had they been able by faith to look steadfastly to the end of that which was abolished, they could have endured the light which was reflected from the countenance of Moses. "But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ." The Jews as a people did not discern that the Messiah whom they rejected, was the Angel who guided their fathers in their travels in the wilderness. To this day the veil is upon their

hearts, and its darkness hides from them the good news of salvation through the merits of a crucified Redeemer (The Signs of the Times, August 25, 1887).

Chapter 3

Leviticus

Chapter 1

1, 2. Become Familiar With Levitical Law.—

We are to become familiar with the Levitical law in all its bearings; for it contains rules that must be obeyed; it contains the instruction that if studied will enable us to understand better the rule of faith and practice that we are to follow in our dealings with one another. No soul has any excuse for being in darkness. Those who receive Christ by faith will receive also power to become the sons of God (Letter 3, 1905).

3 (Malachi 1:13). Every Sacrifice Inspected by God.—It is Christ who searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men. All things are naked and open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight. In the days of ancient Israel the sacrifices brought to the high priest were

cut open to the backbone to see if they were sound at heart. So the sacrifices we bring today are laid open before the piercing eye of our great High Priest. He opens and inspects every sacrifice brought by the human race, that He may prove whether it is worthy of being presented to the Father (MS 42, 1901).

Chapter 5

6. Bring a Trespass Offering.—Let the members of every family begin to work over against their own houses. Let them humble themselves before God. It would be well to have a trespass-offering box in sight, and have all the household agree that whosoever speaks unkindly of another or utters angry words, shall drop into the trespass-offering box a certain sum of money. This would put them upon their guard against the wicked words which work injury, not only to their brethren, but to themselves. No man of himself can tame the unruly member, the tongue; but God will do the work for him who comes unto Him with contrite heart in faith and with humble

supplication. By the help of God, bridle your tongues; talk less, and pray more (The Review and Herald, March 12, 1895).

Chapter 8

31. Sin Offering of Officiating Priest.—The sins of the people were transferred in figure to the officiating priest, who was a mediator for the people. The priest could not himself become an offering for sin, and make an atonement with his life, for he was also a sinner. Therefore, instead of suffering death himself, he killed a lamb without blemish; the penalty of sin was transferred to the innocent beast, which thus became his immediate substitute, and typified the perfect offering of Jesus Christ. Through the blood of this victim, man looked forward by faith to the blood of Christ which would atone for the sins of the world (The Signs of the Times, March 14, 1878).

Chapter 10

1 (Ch. 16:12, 13). Strange Fire Offered

Today.—God has not changed. He is as particular and exact in His requirements now as He was in the days of Moses. But in the sanctuaries of worship in our day, with the songs of praise, the prayers, and the teaching from the pulpit, there is not merely strange fire, but positive defilement. Instead of truths being preached with holy unction from God, it is sometimes spoken under the influence of tobacco and brandy. Strange fire indeed! Bible truth and Bible holiness are presented to the people, and prayers are offered to God, mingled with the stench of tobacco! Such incense is most acceptable to Satan! A terrible deception is this! What an offence in the sight of God! What an insult to Him who is holy, dwelling in light unapproachable!

If the faculties of the mind were in healthful vigor, professed Christians would discern the inconsistency of such worship. Like Nadab and Abihu, their sensibilities are so blunted that they make no difference between the sacred and common. Holy and sacred things are brought down upon a level with their tobacconized breaths,

benumbed brains, and their polluted souls, defiled through indulgence of appetite and passion. Professed Christians eat and drink, smoke and chew tobacco, and become gluttons and drunkards, to gratify appetite, and still talk of overcoming as Christ overcame! (The Review and Herald, March 25, 1875).

Chapter 14

4-8 (John 1:29). Two Birds—One Dipped in Blood.—The wonderful symbol of the living bird dipped in the blood of the bird slain and then set free to its joyous life, is to us the symbol of the atonement. There were death and life blended, presenting to the searcher for truth the hidden treasure, the union of the pardoning blood with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer. The bird slain was over living water; that flowing stream was a symbol of the ever flowing, ever cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the fountain that was open for Judah and Jerusalem, wherein they may wash and be clean from every stain of sin. We

are to have free access to the atoning blood of Christ. This we must regard as the most precious privilege, the greatest blessing, ever granted to sinful man. And how little is made of this great gift! How deep, how wide and continuous is this stream! To every soul thirsting after holiness there is repose, there is rest, there is the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, and then the holy, happy, peaceful walk and precious communion with Christ. Then, oh, then, can we intelligently say with John, “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world” (Letter 87, 1894).

Chapter 16

23, 24. Garments of the High Priest.—As the high priest laid aside his pontifical dress, and officiated in the white linen dress of a common priest, so Christ emptied Himself, and took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. As the high priest, after performing his service in the holy of holies, came forth to the waiting congregation in his pontifical robes, so Christ will come the second

time clothed in glorious garments of the whitest white, “such as no fuller on earth can whiten them.” He will come in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father, as King of kings and Lord of lords, and all the angelic host will escort Him on His way (MS 113, 1899).

Chapter 17

11 (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:22). Blood Was Sacred.—The blood of the Son of God was symbolized by the blood of the slain victim, and God would have clear and definite ideas preserved between the sacred and the common. Blood was sacred, inasmuch as through the shedding of the blood of the Son of God alone could there be atonement for sin (The Signs of the Times, July 15, 1880).

Chapter 25

10. Year of Jubilee.—Every fiftieth year, the year of jubilee, every inheritance in the land was to be restored to its original owner. “In the year of

jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession,” God declared.

Thus in His infinite wisdom the Lord educated His people. His requirements were not arbitrary. Connected with all the instruction received by the people from the Source of all light was the consequence of obedience and disobedience. They were taught that obedience would bring them the richest spiritual grace, and would enable them to distinguish between the sacred and the common. Disobedience would also bring its sure result. If the people chose to manage the land in their own supposed wisdom, they would find that the Lord would not work a miracle to counteract the evils He was trying to save them from.

The Lord presented to His people the course they must pursue if they would be a prosperous, independent nation. If they obeyed Him, He declared that health and peace would be theirs, and under His supervision the land would yield its increase (MS 121, 1899).

18-22. Agricultural and Tithing Laws a Test.—The tithing system was instituted by the Lord as the very best arrangement to help the people in carrying out the principles of the law. If this law were obeyed, the people would be entrusted with the entire vineyard, the whole earth. [Quotes Leviticus 25:18-22.] ...

Men were to cooperate with God in restoring the diseased land to health, that it might be a praise and a glory to His name. And as the land they possessed would, if managed with skill and earnestness, produce its treasures, so their hearts, if controlled by God, would reflect His character....

In the laws which God gave for the cultivation of the soil, He was giving the people opportunity to overcome their selfishness and become heavenly-minded. Canaan would be to them as Eden if they obeyed the Word of the Lord. Through them the Lord designed to teach all the nations of the world how to cultivate the soil so that it would yield healthy fruit, free from disease. The earth is the Lord's vineyard, and is to be treated according to

His plan. Those who cultivated the soil were to realize that they were doing God service. They were as truly in their lot and place as were the men appointed to minister in the priesthood and in work connected with the tabernacle. God told the people that the Levites were a gift to them, and no matter what their trade, they were to help to support them (Ibid.).

Chapter 4

Numbers

Chapter 11

4. Diet Modified Disposition, Activated Mind.—The state of the mind has largely to do with the health of the body, and especially with the health of the digestive organs. As a general thing, the Lord did not provide His people with flesh meat in the desert, because He knew that the use of this diet would create disease and insubordination. In order to modify the disposition, and bring the higher powers of the mind into active exercise, He removed from them the flesh of dead animals. He gave them angel's food, manna from heaven (MS 38, 1898).

Chapter 12

1. Moses' Wife Not Black.—The wife of Moses was not black, but her complexion was somewhat darker than the Hebrews (The Spirit of

Prophecy 1:286).

3. Moses Superior to All Rulers.—Moses stands forth superior in wisdom and integrity to all the sovereigns and statesmen of earth. Yet this man claims no credit for himself, but points the people to God as the Source of all power and wisdom. Where is there such a character among men of this age? Those who would speak contemptuously of the law of God are dishonoring Him and casting a shadow over the most illustrious character presented in the annals of men (The Signs of the Times, October 21, 1886).

(Exodus 18:13). Moses Could Judge Instantly.—Moses was a humble man; God called him the meekest man on earth. He was generous, noble, well-balanced; he was not defective, and his qualities were not merely half developed. He could successfully exhort his fellow-men, because his life itself was a living representation of what man can become and accomplish with God as his helper, of what he taught to others, of what he desired them to be, and of what God required of him. He spoke

from the heart and it reached the heart. He was accomplished in knowledge and yet simple as a child in the manifestation of his deep sympathies. Endowed with a remarkable instinct, he could judge instantly of the needs of all who surrounded him, and of the things which were in bad condition and required attention, and he did not neglect them (MS 24, 1887).

The meekest of Men.—Moses was the greatest man who ever stood as leader of the people of God. He was greatly honored by God, not for the experience which he had gained in the Egyptian court, but because he was the meekest of men. God talked with him face to face, as a man talks with a friend. If men desire to be honored by God, let them be humble. Those who carry forward God's work should be distinguished from all others by their humility. Of the man who is noted for his meekness, Christ says, He can be trusted. Through him I can reveal Myself to the world. He will not weave into the web any threads of selfishness. I will manifest Myself to him as I do not to the world (MS 165, 1899).

Chapter 13

30. Courage Through Faith.—It was Caleb's faith that gave him courage, that kept him from the fear of man, and enabled him to stand boldly and unflinchingly in the defense of the right. Through reliance on the same Power, the mighty General of the armies of heaven, every true soldier of the cross may receive strength and courage to overcome the obstacles that seem insurmountable (The Review and Herald, May 30, 1912).

(Zechariah 4:6). Calebs Needed Today.—Calebs have been greatly needed in different periods of the history of our work. Today we need men of thorough fidelity, men who follow the Lord fully, men who are not disposed to be silent when they ought to speak, who are as true as steel to principle, who do not seek to make a pretentious show, but who walk humbly with God, patient, kind, obliging, courteous men, who understand that the science of prayer is to exercise faith and show works that will tell to the glory of God and the

good of His people.... To follow Jesus requires wholehearted conversion at the start, and a repetition of this conversion every day (Letter 39, 1899).

Chapter 14

29, 30 (Ch. 26:64, 65). Wanderings Extended Through Satan's Efforts.—God gave positive evidence that He rules in the heavens, and rebellion was punished with death. Only two of those who as adults left Egypt, saw the promised land. The wanderings of the people were extended until the rest were buried in the wilderness.

Today Satan is using the same devising to introduce the same evils, and his efforts are followed by the same results that in the days of Israel laid so many in their graves (MS 13, 1906).

Chapter 15

38, 39 (1 Timothy 2:9, 10; 1 Peter 3:3, 4). Israel's Dress Distinguished Them From

Nations.—The children of Israel, after they were brought out of Egypt, were commanded to have a simple ribbon of blue in the border of their garments, to distinguish them from the nations around them, and to signify that they were God's peculiar people. The people of God are not now required to have a special mark placed upon their garments. But in the New Testament we are often referred to ancient Israel for examples. If God gave such definite directions to His ancient people in regard to their dress, will not the dress of His people in this age come under His notice? Should there not be in their dress a distinction from that of the world? Should not the people of God, who are His peculiar treasure, seek even in their dress to glorify God? And should they not be examples in point of dress, and by their simple style rebuke the pride, vanity, and extravagance of worldly, pleasure-loving professors? God requires this of His people. Pride is rebuked in His Word (The Health Reformer, February 1872).

Chapter 16

1-50. Rebellion Against Leadership.—These men of Israel complained, and influenced the people to stand with them in rebellion, and even after God stretched forth His hand and swallowed up the wrong-doers, and the people fled to their tents in horror, their rebellion was not cured. The depth of their disaffection was made manifest even under the judgment of the Lord. The morning after the destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their confederates, the people came to Moses and Aaron, saying, “Ye have killed the people of the Lord.” For this false charge on the servants of God, thousands more were killed, for there was in them sin, exultation and presumptuous wickedness (Letter 12a, 1893).

(1 Samuel 15:23). Lessons From the Rebellion.—I question whether genuine rebellion is ever curable. Study in Patriarchs and Prophets the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. This rebellion was extended, including more than two men. [Reference is here made to two men leading a

rebellion in a certain field.—Editor.] It was led by two hundred and fifty princes of the congregation, men of renown. Call rebellion by its right name, and apostasy by its right name, and then consider that the experience of the ancient people of God with all its objectionable features was faithfully chronicled to pass into history. The Scripture declares, “These things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” And if men and women who have the knowledge of the truth are so far separated from their great Leader, that they will take the great leader of apostasy, and name him Christ our Righteousness, it is because they have not sunk the shaft deep into the mines of truth. They are not able to distinguish the precious ore from the base material....

The Lord has permitted this matter to develop as it has done, in order to show how easily His people will be misled, when they depend upon the words of men instead of searching the Scriptures for themselves, as did the noble Bereans, to see if these things are so....

Rebellion and apostasy are in the very air we breathe. We shall be affected by it unless we by faith hang our helpless souls upon Christ. If men are so easily misled, how will they stand when Satan shall personate Christ, and work miracles? Who will be unmoved by his misrepresentations? Professing to be Christ when it is only Satan assuming the person of Christ, and apparently working the works of Christ? What will hold God's people from giving their allegiance to false Christs? "Go not ye after them."

The doctrines must be plainly understood. The men accepted to teach the truth must be anchored; then their vessel will hold against storm and tempest, because the anchor holds them firmly. The deceptions will increase, and we are to call rebellion by its right name. We are to stand with the whole armor on. My brethren, you are not meeting men only, but principalities and powers. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. Let Ephesians 6:10-18 be read carefully (Letter 1, 1897).

Christ came to our world not to aid Satan in working up rebellion, but to put down rebellion. Wherever men start out in rebellion they will work secretly and in darkness, as they will not come as Christ has told them to do to the ones they have any matter against but will take their budget of falsehoods and enmity and evil surmisings and Satanic representations, as did Satan to the fellow angels under him, and gain their sympathy by false representations (Letter 156, 1897).

1-3. Princes Enlisted in Rebellion.—Those men of Israel were determined to resist all evidence that would prove them to be wrong, and they went on and on in their course of disaffection until many were drawn away to unite with them. Who were these? Not the weak, not the ignorant, not the unenlightened. In that rebellion there were two hundred and fifty princes famous in the congregation, men of renown (Letter 2a, 1892).

3. Moses Accused of Hindering Progress.—They accused Moses of being the cause of their not

entering the promised land. They said that God had not dealt with them thus. He had not said that they should die in the wilderness. They would never believe that He had thus said; but that it was Moses who had said this, not the Lord; and that it was all arranged by Moses to never bring them to the land of Canaan (Spiritual Gifts 4a:30).

Korah Deceived Himself.—Korah had cherished his envy and rebellion until he was self-deceived, and he really thought that the congregation was a very righteous people, and that Moses was a tyrannical ruler, continually dwelling upon the necessity of the congregation's being holy, when there was no need of it, for they were holy (Spiritual Gifts 4a:31).

19. The People Deceived Themselves.—The people thought if Korah could lead them, and encourage them, and dwell upon their righteous acts, instead of reminding them of their failures, they should have a very peaceful, prosperous journey, and he would without doubt lead them, not back and forward in the wilderness, but into the

promised land. They said that it was Moses who had told them that they could not go into the land, and that the Lord had not thus said. Korah in his exalted self-confidence gathered all the congregation against Moses and Aaron, “unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation” (Ibid.).

Chapter 17

1-13. Rod Preserved as Reminder.—All the remarkable changes in the rod occurred in one night, to convince them that God had positively distinguished between Aaron and the rest of the children of Israel. After this miracle of divine power, the authority of the priesthood was no longer called in question. This wonderful rod was preserved to be frequently shown to the people to remind them of the past, to prevent them from murmuring, and again calling in question to whom the priesthood rightfully belonged. After the children of Israel were fully convinced of their wrong, in unjustly accusing Moses and Aaron, as they had done, they saw their past rebellion in its true light, and they were terrified. They spake unto

Moses, saying, “Behold we die, we perish; we all perish.” They are at length compelled to believe the unwelcome truth, that their fate is to die in the wilderness. After they believed that it was indeed the Lord who had said they should not enter the promised land, but should die, they then acknowledged that Moses and Aaron were right, and that they had sinned against the Lord, in rebelling against their authority. They also confessed that Korah, and those who perished with him, were sinners against the Lord and that they had justly suffered His wrath (Spiritual Gifts 4a:35, 36).

Chapter 20

7, 8, 10, 12. Sin of Moses Misrepresented God’s Leadership.—In all their wanderings, the children of Israel were tempted to attribute to Moses the special work of God, the mighty miracles that had been wrought to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. They charged Moses with bringing them out of the land of Egypt. It was true that God had manifested Himself wonderfully to

Moses. He had specially favored him with His presence. To him God had revealed His exceeding glory. Upon the mount He had taken him into a sacred nearness to Himself, and had talked with him as a man speaks to a friend. But the Lord had given evidence after evidence that it was He Himself who was working for their deliverance.

By saying, “Must we fetch you water out of this rock?” Moses virtually said to the people that they were correct in believing that he himself was doing the mighty works that had been done in their behalf. This made it necessary for God to prove to Israel that his admission was not founded on fact.... To dispel forever from the minds of the Israelites the idea that a man was leading them, God found it necessary to allow their leader to die before they entered the land of Canaan (MS 69, 1912).

Chapter 21

6. Had Been Miraculously Preserved.—To punish them for their ingratitude, and complaining against God, the Lord permitted fiery serpents to

bite them. They were called fiery, because their bite produced painful inflammation, and speedy death. The Israelites, up to this time, had been preserved from these serpents in the wilderness, by a continual miracle; for the wilderness through which they traveled was infested with poisonous serpents (Spiritual Gifts 4a:41).

A Fatal Decision.—There were those who stopped to reason regarding the foolishness of looking for relief to this means. That they should be healed by looking at a piece of brass was absurd to their minds, and they said, “We will not look.” This decision was fatal, and all who would not accept the provision made perished.

The brazen serpent was uplifted in the wilderness that those who looked in faith might be made whole. In like manner God sends a restoring, healing message to men, calling upon them to look away from man and earthly things, and place their trust in God. He has given His people the truth with power through the Holy Spirit. He opened His Word to those who were searching and praying for

truth. But when these messengers gave the truth they had received to the people, they were as unbelieving as the Israelites. Many are cavilling over the truth brought to them by humble messengers (MS 75, 1899).

Chapter 22

1-6. Balaam, Double-Minded.—At the time Balak sent messengers for him [Balaam], he was double-minded, pursuing a course to gain and retain the favor and honor of the enemies of the Lord, for the sake of rewards he received from them. At the same time he was professing to be a prophet of God. Idolatrous nations believed that curses might be uttered which would affect individuals, and even whole nations (Spiritual Gifts 4a:43).

15-17. Balaam's One Sin, Covetousness.—Here is a solemn warning for the people of God today, to allow no unchristian trait to live in their hearts. A sin which is fostered becomes habitual; and, strengthened by repetition, it soon exerts a

controlling influence, bringing into subjection all the nobler powers. Balaam loved the reward of unrighteousness. The sin of covetousness, which God ranks with idolatry, he did not resist and overcome. Satan obtained entire control of him through this one fault, which deteriorated his character, and made him a time-server. He called God his master; but he did not serve Him; he did not work the works of God (The Signs of the Times, November 18, 1880).

Chapter 24

1-5. Beheld Glory of God's Presence.—

Balaam had wished to appear to be favorable to Balak, and had permitted him to be deceived, and think that he used superstitious ceremonies and enchantments when he besought the Lord. But as he followed out the command given him of God, he grew bolder in proportion as he obeyed the divine impulse, and he laid aside his pretended conjuration, and, looking toward the encampment of the Israelites, he beholds them all encamped in perfect order, under their respective standards, at a

distance from the tabernacle. Balaam was permitted to behold the glorious manifestation of God's presence, overshadowing protecting, and guiding the tabernacle. He was filled with admiration at the sublime scene. He opened his parable with all the dignity of a true prophet of God (Spiritual Gifts 4a:47, 48).

15-24. Balak Amazed by Revelation.—The Moabites understood the import of the prophetic words of Balaam—that the Israelites after conquering the Canaanites, should settle in their land, and all attempts to subdue them would be of no more avail than for a feeble beast to arouse the lion out of his den. Balaam told Balak that he would inform him what the Israelites should do to his people at a later period. The Lord unfolded the future before Balaam, and permitted events which would occur, to pass before his sight, that the Moabites should understand that Israel should finally triumph. As Balaam prophetically rehearsed the future to Balak and his princes, he was struck with amazement at the future display of God's power (Spiritual Gifts 4a:48).

Chapter 25

16-18. God's Control Unlimited.—Moses commanded the men of war to destroy the women and male children. Balaam had sold the children of Israel for a reward, and he perished with the people whose favor he had obtained at the sacrifice of twenty-four thousand of the Israelites. The Lord is regarded as cruel by many in requiring His people to make war with other nations. They say that it is contrary to His benevolent character. But He who made the world, and formed man to dwell upon the earth, has unlimited control over all the works of His hands, and it is His right to do as He pleases, and what He pleases with the work of His hands. Man has no right to say to his Maker, Why doest Thou thus? There is no injustice in His character. He is the Ruler of the world, and a large portion of His subjects have rebelled against His authority, and have trampled upon His law.... He has used His people as instruments of His wrath, to punish wicked nations, who have vexed them, and seduced them into idolatry (Spiritual Gifts 4a:50, 51).

Chapter 26

64. See EGW comment on Numbers 14:29.

Chapter 29

12-39. See EGW comment on Exodus 23:16.

Chapter 5

Deuteronomy

Chapter 1

1. Study Deuteronomy Carefully.—The book of Deuteronomy should be carefully studied by those living on the earth today. It contains a record of the instruction given to Moses to give to the children of Israel. In it the law is repeated....

The law of God was often to be repeated to Israel. That its precepts might not be forgotten, it was to be kept before the people, and was ever to be exalted and honored. Parents were to read the law to their children, teaching it to them line upon line, precept upon precept. And on public occasions the law was to be read in the hearing of all the people.

Upon obedience to this law depended the prosperity of Israel. If they were obedient, it would bring them life; if disobedient, death (The Review

and Herald, December 31, 1903).

(Exodus 1:1). Study Deuteronomy and Exodus More.—We do not make enough of Deuteronomy and Exodus. These books record the dealings of God with Israel. God took the Israelites from slavery, and led them through the wilderness to the promised land (MS 11, 1903).

6-10. Israel's Invisible Leader Ruled Through Visible Agents.—The Lord God of heaven is our Leader. He is a leader whom we can safely follow; for He never makes a mistake. Let us honor God and His Son Jesus Christ, through whom He communicates with the world. It was Christ who gave to Moses the instruction that He gave to the children of Israel. It was Christ who delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Moses and Aaron were the visible leaders of the people. To Moses instruction was given by their invisible Leader, to be repeated to them.

Had Israel obeyed the directions given them by Moses, not one of those who started on the journey

from Egypt would in the wilderness have fallen a prey to disease or death. They were under a safe Guide. Christ had pledged Himself to lead them safely to the promised land if they would follow His guidance. This vast multitude, numbering more than a million people, was under His direct rule. They were His family. In every one of them He was interested (MS 144, 1903).

Chapter 4

1. Study Chapters Four to Eight.—I ask you to study the fourth to the eighth chapters of Deuteronomy, that you may understand what God required of His ancient people that they might be a holy people unto Himself. We are nearing the day of God's great final review, when the people of this world must stand before the Judge of all the earth to answer for their deeds. We are now in the time of investigation. Before the day of God's review, every character will have been investigated, every case decided for eternity. Let the words of God's servant recorded in these chapters be read with profit (Letter 112, 1909).

Chapter 6

1, 2 (quoted). Results of Obedience.—In this scripture we are taught that obedience to God's requirements brings the obedient under the laws that control the physical being. Those who would preserve themselves in health must bring into subjection all appetites and passions. They must not indulge lustful passion and intemperate appetite, for they are to remain under control to God, and their physical, mental, and moral powers are to be so wisely employed that the bodily mechanism will remain in good working order. Health, life, and happiness are the result of obedience to physical laws governing our bodies. If our will and way are in accordance with God's will and way; if we do the pleasure of our Creator, He will keep the human organism in good condition, and restore the moral, mental, and physical powers, in order that He may work through us to His glory. Constantly His restoring power is manifested in our bodies. If we cooperate with Him in this work, health and happiness, peace and usefulness, are the

sure results (MS 151, 1901).

6-9. (quoted) (Verse 25; Romans 10:5). Obedience by Faith Is Righteousness by Faith.—When we bring our lives to complete obedience to the law of God, regarding God as our supreme Guide, and clinging to Christ as our hope of righteousness, God will work in our behalf. This is a righteousness of faith, a righteousness hidden in a mystery of which the worldling knows nothing, and which he cannot understand. Sophistry and strife follow in the train of the serpent; but the commandments of God diligently studied and practiced, open to us communication with heaven, and distinguish for us the true from the false. This obedience works out for us the divine will, bringing into our lives the righteousness and perfection that was seen in the life of Christ (MS 43, 1907).

Chapter 9

9. See EGW comment on Exodus 34:28.

Chapter 15

11. No Thread of Selfishness in Web of Life.—Deuteronomy contains much instruction regarding what the law is to us, and the relation we shall sustain to God as we reverence and obey His law.

We are God's servants, doing His service. Into the great web of life we are to draw no thread of selfishness; for this would spoil the pattern. But, oh, how thoughtless men are apt to be! How seldom do they make the interests of God's suffering ones their own. The poor are all around them, but they pass on, thoughtless and indifferent, regardless of the widows and orphans who, left without resources, suffer, but do not tell their need. If the rich would place a small fund in the bank, at the disposal of the needy ones, how much suffering would be saved. The holy love of God should lead every one to see that it is his duty to care for some other one, and thus keep alive the spirit of benevolence.... With what goodness, mercy, and love God lays His requirements before His

children, telling them what they are to do. He honors us by making us His helping hand. Instead of complaining, let us rejoice that we have the privilege of serving under so good and merciful a Master (Letter 112, 1902).

Chapter 18

10 (Leviticus 18:21; 20:2, 3). Trial by Fire Condemned.—God was a wise and compassionate Lawgiver, judging all cases righteously, and without partiality. While the Israelites were in Egyptian bondage, they were surrounded by idolatry. The Egyptians had received traditions in regard to sacrificing. They did not acknowledge the existence of the God of heaven. They sacrificed to their idol gods. With great pomp and ceremony they performed their idol worship. They erected altars to the honor of their gods, and they required even their own children to pass through the fire. After they had erected their altars, they required their children to leap over the altars through the fire. If they could do this without their being burned, the idol priests and people received it as an

evidence that their God accepted their offerings, and favored especially the person who passed through the fiery ordeal. He was loaded with benefits, and was ever afterward greatly esteemed by all the people. He was never allowed to be punished, however aggravating might be his crimes. If another person who leaped through the fire was so unfortunate as to be burned, then his fate was fixed; for they thought that their gods were angry, and would be appeased with nothing short of the unhappy victim's life, and he was offered up as a sacrifice upon their idol altars.

Even some of the children of Israel had so far degraded themselves as to practice these abominations, and God caused the fire to kindle upon their children, whom they made to pass through the fire. They did not go to all the lengths of the heathen nations; but God deprived them of their children by causing the fire to consume them in the act of passing through it.

Because the people of God had confused ideas of the ceremonial sacrificial offerings, and had

heathen traditions confounded with their ceremonial worship, God condescended to give them definite directions, that they might understand the true import of those sacrifices which were to last only till the Lamb of God should be slain, who was the great antitype of all their sacrificial offerings (Spiritual Gifts 3:303, 304).

Chapter 23

14. No Uncleaness of Body, Word, or Spirit.—In order to be acceptable in God's sight, the leaders of the people were to give strict heed to the sanitary condition of the armies of Israel, even when they went forth to battle. Every soul, from the commander-in-chief to the lowest soldier in the army, was sacredly charged to preserve cleanliness in his person and surroundings; for the Israelites were chosen by God as His peculiar people. They were sacredly bound to be holy in body and spirit. They were not to be careless or neglectful of their personal duties. In every respect they were to preserve cleanliness. They were to allow nothing untidy or unwholesome in their surroundings,

nothing which would taint the purity of the atmosphere. Inwardly and outwardly they were to be pure [Deuteronomy 23:14 quoted] (Letter 35, 1901).

We know His will, and any departure from it to follow ideas of your own is a dishonor to His name, a reproach to His sacred truth. Everything that relates to the worship of God on earth, is to bear in appearance a striking resemblance to heavenly things. There must be no careless disregard in these things, if you expect the Lord to favor you with His presence. He will not have His work placed on a level with common, temporal things (MS 7, 1889).

All those who come into His presence should give special attention to the body and the clothing. Heaven is a clean and holy place. God is pure and holy. All who come into His presence should take heed to His directions, and have the body and the clothing in a pure, clean condition, thus showing respect to themselves and to Him. The heart must also be sanctified. Those who do this will not

dishonor His sacred name by worshiping Him while their hearts are polluted and their apparel is untidy. God sees these things. He marks the heart-preparation, the thoughts, the cleanliness in appearance, of those who worship Him (MS 126 1901).

Chapter 26

8. Wonders Showed God's Power.—The Lord brought up His people from their long servitude in a signal manner, giving the Egyptians an opportunity to exhibit the feeble wisdom of their mighty men, and array the power of their gods in opposition to the God of heaven. The Lord showed them by His servant Moses that the Maker of the heavens and the earth is the living and all-powerful God, above all gods. That His strength was mightier than the strongest—that OMNIPOTENCE could bring forth His people with a high hand and with an out-stretched arm. The signs and miracles performed in the presence of Pharaoh were not given for his benefit alone, but for the advantage of God's people, to give them more clear and exalted

views of God, and that all Israel should fear Him, and be willing and anxious to leave Egypt, and choose the service of the true and merciful God. Had it not been for these wonderful manifestations, many would have been satisfied to remain in Egypt rather than to journey through the wilderness (Spiritual Gifts 3:204, 205).

16. Withhold Nothing.—There must be no withholding on our part, of our service or our means, if we would fulfill our covenant with God [Deuteronomy 26:16 quoted]. The purpose of all God's commandments is to reveal man's duty not only to God, but to his fellow man. In this late age of the world's history, we are not, because of the selfishness of our hearts, to question or dispute the right of God to make these requirements, or we will deceive ourselves, and rob our souls of the richest blessings of the grace of God. Heart and mind and soul are to be merged in the will of God. Then the covenant, framed from the dictates of infinite wisdom, and made binding by the power and authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords, will be our pleasure. God will have no

controversy with us in regard to these binding precepts. It is enough that He has said that obedience to His statutes and laws is the life and prosperity of His people (MS 67, 1907).

18 (Romans 6:3, 4). Mutual Pledge and Mutual Blessing.—The blessings of God's covenant are mutual [Deuteronomy 26:18 quoted].

...

By our baptismal pledge we avouched and solemnly confessed the Lord Jehovah as our Ruler. We virtually took a solemn oath, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that henceforth our lives would be merged into the life of these three great Agencies, that the life we should live in the flesh would be lived in faithful obedience to God's sacred law. We declared ourselves dead, and our life hid with Christ in God, that henceforth we should walk with Him in newness of life, as men and women having experienced the new birth. We acknowledged God's covenant with us, and pledged ourselves to seek those things which are above, where Christ

sitteth on the right hand of God. By our profession of faith we acknowledged the Lord as our God, and yielded ourselves to obey His commandments. By obedience to God's Word we testify before angels and men that we live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Ibid.).

Chapter 30

15-19 (Joshua 24:15). Decision to Be Based on Evidence.—It is not the plan of God to compel men to yield their wicked unbelief. Before them are light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which to accept. The human mind is endowed with power to discriminate between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from impulse, but from weight of evidence, carefully comparing scripture with scripture (Redemption: or the Miracles of Christ, pp. 112, 113).

Chapter 6

Joshua

Chapter 1

No Better Guide Than God.—If men will walk in the path that God has marked out for them, they will have a counselor whose wisdom is far above any human wisdom. Joshua was a wise general because God was his guide. The first sword that Joshua used was the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Will the men who are handling large responsibilities read the first chapter of Joshua? [Joshua 1:1, 5, 7 quoted.]

Do you think that all these charges would have been given to Joshua if there had been no danger of his being brought under misleading influences? It was because the strongest influences were to be brought to bear against his principles of righteousness that the Lord in mercy charged him not to turn to the right hand or to the left. He was to follow a course of strictest integrity. [Joshua 1:8, 9

quoted.] If there had been no peril before Joshua, God would not over and over again have charged him to be of good courage. But amid all his cares, Joshua had his God to guide him.

There is no greater deception than for man to suppose that in any difficulty he can find a better guide than God, a wiser counselor in any emergency, a stronger defense under any circumstance (MS 66, 1898).

7, 8. Secret of Joshua's Success.—The Lord has a great work to be done in our world. To every man He has given His work for man to do. But man is not to make man his guide, lest he be led astray; this is always unsafe. While Bible religion embodies the principles of activity in service, at the same time there is the necessity of asking for wisdom daily from the Source of all wisdom. What was Joshua's victory? Thou shalt meditate upon the Word of God day and night. The word of the Lord came to Joshua just before he passed over Jordan.... [Joshua 1:7, 8 quoted.] This was the secret of Joshua's victory. He made God his Guide (Letter

188, 1901).

Counselors Should Cherish Everything Coming From God.—Those holding the positions of counselors should be unselfish men, men of faith, men of prayer, men that will not dare to rely upon their own human wisdom, but will seek earnestly for light and intelligence as to what is the best manner of conducting their business. Joshua, the commander of Israel, searched the books diligently in which Moses had faithfully chronicled the directions given by God,—His requirements, reproofs, and restrictions,—lest he should move unadvisedly. Joshua was afraid to trust his own impulses, or his own wisdom. He regarded everything that came from Christ, who was enshrouded by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, as of sufficient importance to be sacredly cherished (Letter 14, 1886).

Chapter 2

10. Judgments Sent Fear Among Nations.—The terrible judgments of God which were visited

upon the idolaters in the lands through which the children of Israel passed caused a fear and dread to fall upon all people living on the earth (MS 27, 1899).

Chapter 3, 4

Study Joshua 3 and 4.—Study carefully the experiences of Israel in their travels to Canaan. Study the third and fourth chapters of Joshua, recording their preparation for and passage over the Jordan into the promised land. We need to keep the heart and mind in training, by refreshing the memory with the lessons that the Lord taught His ancient people. Then to us, as He designed it should be to them, the teachings of His Word will ever be interesting and impressive (Letter 292, 1908).

Chapter 4

24. God Wanted to Teach the World Through His People.—Through His people Israel, God designed to give to the world a knowledge of

His will. His promises and threatenings, His instructions and reproofs, the wonderful manifestations of His power among them, in blessings for obedience, and judgment for transgression and apostasy,—all were designed for the education and development of religious principle among the people of God until the close of time. Therefore it is important that we acquaint ourselves with the history of the Hebrew host, and ponder with care the dealings of God with them.

The words which God spoke to Israel by His Son were spoken for us also in these last days. The same Jesus who, upon the mount, taught His disciples the far-reaching principles of the law of God, instructed ancient Israel from the cloudy pillar and from the tabernacle, by the mouth of Moses and Joshua.... Religion in the days of Moses and Joshua was the same as religion today (The Signs of the Times, May 26, 1881).

Chapter 5

13, 14 (Ch. 6:16, 20). Israel's Part in

Conquest of Jericho.—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 Review and Herald, July 19, 1892).

Chapter 6

2-5. See EGW on Judges 7:7, 16-18.

Many Today Would Wish to Follow Their Own Plan.—Would those who today profess to be God's people conduct themselves thus, under similar circumstances? Doubtless many would wish to follow out their own plans, would suggest ways and means of accomplishing the desired end. They would be loth to submit to so simple an arrangement, and one that reflected no glory upon themselves, save the merit of obedience. They would also question the possibility of conquering a mighty city in that manner. But the law of duty is supreme. It should wield authority over human reason. Faith is the living power that presses through every barrier, overrides all obstacles, and plants its banner in the heart of the enemy's camp (The Signs of the Times, April 14, 1881).

When Man Builds Theories, He Loses Simplicity of Faith.—There are deep mysteries in the Word of God, there are mysteries in His providences, and there are mysteries in the plan of salvation, that man cannot fathom. But the finite mind, strong in its desire to satisfy curiosity, and

solve the problems of infinity, neglects to follow the plain course indicated by the revealed will of God, and pries into the secrets hidden since the foundation of the world. Man builds his theories, loses the simplicity of true faith, becomes too self-important to believe the declarations of the Lord, and hedges himself in with his own conceits.

Many who profess to be children of God are in this position. They are weak because they trust to their own strength. God works mightily for a faithful people, who obey His Word without questioning or doubt. The Majesty of heaven, with His army of angels, leveled the walls of Jericho before His people. The armed warriors of Israel had no cause to glory in their achievements. All was done through the power of God. Let the people give up all desire for self-exaltation, let them humbly submit to the divine will, and God will again manifest His power, and bring freedom and victory to His children (The Signs of the Times, April 14, 1881).

16, 20. See EGW on Ch. 5:13, 14.

Simple Means Glorify God.—At the taking of Jericho the mighty General of armies planned the battle in such simplicity that no human being could take the glory to himself. No human hand must cast down the walls of the city, lest man should take to himself the glory of victory. So today no human being is to take to himself glory for the work he accomplishes. The Lord alone is to be magnified. Oh, that men would see the necessity for looking to God for their orders! (The Review and Herald, October 16, 1900).

Possession After Forty Years' Delay.—The Lord marshaled His armies about the doomed city; no human hand was raised against it; the hosts of heaven overthrew its walls, that God's name alone might have the glory. It was that proud city whose mighty bulwarks had struck terror to the unbelieving spies. Now in the capture of Jericho, God declared to the Hebrews that their fathers might have possessed the city forty years before, had they but trusted in Him (The Review and Herald, March 15, 1887).

Men's Weakness to Find Supernatural Strength.—Our Lord is cognizant of the conflict of His people in these last days with the satanic agencies combined with evil men who neglect and refuse this great salvation. With the greatest simplicity and candor, our Saviour, the mighty General of the armies of heaven, does not conceal the stern conflict which they will experience. He points out the dangers, He shows us the plan of the battle, and the hard and hazardous work to be done, and then lifts His voice before entering the conflict to count the cost while at the same time He encourages all to take up the weapons of their warfare and expect the heavenly host to compose the armies to war in defense of truth and righteousness. Men's weakness shall find supernatural strength and help in every stern conflict to do the deeds of Omnipotence, and perseverance in faith and perfect trust in God will ensure success. While the past confederacy of evil is arrayed against them He bids them to be brave and strong and fight valiantly for they have a heaven to win, and they have more than an angel in

their ranks, the mighty General of armies leads on the armies of heaven. As on the occasion of the taking of Jericho, not one of the armies of Israel could boast of exercising their finite strength to overthrow the walls of the city, but the Captain of the Lord's host planned that battle in the greatest simplicity, that the Lord alone should receive the glory and man should not be exalted. God has promised us all power; for the promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call (Letter 51, 1895).

20. Obedience Will Break Down Barriers.—

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 (The Review and Herald, July 12, 1887).

Chapter 7

7. Joshua's Doubt and Unbelief.—Joshua manifested a true zeal for the honor of God, yet his petitions were mingled with doubt and unbelief. The thought that God had brought His people over the Jordan to deliver them up to the power of the heathen was a sinful one, unworthy of a leader of Israel. Joshua's feelings of despondency and distrust were inexcusable in view of the mighty miracles which God had wrought for the deliverance of His people, and the repeated promise that He would be with them in driving out the wicked inhabitants of the land.

But our merciful God did not visit His servant with wrath because of this error. He graciously accepted the humiliation and prayers of Joshua, and at the same time gently rebuked his unbelief, and then revealed to him the cause of their defeat (The Signs of the Times, April 21, 1881).

11-13 (Ch. 22:15-34). God's Abhorrence of Idolatry.—Here the Lord gave expression to His

abhorrence of idolatry. Those heathen nations had turned from the worship of the living God, and were paying homage to demons. Shrines and temples, beautiful statues, and costly monuments, all the most ingenious and expensive works of art, had held the thoughts and affections of the veriest slavery to Satanic delusions.

The human heart is naturally inclined to idolatry and self-exaltation. The costly and beautiful monuments of heathen worship would please the fancy and engage the senses, and thus allure the Israelites from the service of God. It was to remove this temptation from His people that the Lord commanded them to destroy those relics of idolatry, on penalty of being themselves abhorred and accursed of God (The Signs of the Times, April 21, 1881).

16-26. Sin Must Be Searched Out and Reproved.—The history of Achan teaches the solemn lesson that for one man's sin the displeasure of God will rest upon a people or a nation till the transgression is searched out and

punished. Sin is corrupting in its nature. One man infected with its deadly leprosy may communicate the taint to thousands. Those who occupy responsible positions as guardians of the people are false to their trust if they do not faithfully search out and reprove sin. Many dare not condemn iniquity, lest they shall thereby sacrifice position or popularity. And by some it is considered uncharitable to rebuke sin. The servant of God should never allow his own spirit to be mingled with the reproof which he is required to give; but he is under the most solemn obligation to present the Word of God, without fear or favor. He must call sin by its right name. Those who by their carelessness or indifference permit God's name to be dishonored by His professed people, are numbered with the transgressor,—registered in the record of heaven as partakers in their evil deeds. ...

The love of God will never lead to the belittling of sin; it will never cover or excuse an unconfessed wrong. Achan learned too late that God's law, like its Author, is unchanging. It has to do with all our acts and thoughts and feelings. It follows us, and

reaches every secret spring of action. By indulgence in sin, men are led to lightly regard the law of God. Many conceal their transgressions from their fellow men, and flatter themselves that God will not be strict to mark iniquity. But His law is the great standard of right, and with it every act of life must be compared in that day when God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil. Purity of heart will lead to purity of life. All excuses for sin are vain. Who can plead for the sinner when God testifies against him? (The Signs of the Times, April 21, 1881).

20, 21. Confession Without Repentance Is Worthless.—There are many professed Christians whose confessions of sin are similar to that of Achan. They will, in a general way, acknowledge their unworthiness, but they refuse to confess the sins whose guilt rests upon their conscience, and which have brought the frown of God upon His people. Thus many conceal sins of selfishness, over-reaching, dishonesty toward God and their neighbor, sins in the family, and many others

which it is proper to confess in public.

Genuine repentance springs from a sense of the offensive character of sin. These general confessions are not the fruit of true humiliation of soul before God. They leave the sinner with a self-complacent spirit to go on as before, until his conscience becomes hardened, and warnings that once aroused him produce hardly a feeling of danger and after a time his sinful course appears right. All too late his sins will find him out, in that day when they shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever. There is a vast difference between admitting facts after they are proved, and confessing sins known only to ourselves and God (The Signs of the Times, May 5, 1881).

Achan Felt No Burden.—That which was esteemed by Achan as a very little thing was the cause of great anguish and sorrow to the responsible men of Israel, and this is always the case when it is manifest that the Lord is angry with His people. It is the men upon whom rests the burden of the work, who most keenly feel the

weight of the people's sins, and who pray in agony of soul because of the rebuke of the Lord. Achan, the guilty party, did not feel the burden. He took it very coolly. We find nothing in the account to signify that he felt distressed. There is no evidence that he felt remorse, or reasoned from cause to effect, saying. "It is my sin that has brought the displeasure of the Lord upon the people." He did not ask, "Can it be that it is because I stole that golden wedge and Babylonish garment that we have been defeated in battle?" He had no idea of making his wrong right by confession of sin and humiliation of soul (Letter 13, 1893).

God's Method Vindicated.—The confession of Achan, although too late to be available in bringing to him any saving virtue, yet vindicated the character of God in His manner of dealing with him, and closed the door to the temptation that so continually beset the children of Israel, to charge upon the servants of God the work that God Himself had ordered to be done (Letter 13, 1893).

21. Growth of Achan's Covetousness.—

Achan had fostered covetousness and deception in his heart, until his perceptions of sin had become blunted, and he fell an easy prey to temptation. Those who venture to indulge in a known sin will be more readily overcome the second time. The first transgression opens the door to the tempter, and he gradually breaks down all resistance and takes full possession of the citadel of the soul. Achan had listened to oft-repeated warnings against the sin of covetousness. The law of God, pointed and positive, had forbidden stealing and all deception, but he continued to cherish sin. As he was not detected and openly rebuked, he grew bolder; warnings had less and less effect upon him, until his soul was bound in chains of darkness (The Signs of the Times, April 21, 1881).

In Exchange for His Soul.—For a Babylonish robe and a paltry treasure of gold and silver, Achan consented to sell himself to evil, to bring upon his soul the curse of God, to forfeit his title to a rich possession in Canaan, and lose all prospect of the future, immortal inheritance in the earth made new. A fearful price indeed he paid for his ill-gotten

gains! (The Signs of the Times, May 5, 1881).

God Demands Clean Lives.—There are many in this day that would designate Achan's sin as of little consequence, and would excuse his guilt; but it is because they have no realization of the character of sin and its consequences, no sense of the holiness of God and of His requirements. The statement is often heard that God is not particular whether or not we give diligent heed to His Word, whether or not we obey all the commandments of His holy law; but the record of His dealing with Achan should be a warning to us. He will in no wise clear the guilty....

The controversy for truth will have little success when sin is upon those who advocate it. Men and women may be well versed in Bible knowledge, as well acquainted with the Scripture as were the Israelites with the ark, and yet if their hearts are not right before God, success will not attend their efforts. God will not be with them. They do not have a high sense of the obligations of the law of heaven, nor do they realize the sacred

character of the truth they are teaching. The charge is, “Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.”

It is not enough to argue in defense of the truth. The most telling evidence of its worth is seen in a godly life; and without this the most conclusive statements will be lacking in weight and prevailing power; for our strength lies in being connected with God by His Holy Spirit, and transgression severs us from this sacred nearness with the Source of our might and wisdom (The Review and Herald, March 20, 1888).

24-26. Result of Influence of Parents.—Have you considered why it was that all who were connected with Achan were also subjects of the punishment of God? It was because they had not been trained and educated according to the directions given them in the great standard of the law of God. Achan’s parents had educated their son in such a way that he felt free to disobey the Word of the Lord, the principles inculcated in his life led him to deal with his children in such a way that they also were corrupted. Mind acts and reacts

upon mind, and the punishment which included the relations of Achan with himself, reveals the fact that all were involved in the transgression (MS 67, 1894).

Chapter 17

13 (Ch. 23:13). Stopping Halfway Hinders God's Plan.—The Lord assured them that they must dispossess the land of those who were a snare to them, who would be thorns in their side. This was the word of the Lord, and His plan was that under His guardianship His people should have larger and still larger territory. Wherever they should build houses and cultivate the land, business firms should be established, that they would not have to borrow from their neighbors, but their neighbors from them. Their possessions were to enlarge, and they were to become a great and powerful people. But they stopped halfway. They consulted their own convenience, and the very work God could have done for them by placing them where the knowledge of God should be made known and the abominable practices of the heathen

banished from the land, was not done.

With all their advantages and opportunities and privileges, the Jewish nation failed to carry out God's plans. They bore little fruit, and continually less, until the Lord employed the barren fig tree with His curse upon it, to represent the condition of the once chosen nation. The work we do must be done with the unworked portions of the Lord's vineyard in mind. But today it is in a few places only that means are expended and advantages provided. The Lord would have the means and advantages more equally distributed. He would have provision made for many places that are now unworked (MS 126, 1899).

Chapter 18

1. A Witness Borne Through Worship.—In the land of Canaan, God's people were to have one general place of assembly, where, three times each year they could all meet to worship God. As they would obey the divine laws, they would receive the divine blessing. God would not blot out the

idolatrous nations. He would give them opportunity to become acquainted with Him through His church. The experience of His people during the forty years of their wilderness wandering was to be the study of these nations. God's laws and kingdom were to extend over all the territory of the earth, and His people must be known as the people of the living God.

Their service was an imposing one, and testified to the truth of a living God. Their sacrifices pointed to a coming Saviour, who would take the kingdoms under the whole heaven, and possess them forever and ever. Evidence had been given of His power to do this, for as their invisible Leader had He not subdued their enemies and made a way for His church in the wilderness? His people would never know defeat if they would abide under the shadow of the Almighty; for One mightier than angels would fight by their side in every battle (MS 134, 1899).

Chapter 20

3-6 Position Did Not Prevent Penalty.—

However distinguished his position might be, he [the manslayer] must suffer the penalty of his crime. The safety and purity of the nation demanded that the sin of murder be severely punished. Human life, which God alone could give, must be sacredly guarded.

The blood of the victim, like the blood of Abel, will cry to God for vengeance on the murderer and on all who shield him from the punishment of his crime. Whoever,—be it individual or city,—will excuse the crime of the murderer, when convinced of his guilt, is a partaker of his sin, and will surely suffer the wrath of God. The Lord designed to impress upon His people the terrible guilt of murder, while He would make the most thorough and merciful provision for the acquittal of the innocent (The Signs of the Times, January 20, 1881).

Chapter 22

15-34 (Ch. 7:11-13). Beware of Laxness or Harshness in Dealing With Sin.—Care should be exercised by all Christians, to shun the two extremes, of laxness in dealing with sin on the one hand, and harsh judgment and groundless suspicion on the other. The Israelites who manifested so much zeal against the men of Gad and Reuben remembered how, in Achan's case, God had rebuked the lack of vigilance to discover the sins existing among them. Then they resolved to act promptly and earnestly in the future; but in seeking to do this they went to the opposite extreme. Instead of meeting their brethren with censure, they should first have made courteous inquiry to learn all the facts in the case.

There are still many who are called to endure false accusation. Like the men of Israel, they can afford to be calm and considerate, because they are in the right. They should remember with gratitude that God is acquainted with all that is misunderstood and misinterpreted by men, and

they may safely leave all in His hands. He will surely vindicate the cause of those who put their trust in Him, as He searched out the hidden guilt of Achan.

How much of evil would be averted, if all, when falsely accused, would avoid recrimination, and in its stead employ mild, conciliating words. And at the same time, those who in their zeal to oppose sin have indulged unjust suspicions, should ever seek to take the most favorable view of their brethren, and should rejoice when they are found guiltless (The Signs of the Times, May 12, 1881).

Chapter 23

6. Rebellion Against God Is Inexcusable.— God's plan for the salvation of men, is perfect in every particular. If we will faithfully perform our allotted parts, all will be well with us. It is man's apostasy that causes discord, and brings wretchedness and ruin. God never uses His power to oppress the creatures of His hand. He never requires more than man is able to perform; never

punishes His disobedient children more than is necessary to bring them to repentance; or to deter others from following their example. Rebellion against God is inexcusable (The Signs of the Times, May 19, 1881).

6-8. Danger From Contact With Infidelity.—

We are in as great danger from contact with infidelity as were the Israelites from intercourse with idolaters. The productions of genius and talent too often conceal the deadly poison. Under an attractive guise, themes are presented and thoughts expressed that attract, interest, and corrupt the mind and heart. Thus, in our Christian land, piety wanes, and skepticism and ungodliness are triumphant (The Signs of the Times, May 19, 1881).

12, 13. Danger of Uniting in Marriage With Unbelievers.—The Lord has not changed. His character is the same today as in the days of Joshua. He is true, merciful, compassionate, faithful in the performance of His Word, both in promises and threatenings. One of the greatest

dangers that besets the people of God today, is that of association with the ungodly; especially in uniting themselves in marriage with unbelievers. With many, the love for the human eclipses the love for the divine. They take the first step in backsliding by venturing to disregard the Lord's express command; and complete apostasy is too often the result. It has ever proved a dangerous thing for men to carry out their own will in opposition to the requirements of God. Yet it is a hard lesson for men to learn that God means what He says.

As a rule, those who choose for their friends and companions, persons who reject Christ and trample upon God's law, eventually become of the same mind and spirit. We should ever feel a deep interest in the salvation of the impenitent, and should manifest toward them a spirit of kindness and courtesy; but we can safely choose for our friends only those who are the friends of God (*The Signs of the Times*, May 19, 1881).

13. See EGW on Ch. 17:13.

Chapter 24

A Call to Gratitude, Humility, and Separation.—When Joshua was nearing the close of his life he took up a review of the past for two reasons—to lead the Israel of God to gratitude for the marked manifestation of God’s presence in all their travels, and to lead them to humility of mind under a sense of their unjust murmurings and repinings and their neglect to follow out the revealed will of God. Joshua goes on to warn them in a most earnest manner against the idolatry around them. They were warned not to have any connection with idolaters, not to intermarry with them, nor in any way put themselves in danger of being affected and corrupted by their abominations. They were counseled to shun the very appearance of evil, not to dabble around the borders of sin, for this was the surest way to be engulfed in sin and ruin. He showed them that desolation would be the result of their departing from God, and as God was faithful to His promise He would also be faithful in executing His threatenings (Letter 3, 1879).

14-16. Moral Madness to Prefer Praise of Men.—When a man comes to his right mind, he begins to reflect upon his relation to his Maker. It is moral madness to prefer the praise of men to the favor of God, the rewards of iniquity to the treasures of heaven, the husks of sin to the spiritual food God gives His children. Yet how many who display intelligence and shrewdness in worldly things, manifest an utter disregard to those things that pertain to their eternal interest (The Signs of the Times, May 19, 1881).

15. See EGW on Deuteronomy 30:15-19, Vol. 1, p. 1120.

27. We Need to Recall God's Words.—Joshua plainly declares that his instructions and warnings to the people were not his own words, but the words of God. This great stone would stand to testify to succeeding generations of the event which it was set up to commemorate, and would be a witness against the people, should they ever again degenerate into idolatry. ...

If it was necessary for God's ancient people to often call to mind His dealings with them in mercy and judgment, in counsel and reproof, it is equally important that we contemplate the truths delivered to us in His Word,—truth which, if heeded, will lead us to humility and submission, and obedience to God. We are to be sanctified through the truth. The Word of God presents special truths for every age. The dealings of God with His people in the past should receive our careful attention. We should learn the lessons which they are designed to teach us. But we are not to rest content with them. God is leading out His people step by step. Truth is progressive. The earnest seeker will be constantly receiving light from heaven. What is truth? should ever be our inquiry (The Signs of the Times, May 26, 1881).

Chapter 7

Judges

Chapter 2

1, 2. A Genuine Revival.—[Judges 2:1, 2 quoted.] The people bowed before God in contrition and repentance. They offered sacrifice, and confessed to God and to one another. The sacrifices they offered would have been of no value if they had not shown true repentance. Their contrition was genuine. The grace of Christ wrought in their hearts as they confessed their sins and offered sacrifice, and God forgave them.

The revival was genuine. It wrought a reformation among the people. They remained true to the covenant they had made. The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen the great works of the Lord. Their sins were repented of and forgiven, but the seed of evil had been sown, and it sprang up to bear fruit. Joshua's life of

steadfast integrity closed. His voice was no longer heard in reproof and warning. One by one the faithful sentinels who had crossed the Jordan laid off their armor. A new generation came upon the scene of action. The people departed from God. Their worship was mingled with erroneous principles and ambitious pride (The Review and Herald, September 25, 1900).

2. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). Harmful Effects of Association With the World.—It is not safe for Christians to choose the society of those who have no connection with God, and whose course is displeasing to Him. Yet how many professed Christians venture upon the forbidden ground. Many invite to their homes relatives who are vain, trifling, and ungodly; and often the example and influence of these irreligious visitors produce lasting impressions upon the minds of the children in the household. The influence thus exerted is similar to that which resulted from the association of the Hebrews with the godless Canaanites.

God holds the parents accountable for

disregarding His command to separate themselves and their families from these unholy influences. While we must live in the world, we are not to be of the world. We are forbidden to conform to its practices and fashions. The friendship of the ungodly is more dangerous than their enmity. It misleads and destroys thousands who might, by proper and holy example, be led to become children of God. The minds of the young are thus made familiar with irreligion, vanity, ungodliness, pride, and immorality; and the heart not shielded by divine grace, gradually becomes corrupted. Almost imperceptibly, the youth learn to love the tainted atmosphere surrounding the ungodly. Evil angels gather about them, and they lose their relish for that which is pure, refined, and ennobling.

Professed Christian parents will pay the greatest deference to their worldly and irreligious guests, while these very persons are leading the children of those who pay them so much polite attention, away from sobriety and from religion. The youth may be trying to lead a religious life, but the parents have invited the tempter into their

household, and he weaves his net about the children. Old and young became absorbed in questionable enjoyments, and the excitement of worldly pleasure.

Many feel that they must make some concessions to please their irreligious relatives and friends. As it is not always easy to draw the line, one concession prepares the way for another, until those who were once true followers of Christ, are in life and character conformed to the customs of the world. The connection with God is broken. They are Christians in name only. When the test hour comes, then their hope is seen to be without foundation. They have sold themselves and their children to the enemy (The Signs of the Times, June 2, 1881).

Friendship With World or Favor of God?— Among God's preferred people, there are men in responsible positions who are content to remain in a state of coldness and backsliding. Their piety vanishes at the approach of temptation. To gain the friendship of worldlings, they will risk the

consequences of losing the favor of God. The Lord is trying His people as silver is tried. Closer and still closer will come the searching test, until the heart is wholly submitted to God, or hardened in disobedience and rebellion (The Signs of the Times, June 2, 1881).

Chapter 3

9. Othniel Made a Judge.—In their prosperity, Israel forgot God, as they had been warned that they would do. But reverses came. The Hebrews were subdued by the king of Mesopotamia, and held in severe bondage for eight years. In their distress, they found that their idolatrous connection could not help them. Then they remembered the wonderful works of God, and began to cry unto Him, and the Lord raised up a deliverer for them, Othniel, Caleb's younger brother. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war, and the Lord delivered the king of Mesopotamia into his hand.

When Othniel was designated as the man

whom God had chosen to lead and deliver Israel, he did not refuse to take the responsibility. In the strength of God he at once commenced to repress idolatry as the Lord had commanded, to administer justice, and to elevate the standard of morality and religion. As Israel repented of their sins, the Lord manifested His great mercy toward them, and wrought for their deliverance.

For forty years Othniel ruled in Israel. During this time the people remained faithful to the divine law, and consequently enjoyed peace and prosperity. But when his judicious and salutary control ceased with his death, the Israelites again relapsed into idolatry. And thus the story of backsliding and chastisement, of confession and deliverance, was repeated again and again (The Signs of the Times, June 9, 1881).

Chapter 4

6. God Instructed Deborah to Call Barak.—The Lord communicated to Deborah His purpose to destroy the enemies of Israel, and bade her send for

a man named Barak, of the tribe of Naphtali, and make known to him the instructions which she had received. She accordingly sent for Barak, and directed him to assemble ten thousand men of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, and make war upon the armies of King Jabin (The Signs of the Times, June 16, 1881).

8, 9. Barak Lacked Confidence in Israel.—

Barak knew the scattered, disheartened, and unarmed condition of the Hebrews, and the strength and skill of their enemies. Although he had been designated by the Lord Himself as the one chosen to deliver Israel, and had received the assurance that God would go with him and subdue their enemies, yet he was timid and distrustful. He accepted the message from Deborah as the word of God, but he had little confidence in Israel, and feared that they would not obey his call. He refused to engage in such a doubtful undertaking unless Deborah would accompany him, and thus support his efforts by her influence and counsel (The Signs of the Times, June 16, 1881).

12-14. Poorly Equipped Israelites Go to Mt. Tabor.—Barak now marshaled an army of ten thousand men, and marched to Mount Tabor, as the Lord had directed. Sisera immediately assembled an immense and well-equipped force, expecting to surround the Hebrews and make them an easy prey. The Israelites were but poorly prepared for an encounter, and looked with terror upon the vast armies spread out in the plain beneath them, equipped with all the implements of warfare, and provided with the dreaded chariots of iron. These were so constructed as to be terribly destructive. Large, scythe-like knives were fastened to the axles, so that the chariots, being driven through the ranks of the enemy, would cut them down like wheat before the sickle (*The Signs of the Times*, June 16, 1881).

17-22. Sisera's Death at Hand of Jael.—Jael was at first ignorant of the character of her guest, and she resolved to conceal him; but when she afterward learned that he was Sisera, the enemy of God and of His people, her purpose changed. As he lay before her asleep, she overcame her natural

reluctance to such an act, and slew him by driving a nail through his temples, pinning him to the earth. As Barak, in pursuit of his enemy, passed that way, he was called in by Jael to behold the vain-glorious captain dead at his feet, —slain by the hand of a woman (The Signs of the Times, June 16, 1881).

Chapter 6

15 (Proverbs 15:33; 18:12). Before Honor Is Humility.—Gideon deeply felt his own insufficiency for the great work before him. ...

The Lord does not always choose for His work men of the greatest talents, but He selects those whom He can best use. Individuals who might do good service for God, may for a time be left in obscurity, apparently unnoticed and unemployed by their Master. But if they faithfully perform the duties of their humble position, cherishing a willingness to labor and to sacrifice for Him, He will in His own time intrust them with greater responsibilities.

Before honor is humility. The Lord can use most effectually those who are most sensible of their own unworthiness and inefficiency. He will teach them to exercise the courage of faith. He will make them strong by uniting their weakness to His might, wise by connecting their ignorance with His wisdom (The Signs of the Times, June 23, 1881).

23. The Same Compassionate Saviour.— [Judges 6:23 quoted.] These gracious words were spoken by the same compassionate Saviour who said to the tempted disciples upon the stormy sea, “It is I; be not afraid,”—He who appeared to those sorrowing ones in the upper chamber, and spoke the selfsame words addressed to Gideon, “Peace be unto you.” The very same Jesus who walked in humiliation as a Man among the children of men, came to His ancient people, to counsel and direct, to command, to encourage, and reprove them (The Signs of the Times, June 23, 1881).

Chapter 7

2, 3 (Deuteronomy 20:5-8). Christ Considers

Family Ties.—[Judges 7:2, 3; Deuteronomy 20:5-8 quoted.] What a striking illustration is this of the tender, pitying love of Christ! He who instituted the relations of life and the ties of kindred, made special provision that these be not too widely broken. He would have none go forth to battle unwillingly. This proclamation also sets forth in a forcible manner the influence which may be exerted by one man who is deficient in faith and courage, and further shows the effect of our thoughts and feelings upon our own course of action (The Signs of the Times, June 30, 1881).

4. Qualities Needed in Christ's Soldiers.— True Christian character is marked by a singleness of purpose, an indomitable determination, which refuses to yield to worldly influences, which will aim at nothing short of the Bible standard. If men will permit themselves to become discouraged in the service of God, the great adversary will present abundant reasons to turn them from the plain path of duty to one of ease and irresponsibility. Those who can be bribed or seduced, discouraged or terrified, will be of no service in the Christian

warfare. Those who set their affections on worldly treasures or worldly honors, will not push the battle against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

All who would be soldiers of the cross of Christ, must gird on the armor and prepare for conflict. They should not be intimidated by threats, or terrified by dangers. They must be cautious in peril, yet firm and brave in facing the foe and doing battle for God. The consecration of Christ's follower must be complete. Father, mother, wife, children, houses, lands, everything, must be held secondary to the work and cause of God. He must be willing to bear patiently, cheerfully, joyfully, whatever in God's providence he may be called to suffer. His final reward will be to share with Christ the throne of immortal glory ...[Judges 7:4 quoted] (The Signs of the Times, June 30, 1881).

7. Pray and Never Be Surprised.—The Lord is willing to do great things for us. We shall not gain the victory through numbers, but through the full surrender of the soul to Jesus. We are to go

forward in His strength, trusting in the mighty God of Israel.

There is a lesson for us in the story of Gideon's army. ...

The Lord is just as willing to work through human efforts now, and to accomplish great things through weak instrumentalities. It is essential to have an intelligent knowledge of the truth; for how else could we meet its wily opponents? The Bible must be studied, not alone for the doctrines it teaches, but for its practical lessons. You should never be surprised, you should never be without your armor on. Be prepared for any emergency, for any call of duty. Be waiting, watching for every opportunity to present the truth, familiar with the prophecies, familiar with the lessons of Christ. But do not trust in well-prepared arguments. Argument alone is not enough. God must be sought on your knees; you must go forth to meet the people through the power and influence of His Spirit.

Act promptly. God would have you minute

men, as were the men who composed Gideon's army. Many times ministers are too precise, too calculating. While they are getting ready to do a great work, the opportunity for doing a good work passes unimproved. The minister moves as though the whole burden rested on himself, a poor finite man, when Jesus is carrying him and his burden too. Brethren, trust self less, and Jesus more (The Review and Herald, July 1, 1884).

7, 16-18 (Joshua 6:2-5). God's Ways Are Not Our Ways.—It is a dangerous thing for men to resist the Spirit of truth and grace and righteousness, because its manifestations are not according to their ideas, and have not come in the line of their methodical plans. The Lord works in His own way, and according to His own devising. Let men pray that they may be divested of self, and may be in harmony with heaven. Let them pray, "Not my will, but thine, O God, be done." Let men bear in mind that God's ways are not their ways, nor His thoughts their thoughts; for He says, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than

your thoughts.” In the instruction that the Lord gave Gideon when he was about to fight with the Midianites,—that he should go out against his foes with an army of three hundred blowing trumpets, and carrying empty pitchers in their hands, and shouting, “The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon,”—these precise, methodical, formal men would see nothing but inconsistency and confusion. They would start back with determined protest and resistance. They would have held long controversies to show the inconsistency and the dangers that would accompany the carrying on of the warfare in such an extreme way, and in their finite judgment they would pronounce all such movements as utterly ridiculous and unreasonable. How unscientific, how inconsistent, would they have thought the movements of Joshua and his army at the taking of Jericho! (The Review and Herald, May 5, 1896).

Chapter 8

1-3. A Prudent Answer Appeases Anger.—Gideon’s modest and prudent answer appeased the

anger of the men of Ephraim, and they returned in peace to their homes. How much of the trouble that exists in the world today, springs from the same evil traits that actuated the men of Ephraim, and how many evils might be avoided if all who are unjustly accused or censured would manifest the meek, self-forgetful spirit of Gideon (The Signs of the Times, July 21, 1881).

24-27. Satan Prompts Gideon to Lead Israel Astray.—Satan is never idle. He is filled with hatred against God, and is constantly enticing men into a wrong course of action. After the armies of the Lord have gained a signal victory, the great adversary is especially busy. He comes disguised as an angel of light, and as such he endeavors to overthrow the work of God. Thus thoughts and plans were suggested to the mind of Gideon, by which Israel were led astray (The Signs of the Times, July 28, 1881).

Leaders May Lead Astray.—Those who are placed in the highest positions may lead astray, especially if they feel that there is no danger. The

wisest err; the strongest grow weary. Excess of caution is often attended with as great danger as excess of confidence. To go forward without stumbling, we must have the assurance that a hand all-powerful will hold us up, and an infinite pity be exercised toward us if we fall. God alone can at all times hear our cry for help.

It is a solemn thought that the removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the failure to fulfill one good resolution, the formation of one wrong habit, may result not only in our own ruin, but in the ruin of those who have put confidence in us. Our only safety is to follow where the steps of the Master lead the way, to trust for protection implicitly to Him who says, "Follow me." Our constant prayer should be. "Hold up my goings in thy path, O Lord, that my footsteps slip not" (The Signs of the Times, July 28, 1881).

Chapter 9

Principle, Not Policy, Must Control.—Had the Israelites preserved a clear perception of right

and wrong, they would have seen the fallacy of Abimelech's reasoning, and the injustice of his claims. They would have seen that he was filled with envy, and actuated by a base ambition to exalt himself by the ruin of his brethren. Those who are controlled by policy rather than by principle are not to be trusted. They will pervert the truth, conceal facts, and construe the words of others to mean that which was never intended. They will employ flattering words, while the poison of asps is under their tongue. He who does not earnestly seek the divine guidance will be deceived by their smooth words and their artful plans (The Signs of the Times, August 4, 1881).

Chapter 10

1, 2. Tola Restored Order, Law, and Justice.—After the death of Abimelech, the usurper, the Lord raised up Tola to judge Israel. His peaceful reign presented a happy contrast to the stormy scenes through which the nation had been passing. It was not his work to lead armies to battle and to achieve victories over the enemies of

Israel, as the former rulers had done; but his influence effected a closer union among the people, and established the government upon a firmer basis. He restored order, law, and justice.

Unlike the proud and envious Abimelech, Tola's great desire was, not to secure position or honor for himself, but to improve the condition of his people. A man of deep humility, he felt that he could accomplish no great work, but he determined to perform with faithfulness his duty to God and to the people. He highly valued the privilege of divine worship, and chose to dwell near the tabernacle, that he might oftener attend upon the services there performed (The Signs of the Times, August 11, 1881).

3-6. Jair Tried to Maintain Worship of God.—[Judges 10:6 quoted.] Tola governed Israel twenty-three years, and was succeeded by Jair. This ruler also feared the Lord and endeavored to maintain His worship among the people. In conducting the affairs of the government he was assisted by his sons, who acted as magistrates, and

went from place to place to administer justice.

To some extent, during the latter part of Jair's reign, and more generally after his death, the Israelites again relapsed into idolatry (The Signs of the Times, August 11, 1881).

Chapter 11

23 (Genesis 15:16). Probation for the Nations.—God is slow to anger. He gave the wicked nations a time of probation that they might become acquainted with Him and His character. According to the light given was their condemnation for refusing to receive the light and choosing their own ways rather than God's ways. God gave the reason why He did not at once dispossess the Canaanites. The iniquity of the Amorites was not full. Through their iniquity they were gradually bringing themselves to the point where God's forbearance could no longer be exercised and they would be exterminated. Until the point was reached and their iniquity was full, the vengeance of God would be delayed. All

nations had a period of probation. Those who made void God's law would advance from one degree of wickedness to another. Children would inherit the rebellious spirit of their parents and do worse than their fathers before them until God's wrath would fall upon them. The punishment was not less because deferred (MS 58, 1900).

Chapter 13

2-5. A Lesson to Mothers.—Many whom God would use as His instruments have been disqualified at their birth by the previous wrong habits of their parents. When the Lord would raise up Samson as a deliverer of His people, He enjoined upon the mother correct habits of life before the birth of her child. ...

In instructing this one mother, the Lord gave a lesson to all who should be mothers to the close of time. Had the wife of Manoah followed the prevailing customs, her system would have been weakened by violation of nature's laws, and her child would have suffered with her the penalty of

transgression (The Gospel Herald, February 1880).

2-23. Manoah Meets Christ.—Manoah and his wife knew not that the One thus addressing them was Jesus Christ. They looked upon Him as the Lord's messenger, but whether a prophet or an angel, they were at a loss to determine. Wishing to manifest hospitality toward their guest, they entreated Him to remain while they should prepare for Him a kid. But in their ignorance of His character, they knew not whether to offer it for a burnt-offering or to place it before Him as food.

The angel answered, "Although thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord." Feeling assured, now, that his visitor was a prophet, Manoah said, "What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honor?"

The answer was, "Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret?" Perceiving the divine character of his guest, Manoah "took a kid, with a

meat-offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord; and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on.” Fire came from the rock, and consumed the sacrifice, and as the flame went up toward heaven, “the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground.” There could be no further question as to the character of their visitor. They knew that they had looked upon the Holy One, who, veiling His glory in the cloudy pillar, had been the Guide and Helper of Israel in the desert.

Amazement, awe, and terror filled Manoah’s heart; and he could only exclaim, “We shall surely die, because we have seen God!” But his companion in that solemn hour possessed more faith than he. She reminded him that the Lord had been pleased to accept their sacrifice, and had promised them a son who should begin to deliver Israel. This was an evidence of favor instead of wrath. Had the Lord purposed to destroy them, He would not have wrought this miracle, nor given them a promise which, were they to perish, must

fail of fulfillment (The Signs of the Times, September 15, 1881).

5. Simplicity Leads to Readiness in Service.—He who will observe simplicity in all his habits, restricting the appetite and controlling the passions, may preserve his mental powers strong, active, and vigorous, quick to perceive everything which demands thought or action, keen to discriminate between the holy and the unholy, and ready to engage in every enterprise for the glory of God and the benefit of humanity (The Signs of the Times, September 29, 1881).

Chapter 14

1-4. A Spy in the Camp.—The Lord has in His Word plainly instructed His people not to unite themselves with those who have not His love and fear before them. Such companions will seldom be satisfied with the love and respect which are justly theirs. They will constantly seek to gain from the God-fearing wife or husband some favor which shall involve a disregard of the divine

requirements. To a godly man, and to the church with which he is connected, a worldly wife or a worldly friend is as a spy in the camp, who will watch every opportunity to betray the servant of Christ, and expose him to the enemy's attacks (The Signs of the Times, September 27, 1910).

Chapter 15

14-19. Samson Recognizes His Dependence.—Thousands of Israelites witnessed Samson's defeat of the Philistines, yet no voice was raised in triumph, till the hero, elated at his marvelous success, celebrated his own victory. But he praised himself, instead of ascribing the glory to God. No sooner had he ceased than he was reminded of his weakness by a most intense and painful thirst. He had become exhausted by his prodigious labors, and no means of supplying his need was at hand. He began to feel his utter dependence upon God, and to be convinced that he had not triumphed by his own power, but in the strength of the Omnipotent One.

He then gave God the praise for his deliverance, and offered an earnest prayer for relief from his present suffering. The Lord hearkened to his petition and opened for him a spring of water. In token of his gratitude Samson called the name of the place En-hakkore, or “the well of him that cried” (The Signs of the Times, October 6, 1881).

Chapter 16

Samson Failed Where Joseph Overcame.—

Samson in his peril had the same source of strength as had Joseph. He could choose the right or the wrong as he pleased. But instead of taking hold of the strength of God, he permitted the wild passions of his nature to have full sway. The reasoning powers were perverted, the morals corrupted. God had called Samson to a position of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness; but he must first learn to govern by first learning to obey the laws of God. Joseph was a free moral agent. Good and evil were before him. He could choose the path of purity, holiness, and honor, or the path of immorality and degradation. He chose the right

way, and God approved. Samson, under similar temptations, which he had brought upon himself, gave loose rein to passion. The path which he entered upon he found to end in shame, disaster, and death. What a contrast to the history of Joseph! (The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881).

(Galatians 6:7, 8). Samson's History a Lesson for Youth.—The history of Samson conveys a lesson for those whose characters are yet unformed, who have not yet entered upon the stage of active life. The youth who enter our schools and colleges will find there every class of mind. If they desire sport and folly, if they seek to shun the good and unite with the evil, they have the opportunity. Sin and righteousness are before them, and they are to choose for themselves. But let them remember that “whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.... He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881).

4. Precious Hours Squandered.—In the

society of this enchantress, the judge of Israel squandered precious hours that should have been sacredly devoted to the welfare of his people. But the blinding passions which make even the strongest weak, had gained control of reason and of conscience (The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881).

Philistines Knowing Divine Law, Watched Samson.—The Philistines were well acquainted with the divine law, and its condemnation of sensual indulgence. They kept a vigilant watch over all the movements of their enemy, and when he degraded himself by this new attachment, and they saw the bewitching power of the enchantress, they determined, through her, to accomplish his ruin (The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881).

15-17. Samson Deliberately Walked Into Net of Betrayer.—Samson's infatuation seems almost incredible. At first he was not so wholly enthralled as to reveal the secret; but he had deliberately walked into the net of the betrayer of souls, and its meshes were drawing closer about him at every

step (The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881).

15-20. Samson Lost Sense of Sacredness of His Work.—Samson, that mighty man of valor, was under a solemn vow to be a Nazarite during the period of his life; but becoming infatuated by the charms of a lewd woman, he rashly broke that sacred pledge. Satan worked through his agents to destroy this ruler of Israel, that the mysterious power which he possessed might no longer intimidate the enemies of God's people. It was the influence of this bold woman that separated him from God, her artifices that proved his ruin. The love and service which God claims, Samson gave to this woman. This was idolatry. He lost all sense of the sacred character and work of God, and sacrificed honor, conscience, and every valuable interest, to base passion (The Signs of the Times, July 1, 1903).

20. Willful Sin Caused Loss of Strength.—Had Samson's head been shaven without fault on his part, his strength would have remained. But his course had shown contempt for the favor and

authority of God as much as if he had in disdain himself severed his locks from his head. Therefore God left him to endure the results of his own folly (The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881).

28. Real Contest Between Jehovah and Dagon.—The contest, instead of being between Samson and the Philistines, was now between Jehovah and Dagon, and thus the Lord was moved to assert His almighty power and His supreme authority (The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881).

30. God's Design for Samson Marred by Sin.—God designed that Samson should accomplish a great work for Israel. Hence the utmost care had been taken at the very outset of life to surround him with the most favorable conditions for physical strength, intellectual vigor, and moral purity. Had he not in after years ventured among the ungodly and the licentious, he would not so basely have yielded to temptation (The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881).

Chapter 8

Ruth

No Commentary.

Chapter 9

1 Samuel

Chapter 1

Valuable Lessons in Life of Samuel.—The reign of judges in Israel closes with Samuel, than whom few purer or more illustrious characters are presented in the sacred record. There are few, also, whose life history contains lessons of greater value to the thoughtful student (*The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881).

8. Satan's Attempt to Destroy Hannah.—This scene was enacted again and again, not only at the yearly gatherings, but whenever circumstances furnished an opportunity for Peninnah to exalt herself at the expense of her rival. The course of this woman seemed to Hannah a trial almost beyond endurance. Satan employed her as his agent to harass, and if possible exasperate and destroy, one of God's faithful children (*The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881).

10. Mighty Power in Prayer.—There is a mighty power in prayer. Our great adversary is constantly seeking to keep the troubled soul away from God. An appeal to heaven by the humblest saint is more to be dreaded by Satan than the decrees of cabinets or the mandates of Kings (The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881).

14. Intemperance Was Common in Israel.—Feasting revelry had well-nigh supplanted true godliness among the people of Israel. Instances of intemperance, even among women, were of frequent occurrence, and now Eli determined to administer what he considered a deserved rebuke (The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881).

20-28. The Reward of Faithfulness.—During the first three years of the life of Samuel the prophet, his mother carefully taught him to distinguish between good and evil. By every familiar object surrounding him, she sought to lead his thoughts up to the Creator. In fulfillment of her vow to give her son to the Lord, with great self-

denial she placed him under the care of Eli the high priest, to be trained for service in the house of God. Though Samuel's youth was passed at the tabernacle devoted to the worship of God, he was not free from evil influences or sinful example. The sons of Eli feared not God, nor honored their father; but Samuel did not seek their company nor follow their evil ways. His early training led him to choose to maintain his Christian integrity. What a reward was Hannah's! and what an encouragement to faithfulness is her example! (The Review and Herald, September 8, 1904).

Chapter 2

11. Faith's Triumph Over Natural Affection.—As soon as the little one was old enough to be separated from its mother, she fulfilled her solemn vow. She loved her child with all the devotion of a mother's heart; day by day her affections entwined about him more closely as she watched his expanding powers, and listened to the childish prattle; he was her only son, the especial gift of heaven; but she had received him as a

treasure consecrated to God, and she would not withhold from the Giver His own. Faith strengthened the mother's heart, and she yielded not to the pleadings of natural affection (The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881).

Mother's Decisive Power in Her Home.—

Would that every mother could realize how great are her duties and her responsibilities, and how great will be the reward of faithfulness. The mother's daily influence upon her children is preparing them for everlasting life or eternal death. She exercises in her home a power more decisive than the minister in the desk, or even the king upon his throne (The Signs of the Times, November 3, 1881).

12. Eli's Criminal Neglect.—The course of Eli—his sinful indulgence as a father, and his criminal neglect as a priest of God—presents a striking and painful contrast to the firmness and self-denial of the faithful Hannah. Eli was acquainted with the divine will. He knew what characters God could accept, and what He would

condemn. Yet he suffered his children to grow up with unbridled passions, perverted appetites, and corrupt morals.

Eli had instructed his children in the law of God, and had given them a good example in his own life; but this was not his whole duty. God required him, both as a father and as a priest, to restrain them from following their own perverse will. This he had failed to do (The Signs of the Times, November 10, 1881).

Warning to Parents Following Eli's Example.—If parents who are following Eli's example of neglect could see the result of the education they are giving their children, they would feel that the curse which fell on Eli would assuredly fall on them. The sin of rebellion against parental authority, lies at the very foundation of the misery and crime in the world today (The Signs of the Times, November 10, 1881).

Many Youth Becoming Infidels.—By precept and example, let the young be taught reverence for

God and for His Word. Many of our youth are becoming infidels at heart, because of the lack of devotion in their parents (The Signs of the Times, November 24, 1881).

Parents and Soul Winning.—Christian parents, if you desire to work for the Lord, begin with your little ones at home. If you manifest tact and wisdom and the fear of God in the management of your children, you may be intrusted with greater responsibilities. True Christian effort will begin at home, and go out from the center to embrace wider fields. A soul saved in your own family circle or in your own neighborhood, by your patient, painstaking labor, will bring as much honor to the name of Christ, and will shine as brightly in your crown as if you had found that soul in China or India (The Signs of the Times, November 10, 1881).

The Duty of the Minister.—All parents should strive to make their families patterns of good works, perfect Christian households. But in a pre-eminent degree is this the duty of those who

minister in sacred things, and to whom the people look for instruction and guidance. The ministers of Christ are to be examples to the flock. He who fails to direct wisely his own household, is not qualified to guide the church of God (The Signs of the Times, November 10, 1881).

Ministers and Their Children.—But great as are the evils of parental unfaithfulness under any circumstances, they are tenfold greater when they exist in the family of those who stand in Christ's stead, to instruct the people. Ministers of the gospel, who fail to control their own households, are, by their wrong example, misleading many. They sanction the growth of evil, instead of repressing it. Many who consider themselves excellent judges of what other children should be and what they should do, are blind to the defects of their own sons and daughters. Such a lack of divine wisdom in those who profess to teach the Word of God, is working untold evil. It tends to efface from the minds of the people the distinction between right and wrong, purity and vice (The Signs of the Times, November 24, 1881).

(Ch. 3:11-14). Results of Parental Unfaithfulness.—The history of Eli is a terrible example of the results of parental unfaithfulness. Through his neglect of duty, his sons became a snare to their fellow men and an offense to God, forfeiting not only the present but the future life. Their evil example destroyed hundreds, and the influence of these hundreds corrupted the morals of thousands. This case should be a warning to all parents. While some err upon the side of undue severity, Eli went to the opposite extreme. He indulged his sons to their ruin. Their faults were overlooked in their childhood, and excused in their days of youth. The commands of the parents were disregarded, and the father did not enforce obedience.

The children saw that they could hold the lines of control, and they improved the opportunity. As the sons advanced in years, they lost all respect for their fainthearted father. They went on in sin without restraint. He remonstrated with them, but his words fell unheeded. Gross sins and revolting

crimes were daily committed by them, until the Lord Himself visited with judgment the transgressors of His law.

We have seen the result of Eli's mistaken kindness,—death to the indulgent father, ruin and death to his wicked sons, and destruction to thousands in Israel. The Lord Himself decreed that for the sins of Eli's sons no atonement should be made by sacrifice or offering forever. How great, how lamentable, was their fall,—men upon whom rested sacred responsibilities, proscribed, outlawed from mercy, by a just and holy God!

Such is the fearful reaping of the harvest sown when parents neglect their God-given responsibilities,—when they allow Satan to preoccupy the field which they themselves should carefully have sown with precious seed of virtue, truth, and righteousness. If but one parent is neglectful of duty, the result will be seen in the character of the children; if both fail, how great will be their accountability before God! How can they escape the doom of those who destroy their

children's souls? (The Review and Herald, August 30, 1881).

12-17. Typical Service the Connecting Link.—The typical service was the connecting link between God and Israel. The sacrificial offerings were designed to prefigure the sacrifice of Christ, and thus to preserve in the hearts of the people an unwavering faith in the Redeemer to come. Hence, in order that the Lord might accept their sacrifices, and continue His presence with them, and, on the other hand, that the people might have a correct knowledge of the plan of salvation, and a right understanding of their duty, it was of the utmost importance that holiness of heart and purity of life, reverence for God, and strict obedience to His requirements, should be maintained by all connected with the sanctuary (The Signs of the Times, December 1, 1881).

17. Sins of Priests Caused Some to Offer Own Sacrifices.—As the men of Israel witnessed the corrupt course of the priests, they thought it safer for their families not to come up to the

appointed place of worship. Many went from Shiloh with their peace disturbed, their indignation aroused, until they at last determined to offer their sacrifices themselves, concluding that this would be fully as acceptable to God, as to sanction in any manner the abominations practiced in the sanctuary (The Signs of the Times, December 1, 1881).

26. (Psalm 71:17). A Place for Consecrated Youth.—God gives all an opportunity in this life to develop character. All may fill their appointed place in His great plan. The Lord accepted Samuel from his very childhood, because his heart was pure, and he had reverence for God. He was given to God, a consecrated offering, and the Lord made him, even in his childhood, a channel of light. A life consecrated as was Samuel's is of great value in God's sight. If the youth of today will consecrate themselves as did Samuel, the Lord will accept them and use them in His work. Of their life they may be able to say with the psalmist, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works" (MS 51, 1900).

Chapter 3

4. Samuel Commissioned When Twelve Years Old.—When but twelve years old, the son of Hannah received his special commission from the Most High (The Signs of the Times, December 15, 1881).

10-14. God May Pass By Adults and Use Children.—God will work with children and youth who give themselves to Him. Samuel was educated for the Lord in his youth, and God passed by the hoary-headed Eli, and conversed with the child Samuel (MS 99, 1899).

11-14. See EGW on Ch. 2:12.

Lord Will Pass By Fathers Who Neglect Home Life.—By this we see that the Lord will pass by old, experienced fathers connected with His work if they neglect their duty in their home life (Letter 33, 1897).

God's Thorough Work Contrasted With

Eli's Carelessness.—Eli was a believer in God and in His Word; but he did not, like Abraham, “command” his children and his household after him. Let us hear what God says about Eli's neglect: “Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of everyone that heareth it shall tingle.” The Lord had borne long with Eli. He had been warned and instructed; but, like the parents of today, he had not heeded the warning. But when the Lord took hold of the case, He ceased not till He had made thorough work (The Review and Herald, May 4, 1886).

20. (Ch. 7:9, 15). Samuel Takes Hold With Both Hands.—Samuel was now invested by the God of Israel with the three-fold office of judge, prophet, and priest. Placing one hand in the hand of Christ, and with the other taking the helm of the nation, he holds it with such wisdom and firmness as to preserve Israel from destruction (The Signs of the Times, June 22, 1882).

Chapter 4

3. Israel Sought Victory in Wrong Way.—

The recollection of these glorious triumphs inspired all Israel with fresh hope and courage, and they immediately sent to Shiloh for the ark, “that when it cometh among us,” said they, “it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.” They did not consider that it was the law of God which alone gave to the ark its sacredness, and that its presence would bring them prosperity only as they obeyed that law (The Signs of the Times, December 22, 1881).

3-5. Hophni and Phinehas Presumptuously Enter Most Holy Place.—The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, eagerly acceded to the proposal to bear the ark into the camp. Without the consent of the high priest, they ventured presumptuously into the holy of holies, and took from thence the ark of God. Filled with pride, and elated with the expectation of speedy victory, they bore it to the camp. And the people, beholding, as they thought, the token of Jehovah’s presence,

“shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.” (The Signs of the Times, December 22, 1881).

Chapter 6

1-5. Only One Sacrifice Can Secure Divine Favor.—The Philistines hoped by their offerings to appease the wrath of God, but they were ignorant of the one great sacrifice which alone can secure to sinful men the divine favor. Those gifts were powerless to atone for sin; for the offerers did not through them express faith in Christ (The Signs of the Times, January 12, 1882).

19. The Spirit of Irreverent Curiosity Still Exists.—The spirit of irreverent curiosity still exists among the children of men. Many are eager to investigate those mysteries which infinite wisdom has seen fit to leave unrevealed. Having no reliable evidence from which to reason, they base their theories on conjecture. The Lord has wrought for His servants and for the upbuilding of His cause at the present day as verily as He wrought in behalf

of ancient Israel; but vain philosophy, “science falsely so called,” has sought to destroy faith in the direct interposition of Providence, attributing all such manifestations to natural causes. This is the sophistry of Satan. He is asserting his authority by mighty signs and wonders in the earth. Those who ignore or deny the special evidences of God’s power, are preparing the way for the arch-deceiver to exalt himself before the people as superior to the God of Israel.

Many accept the reasoning of these would-be wise men as truth, when in fact it undermines the very foundations which God has laid. Such teachers are the ones described by inspiration, who must become fools in their own estimation, that they may be wise. God has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. By those who are guided only by human wisdom, the simplicity of His mighty workings is called foolishness. They think themselves wiser than their Creator, when in fact they are victims of finite ignorance and childish conceit. It is this that holds them in the darkness of unbelief, so that they do

not discern the power of God, and tremble before Him (The Signs of the Times, January 19, 1882).

Chapter 7

3. Modern Forms of Idolatry.—Many who bear the name of Christians are serving other gods besides the Lord. Our Creator demands our supreme devotion, our first allegiance. Anything which tends to abate our love for God, or to interfere with the service due Him, becomes thereby an idol. With some their lands, their houses, their merchandise, are the idols. Business enterprises are prosecuted with zeal and energy, while the service of God is made a secondary consideration. Family worship is neglected, secret prayer is forgotten. Many claim to deal justly with their fellow men, and seem to feel that in so doing they discharge their whole duty. But it is not enough to keep the last six commandments of the decalogue. We are to love the Lord our God with all the heart. Nothing short of obedience to every precept—nothing less than supreme love to God as well as equal love to our fellow man—can satisfy

the claims of the divine law.

There are many whose hearts have been so hardened by prosperity that they forget God, and forget the wants of their fellow man. Professed Christians adorn themselves with jewelry, laces, costly apparel, while the Lord's poor suffer for the necessaries of life. Men and women who claim redemption through a Saviour's blood will squander the means intrusted to them for the saving of other souls, and then grudgingly dole out their offerings for religion, giving liberally only when it will bring honor to themselves. These are idolaters (The Signs of the Times, January 26, 1882).

7-11. God's Intervention to Save Helpless Israel.—It was the Lord's purpose so to manifest His power in delivering Israel, that they might not take the glory to themselves. He permitted them, when unarmed and defenseless, to be challenged by their enemies, and then the Captain of the Lord's host marshalled the army of heaven to destroy the foes of His people. Humility of heart and obedience to the divine law are more

acceptable to God than the most costly sacrifices from a heart filled with pride and hypocrisy. God will not defend those who are living in transgression of His law (The Signs of the Times, January 26, 1882).

12. Samuel's Diary.—There are thousands of souls willing to work for the Master who have not had the privilege of hearing the truth as some have heard it, but they have been faithful readers of the Word of God, and they will be blessed in their humble efforts to impart light to others. Let such ones keep a diary, and when the Lord gives them an interesting experience, let them write it down, as Samuel did when the armies of Israel won a victory over the Philistines. He set up a monument of thankfulness, saying, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” “Brethren, where are the monuments by which you keep in view the love and goodness of God? Strive to keep fresh in your minds the help that the Lord has given you in your efforts to help others. Let not your actions show one trace of selfishness. Every tear that the Lord has helped you to wipe from sorrowful eyes, every fear that has

been expelled, every mercy shown,—trace a record of it in your diary. “As thy days, so shall thy strength be” (MS 62, 1905).

Chapter 8

1-3. Samuel’s Sons Loved Reward.—Samuel had judged Israel from his youth. He had been a righteous and impartial judge, faithful in all his work. He was becoming old; and the people saw that his sons did not follow his footsteps. Although they were not vile, like the children of Eli, yet they were dishonest and double-minded. While they aided their father in his laborious work, their love of reward led them to favor the cause of the unrighteous (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:353).

1-5. Samuel Was Deceived in His Sons.—These young men had received faithful instructions from their father, both by precept and example. They were not ignorant of the warnings given to Eli, and the divine judgments visited upon him and his house. They were apparently men of sterling virtue and integrity, as well as intellectual promise.

It was with the full assent of the people that Samuel shared with his sons the responsibilities of office. But the characters of these young men were yet to be tested. Separated from their father's influence, it would be seen whether they were true to the principles which he had taught them. The result showed that Samuel had been painfully deceived in his sons. Like many young men of today who have been blessed with good abilities, they perverted their God-given powers. The honor bestowed upon them rendered them proud and self-sufficient. They did not make the glory of God their aim, nor did they seek earnestly to Him for strength and wisdom. Yielding to the power of temptation, they became avaricious, selfish, and unjust. God's Word declares that "they walked not in His ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (The Signs of the Times, February 2, 1882).

5. Like All the Nations.—The dissatisfied longing for worldly power and display, is as difficult to cure now as in the days of Samuel. Christians seek to build as worldlings build, to

dress as worldlings dress,-to imitate the customs and practices of those who worship only the God of this world. The instructions of God's Word, the counsels and reproofs of His servants, and even warnings sent directly from His throne, seem powerless to subdue this unworthy ambition. When the heart is estranged from God, almost any pretext is sufficient to justify a disregard of His authority. The promptings of pride and self-love are gratified at whatever expense to the cause of God (The Signs of the Times, July 13, 1882).

6. Faithfulness Brings Criticism.—The unconsecrated and world-loving are ever ready to criticise and condemn those who have stood fearlessly for God and the right. If a defect is seen in one whom the Lord has intrusted with great responsibilities, then all his former devotion is forgotten, and an effort is made to silence his voice and destroy his influence. But let these self-constituted judges remember that the Lord reads the heart. They cannot hide its secrets from His searching gaze. God declares that He will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing

(The Signs of the Times, July 13, 1882).

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

Chapter 10

9. Saul Became a New Man.—The Lord would not leave Saul to be placed in a position of

trust without divine enlightenment. He was to have a new calling, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. The effect was that he was changed into a new man. The Lord gave Saul a new spirit, other thoughts, other aims and desires than he had previously had. This enlightenment, with the spiritual knowledge of God, placing him on vantage ground, was to bind his will to the will of Jehovah (Letter 12a, 1888).

24. Saul's Capabilities Perverted.—Saul had a mind and influence capable of governing a kingdom, if his powers had been submitted to the control of God, but the very endowments that qualified him for doing good could be used by Satan, when surrendered to his power, and would enable him to exert widespread influence for evil. He could be more sternly vindictive, more injurious and determined in prosecuting his unholy designs, than could others, because of the superior powers of mind and heart that had been given him of God (The Signs of the Times, October 19, 1888).

24, 25. Mutual Love of Saul and Samuel.—

The relation between Samuel and Saul was one of peculiar tenderness. Samuel loved Saul as his own son, while Saul, bold and ardent of temper, held the prophet in great reverence, and bestowed upon him the warmth of his affection and regard. Thus the prophet of the living God, an old man whose mission was nearly finished, and the youthful king, whose work was before him, were bound together by the ties of friendship and respect. All through his perverse course, the king clung to the prophet as if he alone could save him from himself (The Signs of the Times, June 1, 1888).

Chapter 12

1-5. Samuel a Man of Strict Integrity.—How many retiring from a position of responsibility as a judge, can say in regard to their purity, Which of you convinceth me of sin? Who can prove that I have turned aside from my righteousness to accept bribes? I have never stained my record as a man who does judgment and justice. Who today can say what Samuel said when he was taking leave of the

people of Israel, because they were determined to have a king? ...Brave, noble judge! But it is a sorrowful thing that a man of the strictest integrity should have to humble himself to make his own defence (MS 33, 1898).

Faithfulness Leads to Honor at the End.—

The honor accorded him who is concluding his work is of far more worth than the applause and congratulations which those receive who are just entering upon their duties, and who have yet to be tested. One may easily lay off his burdens, when even the enemies of truth acknowledge his fidelity. But how many of our great men close their official labors in disgrace, because they have sacrificed principle for gain or honor. The desire to be popular, the temptations of wealth or ease, lead them astray. Men who connive at sin may appear to prosper; they may triumph because their undertakings seem crowned with success; but God's eye is upon these proud boasters. He will reward them as their works have been. The greatest outward prosperity cannot bring happiness to those who are not at peace with God or with themselves

(The Signs of the Times, July 27, 1882).

14. Perpetual Obligation of the Law.—The law of God was not given to the Jews alone. It is of world-wide and perpetual obligation. “He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all.” Its ten precepts are like a chain of ten links. If one link is broken, the chain becomes worthless. Not a single precept can be revoked or changed to save the transgressor. While families and nations exist; while property, life, and character must be guarded; while good and evil are antagonistic, and a blessing or a curse must follow the acts of men—so long must the divine law control us. When God no longer requires men to love Him supremely, to reverence His name, and to keep the holy Sabbath; when He permits them to disregard the rights of their fellow men, to hate and injure one another—then, and not till then, will the moral law lose its force (The Signs of the Times, January 19, 1882).

Chapter 13

8-10. God Was Revealing Saul’s True

Character.—In detaining Samuel, it was the purpose of God that the heart of Saul should be revealed, that others might know what he would do in an emergency. It was a trying position in which to be placed, but Saul did not obey orders. He felt that it would make no difference who approached God, or in what way; and, full of energy and self-complacency, he put himself forward into the sacred office.

The Lord has His appointed agencies; and if these are not discerned and respected by those who are connected with His work, if men feel free to disregard God's requirements, they must not be kept in positions of trust. They would not listen to counsel, nor to the commands of God through His appointed agencies. Like Saul, they would rush into a work that was never appointed them, and the mistakes they would make in following their human judgment would place the Israel of God where their Leader could not reveal Himself to them. Sacred things would become mingled with the common (The Youth's Instructor, November 17, 1898).

9. Saul Could Have Offered Prayer.—He [Saul] could have offered humble prayer to God without the sacrifice; for the Lord will accept even the silent petition of a burdened heart; but instead of this, he forced himself into the priesthood (The Youth's Instructor, November 17, 1898).

11. Blaming Samuel Led to Further Sin.—Saul endeavored to vindicate his own course, and blamed the prophet, instead of condemning himself.

There are today many who pursue a similar course. Like Saul, they are blinded to their errors. When the Lord seeks to correct them, they receive reproof as insult, and find fault with the one who brings the divine message.

Had Saul been willing to see and confess his error, this bitter experience would have proved a safeguard for the future. He would afterward have avoided the mistakes which called forth divine reproof.

But feeling that he was unjustly condemned, he would, of course, be likely again to commit the same sin.

The Lord would have His people, under all circumstances, manifest implicit trust in Him. Although we cannot always understand the workings of His providence, we should wait with patience and humility until He sees fit to enlighten us. We should beware of taking upon ourselves responsibilities which God has not authorized us to bear. Men frequently have too high an estimate of their own character or abilities. They may feel competent to undertake the most important work, when God sees that they are not prepared to perform aright the smallest and humblest duty (The Signs of the Times, August 10, 1882).

13, 14. Saul's Folly Leads to Rejection.—Saul's transgression proved him unworthy to be intrusted with sacred responsibilities. One who had himself so little reverence for God's requirements, could not be a wise or safe leader for the nation.

Had he patiently endured the divine test, the crown would have been confirmed to him and to his house. In fact, Samuel had come to Gilgal for this very purpose. But Saul had been weighed in the balance, and found wanting. He must be removed to make way for one who would sacredly regard the divine honor and authority (The Signs of the Times, August 3, 1882).

After Whose Heart?—Saul had been after the heart of Israel, but David is a man after God's own heart (The Signs of the Times, June 15, 1888).

Chapter 14

1, 6, 7. Jonathan an Instrument of God.—These two men gave evidence that they were moving under the influence and command of a more than human general. To outward appearance, their venture was rash, and contrary to all military rules. But the action of Jonathan was not done in human rashness. He depended not on what he and his armor-bearer themselves could do; he was the instrument that God used in behalf of His people

Israel. They made their plans, and rested their cause in the hands of God. If the armies of the Philistines challenged them, they would advance. If they said, Come, they would go forward. This was their sign, and the angels of God prospered them. They went forward, saying, “It may be that the Lord will work for us” (The Youth’s Instructor, November 24, 1898).

11-15. Armies of Heaven Aided Jonathan.—

It would have been an easy matter for the Philistines to kill these two brave, daring men; but it did not enter into their minds that these two solitary men had come up with any hostile intent. The wondering men above looked on, too surprised to take in their possible object. They regarded these men as deserters, and permitted them to come without harm....

This daring work sent a panic through the camp. There lay the dead bodies of twenty men, and to the sight of the enemy there seemed hundreds of men prepared for war. The armies of heaven were revealed to the opposing host of the

Philistines (The Youth's Instructor, November 24, 1898).

24, 25. Honey of God's Providing.—This rash oath of Saul's was a human invention. It was not inspired of God, and God was displeased with it. Jonathan and his armorbearer, who, through God, had wrought deliverance for Israel that day, had become weak through hunger. The people also were weary and hungry.

“And all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground.” This honey was of God's own providing. He desired that the armies of Israel should partake of this food, and receive strength. But Saul, who was not under the direction of God, had interposed his rash oath (The Youth's Instructor, December 1, 1898).

Man-invented Tests Dishonor God.—There are many who will lightly regard the tests which God has given, and will assume the responsibility of creating tests and prohibitions, as did Saul, which bring dishonor to God and evil to men (The

Signs of the Times, June 1, 1888).

37. Saul Did Not Sense His Own Guilt.—

When the people had satisfied their hunger, Saul proposed to continue the pursuit that night; but the priest suggested that it would be wiser first to ask counsel of God. This was done in the usual manner; but no answer came. Regarding this silence as a token of the Lord's displeasure, Saul determined to discover the cause. Had he properly realized the sinfulness of His own course, he would have concluded that he himself was the guilty one. But failing to discern this, he gave command that the matter be decided by lot (The Signs of the Times, August 17, 1882).

44. (Matthew 7:2). The Guilty Are Severe Judges.—Those who are most ready to excuse or justify themselves in sin are often most severe in judging and condemning others. There are many today, like Saul, bringing upon themselves the displeasure of God. They reject counsel and despise reproof. Even when convinced that the Lord is not with them, they refuse to see in

themselves...the cause of their trouble. How many cherish a proud, boastful spirit, while they indulge in cruel judgment or severe rebuke of others really better in heart and life than they. Well would it be for such self-constituted judges to ponder those words of Christ: “With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (The Signs of the Times, August 17, 1882).

45. Danger in Following Blindly.—God’s people of today are in danger of committing errors no less disastrous. We cannot, we must not, place blind confidence in any man, however high his profession of faith or his position in the church. We must not follow his guidance, unless the Word of God sustains him. The Lord would have His people individually distinguish between sin and righteousness, between the precious and the vile (The Signs of the Times, August 17, 1882).

Chapter 15

2, 3 (Exodus 17:14-16). Destruction of

Amalek Not to Add to Israel's Possessions.—

God did not wish His people to possess anything which belonged to the Amalekites, for His curse rested upon them and their possessions. He designed that they should have an end, and that His people should not preserve anything for themselves which He had cursed. He also wished the nations to see the end of that people who had defied Him, and to mark that they were destroyed by the very people they had despised. They were not to destroy them to add to their own possessions, or to get glory to themselves, but to fulfill the Word of the Lord spoken in regard to Amalek (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:364).

3. Amalek Used Gifts With No Thought of Giver.—That wicked people [the Amalekites] were dwelling in God's world, the house which he had prepared for His faithful, obedient children. Yet they appropriated His gifts to their own use, without one thought of the Giver. The more blessings He poured upon them, the more boldly they transgressed against Him. Thus they continued to pervert His blessings and abuse His mercy. ...

Our gracious God still bears long with the impenitent. He gives them light from heaven, that they may understand the holiness of His character, and the justice of His requirements. He calls them to repentance, and assures them of His willingness to forgive. But if they continue to reject His mercy, the mandate goes forth devoting them to destruction (The Signs of the Times, August 24, 1882).

10-23. Stubbornness Made Saul's Case Hopeless.—It was Saul's stubbornness that made his case hopeless, and yet how many venture to follow his example. The Lord in mercy sends words of reproof to save the erring, but they will not submit to be corrected. They insist that they have done no wrong, and thus resist the Spirit of God (The Review and Herald, May 7, 1895).

17. God Guides the Humble and Consecrated.—[1 Samuel 15:17 quoted.] Here Samuel points out the reason for Saul's appointment to the throne of Israel. He had a

humble opinion of his own capabilities, and was willing to be instructed. When the divine choice fell upon him, he was deficient in knowledge and experience, and had, with many good qualities, serious defects of character. But the Lord granted him the Holy Spirit as a guide and helper, and placed him in a position where he could develop the qualities requisite for a ruler of Israel.

Should he trust to his own strength and judgment, Saul would move impulsively, and would commit grave errors. But if he would remain humble, seeking constantly to be guided by divine wisdom, and advancing as the providence of God opened the way, he would be enabled to discharge the duties of his high position with success and honor. Under the influence of divine grace, every good quality would be gaining strength, while evil traits would as steadily lose their power.

This is the work which the Lord proposes to do for all who consecrate themselves to Him (The Signs of the Times, September 7, 1882).

Those Who Feel Insufficient Will Receive Help.—Whatever the position in which God has placed us, whatever our responsibilities or our dangers, we should remember that He has pledged Himself to impart needed grace to the earnest seeker. Those who feel insufficient for their position, and yet accept it because God bids them, relying upon His power and wisdom, will go on from strength to strength. When they enter upon their work, they may have almost everything to learn; but with Christ as a teacher they will become efficient laborers. God does not intrust His work to the worldly wise; for they are too proud to learn. He chooses those who, feeling their deficiencies, seek to be guided by unerring wisdom (The Signs of the Times, September 7, 1882).

Become Sensitive to Little Digressions.—There are many whom He has called to positions in His work for the same reason that He called Saul,—because they are little in their own sight, because they have a humble and teachable spirit. In His providence He places them where they may learn of Him. To all who will receive instruction

He will impart grace and wisdom. It is His purpose to bring them into so close connection with Himself that Satan shall have no opportunity to pervert their judgment or overpower their conscience. He will reveal to them their defects of character, and bestow upon all who seek His aid, strength to correct their errors. Whatever may be man's besetting sin, whatever bitter or baleful passions struggle for the mastery, he may conquer, if he will watch and war against them in the name and strength of Israel's Helper. The children of God should cultivate a keen sensitiveness to sin. Here, as well as elsewhere, we should not despise the day of small things. It is one of Satan's most successful devices, to lead men to the commission of little sins, to blind the mind to the danger of little indulgences, little digressions from the plainly stated requirements of God. Many who would shrink with horror from some great transgression, are led to look upon sin in little matters as of trifling consequence. But these little sins eat out the life of godliness in the soul. The feet which enter upon a path diverging from the right way are tending toward the broad road that ends in death.

When once a retrograde movement begins, no one can tell where it may end. ...

We must learn to distrust self and to rely wholly upon God for guidance and support, for a knowledge of His will, and for strength to perform it (The Signs of the Times, September 7, 1882).

22. God Did Not Want Spoil of Corrupt People.—[1 Samuel 15:22 quoted.] God required of His people obedience rather than sacrifice. All the riches of the earth were His. The cattle upon a thousand hills belonged to Him. He did not require the spoil of a corrupt people, upon whom His curse rested, even to their utter extinction, to be presented to Him to prefigure the holy Saviour, as a lamb without blemish (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:365).

23. See EGW on Numbers 16:1-50, Vol. I, p. 1114.

Saul a Failure.—The first king of Israel proved a failure, because he set his will above the

will of God. Through the prophet Samuel the Lord instructed Saul that as king of Israel his course of action must be one of strictest integrity. Then God would bless his government with prosperity. But Saul refused to make obedience to God his first consideration, and the principles of heaven the government of his conduct. He died in dishonor and despair (MS 151, 1899).

Pretended Righteousness Used as Cloak.— Many who profess to be serving God are in the same position as Saul,—covering over ambitious projects, pride of display, with a garment of pretended righteousness. The Lord's cause is made a cloak to hide the deformity of injustice, but it makes the sin of tenfold greater enormity (MS 1a, 1890).

Self-justification Keeps One in Darkness.— Those whose deeds are evil, will not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reprov'd and their real characters revealed. If they continue in the path of transgression, and sever themselves entirely from the Redeemer, stubbornness, and sullenness,

and a spirit of revenge will take possession of them, and they will say to their own souls, Peace, peace, when there is every reason that they should be alarmed, for their steps are directed toward destruction. As Saul resisted the reproofs of the servant of the Lord, this spirit took possession of him. He defied the Lord, he defied His servant, and his enmity toward David was the outworking of the murderous spirit that comes into the heart of those who justify themselves in the face of their guilt (The Signs of the Times, June 22, 1888).

28. David and Saul Contrasted.—David and Saul stand before us in this history as men widely different in character. The course of David makes manifest the fact that he regarded the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom. But Saul was shorn of his strength, because he failed to make obedience to God's commandments the rule of his life. It is a fearful thing for a man to set his will against the will of God, as revealed in his specified requirements. All the honor that a man could receive on the throne of a kingdom, would be a poor compensation for the loss of the favor of God

through an act of disloyalty to heaven. Disobedience to the commandments of God can only bring disaster and dishonor at last. God has given to every man his work, just as truly as he appointed to Saul the government of Israel; and the practical and important lesson to us is to accomplish our appointed work in such a manner that we may meet our life records with joy, and not with grief (The Signs of the Times, September 7, 1888).

34, 35. Samuel Active in Retirement.—After Israel had rejected Samuel as ruler of the nation, though well qualified for public labor, the prophet sought retirement. He was not superannuated, for he presided as teacher in the school of the prophets. This service for his God was a pleasant service (The Signs of the Times, October 19, 1888).

Chapter 16

7-13. Christ Built David's Character.—When God called David from his father's sheepfold to anoint him king of Israel, He saw in

him one to whom He could impart His Spirit. David was susceptible to the influence of the Holy Spirit, and the Lord in His providence trained him for His service, preparing him to carry out His purposes. Christ was the Master-builder of his character (MS 163, 1902).

11, 12. God Chose and Prepared David for His Work.—Six miles south of Jerusalem, “the city of the great King,” was Bethlehem, where David was born more than a thousand years before the infant Jesus was cradled in the manger, and worshiped by the wise men from the East. Centuries before the advent of the Saviour of the world, David, in the freshness of boyhood, had kept watch of his flocks as they grazed on the open fields of Bethlehem. The simple shepherd boy sang the songs of his own composing, and the music of his harp made a sweet accompaniment to the melody of his fresh young voice. The Lord had chosen David, and had ordered his life that he might have an opportunity to train his voice, and cultivate his talent for music and poetry. The Lord was preparing him in his solitary life with his

flocks, for the work He designed to commit to his trust in afteryears (The Signs of the Times, June 8, 1888).

Chapter 17

1-11. Goliath About Twelve Feet Tall.—The Philistines propose their own manner of warfare, in selecting a man of great size and strength, whose height is about twelve feet; and they send this champion forth to provoke a combat with Israel, requesting them to send out a man to fight with him (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:370).

Chapter 22

3, 4. David's Care for His Parents.—David's anxiety was not all for himself, although he realized his peril. He thought of his father and mother, and he concluded that he must seek another refuge for them. He went to the king of Moab, and the Lord put it into the heart of the monarch to courteously grant to the beloved parents of David an asylum in Mizpeh, and they

were not disturbed, even in the midst of the enemies of Israel. From this history, we may all learn precious lessons of filial love. The Bible plainly condemns the unfaithfulness of parents to their children, and the disobedience of children to their parents. Religion in the home is of priceless value (The Signs of the Times, September 7, 1888).

5. Sentinels of Heaven Gave Warning.—It seemed certain to him [David] that he must, at last, fall into the hands of his pursuer and persecutor. But could his eyes have been opened, he would have seen the angels of the Lord encamped round about him and his followers. The sentinels of heaven were waiting to warn them of impending danger, and to conduct them to a place of refuge when their peril demanded it. God could protect David and his followers; for they were not a band in rebellion against Saul. David had repeatedly proved his allegiance to the king (The Signs of the Times, September 7, 1888).

6-16. The Effects of Evil Surmising.—The spirit of evil was upon Saul. He felt that his doom

had been sealed by the solemn message of his rejection from the throne of Israel. His departure from the plain requirements of God was bringing its sure results. He did not turn, and repent, and humble his heart before God, but opened it to receive every suggestion of the enemy. He listened to every false witness, eagerly receiving anything that was detrimental to the character of David, hoping that he might find an excuse for manifesting his increasing envy and hatred of him who had been anointed to the throne of Israel. Every rumor was credited, no matter how inconsistent and irreconcilable it was with the former character and custom of David.

Every evidence that the protecting care of God was over David seemed to embitter and deepen his one engrossing and determined purpose. The failure to accomplish his own designs appeared in marked contrast to the success of the fugitive in eluding his search, but it only made the determination of the king the more unrelenting and firm. He was not careful to conceal his designs toward David, nor scrupulous as to what means

should be employed in accomplishing his purpose.

It was not the man David, who had done him no harm, against whom the king was contending. He was in controversy with the King of heaven; for when Satan is permitted to control the mind that will not be ruled by Jehovah, he will lead it according to his will, until the man who is thus in his power becomes an efficient agent to carry out his designs. So bitter is the enmity of the great originator of sin against the purposes of God, so terrible is his power for evil, that when men disconnect from God, Satan influences them, and their minds are brought more and more into subjection, until they cast off the fear of God, and the respect of men, and become bold and avowed enemies of God and of His people.

What an example was Saul giving to the subjects of his kingdom in his desperate, unprovoked persecution of David! What a record he was making to be placed upon the pages of history for future generations! He sought to turn the full tide of the power of his kingdom into the

channel of his own hatred in hunting down an innocent man. All this had a demoralizing influence upon Israel. And while Saul was giving loose reign to his passion, Satan was weaving a snare to compass his ruin, and the ruin of his kingdom. While the king and his councilors were planning for the capture of David, the affairs of the nation were being mismanaged and neglected. While imaginary foes were constantly presented before the minds of the people, the real enemies were strengthening themselves without arousing suspicion or alarm. By following the dictates of Satan, Saul was himself hastening the very result which, with unsanctified ability, he was endeavoring to avert.

The counsel of the Lord had been disregarded again and again by the rebellious king, and the Lord had given him up to the folly of his own wisdom. The influences of the Spirit of God would have restrained him from the course of evil which he had chosen, that eventually worked out his ruin. God hates all sin, and when man persistently refuses all the counsel of heaven, he is left to the

deceptions of the enemy, to be drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed (The Signs of the Times, September 7, 1888).

9, 10. Humanity Was Extinguished From Saul.—Doeg knew well that the action of the priest toward David did not proceed from any malice toward the king. The priest thought that in doing a kindness to an ambassador of his court, he was showing respect to the king. He was altogether innocent of any evil intention toward Saul or his realm. David had not taken a straightforward course before the priest, he had dissimulated, and on this account he had brought the whole family of the priesthood into peril.

But Doeg was a slanderer, and Saul had such a spirit of envy and hatred and murder, that he desired the report to be true. The partial and exaggerated statement of the chief of the herdsman, was suited for the use of the adversary of God and man. It was presented to the mind of Saul in such a light that the king lost all control of himself, and acted like a madman. If he had but calmly waited

until he could have heard the whole story, and had exercised his reasoning faculties, how different would have been the terrible record of that day's doings!

How Satan exults when he is enabled to set the soul into a white heat of anger! A glance, a gesture, an intonation, may be seized upon and used, as the arrow of Satan, to wound and poison the heart that is open to receive it. If the Spirit of Christ possesses us wholly, and we have been transformed by His grace, there will be no disposition to speak evil, or to bear reports freighted with falsehood. The falsifier, the accuser of the brethren, is a chosen agent of the great deceiver. Ahimelech was not present on this occasion to vindicate himself, and to state the facts as they existed; but Doeg cared not for this. Like Satan his father, he read the mind of Saul, and improved the opportunity of increasing the misery of the king by the words of his mischievous tongue, which was set on fire of hell. He stirred up the very worst passions of the human heart (The Signs of the Times, September 21, 1888).

16. The Inconsistency of Jealousy.—The inconsistency of jealousy was shown in this verdict. Without proving the guilt of any one of the priests, the king commanded that all the line of Eli should be slain. He had determined upon this course of action before he had sent for them or heard their side of the case. And no amount of proof could undo his malignant purpose. To vent his wrath upon one man seemed too small a matter to satisfy the fury of his revenge (The Signs of the Times, September 21, 1888).

17, 18. Cruelty of Saul and Doeg.—Saul's rage was not appeased by the noble stand of his footmen, and he turned to the man whom he had connected with himself as a friend, because he had reported against the priests. Thus this Edomite, who was as base a character as was Barabbas, slew with his own hand eighty-five priests of the Lord in one day; and he and Saul, and he who was a murderer from the beginning, gloried over the massacre of the servants of the Lord. Like savage beasts who have tasted of blood, so were Saul and

Doeg (The Signs of the Times, September 21, 1888).

Chapter 23

3, 4. David Seeks Assurance.—He [David] had been anointed as king, and he thought that some measure of responsibility rested upon him for the protection of his people. If he could but have the positive assurance that he was moving in the path of duty, he would start out with his limited forces, and stand faithfully at his post whatever might be the consequences (The Signs of the Times, October 5, 1888).

9-12. Saul's Unreasonableness.—Although a great deliverance had been wrought for Keilah, and the men of the city were very grateful to David and his men for the preservation of their lives, yet so fiendish had become the soul of the God-forsaken Saul, that he could demand from the men of Keilah that they yield up their deliverer to certain and unmerited death. Saul had determined that if they should offer any resistance they would suffer the

bitter consequences of opposing the command of their king. The long-desired opportunity seemed to have come, and he determined to leave nothing undone in securing the arrest of his rival (The Signs of the Times, October 5, 1888).

12. People Knew Not Their Own Mind.—

The inhabitants of the city did not for a moment think themselves capable of such an act of ingratitude and treachery; but David knew, from the light that God had given him, that they could not be trusted, that in the hour of need they would fail (The Signs of the Times, October 5, 1888).

19-26. Hypocrisy of Citizens of Ziph.—The citizens of Keilah, who should have repaid the interest and zeal of David in delivering them from the hands of the Philistines, would have given him up because of their fear of Saul rather than to have suffered a siege for his sake. But the men of Ziph would do worse; they would betray David into the hands of his enemy, not because of their loyalty to the king, but because of their hatred of David. Their interest for the king was only a pretense.

They were of their own accord acting the part of hypocrites when they offered to assist in the capture of David. It was upon these false-hearted betrayers that Saul invoked the blessing of the Lord. He praised their satanic spirit in betraying an innocent man, as the spirit and act of virtue in showing compassion to himself. Apparently David was in greater danger than he had ever been before. Upon learning the perils to which he was exposed, he changed his position, seeking refuge in the mountains between Maon and the Dead Sea (The Signs of the Times, October 12, 1888).

27-29. Saul Angry but Afraid.—The disappointed king was in a frenzy of anger to be thus cheated of his prey; but he feared the dissatisfaction of the nation; for, if the Philistines should ravage the country while he was destroying its defender, a reaction would be likely to take place, and he would become the object of the people's hate. So he relinquished his pursuit of David, and went against the Philistines, and this gave David an opportunity to escape to the stronghold of En-gedi (The Signs of the Times,

October 12, 1888).

Chapter 24

6 (Proverbs 16:32). Who Am I to Raise My Hand?—The course of David made it manifest that he had a Ruler whom he obeyed. He could not permit his natural passions to gain the victory over him; for he knew that he that ruleth his own spirit, is greater than he who taketh a city. If he had been led and controlled by human feelings, he would have reasoned that the Lord had brought his enemy under his power in order that he might slay him, and take the government of Israel upon himself. Saul's mind was in such a condition that his authority was not respected, and the people were becoming irreligious and demoralized. Yet the fact that Saul had been divinely chosen king of Israel kept him in safety, for David conscientiously served God, and he would not in any wise harm the anointed of the Lord (The Signs of the Times, October 12, 1888).

Chapter 25

1. Relation of Youth and Old Age Illustrated.—The life of Samuel from early childhood had been a life of piety and devotion. He had been placed under the care of Eli in his youth, and the loveliness of his character drew forth the warm affection of the aged priest. He was kind, generous, diligent, obedient, and respectful. The contrast between the course of the youth Samuel and that of the priest's own sons was very marked, and Eli found rest and comfort and blessing in the presence of his charge. It was a singular thing that between Eli, the chief magistrate of the nation, and the simple child so warm a friendship should exist. Samuel was helpful and affectionate, and no father ever loved his child more tenderly than did Eli this youth. As the infirmities of age came upon Eli, he felt more keenly the disheartening, reckless, profligate course of his own sons, and he turned to Samuel for comfort and support.

How touching to see youth and old age relying one upon the other, the youth looking up to the

aged for counsel and wisdom, the aged looking to the youth for help and sympathy. This is as it should be. God would have the young possess such qualifications of character that they shall find delight in the friendship of the old, that they may be united in the endearing bonds of affection to those who are approaching the borders of the grave (The Signs of the Times, October 19, 1888).

10, 11 (Luke 12:16-21). Gain Was Nabal's God.—Nabal thought nothing of spending an extravagant amount of his wealth to indulge and glorify himself; but it seemed too painful a sacrifice for him to make to bestow compensation which he never would have missed, upon those who had been like a wall to his flocks and herds. Nabal was like the rich man in the parable.

He had only one thought,—to use God's merciful gifts to gratify his selfish animal appetites. He had no thought of gratitude to the Giver. He was not rich toward God; for eternal treasure had no attraction for him. Present luxury, present gain, was the one absorbing thought of his life. This was

his God (The Signs of the Times, October 26, 1888).

18-31. A Contrast of Characters.—In the character of Abigail, the wife of Nabal, we have an illustration of womanhood after the order of Christ; while her husband illustrates what a man may become who yields himself to the control of Satan (MS 17, 1891).

39. God Will Set Matters Right.—When David heard the tidings of the death of Nabal, he gave thanks that God had taken vengeance into His own hands. He had been restrained from evil, and the Lord had returned the wickedness of the wicked upon his own head. In this dealing of God with Nabal and David, men may be encouraged to put their cases into the hands of God; for in His own good time He will set matters right (The Signs of the Times, October 26, 1888).

Chapter 27

1. A Failure in David's Faith.—David's faith

in God had been strong, but it had failed him when he placed himself under the protection of the Philistines. He had taken this step without seeking the counsel of the Lord; but when he had sought and obtained the favor of the Philistines, it was poor policy to repay their kindness by deception. In the favor they had shown him they had been actuated by selfishness. They had reason to remember the son of Jesse, for his valor had cost them their champion, Goliath, and had turned the tide of the battle against them. The Philistines were glad of an opportunity to separate David's forces from the army under Saul. They hoped that David would avenge his wrongs by joining them in battle against Saul and Israel (The Signs of the Times, November 16, 1888).

Failure to Pray Leads to Mistakes.—This demonstrates the fact that great and good men, men with whom God has worked, will make grievous mistakes when they cease to watch and pray, and to fully trust in God.

There is a precious experience, an experience

more precious than fine gold, to be gained by everyone who will walk by faith. He who will walk in the way of unwavering trust in God will have a connection with heaven. The child of God is to do his work, looking to God alone for strength and guidance. He must toil on without despondency and full of hope, even though he is placed in most trying and aggravating circumstances.

David's experiences are recorded for the instruction of the people of God in these last days. In his warfare against Satan, this servant of God had received light and direction from heaven, but, because the conflict was long continued, and because the question of his receiving the throne was unsettled, he became weary and discouraged (The Signs of the Times, November 9, 1888).

Chapter 28

7. The Witch and Satan Had an Agreement.—The witch of Endor had made agreement with Satan to follow his directions in all things; and he would perform wonders and

miracles for her, and would reveal to her the most secret things, if she would yield herself unreservedly to be controlled by his Satanic majesty. This she had done (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:375, 376).

8-19. Saul's Final Step.—When Saul inquired for Samuel, the Lord did not cause Samuel to appear to Saul. He saw nothing. Satan was not allowed to disturb the rest of Samuel in the grave, and bring him up in reality to the witch of Endor. God does not give Satan power to resurrect the dead. But Satan's angels assume the form of dead friends, and speak and act like them, that through professed dead friends he can the better carry on his work of deception. Satan knew Samuel well, and he knew how to represent him before the witch of Endor, and to utter correctly the fate of Saul and his sons.

Satan will come in a very plausible manner to such as he can deceive, and will insinuate himself into their favor, and lead them almost imperceptibly from God. He wins them under his

control, cautiously at first, until their perceptibilities become blunted. Then he will make bolder suggestions, until he can lead them to commit almost any degree of crime. When he has led them fully into his snare, he is then willing that they should see where they are, and he exults in their confusion, as in the case of Saul. He had suffered Satan to lead him a willing captive, and now Satan spreads before Saul a correct description of his fate. By giving Saul a correct statement of his end, through the woman of Endor, Satan opens a way for Israel to be instructed by his satanic cunning, that they may, in their rebellion against God, learn of him, and by thus doing, sever the last link which would hold them to God.

Saul knew that in this last act, of consulting the witch of Endor, he cut the last shred which held him to God. He knew that if he had not before wilfully separated himself from God, this act sealed that separation, and made it final. He had made an agreement with death, and a covenant with hell. The cup of his iniquity was full (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:376, 377).

Chapter 10

2 Samuel

Chapter 12

1-14. David's Conviction of Guilt Led to His Salvation.—The prophet Nathan's parable of the ewe lamb, given to King David, may be studied by all. The light was flashed sharply upon the king, while he was in utter darkness as to what was thought of his actions in regard to Uriah. While he was following his course of self-indulgence and commandment breaking, the parable of a rich man who took from a poor man his one ewe lamb, was presented before him. But the king was so completely wrapped in his garments of sin, that he did not see that he was the sinner. He fell into the trap, and with great indignation, he passed his sentence upon another man, as he supposed, condemning him to death. When the application was made, and the facts brought home to him, when Nathan said, Thou art the man; unknowingly thou hast condemned thyself, David was

overwhelmed. He had not one word to say in defence of his course of action.

This experience was most painful to David, but it was most beneficial. But for the mirror which Nathan held up before him, in which he so clearly recognized his own likeness, he would have gone on unconvicted of his heinous sin, and would have been ruined. The conviction of his guilt was the saving of his soul. He saw himself in another light, as the Lord saw him, and as long as he lived he repented of his sin (Letter 57, 1897).

13. See EGW on 1 Kings 3:14.

David Offered No Excuses.—David awakens as from a dream. He feels the sense of his sin. He does not seek to excuse his course, or palliate his sin, as did Saul; but with remorse and sincere grief, he bows his head before the prophet of God, and acknowledges his guilt....

David does not manifest the spirit of an unconverted man. If he had possessed the spirit of

the rulers of the nations around him, he would not have borne, from Nathan, the picture of his crime before him in its truly abominable colors, but would have taken the life of the faithful reprover. But notwithstanding the loftiness of his throne, and his unlimited power, his humble acknowledgement of all with which he was charged, is evidence that he still feared and trembled at the word of the Lord (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:378, 381).

25. (1 Kings 3:3). Failure to Sense Need Leads to Presumption.—Solomon's youth was illustrious, because he was connected with heaven, and made God his dependence and his strength. God had called him Jedidiah, which, interpreted, meant The Beloved of God. He had been the pride and hope of his father, and well beloved in the sight of his mother. He had been surrounded by every worldly advantage that could improve his education and increase his wisdom. But, on the other hand, the corruption of court life was calculated to lead him to love amusement and the gratification of his appetite. He never felt the want of means by which to gratify his desires, and never

had need to exercise self-denial.

Notwithstanding all these objectionable surroundings, the character of Solomon was preserved in purity during his youth. God's angel could talk with him in the night season; and the divine promise to give him understanding and judgment, and to fully qualify him for his responsible work, was faithfully kept. In the history of Solomon we have the assurance that God will do great things for those who love Him, who are obedient to His commandments, and trust in Him as their surety and strength.

Many of our youth suffer shipwreck in the dangerous voyage of life, because they are self-confident and presumptuous. They follow their inclinations, and are allured by amusements, and indulgence of appetite, till habits are formed which become shackles, impossible for them to break, and which drag them down to ruin.... If the youth of our day would, like young King Solomon, feel their need of heavenly wisdom, and seek to develop and strengthen their higher faculties, and consecrate

them to the service of God, their lives would show great and noble results, and bring pure and holy happiness to themselves and many others (The Health Reformer, April, 1878).

Chapter 16

10, 11. David Accepted Humiliation as Necessary.—[2 Samuel 16:10, 11 quoted.] He [David] thus acknowledges, before his people and chief men, that this is the punishment God has brought upon him because of his sin, which has given the enemies of the Lord occasion to blaspheme; that the enraged Benjamite might be accomplishing his part of the punishment predicted, and that if he bore these things with humility, the Lord would lessen his affliction, and turn the curse of Shimei into a blessing. David does not manifest the spirit of an unconverted man. He shows that he has had an experience in the things of God. He manifests a disposition to receive correction from God, and, in confidence turns to Him as his only trust. God rewards David's humble trust in Him, by defeating the counsel of

Ahithophel, and preserving his life (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:383).

Chapter 19

16, 18-23. Shimei Confessed, David Forgave.—After the death of Absalom, God turned the hearts of Israel, as the heart of one man, to David. Shimei, who had cursed David in his humility, through fear of his life, was among the first of the rebellious to meet David on his return to Jerusalem. He made confession of his rebellious conduct toward David. Those who witnessed his abusive course urged David not to spare his life, because he cursed the Lord's anointed. But David rebuked them. He not only spared the life of Shimei, but mercifully forgave him. Had David possessed a revengeful spirit, he could readily have gratified it, by putting the offender to death (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:384).

Chapter 24

1-14. See EGW on 1 Chronicles 21:1-13.

15-25. See EGW on 1 Chronicles 21:14-27.

Chapter 11

1 Kings

Chapter 1

5, 6. David Faithfully Withstood Pressure by Adonijah.—Adonijah had ever had his own way, and he thought that if he made a demonstration showing his desire to reign, David would yield to his wishes. But David was true to God and to his convictions (MS 6 1/2, 1903).

Chapter 2

1-9. David Prepared the Way for Solomon.—David's public labor was about to close. He knew that he should soon die, and he does not leave his business matters in confusion, to vex the soul of his son; but while he has sufficient physical and mental strength, he arranges the affairs of his kingdom, even to the minutest matters, not forgetting to warn Solomon in regard to the case of Shimei. He knew that the latter

would cause trouble in the kingdom. He was a dangerous man, of violent temper, and was kept in control only through fear. Whenever he dared, he would cause rebellion, or, if he had a favorable opportunity, would not hesitate to take the life of Solomon.

David, in arranging his business, sets a good example to all who are advanced in years, to settle their matters while they are capable of doing so, that when they shall be drawing near to death, and their mental faculties are dimmed, they shall have nothing of a worldly nature to divert their minds from God (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:389, 390).

19. Solomon's Honor to His Mother.—We take the position that the fifth commandment is binding upon the son and daughter, although they may be old and gray-headed. However high or humble their station in life they will never rise above or fall below their obligation to obey the fifth precept of the decalogue, that commands them to honor their father and mother. Solomon, the wisest and most exalted monarch that ever sat upon

an earthly throne, has given us an example of filial love and reverence. He was surrounded by his courtly train, consisting of the wisest sages and counselors, yet, when visited by his mother, he laid aside all the customary ceremonies attending the approach of a subject to an oriental monarch. The mighty king, in the presence of his mother, was only her son. His royalty was laid aside, as he rose from his throne and bowed before her. He then seated her on his throne, at his right hand (The Signs of the Times, February 28, 1878).

Chapter 3

2. A Temporary Place of Worship Should Have Been Prepared.—Solomon...knew that it would take much time to carry out the grand designs given for the building of the temple; and before building the house of the Lord or the walls about Jerusalem, he should have prepared a temporary place of worship for the people of God. He should not have encouraged them, by his own example, to go to the high places to offer sacrifice. But we read, “Only the people of Israel sacrificed

in high places.” This is mentioned as a matter that should have been otherwise.

Solomon changed his place of worship to Jerusalem, but his former act in sacrificing in a place not made sacred by the presence of the Lord, but dedicated to the worship of idols, removed from the minds of the people something of the repulsion with which they should have regarded the horrible performances practiced by idolaters. This mingling of the sacred and the profane was the first step in the practice of Solomon which led him to suppose that the Lord was not so particular in regard to the worship of His people. Thus he was educating himself to make still greater departures from God and His work. Little by little his heathen wives led him to make them altars on which to sacrifice to their gods (MS 5, 1912).

3. See EGW on 2 Samuel 12:25.

4. (2 Chronicles 1:3-6). A Token of Earnest Desire.—These sacrifices were offered by Solomon and his men in positions of trust, not as a

formal ceremony, but as a token of their earnest desire for special help. They knew that they were insufficient, in their own strength, for the responsibilities entrusted to them. Solomon and his associates longed for quickness of mind, for largeness of heart, for tenderness of spirit (The Review and Herald, October 19, 1905).

5-9. (2 Chronicles 1:7-10). A Most Precious Lesson.—This prayer is a most precious lesson of instruction. Especially is it of value to those entrusted with responsibilities in the Lord's work. It is a sample prayer, indited by the Lord, to guide aright the desires of His servants. It is given also for the guidance of those who today are striving to serve the Lord with singleness of heart. ...

It was in the night season that the Lord appeared to Solomon. During the busy hours of the day Solomon had much to do. Many came to him for advice and counsel, and his mind was fully occupied.

The hours of the night, when all was silent, and

Solomon was free from confusion, was the time that the Lord chose in which to reveal Himself to him.

God often chooses the silence of the night to give His servants instruction. He can then gain freer access to their hearts than during the day. There is less to draw the mind from Him....

The Lord was testing Solomon. He placed in his mind a desire for the things that would enable him to rule wisely the people of Israel [Verses 7-9 quoted.] It was such a prayer as this that Solomon was continually to offer in the days of exaltation and glory awaiting him. And thus those who today are standing in positions of trust in the Lord's work are to pray. Let them beware of lifting up their hearts unto vanity. Only the prayers of those whose hearts are not filled with self-exaltation and haughtiness will the Lord hear. [Isaiah 58:9 quoted.]

God commended Solomon's prayer. And He will today hear and commend the prayers of those

who in faith and humility cry to Him for aid. He will certainly answer the fervent prayer for a preparation for service. In answer He will say, Here I am. What wilt thou that I shall do for thee?

The lesson to be drawn from this record is more precious than any earthly treasure. He who led Solomon's mind as he made this prayer will today teach His servants how to pray for what they need (MS 164, 1902).

Possibilities of a Heavenly Commerce.—This is a lesson for us. Our petitions to God should not proceed from hearts that are filled with selfish aspirations. God exhorts us to choose those gifts that will redound to His glory. He would have us choose the heavenly instead of the earthly. He throws open before us the possibilities and advantages of a heavenly commerce. He gives encouragement to our loftiest aims, security to our choicest treasure. When the worldly possession is swept away, the believer will rejoice in his heavenly treasure, the riches that cannot be lost in any earthly disaster (The Review and Herald,

August 16, 1898).

5-15. (2 Chronicles 1:7-12). Study Every Point Carefully.—[1 Kings 3:5-15 quoted.] It would be well for us carefully to study Solomon's prayer, and to consider every point on which depended his receiving the rich blessings that the Lord was ready to give him (MS 154, 1902).

6. God Dealt According to Faithfulness.—[1 Kings 3:6 quoted.] There is enough contained in these words to silence every skeptic in regard to God's sanctioning the sins of David and Solomon. God was merciful to them according as they walked before Him in truth, righteousness, and uprightness of heart. Just according to their faithfulness, God dealt with them (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:395).

14. (2 Samuel 12:13). David Reproved for Walking in Own Counsel.—[1 Kings 3:14 quoted.] Several times during his reign David walked in the counsel of his own heart, and greatly injured his influence by following his impulses.

But he always received the words of reproof sent to him by the Lord. These words cut him to the quick. He did not seek to evade the matter, but bore the punishment of his transgression, saying, “I have sinned” (MS 164, 1902).

Chapter 5

2-9. David’s Public Relations.—[1 Kings 5:2-9 quoted.] David had lived in friendship with the people of Tyre and Sidon, who had not in any way molested Israel. Hiram, king of Tyre, acknowledged Jehovah as the true God, and some of the Sidonians were turning from idol worship.

Today, in our dealings with our neighbors, we are to be kind and courteous. We are to be as signs in the world, testifying to the power of divine grace to refine and ennoble those who give themselves to God’s service (MS 18, 1905).

3-18. (Ch. 7:13, 14, 40; 2 Chronicles 2:3-14). A Spirit of Sacrifice Vital in Every Phase of Our Work.—The beginnings of Solomon’s apostasy

may be traced to many seemingly slight deviations from right principles. Associations with idolatrous women was by no means the only cause of his downfall. Among the primary causes that led Solomon into extravagance and tyrannical oppression, was his course in developing and cherishing a spirit of covetousness.

In the days of ancient Israel, when at the foot of Sinai Moses told the people of the divine command, “Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them,” the response of the Israelites was accompanied by appropriate gifts. “They came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing,” and brought offerings. For the building of the sanctuary, great and expensive preparations were necessary; a large amount of the most precious and costly material was required; yet the Lord accepted only free-will offerings. “Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering” was the divine command repeated by Moses to the congregation. Devotion to God and a spirit of sacrifice were the first requisites in

preparing a dwelling-place for the Most High.

A similar call to self-sacrifice was made when David turned over to Solomon the responsibility of erecting the temple. Of the assembled multitude that had brought their liberal gifts, David asked, “Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?” This call should ever have been kept in mind by those who had to do with the construction of the temple.

Chosen men were specially endowed by God with skill and wisdom for the construction of the wilderness-tabernacle. “Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the Lord hath called by name Bezaleel ...of the tribe of Judah; and he hath filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.... And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he, and Aholiab ...of the tribe of Dan. Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer ...and of the weaver, even of them that

do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.” “Then wrought Bezaleel, ...and every wise-hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding.” Heavenly intelligences cooperated with the workmen whom God Himself chose.

The descendants of these men inherited to a large degree the skill conferred upon their forefathers. In the tribes of Judah and of Dan there were men who were regarded as especially “cunning” in the finer arts. For a time these men remained humble and unselfish; but gradually, almost imperceptibly, they lost their hold upon God and His truth. They began to ask for higher wages because of their superior skill. In some instances their request was granted, but more often those asking higher wages found employment in the surrounding nations. In place of the noble spirit of self-sacrifice that had filled the hearts of their illustrious ancestors, they cherished a spirit of covetousness, of grasping for more and more. They served heathen Kings with their God-given skill, and dishonored their Maker.

It was to these apostates that Solomon looked for a master workman to superintend the construction of the temple on Mount Moriah. Minute specifications, in writing, regarding every portion of the sacred structure, had been entrusted to the king, and he should have looked to God in faith for consecrated helpers, to whom would have been granted special skill for doing with exactness the work required. But Solomon lost sight of this opportunity to exercise faith in God. He sent to the king of Tyre for “a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with cunning men ...in Judah and in Jerusalem.”

The Phenician king responded by sending Hiram, “a cunning man, endued with understanding, ...the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre.” This master workman, Hiram, was a descendant, on his mother’s side, of Aholiab, to whom, hundreds of years before, God had given special wisdom for the construction of the

tabernacle. Thus at the head of Solomon's company of workmen there was placed an unsanctified man, who demanded large wages because of his unusual skill.

Huram's efforts were not prompted by a desire to render his highest service to God. He served the God of this world—Mammon. The very fibers of his being had been inwrought with principles of selfishness, which were revealed in his grasping for the highest wages. And gradually these wrong principles came to be cherished by his associates. As they labored with him day after day, and yielded to the inclination to compare his wages with their own, they began to lose sight of the holy character of their work, and to dwell upon the difference between their wages and his. Gradually they lost their spirit of self-denial, and fostered a spirit of covetousness. The result was a demand for higher wages, which was granted them.

The baleful influences set in operation by the employment of this man of a grasping spirit, permeated all branches of the Lord's service, and

extended throughout Solomon's kingdom. The high wages demanded and received gave many an opportunity to indulge in luxury and extravagance. In the far-reaching effects of these influences, may be traced one of the principal causes of the terrible apostasy of him who once was the wisest of mortals. The king was not alone in his apostasy. Extravagance and corruption were to be seen on every hand. The poor were oppressed by the rich; the spirit of self-sacrifice in God's service was well nigh lost.

Herein lies a most important lesson for God's people today,—a lesson that many are slow to learn. The spirit of covetousness, of seeking for the highest position and the highest wage, is rife in the world. The old-time spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice is too seldom met with. But this is the only spirit that can actuate a true follower of Jesus. Our divine Master has given us an example of how we are to work. And to those whom He bade, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men," He offered no stated sum as a reward for their services. They were to share with Him His self-

denial and sacrifice.

Those who claim to be followers of the Master Worker, and who engage in His service as colaborers with God, are to bring into their work the exactitude and skill, the tact and wisdom, that the God of perfection required in the building of the earthly tabernacle. And now, as in that time and as in the days of Christ's earthly ministry, devotion to God and a spirit of sacrifice should be regarded as the first requisites of acceptable service. God designs that not one thread of selfishness shall be woven into His work.

Great care should be taken in regard to the spirit pervading the Lord's institutions. These institutions were founded in self-sacrifice, and have been built up by the self-denying gifts of God's people and the unselfish labor of His servants. Everything connected with institutional service should bear the signature of heaven. A sense of the sacredness of God's institutions should be encouraged and cultivated. The workers are to humble their hearts before the Lord,

acknowledging His sovereignty. All are to live in accordance with principles of self-denial. As the true, self-sacrificing laborer, with his spiritual lamp trimmed and burning, strives unselfishly to advance the interests of the institution in which he is working, he will have a precious experience, and will be able to say, “The Lord indeed is in this place.” He will feel that he is highly privileged in being permitted to give to the Lord’s institution his ability, his service, and his unwearying vigilance.

In the early days of the third angel’s message those who established our institutions, and those who labored in them, were actuated by high motives of unselfishness. For their arduous labors they received no more than a mere pittance—barely enough for a meager support. But their hearts were baptized with the ministry of love. The reward of whole-souled liberality was apparent in their close fellowship with the Spirit of the Master Worker. They practiced the closest economy, in order that as many other laborers as possible might be planting the standard of truth in new places.

But in time a change came. The spirit of sacrifice was not manifest. In some of our institutions the wages of a few workers was increased beyond reason. Those who received these wages claimed that they deserved a greater sum than others, because of their superior talents. But who gave them their talents, their ability? With the increase of wages came a steady increase of covetousness, which is idolatry, and a steady decline of spirituality. Gross evils crept in, and God was dishonored. The minds of many who witnessed this grasping after higher and still higher wages, were leavened with doubt and unbelief. Strange principles, like evil leaven, permeated nearly the entire body of believers. Many ceased to deny self, and not a few withheld their tithes and offerings.

God in His providence called for a reform in His sacred work, which should begin at the heart, and work outwardly. Some who blindly continued to place a high estimate upon their services, were removed. Others received the message given to them, turned to God with full purpose of heart, and

learned to abhor their covetous spirit. So far as possible, they endeavored to set a right example before the people by voluntarily reducing their wages. They realized that nothing less than complete transformation in mind and heart would save them from being swept off their feet by some masterly temptation.

The work of God in all its wide extent is one, and the same principles should control, the same spirit be revealed, in all its branches. It must bear the stamp of missionary work. Every department of the cause is related to all parts of the gospel field, and the spirit that controls one department will be felt throughout the entire field. If a portion of the workers receive large wages, there are others, in different branches of the work, who will call for higher wages, and the spirit of self-sacrifice will gradually be lost sight of. Other institutions and conferences will catch the same spirit, and the Lord's favor will be removed from them; for He can never sanction selfishness. Thus our aggressive work would come to an end. Only by constant sacrifice can it be carried forward.

God will test the faith of every soul. Christ has purchased us at an infinite sacrifice. Although He was rich, yet for our sake He became poor, that we through His poverty might come into possession of eternal riches. All that we possess of ability and intellect has been lent us in trust by the Lord, to use for Him. It is our privilege to be partakers with Christ in His sacrifice (The Review and Herald, January 4, 1906).

Contact With Worldly Wise Men Paved Way for Ruin.—Solomon prepared the way for his own ruin when he sought for wise men from other nations to build the temple. God had been the educator of His people, and He designed that they should stand in His wisdom, and with His imparted talents should be second to none. If they had the clean hands, the pure heart, and the noble, sanctified purpose, the Lord would communicate to them His grace. But Solomon looked to man instead of God, and he found his supposed strength to be weakness. He brought to Jerusalem the leaven of the evil influences which were perpetuated in

polygamy and idolatry (The General Conference Bulletin, February 25, 1895).

Chapter 6

7. (Ephesians 2:19-22). A Type of God's Spiritual Temple.—The Jewish temple was built of hewn stones quarried out of the mountains; and every stone was fitted for its place in the temple, hewn, polished, and tested, before it was brought to Jerusalem. And when all were brought to the ground, the building went together without the sound of ax or hammer. This building represents God's spiritual temple, which is composed of material gathered out of every nation, and tongue, and people, of all grades, high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. These are not dead substances, to be fitted by hammer and chisel. They are living stones, quarried out from the world by the truth; and the great Master-Builder, the Lord of the temple, is now hewing and polishing them, and fitting them for their respective places in the spiritual temple. When completed, this temple will be perfect in all its parts, the admiration of angels

and of men; for its Builder and Maker is God.

Let no one think that there need not be a stroke placed upon him. There is no person, no nation, that is perfect in every habit and thought. One must learn of another. Therefore God wants the different nationalities to mingle together, to be one in judgment, one in purpose. Then the union that there is in Christ will be exemplified (Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 136, 137).

11-13. Building and Character to Reveal God's Greatness.—[1 Kings 6:11-13 quoted.] The preparations made for the building of this house for the Lord, must be in accordance with the instructions He had given. No pains must be spared in its erection; for in it God was to meet with His people. The building must show forth to the nations of the earth the greatness of Israel's God. In every part it must represent the perfection of Him whom the Israelites were called upon to honor before all the world.

The specifications regarding the building were often repeated. In all the work done, these specifications were to be followed with the utmost exactness. Believers and unbelievers were to learn of the importance of the work from the care shown in its performance.

The care shown in the building of the temple is a lesson to us regarding the care that we are to show in our character-building. No cheap material was to be used. No haphazard work was to be done in matching the different parts. Piece must fit piece perfectly. Just as God's temple was, so must His church be. Into their character-building His people are to bring no worthless timbers, no careless, indifferent work....

In times of perplexity and distress, when a heavy strain is brought to bear, it will plainly be seen what kind of timbers have been used in the character-building (MS 18, 1905).

12, 13. God Gives Skill, Understanding, Adaptability.—[1 Kings 6:12, 13 quoted.] This

word was sent to Solomon while he was engaged in the building of the temple. The Lord assured him that He was taking notice of his efforts and of the efforts of the others engaged on the building. God exercises the same watchcare over His work today. Those who labor with a sincere desire to fulfill the Word of the Lord, and to glorify His name, will gain increased knowledge; for the Lord will cooperate with them. He watches with approval those who keep His glory in view. He will give them skill and understanding and adaptability for their work. Each one who enters the service of God with a determination to do his best, will receive a valuable education, if he heeds the instruction given by the Lord, and does not follow his own wisdom and his own ideas. All are to be teachable, seeking the Lord with humility, and using for Him, with cheerfulness and gratitude, the knowledge gained (MS 18, 1905).

23-28. (Ch. 8:6, 7; 2 Chronicles 5:7, 8, 12-14). Two Additional Angels Placed by Ark.—A most splendid sanctuary had been made, according to the pattern showed to Moses in the mount, and

afterward presented by the Lord to David. In addition to the cherubim on the top of the ark, Solomon made two other angels of larger size, standing at each end of the ark, representing the heavenly angels guarding the law of God. It is impossible to describe the beauty and splendor of this sanctuary. Into this place the sacred ark was borne with solemn reverence by the priests, and set in its place beneath the wings of the two stately cherubim that stood upon the floor.

The sacred choir lifted their voices in praise to God, and the melody of their voices was accompanied by all kinds of musical instruments. And while the courts of the temple resounded with praise, the cloud of God's glory took possession of the house, as it had formerly filled the wilderness tabernacle (The Review and Herald, November 9, 1905).

Chapter 7

13, 14, 40. (Ch. 5:3-18; 2:13, 14; 2 Chronicles 4:11).—Solomon Should Have Used Available

Talent.—The first thing that Solomon should have thought of in connection with the building of the temple was how to obtain all the strength and ability possible from the people whom Christ had been training by the communications given through Moses for Israel (MS 5, 1912).

Chapter 8

6, 7. See EGW on Ch. 6:23-28.

54. See EGW on 2 Chronicles 6:13.

Chapter 10

18-27. (Ecclesiastes 1:14). Pity the Man Who Was Envied.—Many envied the popularity and abundant glory of Solomon, thinking that of all men he must be the most happy. But amid all that glory of artificial display the man envied is the one to be most pitied. His countenance is dark with despair. All the splendor about him is but to him mockery of the distress and anguish of his thoughts as he reviews his misspent life in seeking for

happiness through indulgence and selfish gratification of every desire (The Signs of the Times, February 7, 1878).

Chapter 11

1. Unsanctified Marriages Cause Downfall.—All the sins and excesses of Solomon can be traced to his great mistake in ceasing to rely upon God for wisdom, and to walk in humility before Him. ...

The lesson for us to learn from the history of this perverted life is the necessity of continual dependence upon the counsels of God; to carefully watch the tendency of our course, and to reform every habit calculated to draw us from God. It teaches us that great caution, watchfulness, and prayer are needed to keep undefiled the simplicity and purity of our faith. If we would rise to the highest moral excellence, and attain to the perfection of religious character, what discrimination should be used in the formation of friendships, and the choice of a companion for life!

Many, like the king of Israel, follow their own carnal desires, and enter into unsanctified marriages. Many who started out in life with as fair and promising a morning, in their limited sphere, as Solomon had in his exalted station, through one false and irrevocable step in the marriage relation, lose their souls, and draw others down to ruin with them. As Solomon's wives turned his heart away from God to idolatry, so do frivolous companions, who have no depth of principle, turn away the hearts of those who were once noble and true, to vanity, corrupting pleasures, and downright vice (The Health Reformer, May, 1878).

1-4. (1 Corinthians 10:12). A Special Lesson to the Aged.—Of Solomon the inspired record says, “His wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God.”

This is no theme to be treated with a smile. The heart that loves Jesus will not desire the unlawful affections of another. Every want is supplied in

Christ. This superficial affection is of the same character as that exalted enjoyment which Satan promised Eve. It is coveting that which God has forbidden. When it is too late hundreds can warn others not to venture upon the precipice. Intellect, position, wealth can never, never take the place of moral qualities. Clean hands, a pure heart, and noble, earnest devotion to God and the truth the Lord esteems above the golden wedge of Ophir. An evil influence has a perpetuating power. I wish I could set this matter before God's commandment-keeping people just as it has been shown me. Let the sad memory of Solomon's apostasy warn every soul to shun the same precipice. His weakness and sin are handed down from generation to generation. The greatest king that ever wielded a scepter, of whom it had been said that he was the beloved of God, through misplaced affection became contaminated and was miserably forsaken of his God. The mightiest ruler of the earth had failed to rule his own passions. Solomon may have been saved "as by fire," yet his repentance could not efface those high places, nor demolish those stones, which remained as evidences of his crimes. He

dishonored God, choosing rather to be controlled by lust than to be a partaker of the divine nature. What a legacy Solomon's life has committed to those who would use his example to cover their own base actions. We must either transmit a heritage of good or evil. Shall our lives and our example be a blessing or a curse? Shall people look at our graves and say, He ruined me, or, He saved me? ...

The lesson to be learned from the life of Solomon has a special moral bearing upon the life of the aged, of those who are no longer climbing the mountain but are descending and facing the western sun. We expect to see defects in the characters of youth who are not controlled by love and faith in Jesus Christ. We see youth wavering between right and wrong, vacillating between fixed principle and the almost overpowering current of evil that is bearing them off their feet to ruin. But of those of mature age we expect better things. We look for the character to be established, for principles to be rooted, and for them to be beyond the danger of pollution. But the case of Solomon is

before us as a beacon of warning. When thou, aged pilgrim who hast fought the battles of life, thinkest that thou standest take heed lest thou fall. How, in Solomon's case, was weak, vacillating character, naturally bold, firm, and determined, shaken like a reed in the wind under the tempter's power! How was an old gnarled cedar of Lebanon, a sturdy oak of Bashan, bent before the blast of temptation! What a lesson for all who desire to save their souls to watch unto prayer continually! What a warning to keep the grace of Christ ever in their heart, to battle with inward corruptions and outward temptations! (Letter 51, 1886).

As long as life shall last, there is need of guarding the affections and the passions with a firm purpose. There is inward corruption, there are outward temptations, and wherever the work of God shall be advanced, Satan plans so to arrange circumstances that temptation shall come with overpowering force upon the soul. Not one moment can we be secure only as we are relying upon God, the life hid with Christ in God (Letter 8b, 1891).

4-6. Why God Broke His Covenant With Solomon.—[1 Kings 11:4-6 quoted.] Solomon lost his connection with heaven, and set Israel an example so misleading that God could not vindicate him. God broke His covenant with Solomon because Solomon was disloyal. Had Solomon heeded the instruction given him, God would have worked through him to reveal to the world His power and majesty.

Those today to whom the Lord has given great light will find their only safety in walking in the way of the Lord, placing themselves where He can carry out His will through them. God will do large things for those who will learn of him, not taking counsel of themselves, but of Him who never makes a mistake. Our safety, our wisdom, is in recognizing and heeding God's instructions. The most valuable knowledge that we can obtain is the knowledge of God. Those who walk humbly before Him, loving Him supremely and obeying His Word, will be blessed with wisdom. They will be given the knowledge of heaven to impart to others.

Wisdom is God's gift, to be kept pure from all contamination. Its possession lays upon every one on whom it is bestowed a peculiar obligation to glorify God by blessing his fellow men. He is ever to keep before him the fear of God, enquiring at every step, "Is this the way of the Lord?"

God desires to have upon this earth righteous representatives, through whom He can communicate to His people His peculiar favor. These representatives are to be men who honor God by keeping His commandments,—wise, true men, who can act as leaders, walking circumspectly, showing to the world the meaning of true loyalty to God (MS 1, 1912).

4. (Revelation 2:4, 5). A Candlestick Removed.—Did Solomon know God when he was doing according to the ways of idolaters?—No; he had forgotten the rich experience of his youth and the prayers he had made in the temple. [Revelation 2:4, 5 quoted.]

The candlestick was removed out of its place

when Solomon forgot God. He lost the light of God, he lost the wisdom of God, he confounded idolatry with religion (The Review and Herald, March 29, 1892).

4-8. (2 Kings 23:13, 14). Monument to a Debased Character.—Few realize that, in their lives, they constantly exert an influence which will be perpetuated for good or evil. Hundreds of years had elapsed since Solomon caused those idolatrous shrines to be erected on the mount; and, although Josiah had demolished them as places for worship, their debris, containing portions of architecture, were still remaining in the days of Christ. The prominence upon which those shrines had stood was called, by the true-hearted of Israel, the Mount of Offense.

Solomon, in his pride and enthusiasm, did not realize that in those pagan altars he was erecting a monument of his debased character, to endure for many generations, and to be commented on by thousands. In like manner, every act of life is great for good or evil; and it is only by acting upon

principle in the tests of daily life, that we acquire power to stand firm and faithful in the most dangerous and most difficult positions.

The marks of Solomon's apostasy lived ages after him. In the days of Christ, the worshipers in the temple could look, just opposite them, upon the Mount of Offense, and be reminded that the builder of their rich and glorious temple, the most renowned of all Kings, had separated himself from God, and reared altars to heathen idols; that the mightiest ruler on earth had failed in ruling his own spirit. Solomon went down to death a repentant man; but his repentance and tears could not efface from the Mount of Offense the signs of his miserable departure from God. Ruined walls and broken pillars bore silent witness for a thousand years to the apostasy of the greatest king that ever sat upon an earthly throne (The Health Reformer, May 1878).

4-11. Luxury, Wine, Idolatrous Women, Defeat Solomon.—Solomon, under all his honors, walked wisely and firmly in the counsels of God

for a considerable time; but he was overcome at length by temptations that came through his prosperity. He had lived luxuriously from his youth. His appetite had been gratified with the most delicate and expensive dainties. The effects of this luxurious living, and the free use of wine, finally clouded his intellect, and caused him to depart from God. He entered into rash and sinful marriage relations with idolatrous women (The Health Reformer, April, 1878).

9-12 (Ch. 14:21). Solomon's Influence on His Children.—It was this prophecy of impending ruin that had awakened the apostate king as from a dream, and had led him to repent, and to seek to stay, so far as possible, the terrible tide of evil that during the later years of his reign had been rising high and still higher. But at the time of his repentance, only a few years of life remained to him, and he could not hope to avert the consequences of long years of wrong-doing. His course of evil had set in operation influences that afterward he could never fully control.

Especially was this the case in the training of the children born to him through marriage with idolatrous women. Rehoboam, the son whom Solomon chose to be his successor, had received from his mother, an Ammonitess, a stamp of character that led him to look upon sin as desirable. At times he endeavored to serve God, and was granted a measure of prosperity; but he was not steadfast, and at last he yielded to the influences for evil that had surrounded him from infancy (The Review and Herald, July 3, 1913).

Chapter 12

25-33. Danger in Manifesting Jeroboam's Spirit.—Men today are in danger of manifesting the same spirit that Jeroboam manifested, and of doing a work similar in character to the work that he did. His plans, put into operation, led the children of Israel away from God into idolatry, and they performed and permitted terrible evils. The Judge of all the earth will lay to the charge of Jeroboam the awful results of his course. And to the charge of those who follow his example will be

laid the results of their wrong course (Letter 113, 1903).

Chapter 13

11-19. God Alone Can Countermand His Orders.—The man of God had been fearless in delivering his message of rebuke. He had not hesitated to denounce the king's false system of worship. And he had refused Jeroboam's invitation, even though promised a reward. But he allowed himself to be over-persuaded by the one who claimed to have a message from heaven.

When the Lord gives a man a command such as He gave this messenger, He Himself must countermand the order. Upon those who turn from the voice of God to listen to counter orders, the threatened evil will come. Because this messenger obeyed false orders, God permitted him to be destroyed (MS 1, 1912).

Chapter 14

21. See EGW on Ch. 11:9-12.

Chapter 16

31. Jezebel Versus the Spirit of God.—How few realize the power of an unconsecrated woman. I was carried back to the time of Ahab. God would have been with Ahab if he had walked in the counsel of heaven. But Ahab did not do this. He married a woman given to idolatry. Jezebel had more power over the king than God had. She led him into idolatry, and with him the people (MS 29, 1911).

The influence of Jezebel over Ahab was greater than the influence of the Spirit of God, however powerful and convincing the evidence from heaven (MS 19, 1906).

Chapter 17

1. Elijah Took the Key of Heaven.—Before

he [Ahab] could recover from his astonishment or frame a reply, Elijah disappeared, taking with him the key of heaven. ...

His word had locked up the treasures of heaven, and his word only could open them again....Ahab did not realize that the prophet had left his presence unrebuked until the man of God had gone beyond recall (The Review and Herald, August 14, 1913).

1, 2. God's Man With God's Message.—God always has men to whom He intrusts His message. His Spirit moves upon their hearts, and constrains them to speak. Stimulated by holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they enter upon the performance of their duty without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord has given them. But the servant of God is soon made aware that he has risked something. He finds himself and his message made the subject of criticism. His manners, his life, his property are all inspected and commented upon. His message is picked to pieces

and rejected in the most illiberal and unsanctified spirit, as men in their finite judgment see fit. Has that message done the work God designed it should accomplish? No; it has signally failed, because the hearts of the hearers were unsanctified.

If the minister's face is not flint, if he has not indomitable faith and courage, if his heart is not made strong by constant communion with God, he will begin to shape his testimony to please the unsanctified ears and hearts of those whom he is addressing. In endeavoring to avoid the criticism to which he is exposed, he separates from God, and loses the sense of the divine favor, and his testimony becomes tame and lifeless. He finds that his courage and faith are gone, and his labors are powerless. The world is full of flatterers and dissemblers who have yielded to the desire to please; but the faithful men, who do not study self-interest, but love their brethren too well to suffer sin upon them, are few indeed (The Review and Herald, April 7, 1885).

Chapter 18

17. Rebels Blame Others for Troubles.—

Those who refuse to receive reproof and to be corrected, will manifest enmity, malice, and hatred against the instrument that God has used. They will leave no means untried to cast stigma upon the one who bore to them the message. They will feel as did Ahab toward Elijah, that God's servant is the one who is the hindrance, the curse. Said Ahab, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" (The Review and Herald, January 8, 1884).

36-40. One Who Stood Wholly for God.—

God would have His honor exalted before men as supreme, and His counsels confirmed in the eyes of the people. The witness of the prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel gives the example of one who stood wholly for God and His work in the earth. The prophet calls the Lord by His name, Jehovah God, which He Himself had given to denote His condescension and compassion. Elijah calls Him the God of Abraham and Isaac and Israel. He does this that He may excite in the hearts of His

backslidden people humble remembrance of the Lord, and assure them of His rich, free grace. Elijah prays, Be it known this day that thou art the God of Israel. The honor of God is to be exalted as supreme, but the prophet asks further that his mission also may be confirmed. “Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel,” he prays, “and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord,” he pleads, “hear me.” ...

His zeal for God’s glory and his deep love for the house of Israel present lessons for the instruction of all who stand today as representatives of God’s work in the earth (Letter 22, 1911).

42-44. Important Lessons From Elijah.— Important lessons are presented to us in the experience of Elijah. When upon Mt. Carmel he offered the prayer for rain, his faith was tested, but he persevered in making known his request unto God. Six times he prayed earnestly, and yet there was no sign that his petition was granted, but with

a strong faith he urged his plea to the throne of grace. Had he given up in discouragement at the sixth time, his prayer would not have been answered, but he persevered till the answer came. We have a God whose ear is not closed to our petitions; and if we prove His word, He will honor our faith. He wants us to have all our interests interwoven with His interests, and then He can safely bless us; for we shall not then take glory to self when the blessing is ours, but shall render all the praise to God. God does not always answer our prayers the first time we call upon Him; for should He do this, we might take it for granted that we had a right to all the blessings and favors He bestowed upon us. Instead of searching our hearts to see if any evil was entertained by us, any sin indulged, we should become careless, and fail to realize our dependence upon Him, and our need of His help.

Elijah humbled himself until he was in a condition where he would not take the glory to himself. This is the condition upon which the Lord hears prayer, for then we shall give the praise to Him. The custom of offering praise to men is one

that results in great evil. One praises another, and thus men are led to feel that glory and honor belong to them. When you exalt man, you lay a snare for his soul, and do just as Satan would have you. You should praise God with all your heart, soul, might, mind, and strength; for God alone is worthy to be glorified (The Review and Herald, March 27, 1913).

43, 44. Elijah's Heart Search.—The servant watched while Elijah prayed. Six times he returned from the watch, saying, There is nothing, no cloud, no sign of rain. But the prophet did not give up in discouragement. He kept reviewing his life, to see where he had failed to honor God, he confessed his sins, and thus continued to afflict his soul before God, while watching for a token that his prayer was answered. As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything; and when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came. The servant

appeared, and said, “Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand” (The Review and Herald, May 26, 1891).

Chapter 19

4. Looking to God Upholds Courage.—

However courageous and successful a man may be in the performance of a special work, unless he looks constantly to God when circumstances arise to test his faith he will lose his courage. Even after God has given him marked tokens of His power, after he has been strengthened to do God’s work, he will fail unless he trusts implicitly in Omnipotence (The Review and Herald, October 16, 1913).

18. Many Have Not Bowed to Baal.—There are in our cities thousands who have the fear of God before them, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. It is because so many of these are in lowly circumstances that the world does not notice them. But though hidden in highways and hedges, these are seeking God (MS 17, 1898).

19-21. The Character of Elisha.—The attention of Elijah was attracted to Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who with the servants was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen. He was educator, director, and worker. Elisha did not live in the thickly populated cities. His father was a tiller of the soil, a farmer. Far from the city and court dissipation, Elisha had received his education. He had been trained in habits of simplicity, of obedience to his parents and to God. Thus in quietude and contentment he was prepared to do the humble work of cultivating the soil. But though of a meek and quiet spirit, Elisha had no changeable character. Integrity and fidelity and the love and fear of God were his. He had the characteristics of a ruler, but with it all was the meekness of one who would serve. His mind had been exercised in the little things, to be faithful in whatsoever he should do; so that if God should call him to act more directly for Him, he would be prepared to hear His voice.

The surroundings of Elisha's home were those

of wealth; but he realized that in order to obtain an all-round education, he must be a constant worker in any work that needed to be done. He had not consented to be in any respect less informed than his father's servants. He had learned how to serve first, that he might know how to lead, instruct, and command.

Elisha waited contentedly, doing his work with fidelity. Day by day, through practical obedience and the divine grace in which he trusted, he obtained rectitude and strength of purpose. While doing all that he possibly could in cooperating with his father in the home firm, he was doing God's service. He was learning how to cooperate with God (The Youth's Instructor, April 14, 1898).

Chapter 22

7,8. Prejudices Blind Eyes to Truth.—The more closely the Scriptures are studied, the more clearly shall we understand the true character of our thoughts and actions. But thousands put the Bible on one side for the same reason that Ahab

hated Micaiah. Because it prophesies evil against the sinner, they claim that they find objections and contradictions in God's Word. While professing to be open to conviction, they allow prejudice to hold sway, and refuse to see the truth which that Word reveals (The Youth's Instructor, June 10, 1897).

Chapter 12

2 Kings

Chapter 1

2, 3. Voice of the Prince of Darkness.—The God of Ekron was supposed to give information, through the medium of its priests, concerning future events. Large numbers of people went to inquire of it; but the predictions there uttered and the information given, proceeded directly from the prince of darkness (The Review and Herald, January 15, 1914).

3. Is There No God in Israel?—God is your counselor, and we are always in danger of showing distrust of God when we seek for the advice and counsel of men who do not make God their trust, and who are so devoid of wisdom in matters that they will, by following their own judgment, retard the work. They do not recognize God to be infinite in wisdom. We are to acknowledge God in all our counsels, and when we ask Him, we are to believe

that we receive the things we ask of Him. If you depend upon men who do not love God and obey His commandments, you will surely be brought into very difficult places. Those that are not connected with God are connected with the enemy of God, and the enemy will work with them to lead us in false paths. We do not honor God when we go aside from the only true God to inquire of the God of Ekron. The question is asked, Is it because there is not a God in Israel that ye have gone to the God of Ekron to inquire? (MS 41, 1894).

Chapter 2

1-6. Some Need Many Moves.—Again, God sees that a worker needs to be more closely associated with Him; and to bring this about, He separates him from friends and acquaintances. When He was preparing Elijah for translation, He moved him from place to place that he might not settle down at ease, and thus fail of obtaining spiritual power. And it was God's design that Elijah's influence should be a power to help many souls to gain a wider, more helpful experience.

Let those who are not permitted to rest in quietude, who must be continually on the move, pitching their tent tonight in one place, and tomorrow night in another place, remember that the Lord is leading them, and that this is His way of helping them to form perfect characters. In all the changes that we are required to make, God is to be recognized as our companion, our guide, our dependence (The Review and Herald, May 2, 1907).

1-8. Our Schools of the Prophets.—Just before Elijah was taken to heaven, he visited the schools of the prophets, and instructed the students on the most important points of their education. The lessons he had given them on former visits, he now repeated, impressing upon the minds of the youth the importance of letting simplicity mark every feature of their education. Only in this way could they receive the mold of heaven, and go forth to work in the ways of the Lord. If conducted as God designs they should be, our schools in these closing days of the message will do a work similar

to that done by the schools of the prophets (The Review and Herald, October 24, 1907).

9. Linking One's Self With Holy Spirit Means Success.—The success of the ministry of Elijah was not due to any inherited qualities he possessed, but to the submission of himself to the Holy Spirit, which was given to him as it will be given to all who exercise living faith in God. In his imperfection man has the privilege of linking himself up with God through Jesus Christ (MS 148, 1899).

9, 15. Power United With Tender Compassion.—Elisha received a double portion of the spirit that had rested on Elijah. In him the power of Elijah's spirit was united with the gentleness, mercy, and tender compassion of the Spirit of Christ (Letter 93, 1902).

11-15 (Zechariah 4:6). Deviation Disqualifies for Service.—Henceforth Elisha stood in the place of Elijah. He was called to the position of highest honor because he had been faithful over a few

things. The question arose in his mind, Am I qualified for such a position? But he would not allow his mind to question. The greatest qualification for any man in a position of trust is to obey implicitly the Word of the Lord. Elisha might exercise his reasoning ability on every other subject but the one that would admit of no reasoning. He was to obey the Word of the Lord at all times and in all places. Elisha had put his hand to the plow, and he would not look back. He revealed his determination and firm reliance upon God.

This lesson is for us to study carefully. We are in no case to swerve from our allegiance. No duties that God presents before us should cause us to work at cross-purposes with Him. The Word of God is to be our counselor. It is only those who render perfect and thorough obedience to God that He will choose. Those who follow the Lord are to be firm and straightforward in obeying His directions. Any deviation to follow human devising or planning disqualifies them for being trustworthy. Even if they have to walk as did Enoch,—with God

alone,—his children must separate from those who do not obey Him, who show that they are not in vital connection with Him. The Lord God is a Host; and all who are in His service will realize the meaning of His words to Zerubbabel, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (The Youth’s Instructor, April 28, 1898).

15. Lessons from Elijah and Elisha.—The history of Elijah and Elisha needs to be brought out in clear lines, that our people may understand the importance of the work of reform to be carried on in this age. Oh, that our people might have the assurance that their feet are standing on the sure foundation!

The lessons to be learned from the life work of Elijah and Elisha mean much to all who are striving to plant the feet of men and women on the eternal Rock. The workers must humble their own hearts if they would understand God’s purposes for them; they must themselves strive in the truest sense if they would influence others to enter the

strait gate. The presentation of the truth must be made with grace and with power to those who stand in need of light and uplifting (Letter 30, 1912).

Chapter 4

38-44 (Ch. 6:1-7). Schools Were Respected for Learning and Piety.—Samuel had founded the first regular establishments for religious instruction and the unfolding of the prophetic gifts. Among the chief subjects of study, were the law of God with the instructions given to Moses, sacred history, sacred music, and poetry. In these “schools of the prophets” young men were educated by those who were not only well versed in divine truth, but who themselves maintained close communion with God and had received the special endowment of His Spirit. These educators enjoyed the respect and confidence of the people both for learning and piety. The power of the Holy Spirit was often strikingly manifest in their assemblies, and the exercise of the prophetic gift was not infrequent. These schools, or colleges, were of untold value to

Israel, not only as providing for the dissemination of religious truth, but as preserving the spirit of vital godliness (The Signs of the Times, July 20, 1882).

Chapter 6

1-7. See EGW on Ch. 4:38-44.

Chapter 8

16, 18. Jezebel's Scheme Unsuccessful.— With her seductive arts, Jezebel made Jehoshaphat her friend. She arranged a marriage between her daughter Athaliah and Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat. She knew that her daughter, brought up under her guidance and as unscrupulous as herself, would carry out her designs. But did she? No; the sons of the prophets, who had been educated in the schools which Samuel established, were steadfast for truth and righteousness (MS 116, 1899).

Chapter 10

1-31. Jehu Religion Unsafe.—Men are slow to learn the lesson that the spirit manifested by Jehu will never bind hearts together. It is not safe for us to bind our interests with a Jehu religion; for this will result in bringing sadness of heart upon God's true workers. God has not given to any of His servants the work of punishing those who will not heed His warnings and reproofs. When the Holy Spirit is abiding in the heart, it will lead the human agent to see his own defects of character, to pity the weakness of others, to forgive as he wishes to be forgiven. He will be pitiful, courteous, Christlike (The Review and Herald, April 10, 1900).

Chapter 15

5. See EGW on 2 Chronicles 26:16-21.

Chapter 20

12-15. (Isaiah 39:1-4). **What Have They**

Seen?—What have your friends and acquaintances seen in your house? Are you, instead of revealing the treasures of the grace of Christ, displaying those things that will perish with the using? Or do you, to those with whom you are brought in contact, communicate some new thought of Christ's character and work? Have you always some fresh revelation of His pitying love to impart to those who know Him not? (The Signs of the Times, October 1, 1902).

Chapter 22

10, 11. (2 Chronicles 34:18, 19). Josiah's Repentance Points to Our Work.—When Josiah heard the words of warning and condemnation because Israel had trampled upon the precepts of heaven, he humbled himself. He wept before the Lord. He made a thorough work of repentance and reformation, and God accepted his efforts. The whole congregation of Israel entered into a solemn covenant to keep the commandments of Jehovah. This is our work today. We must repent of the past evil of our doings, and seek God with all our

hearts. We must believe that God means just what He says, and make no compromise with evil in any way. We should greatly humble ourselves before God, and consider any loss preferable to the loss of His favor (The Review and Herald, January 31, 1888).

13. See EGW on 2 Chronicles 34:21.

14. See EGW on 2 Chronicles 34:22.

Chapter 23

1-3 (2 Chronicles 34:29-31). Need for a Reform.—Josiah had read to priests and people the Book of the law found in the side of the ark in the house of God. His sensitive conscience was deeply stirred as he saw how far the people had departed from the requirements of the covenant they had made with God. He saw that they were indulging appetite to a fearful extent, and perverting their senses by the use of wine. Men in sacred offices were frequently incapacitated for the duties of their positions, because of their indulgence in wine.

Appetite and passion were fast gaining the ascendancy over the reason and judgment of the people, till they could not discern that the retribution of God would follow upon their corrupt course. Josiah, the youthful reformer, in the fear of God demolished the profane sanctuaries and hideous idols built for heathen worship, and the altars reared for sacrifices to heathen deities. Yet there were still to be seen in Christ's time the memorials of the sad apostasy of the king of Israel and his people (The Health Reformer, April, 1878).

The Book an Ally in Work of Reform.—In his position as king, it was the work of Josiah to carry out in the Jewish nation the principles taught in the Book of the law. This he endeavored to do faithfully. In the Book of the law itself he found a treasure of knowledge, a powerful ally in the work of reform (The General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1903).

2. (2 Chronicles 34:30). Josiah's View of His Highest Position.—To be a reader of the Book of

the law, containing a “Thus saith the Lord,” Josiah regarded as the highest position that he could occupy.... The highest work of princes in Israel,—of physicians, of teachers in our schools, as well as of ministers and those who are in positions of trust in the Lord’s institutions,—is to fulfill the responsibility resting upon them to fasten the Scriptures in the minds of the people as a nail in a sure place, to use their God-given talent of influence to impress the truth that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” For the leaders in Israel to extend a knowledge of the Scriptures in all their borders is to promote spiritual health; for God’s Word is a leaf from the tree of life (MS 14, 1903).

10. Children Need Not Be Sacrificed to Moloch.—Religion in the home—what will it not accomplish? It will do the very work that God designed should be done in every family. Children will be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They will be educated and trained, not to be society devotees, but members of the Lord’s family. They will not be sacrificed to Moloch.

Parents will become willing subjects of Christ. Both father and mother will consecrate themselves to the work of properly training the children given them. They will firmly decide to work in the love of God with the utmost tenderness and compassion to save the souls under their guidance. They will not allow themselves to be absorbed with the customs of the world. They will not give themselves up to parties, concerts, dances, to give feasts and attend feasts, because after this manner do the Gentiles (NL No. 29, p. 2).

13, 14. (1 Kings 11:4-8). Memorials of Apostasy.—Goodness alone is true greatness. Everyone will transmit a heritage of good or of evil. On the southern eminence of the Mount of Olives were the memorial stones of Solomon's apostasy. Huge idols, unshapely blocks of wood and stone, appeared above the groves of myrtle and olive. Josiah, the youthful reformer, in his religious zeal destroyed these images of Ashtoreth and Chemosh and Moloch, but the broken fragments and masses of ruins remained opposite Mount Moriah, where stood the temple of God. As

strangers in after generations asked, “What mean these ruins confronting the temple of the Lord?” they were answered, “There is Solomon’s Mount of Offense, where he built altars for idol worship to please his heathen wives” (Letter 8b, 1891).

29, 30. (2 Kings 22:19, 20; 2 Chronicles 34:26-33; 35:20-24). Josiah’s Mistake.—Those who will not take God’s Word as assurance, need not hope that human wisdom can help them; for human wisdom, aside from God, is like the waves of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed. The word of Christ is, “He shall guide you into all truth.” Reject not the light given.

Read the history of Josiah. He had done a good work. During his reign idolatry was put down, and apparently successfully uprooted. The temple was reopened and the sacrificial offerings re-established. His work was done well.

But at the last he died in battle. Why?—Because he did not heed the warnings given.... [2 Chronicles 34:26-33; 35:20-24 quoted.]

Because Josiah died in battle, who will charge God with denying His word that Josiah should go to his grave in peace? The Lord did not give orders for Josiah to make war on the king of Egypt. When the Lord gave the king of Egypt orders that the time had come to serve Him by warfare, and the ambassadors told Josiah not to make war on Necho, no doubt Josiah congratulated himself that no word from the Lord had come directly to him. To turn back with his army would have been humiliating, so he went on. And because of this, he was killed in battle, a battle that he should not have had anything to do with. The man who had been so greatly honored by the Lord, did not honor the word of God. The Lord had spoken in his favor, predicted good things for him; and Josiah became self-confident, and failed to heed the warning. He went against the word of God, choosing to follow his own way, and God could not shield him from the consequences of his act.

In this our day men choose to follow their own desires and their own will.

Can we be surprised that there is so much spiritual blindness? (MS 163, 1903).

Chapter 24

10-16. (2 Chronicles 36:20). Israelites Proved Themselves Untrustworthy.—The children of Israel were taken captive to Babylon because they separated from God, and no longer maintained the principles that had been given to keep them free from the methods and practices of the nations who dishonored God. The Lord could not give them prosperity, he could not fulfill His covenant with them, while they were untrue to the principles He had given them zealously to maintain. By their spirit and their actions they misrepresented His character, and He permitted them to be taken captive. Because of their separation from Him, He humbled them. He left them to their own ways, and the innocent suffered with the guilty.

The Lord's chosen people proved themselves untrustworthy. They showed themselves to be

selfish, scheming, dishonorable. But among the children of Israel there were Christian patriots, who were as true as steel to principle, and upon these loyal men the Lord looked with great pleasure. These were men who would not be corrupted by selfishness, who would not mar the work of God by following erroneous methods and practices, men who would honor God at the loss of all things. They had to suffer with the guilty, but in the providence of God their captivity at Babylon was the means of bringing them to the front, and their example of untarnished integrity shines with heaven's luster (The Review and Herald, May 2, 1899).

17-20. (2 Kings 25:7; 2 Chronicles 36:11-13; Jeremiah 27:12-22; 39:4-7).—Zedekiah Refused God's Protection.—Zedekiah was faithfully instructed through the prophet Jeremiah, how he might be preserved from the calamities that would surely come upon him if he did not change his course and serve the Lord. The calamities came, because he would not, through obedience, place himself under the protection of God. With his eyes

put out, he was led in chains of captivity to Babylon.

What a sad and awful warning is this to those who harden themselves under reproof, and who will not humble themselves in repentance, that God may save them! (Letter 281, 1905).

Chapter 25

9. (2 Chronicles 36:19; Jeremiah 39:8). Failure as Missionaries.—Why did the Lord permit Jerusalem to be destroyed by fire the first time? Why did He permit His people to be overcome by their enemies and carried into heathen lands?—It was because they had failed to be His missionaries, and had built walls of division between themselves and the people round them. The Lord scattered them, that the knowledge of His truth might be carried to the world. If they were loyal and true and submissive, God would bring them again into their own land (The General Conference Bulletin, April 7, 1903).

Chapter 13

1 Chronicles

Chapter 21

1-13 (2 Samuel 24:1-14). David Trusted Himself to God's Mercies.—The work of numbering Israel is not fully completed before David feels convicted that he has committed a great sin against God. He sees his error, and humbles himself before God, confessing his great sin in foolishly numbering the people. But his repentance came too late. The word had already gone forth from the Lord to His faithful prophet, to carry a message to David, and offer him his choice of punishments for his transgression. David still shows that he has confidence in God. He chooses to fall into the hands of a merciful God, rather than to be left to the cruel mercies of wicked men (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:385).

14-27 (2 Samuel 24:15-25). David's Repentance Accepted and Destruction Stayed.—

Swift destruction followed. Seventy thousand were destroyed by pestilence. David and the elders of Israel were in the deepest humiliation, mourning before the Lord. As the angel of the Lord was on his way to destroy Jerusalem, God bade him stay his work of death. A pitiful God loves His people still, notwithstanding their rebellion. The angel, clad in warlike garments, with a drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem, is revealed to David, and to those who are with him. David is terribly afraid, yet he cries out in his distress, and his compassion for Israel. He begs of God to save the sheep. In anguish he confesses, "I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house." God speaks to David, by His prophet, and bids him make atonement for his sin. David's heart was in the work, and his repentance was accepted. The threshing floor of Araunah is offered him freely, where to build an altar unto the Lord; also cattle, and everything needful for the sacrifice. But David tells him who would make this generous offering, that the Lord will accept the sacrifice which he is

willing to make, but that he would not come before the Lord with an offering which cost him nothing. He would buy it of him for full price. He offered there burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. God accepted the offerings by answering David in sending fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice. The angel of the Lord was commanded to put his sword into his sheath, and cease his work of destruction (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:385, 386).

Chapter 22

13. God Blesses Those Who Cherish Principle.—Did the Lord make a mistake in placing Solomon in a position of so great responsibility? Nay. God prepared him to bear these responsibilities, and promised him grace and strength on condition of obedience. [1 Chronicles 22:13 quoted.]

The Lord sets men in responsible places, not to act out their own wills, but His will. So long as they cherish His pure principles of government, He will bless and strengthen them, recognizing them

as His instrumentalities. God never forsakes the one who is true to principle. (MS 164, 1902).

Chapter 23

1-5. (2 Chronicles 8:14). Organization for the Temple Services.—[1 Chronicles 23:1-5 quoted.] The four thousand musicians, divided into twenty-four courses, were each lead by twelve men especially instructed and skilful in the use of musical instruments. The work of the porters was also definitely arranged.

The priests were divided into twenty-four courses, and a full and accurate record was made regarding this division. Each course was thoroughly organized under its chief, and each was to come to Jerusalem twice a year, to attend for one week to the ministry of the sanctuary.

The Levites, whose duty it was to assist in the sanctuary service, were organized and allotted their part with similar precision (The Review and Herald, October 5, 1905).

Chapter 27

1, 32-34. (Proverbs 11:14; 24:6). Wide Distribution of Responsibility Lessened Burdens.—In planning for the administration of the affairs of the kingdom, after David abdicated in favor of Solomon, the aged king and his son and their counselors regarded it as essential that everything be done with regularity, propriety, fidelity, and dispatch. So far as possible, they followed the system of organization given Israel soon after the deliverance from Egypt. The Levites were assigned the work connected with the temple service, including the ministry of song and instrumental music, and the keeping of the treasures. The men capable of bearing arms and of serving the king were divided into twelve courses of twenty-four thousand each. Over every course was a captain. “The general of the king’s army was Joab.” “The courses...came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year.” Thus every group of twenty-four thousand served the king one month during each year.

David appointed Jonathan, his uncle, as “a counselor, a wise man, and a scribe”; Ahithophel also was “the king’s counselor...And after Ahithophel was Jehoiada... and Abiathar.” Hushai was “the king’s friend.” By his prudent example, the aged king taught Solomon that “in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”

The thoroughness and completeness of the organization perfected at the beginning of Solomon’s reign; the comprehensiveness of the plans for bringing the largest number possible of all the people into active service; the wide distribution of responsibility, so that the service of God and of the king should not be unduly burdensome to any individual or class,—these are lessons which all may study with profit, and which the leaders of the Christian church should understand and follow.

This picture of a great and mighty nation living in simplicity and comfort in rural homes, every person rendering willing and unsalaried service to

God and the king for a portion of each year, is one from which we may gather many helpful suggestions (The Review and Herald, October 12, 1905).

Chapter 28

9. Fidelity Must Precede Blessings.—[1 Chronicles 28:9 quoted.] This charge is given to the men in positions of trust in the work of God today as verily as it was given to Solomon. The day of test and trial is upon them, as verily as it was then upon Solomon.

Fidelity is required before God can bestow the blessings that He has promised. Those who offer God acceptable service must obey all His commandments. Thus they become representatives of Christ (MS 163, 1902).

11-13, 19. An Angel Guided David's Writing.—The Lord, through His angel, instructed David, and gave him a pattern of the house which Solomon should build for Him. An angel was

commissioned to stand by David while he was writing out, for the benefit of Solomon, the important directions in regard to the arrangements of the house. David's heart was in the work (The Spirit of Prophecy 1:387, 388).

Carpenter of Nazareth Was Heavenly Architect.—Christ was the foundation of the Jewish economy. He planned the arrangements of the first earthly tabernacle. He gave every specification in regard to the building of Solomon's temple. He who worked as a carpenter in the village of Nazareth was the heavenly Architect who marked out the plan of the house where His name should be honored. The things of heaven and earth are more directly under Christ's supervision than many realize (MS 34, 1899).

20, 21. God Gives Wisdom to Accomplish This Work.—[1 Chronicles 28:20, 21 quoted.] David's solemn charge should be kept in mind by those who are in positions of trust today; for it is as verily binding upon these men as it was upon Solomon at the time it was given. In this our day of

probation God's people are being tested and tried as surely as they were in the days of Solomon.

This whole chapter is of importance to all the people of God living in this age. In the business that He desires men of His appointment to carry on for the safety and prosperity of His kingdom, the Lord does not link together scattered elements that have not had a genuine experience, and that give no promise of developing characters that may be depended upon to bear responsibilities in connection with the work of molding and fashioning a nation to do a most solemn, sacred service for God, consistent with the uplifted, purified state of a people who represent Him.

God's service is not committed to one man's judgment and option, but is divided among those who are found willing to labor interestedly and self-sacrificingly. Thus all, according to the skill and ability God has given them, bear the responsibilities that He has appointed to them. The important interests of a great nation were entrusted to men whose talents fitted them to handle these

responsibilities. Some were chosen to direct the business affairs; others were chosen to look after spiritual matters connected with the worship of God. All the religious service and every branch of the business was to bear the signature of heaven. “Holiness unto the Lord” was to be the motto of the laborers in every department. It was regarded as essential that everything be conducted with regularity, propriety, fidelity, and dispatch.

To all who are engaged in His service, the Lord gives wisdom. The tabernacle to be borne in the wilderness, and the temple at Jerusalem, were built in accordance with special directions from God. In the very beginning, He was particular as to the design and the accomplishment of His work. In this age of the world He has given His people much light and instruction in regard to how His work is to be carried forward,—on an elevated, refined, ennobling basis; and He is displeased with those who in their service do not carry out His design. He will separate such men from His cause, and prove others, who, if self-sufficient, will in turn be replaced by still other laborers (MS 81, 1900).

Chapter 29

5. Half-hearted Service Cannot Please God.—[1 Chronicles 29:5 quoted.] The response came not only in liberal offerings of treasures to meet the expense of the building, but also in willing service in the various lines of God's work. Hearts were filled with a desire to return to the Lord His own, by consecrating to His service all the energies of mind and body. Those upon whom had been placed burdens of state, determined to labor heartily and unselfishly, using for God the skill and ability He had given them.

David's exhortation to Solomon, and his appeal to the burden-bearers of the nation, should be kept in mind by those who are in positions of trust in the Lord's cause today. In this our day God's people will prosper only so long as they keep His precepts; and those who bear responsibilities are called upon to consecrate their service to the Lord. Conference officers, church officers, managers and heads of departments in our institutions, laborers in the field

at home and abroad,—all are to render faithful service by using their talents wholly for God. The Lord is not pleased with half-hearted service. To Him we owe all that we have and are (The Review and Herald, September 14, 1905).

14. David and God Were Partners.—This subject of the use of the means entrusted to us should be carefully considered; for the Lord will require His own with usury. While in poverty, many regard systematic giving as a Bible requirement; but when they come into possession of money or property, they do not acknowledge God's claim upon them. They look upon their means as their own. But not so did King David regard his possessions. He understood that God is the great proprietor of all things, and that he himself was highly honored in that he had been taken into partnership with God. His heart was filled with gratitude for the favor and mercy of God, and in his prayer when presenting offerings for the building of the temple, he said, "Of thine own have we given thee" (The Review and Herald, December 8, 1896).

Chapter 14

2 Chronicles

Chapter 1

3-6. See EGW on 1 Kings 3:4, Vol. 2, p. 1025.

7-10. See EGW on 1 Kings 3:5-9, Vol. 2, p. 1025.

7-12. See EGW on 1 Kings 3:5-15, Vol. 2, p. 1026.

Chapter 2

3-14. See EGW on 1 Kings 5:3-18, Vol. 2, p. 1026.

13, 14. See EGW on 1 Kings 7:13, 14, Vol. 2, p. 1030.

Chapter 4

11. See EGW on 1 Kings 7:13, 14, Vol. 2, p. 1030.

Chapter 5

7, 8, 12-14. See EGW on 1 Kings 6:23-28, Vol. 2, p. 1030.

Chapter 6

13 (1 Kings 8:54). Kneel for Prayer in Public Worship.—I have received letters questioning me in regard to the proper attitude to be taken by a person offering prayer to the Sovereign of the universe. Where have our brethren obtained the idea that they should stand upon their feet when praying to God? ...

[Luke 22:41; Acts 9:40; 7:59, 60; Acts 20:36; 21:5; Ezra 9:5, 6; Psalm 95:6; Ephesians 3:14 quoted.]...

Both in public and private worship it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him. This act shows our dependence upon God....

[2 Chronicles 6:1-13 quoted.]...

Is it possible that with all the light that God has given to His people on the subject of reverence, that ministers, principals, and teachers in our schools, by precept and example teach young men to stand erect in devotion as did the Pharisees? Shall we look upon this as significant of their self-sufficiency and self-importance? Are these traits to become conspicuous? ...

We hope that our brethren will not manifest less reverence and awe as they approach the only true and living God than the heathen manifest for their idol deities, or these people will be our judges in the day of final decision. I would speak to all who occupy the place of teachers in our schools. Men and women, do not dishonor God by your irreverence and pomposity. Do not stand up in your

Phariseeism and offer your prayers to God. Mistrust your own strength. Depend not in it; but often bow down on your knees before God, and worship Him.

And when you assemble to worship God, be sure and bow your knees before Him. Let this act testify that the whole soul, body, and spirit are in subjection to the Spirit of truth. Who have searched the Word closely for examples and direction in this respect? ...

Man must come on bended knee, as a subject of grace, a suppliant at the footstool of mercy. And as he receives daily mercies at the hand of God, he is ever to cherish gratitude in his heart, and give expression to it in the words of thanksgiving and praise for these unmerited favors (NL 37, pp. 1-3).

The prayer offered by Solomon during the dedication of the temple, was not made while he stood upon his feet. The king knelt in the humble position of a petitioner.

Herein is a lesson for God's people today. Our spiritual strength and our influence are not increased by conformity to a worldly attitude during prayer.... Let man come on bended knee, as a subject of grace, a suppliant at the footstool of mercy. Thus he is to testify that the whole soul, body, and spirit are in subjection to his Creator (The Review and Herald, November 30, 1905).

Chapter 8

14. See EGW on 1 Chronicles 23:1-5.

Chapter 9

17-22. See EGW on Ecclesiastes 1:14.

22, 23 (1 Kings 10:23, 24). God Endows Man With Talent.—[2 Chronicles 9:22, 23 quoted.] This honor was not brought about by Solomon himself. God gave to him the talents of influence and of great wisdom. Let all remember that tact and ability do not come from the natural man. Those who depend upon ministers or upon any other men

whom they regard as superior to themselves, should understand that God is the One who endows man with talent.

We see danger in the bestowal of rich gifts or of words of commendation upon human agencies. Those who are favored by the Lord need to be on guard constantly, lest pride or self-esteem obtain the supremacy. He who has an unusual following, he who has received words of commendation from the Lord, needs the special prayers of God's faithful watchmen, that he may be shielded from the danger of cherishing thoughts of self-esteem and spiritual pride. Never is such a man to manifest self-importance, or attempt to act as a dictator or a ruler. Faithfully should his brethren warn him of his dangers; for, if left to himself, he will surely make mistakes, and reveal human frailties.

In studying Solomon's history, we can see clearly that the very ones who flattered and praised and glorified the man of ability are the ones who did not recognize and glorify God for the blessings He bestowed upon them through the human

instrumentality. They supported and glorified the man; God was dishonored; and therefore the Lord found the vessel He had ordained and used in His sacred service, becoming unclean. The sentiments, the spirit, and the likeness of the natural man began to appear, and he who once was doing God's will, became corrupted through human exaltations. Then the feebleness and weakness of man was revealed by the choice of injudicious friends, whose course of action helped the tempter to ensnare the man. The Lord allowed him to be ensnared, because he went on to exalt his own wisdom, and made not God his trust. He would not be counseled; he would walk in his own way. ...

The Lord sets men in positions of responsibility to carry out not their own will, but God's will. He gives wisdom to those who seek Him and depend upon Him as their Counselor. So long as men represent the pure principles of His government, He will continue to bless and maintain them as His instrumentalities to carry out His purposes concerning His people. He cooperates with those who cooperate with Him.... The test by which

Solomon was measured, is used to measure all (MS 81, 1900).

Chapter 14

11. God Will Work With Us When We Trust Him.—[2 Chronicles 14:11 quoted.] This is an appropriate prayer for us to make. Our prospects are anything but flattering. There are vast numbers arrayed against the truth, whom we must meet in presenting the light to others. Our hope is not in our knowledge of the truth, and in our own ability, but in the living God ... There should be ... living faith for the mighty God to manifest His power, else all will prove a failure. God defeated the enemies of Israel. He put their forces into disorder. They fled they knew not whither. Who can stand before the Lord God of Israel?

Now we are not warring against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. The Lord would encourage us to look to Him as the source of all our strength, the One who is able to help us. We

may look to men, and they will give us counsel, and yet this may be defeated; but when the God of Israel undertakes work for us, He will make it a success. We want to know that we are right before God; if we are not right before Him, then we want to make an earnest effort to come in right relation to Him. We must individually do something ourselves. We are not to risk our eternal interest upon guesswork. We must set everything right; we must follow out the requirements of God, and then expect God to work with our efforts. 2 Chronicles 20:15. God works in us by the light of His truth. We are to be obedient to all His commandments.

Oh, that we could take this point into consideration, that the work in which we are engaged is not our work, but God's work, and we as humble instruments are laborers together with Him; and with an eye single to God's glory, not mistake the beginning of the Christian life for its consummation, but see the necessity of training upon the earth to prepare us for doing God's will! We are not to lift up ourselves, not to be self-confident, but to trust in God, knowing that He is

willing and able to help us. God will work with His people, but we want to be in that position where our trust and confidence will become firm in Him (The Review and Herald, May 10, 1887).

Chapter 17

3-7, 9, 10. Obedience Brings God's Favor.— [2 Chronicles 17:3-7, 9, 10 quoted.] Obedience to the Lord always brings favor, and a faithful discharge of righteous principles will bear the divine credentials; but the Lord is dishonored when those who are placed as stewards of God's flock, sustain and sanction an evil work.

The outward signs of fasting and prayer, without a broken and contrite spirit, are of no value in God's sight. The inward work of grace is needed. Humiliation of soul is essential. God looks upon this. He will graciously receive those who will humble their hearts before Him. He will hear their petitions and heal their backslidings.

Ministers and people need the work of

purification in their souls, that God's judgments may be turned away from them. God is waiting, waiting for humiliation and repentance. He will receive all who will turn unto Him with their whole heart (MS 33, 1903).

Chapter 26

16-21 (2 Kings 15:5). Success Must Not Lift One Up.—[2 Chronicles 26:16-21 quoted.] The case of Uzziah the king reveals how God will punish the sin of presumption.... The Lord has ordained men to certain positions in His church, and He would not have them step out of the places to which He has appointed them. When the Lord gives them a measure of success, they are not to become lifted up, and think themselves qualified to do a work for which they are not fitted, and to which God has not called them (The Review and Herald, August 14, 1900).

Chapter 33

9-13. The Way God Works.—In the case of

Manasseh the Lord gives us an instance of the way in which He works. [2 Chronicles 33:9-13 quoted.]

The Lord has often spoken to His people in warning and reproof. He has revealed Himself in mercy, love, and kindness. He has not left His backsliding people to the will of the enemy, but has borne long with them, even during obdurate apostasy. But after appeals have been made in vain, He prepares the rod for punishment. What compassionate love has been exercised toward the people of God! The Lord might have cut down in their sins those who were working at cross purposes with Him, but He has not done this. His hand is stretched out still. We have reason to offer thanksgiving to God that He has not taken His Spirit from those who have refused to walk in His way (Letter 94, 1899).

Chapter 34

18, 19. See EGW on 2 Kings 22:10, 11, Vol. 2, p. 1038.

21. (2 Kings 22:13). Word of the Lord Still Binding.—[2 Kings 22:13 quoted.] Josiah did not say, “I knew nothing about this book. These are ancient precepts, and times have changed.” He appointed men to investigate the matter, and these men went to Huldah, the prophetess. [2 Kings 22:15-20 quoted.]

In Josiah’s day the Word of the Lord was as binding, and should have been as strictly enforced, as at the time it was spoken. And today it is as binding as it was then (The General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1903).

22. (2 Kings 22:14). Huldah Visited by Most Honored of the Kingdom.—Josiah sent as messengers to the prophetess, the highest and most honored of the people. He sent the first men of his kingdom,—men who occupied high positions of trust in the nation. Thus he conferred honor upon the oracles of God (The General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1903).

29-31. See EGW on 2 Kings 23:1-3, Vol. 2, p.

1038.

30. See EGW on 2 Kings 23:2, Vol. 2, p. 1039.

26-33. See EGW on 2 Kings 23:29, 30, Vol. 2, p. 1039.

Chapter 35

20-24. See EGW on 2 Kings 23:29, 30, Vol. 2, p. 1039.

Chapter 36

11-13. See EGW on 2 Kings 24:17-20, Vol. 2, p. 1040.

14-21. Jews Exemplified Termination of God's Forbearance.—The Jewish nation is before us as an example of the termination of God's long forbearance. In the destruction of Jerusalem the destruction of the world is typified. The lips of Him who ever pronounced blessings upon the penitent, and spoke encouragement to the poor and

suffering, and brought gladness to the humble, pronounced a curse upon those to whom He had presented light, who would not appreciate or accept light. Those who thought to evade the clear, distinct Word of God, and cherish man-made traditions, He declared would be found guilty of all the blood of the prophets which had been slain from the foundation of the world.

Again and again God had arrested the Jews in their wicked course by severe chastisement, but they provoked Him by their wicked works, casting away the law of the Lord of Hosts, and finally refusing to reverence His only begotten Son. Each century of transgression treasured up wrath against the day of wrath. Jesus bade the stubborn and impenitent nation to fill up the measure of their iniquity. Their wicked works were not forgotten nor overlooked. When the time of retributive judgment was fully due, the mandate was sent forth from the sacred place of the Most High for the vindication of God's honor and the magnifying of His law (Undated MS 145).

19. See EGW on 2 Kings 25:9, Vol. 2, p. 1040.

20. See EGW on 2 Kings 24:10-16, Vol. 2. p. 1040.

Chapter 15

Ezra

Chapter 3

10-12. Some Praised and Others Mourned.—

[Ezra 3:10, 11 quoted.] This praise and thanksgiving, we have no need to say, was entirely appropriate. The house upon which their eyes rested was of sufficient consequence for the Lord to send His word again and again to encourage the builders. The Lord gives His servants words to speak; and this gratitude all should have...expressed when they saw that the foundation of the house...was laid.

But there came another difficulty. Lamentation and weeping and mourning was heard because the temple was not outwardly so glorious as the first. There were those who used their conversational powers to talk of the inferiority of the building to the one built by Solomon. Mingled with music and singing, with rejoicing and praise to God, was an

inharmonious sound, not of joy or praise or thanksgiving, but of dissatisfaction. [Ezra 3:12 quoted.]

They saw enough to make them praise God. They saw that the Lord had visited them after He had scattered them for their ingratitude and disloyalty to His commandments. He had moved upon the heart of Cyrus to aid those who were appointed to rebuild His house. But those who were easily discouraged did not walk by faith. They entertained discouraging sentiments, that were not a savor of life unto good works (MS 116, 1897).

Chapter 7

6-10. Ezra Published Copies of the Law.—

Ezra was of the sons of Aaron, a priest, whom God chose to be an instrument of good unto Israel, that He might put honor upon the priesthood, the glory of which had been greatly eclipsed during the captivity. Ezra was a man of great piety and holy zeal. He was also a man of learning, and a ready

scribe in the law of Moses. These qualifications made him an eminent man.

Ezra was impressed by the Spirit of God to search the historical and poetical books of the Bible, and by this means he became familiar with the sense and understanding of the law. During the captivity the knowledge of God's will had to some extent been lost. Ezra gathered all the copies of the law that he could find. He published copies of these among God's people, and became a teacher of the law and the prophecies in the schools of the prophets. The pure Word, thus diligently taught by Ezra, gave knowledge that was invaluable at that time (Letter 100, 1907).

God Gives Another Opportunity and Shows Forbearance.—The Lord raised up Ezra to be His servant. He moved upon the heart of the king, so that Ezra found favor with him. The king placed in his hands abundant means for the rebuilding of the temple, and made it possible for the Jews to return who for seventy years had been in captivity in Babylon. In thus giving to His people another

opportunity to serve God in their own country, the Lord shows His forbearance with His wayward children (Letter 98, 1907).

10. An Example in Knowledge and Practice.—Shall we let the example of Ezra teach us the use we should make of our knowledge of the Scriptures? The life of this servant of God should be an inspiration to us to serve the Lord with heart and mind and strength. We each have an appointed work to do, and this can be accomplished only by consecrated effort. We need first to set ourselves to know the requirements of God, and then to practise them. Then we can sow seeds of truth that will bear fruit unto eternal life (The Review and Herald, February 6, 1908).

Chapter 8

22. Ezra Willing to Run the Risk.—Ezra and his companions had determined to fear and obey God, and to put their trust wholly in Him. They would not form a connection with the world in order to secure the help or friendship of the

enemies of God. Whether they were with the many or the few, they knew that success could come from God only. And they had no desire that their success should be attributed to the wealth or influence of wicked men.

Ezra would run the risk of trusting his cause with God. He well knew that if they failed in their important work, it would be because they had not complied with the requirements of God and therefore He could not help them.

The Scriptures furnish abundant evidence that it is safer to be joined to the Lord, and lose the favor and friendship of the world, than to look to the world for favor and support, and forget our dependence upon God. It was because they were convinced of this truth that the Jews had refused to allow their adversaries to unite with them in the work of building the temple. They saw in the propositions of those idolaters a device of Satan to beguile

God's people into union and fellowship with

His enemies (The Review and Herald, January 8, 1884).

Chapter 9

6. A Prayer of Humiliation and Contrition.—Ezra had the true spirit of prayer. Presenting his petition before God for Israel, when they had sinned grievously in the face of great light and privileges, he exclaimed, “I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.” Ezra remembered the goodness of God in again giving his people a foothold in their native land, and he was overwhelmed with indignation and grief at the thought of their ingratitude in return for the divine favor. His language is that of true humiliation of soul, the contrition that prevails with God in prayer. Only the prayer of the humble enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth (The Signs of the Times, February 19, 1885).

Chapter 16

Nehemiah

Chapter 1

1. Men of Opportunity and Principle.—

Nehemiah and Ezra are men of opportunity. The Lord had a special work for them to do. They were to call upon the people to consider their ways, and to see where they had made their mistake; for the Lord had not suffered His people to become powerless and confused and to be taken into captivity without a cause. The Lord especially blessed these men for standing up for the right. Nehemiah was not set apart as a priest or a prophet, but the Lord used him to do a special work. He was chosen as a leader of the people. But his fidelity to God did not depend upon his position.

The Lord will not allow His work to be hindered, even though the workmen may prove unworthy. God has men in reserve, prepared to meet the demand, that His work may be preserved

from all contaminating influences. God will be honored and glorified. When the divine Spirit impresses the mind of the man appointed by God as fit for the work, he responds, saying, “Here am I; send me.”

God demonstrated to the people for whom He had done so much that He would not serve with their sins. He wrought, not through those who refused to serve Him with singleness of purpose, who had corrupted their ways before Him, but through Nehemiah; for he was registered in the books of heaven as a man. God has said, “Them that honor me I will honor.” Nehemiah showed himself to be a man whom God could use to put down false principles and to restore heaven-born principles; and God honored him. The Lord will use in His work men who are as true as steel to principle, who will not be swayed by the sophistries of those who have lost their spiritual eyesight.

Nehemiah was chosen by God because he was willing to cooperate with the Lord as a restorer.

Falsehood and intrigue were used to pervert his integrity, but he would not be bribed. He refused to be corrupted by the devices of unprincipled men, who had been hired to do an evil work. He would not allow them to intimidate him into following a cowardly course. When he saw wrong principles being acted upon, he did not stand by as an onlooker, and by his silence give consent. He did not leave the people to conclude that he was standing on the wrong side. He took a firm, unyielding stand for the right. He would not lend one jot of influence to the perversion of the principles that God has established. Whatever the course others might pursue, he could say, “So did not I, because of the fear of God.”

In his work, Nehemiah kept the honor and glory of God ever in view. The governors that had been before him had dealt unjustly with the people, “and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bear rule over the people. “But so did not I,” Nehemiah declared, “because of the fear of God” (The Review and Herald, May 2, 1899).

5-11. A Prayer to Be Studied.—[Nehemiah 1:5, 6 quoted.] Not only did Nehemiah say that Israel had sinned. He acknowledged with penitence that he and his father's house had sinned. "We have dealt corruptly against Thee," he says, placing himself among those who had dishonored God by not standing stiffly for the truth.... [Nehemiah 1:7-11 quoted.] ...

Nehemiah humbled himself before God, giving Him the glory due unto His name. Thus also did Daniel in Babylon. Let us study the prayers of these men. They teach us that we are to humble ourselves, but that we are never to obliterate the line of demarcation between God's commandment-keeping people and those who have no respect for His law.

We all need to draw near to God. He will draw near to those who approach Him in humility, filled with a holy awe for His sacred majesty, and standing before Him separate from the world (MS 58, 1903).

6, 7. Nehemiah Trusted God's Faithfulness.—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 Southern Work, March 1, 1904).

Chapter 2

4. (Romans 12:12). Instant in Prayer.—God in His providence does not permit us to know the end from the beginning; but He gives us the light of His Word to guide us as we pass along, and bids us to keep our minds stayed upon Jesus. Wherever we are, whatever our employment, our hearts are to be uplifted to God in prayer. This is being instant

in prayer. We need not wait until we can bow upon our knees, before we pray. On one occasion, when Nehemiah came in before the king, the king asked why he looked so sad, and what request he had to make. But Nehemiah dared not answer at once. Important interests were at stake. The fate of a nation hung upon the impression that should then be made upon the monarch's mind; and Nehemiah darted up a prayer to the God of heaven, before he dared to answer the king. The result was that he obtained all that he asked or even desired (Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 144).

8, 18. The Good Hand of God Acknowledged.—The Lord requires us to sink self in Jesus Christ, and let the glory be all of God. Our life is the Lord's, and is invested with a responsibility that we do not fully comprehend. The threads of self have become woven into the fabric, and this has dishonored God. Nehemiah, after gaining so great an influence over the monarch in whose court he lived, and over his people in Jerusalem, instead of ascribing praise to

his own excellent traits of character, his remarkable aptness and energy, stated the matter just as it was. He declared that his success was due to the good hand of God that was upon him. He cherished the truth that God was his safeguard in every position of influence. For every trait of character by which he obtained favor he praised the working power of God through His unseen agencies. And God gave him wisdom because he did not exalt himself. The Lord taught him how to use the gifts entrusted to him to the very best advantage, and under the supervision of God, these talents gained other talents. This human agent could be worked by divine agencies (Letter 83, 1898).

12-15. Angels View Church as Nehemiah Viewed Jerusalem.—With sorrow-stricken heart, the visitor from afar gazed upon the ruined defenses of his loved Jerusalem. And is it not thus that angels of heaven survey the condition of the church of Christ? Like the dwellers at Jerusalem, we become accustomed to existing evils, and often are content while making no effort to remedy them. But how are these evils regarded by beings

divinely illuminated? Do not they, like Nehemiah, look with sorrow-burdened heart upon ruined walls, and gates burned with fire?

Are not everywhere visible the shameful tokens of backsliding from God and conformity with a sin-loving and truth-hating world? In these days of darkness and peril, who is able to stand in defense of Zion and show her any good? Her spiritual state and prospects are not in accordance with the light and privileges bestowed of God (The Southern Work, March 22, 1904).

17, 18. Needed: Nehemiahs.—There is need of Nehemiahs in the church today,—not men who can pray and preach only, but men whose prayers and sermons are braced with firm and eager purpose. The course pursued by this Hebrew patriot in the accomplishment of his plans is one that should still be adopted by ministers and leading men. When they have laid their plans, they should present them to the church in such a manner as to win their interest and cooperation. Let the people understand the plans and share in the work, and they will have

a personal interest in its prosperity. The success attending Nehemiah's efforts shows what prayer, faith, and wise, energetic action will accomplish. Living faith will prompt to energetic action. The spirit manifested by the leader will be, to a great extent, reflected by the people. If the leaders professing to believe the solemn, important truths that are to test the world at this time, manifest no ardent zeal to prepare a people to stand in the day of God, we must expect the church to be careless, indolent, and pleasure-loving (The Southern Work, March 29, 1904).

We need Nehemiahs in this age of the world, who shall arouse the people to see how far from God they are because of the transgression of His law. Nehemiah was a reformer, a great man raised up for an important time. As he came in contact with evil and every kind of opposition, fresh courage and zeal were aroused. His energy and determination inspired the people of Jerusalem; and strength and courage took the place of feebleness and discouragement. His holy purpose, his high hope, his cheerful consecration to the

work, were contagious. The people caught the enthusiasm of their leader, and in his sphere each man became a Nehemiah, and helped to make stronger the hand and heart of his neighbor. Here is a lesson for ministers of the present day. If they are listless, inactive, destitute of godly zeal, what can be expected of the people to whom they minister (The Southern Work, June 28, 1904)?

Chapter 4

1-8. Satan Still Uses Contempt and Derision.—The experience of Nehemiah is repeated in the history of God's people in this time. Those who labor in the cause of truth will find that they cannot do this without exciting the anger of its enemies. Though they have been called of God to the work in which they are engaged, and their course is approved of Him, they cannot escape reproach and derision. They will be denounced as visionary, unreliable, scheming, hypocritical,—anything, in short, that will suit the purpose of their enemies. The most sacred things will be represented in a ridiculous light to amuse the

ungodly. A very small amount of sarcasm and low wit, united with envy, jealousy, impiety, and hatred, is sufficient to excite the mirth of the profane scoffer. And these presumptuous jesters sharpen one another's ingenuity, and embolden each other in their blasphemous work. Contempt and derision are indeed painful to human nature; but they must be endured by all who are true to God. It is the policy of Satan thus to turn souls from doing the work which the Lord has laid upon them.

Proud scorers are not to be trusted; yet, as Satan found in the heavenly courts a company to sympathize with him, so these find among professed followers of Christ those whom they can influence, who believe them honest, who sympathize with them, plead in their behalf, and become permeated with their spirit. Those who are at variance in almost everything else, will unite in persecuting the few who dare to pursue the straightforward path of duty. And the same enmity which leads to contempt and derision, will, at a favorable opportunity, inspire more violent and

cruel measures, especially when workers for God are active and successful (The Southern Work, April 12, 1904).

7-9. Union Through a Dragonic Bond.—A spirit of hatred and opposition to the Hebrews formed the bond of union, and created the mutual sympathy among different bodies of men, who otherwise might have warred against each other. This will illustrate what we frequently witness in our day in the existing union of men of different denominations to oppose the present truth, whose only bond seems to be that which is dragonic in its nature, manifesting hatred and bitterness against the remnant who keep the commandments of God. “Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.”

We are in constant danger of becoming self-sufficient, relying upon our own wisdom, and not making God our strength. Nothing disturbs Satan so much as our not being ignorant of his devices. If we feel our dangers, we shall feel the need of

prayer as did Nehemiah, and, like him, we shall obtain that sure defense that will give us security in peril. If we are careless and indifferent, we shall surely be overcome by Satan's devices. We must be vigilant. While, like Nehemiah, we resort to prayer, taking all our perplexities and burdens to God, we should not feel that we have nothing to do. We are to watch as well as pray. We should watch the work of our adversaries, lest they gain advantage in deceiving souls. We should, in the wisdom of Christ, make efforts to defeat their purposes, while, at the same time, we do not suffer them to call us from our great work. Truth is stronger than error. Righteousness will prevail over wrong....

We shall meet with opposition of every description, as did the builders of the walls of Jerusalem; but if we watch and pray, and work as they did, God will fight our battles for us, and give us precious victories (The Review and Herald, July 6, 1886).

Chapter 6

3. The Way to Meet Intimidating Threats.—

We shall receive the most fierce opposition from those who oppose the law of God. But, like the builders of the walls of Jerusalem, we should not be diverted and hindered from our work by reports, by messengers desiring discussion or controversy, or by intimidating threats, the publication of falsehoods, or any of the devices Satan may instigate. Our answer should be, We are engaged in a great work, and we cannot come down. We shall sometimes be perplexed to know what course we should pursue, to preserve the honor of the cause of God, and to vindicate His truth.

The course of Nehemiah should have a strong bearing upon our minds, as to the manner of meeting this kind of opponents. We should take all these things to the Lord in prayer, as Nehemiah made his supplication to God while his own spirit was humbled. He clung to God with unwavering faith.

This is the course we should pursue. Time is too precious for the servants of God to devote to vindicating their character blackened by those who hate the Sabbath of the Lord. We should move forward with unwavering confidence, believing that God will give to His truth great and precious victories. In humility, meekness, and purity of life, relying upon Jesus, we shall carry a convincing power with us that we have the truth (The Review and Herald, July 6, 1886).

Chapter 9

Bible Principles Versus Customs of Men.—

In the ninth chapter of Nehemiah the works of the Lord in behalf of His people are recorded. The sins of the people in turning from God are pointed out. These sins had separated them from God, and He had permitted them to be brought under the control of heathen nations.

This history has been recorded for our benefit. What has been will be, and we need to look to God for counsel. We must not trust to the counsel of

men. We need increased discernment, that we may distinguish between truth and error. The history of the children of Israel shows the sure result of turning from Bible principles to the customs and practises of men. The Lord will not serve with any plans which gratify the selfishness of men, and blight His work. He will not give prosperity to devices that lead away from fidelity to His commandments. He demands that the talents lent to man shall be used in keeping His way, in doing justice and judgment, whether it be to break down or to restore and build up. God would not have us follow the wisdom of men who have disregarded His Word, and made themselves a reproach by their practises and counsels (The Review and Herald, May 2, 1899).

6-15. See EGW on Exodus 20:1-17, Vol. 1, p. 1103.

38 (Nehemiah 10:29). Unite in a Solemn Covenant.—It would be a scene well-pleasing to God and angels, would His professed followers in this generation unite, as did Israel of old [referring

especially to the revival in the days of Nehemiah], in a solemn covenant to “observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes” (The Southern Work, June 7, 1904).

Chapter 17

Esther

Chapter 1

9. Contrast of Two Feasts.—We read with pleasure of the feast of queen Vashti. This was not a feast attended by a promiscuous number, but a feast given by the queen for the women of rank in the kingdom, who were entertained with modest courtesy, without wantonness or sensuality.

It was when the king was not himself, when his reason was dethroned by wine-drinking that he sent for the queen, that those present at his feast, men besotted by wine, might gaze on her beauty. She acted in harmony with a pure conscience.

Vashti refused to obey the king's command, thinking that when he came to himself, he would commend her course of action. But the king had unwise advisers. They argued it would be a power given to woman that would be to her injury (MS

29, 1911).

10-12. Vashti's Refusal Was for the King's Good.—[Esther 1:10, 11 quoted.] Had the king maintained his royal dignity by practicing habits of temperance, he would never have made this command. But his mind was affected by the wine that he had used so freely, and he was not prepared to act wisely.

When this command came from the king, Vashti did not carry out his orders, because she knew that wine had been freely used, and that Ahasuerus was under the influence of the intoxicating liquor. For her husband's sake as well as her own, she decided not to leave her position at the head of the women of the court [Esther 1:12 quoted] (MS 39, 1910).

16-22. God Overruled Ahasuerus' Folly for Good.—[Esther 1:16-22 quoted.] There is little doubt that the king, when he afterward considered the matter, felt that Vashti deserved to be honored, rather than to be treated as she was.

No law of divorce, drawn up by men who for many days had given themselves up to wine-drinking, men who were unable to control the appetite, could be of any value in the eyes of the King of Kings. These men were unable to reason soundly and nobly. They could not discern the real situation.

However high their office, men are amenable to God. The great power exercised by Kings, often leads to extremes in exaltation of self. And the worthless vows made to enact laws which disregard the higher laws of God, lead to great injustice.

Occasions of indulgence such as are pictured in the first chapter of Esther, do not glorify God. But the Lord accomplishes His will through men who are nevertheless misleading others. If God did not stretch forth His restraining hand, strange presentations would be seen. But God impresses human minds to accomplish His purpose, even though the one used continues to follow wrong

practices. And the Lord works out His plans through men who do not acknowledge His lessons of wisdom. In His hand is the heart of every earthly ruler, to turn whithersoever He will, as He turneth the waters of the river.

Through the experience that brought Esther to the Medo-Persian throne, God was working for the accomplishment of His purposes for His people. That which was done under the influence of much wine worked out for good to Israel (MS 39, 1910).

Chapter 4

14-17. Consecrated Women Can Act Important Part.—Through Esther the queen the Lord accomplished a mighty deliverance for His people. At a time when it seemed that no power could save them, Esther and the women associated with her, by fasting and prayer and prompt action, met the issue, and brought salvation to their people.

A study of women's work in connection with the cause of God in Old Testament times will teach

us lessons that will enable us to meet emergencies in the work today. We may not be brought into such a critical and prominent place as were the people of God in the time of Esther; but often converted women can act an important part in more humble positions (Letter 22, 1911).

Chapter 18

Job

Chapter 1

1. Moses Wrote Book of Job.—The long years amid desert solitudes were not lost. Not only was Moses gaining a preparation for the great work before him, but during this time, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the book of Genesis and also the book of Job, which would be read with the deepest interest by the people of God until the close of time (The Signs of the Times, February 19, 1880).

5. Job as a Faithful Priest.—It were well for parents to learn from the man of Uz a lesson of steadfastness and devotion. Job did not neglect his duty to those outside of his household; he was benevolent, kind, thoughtful of the interest of others; and at the same time he labored earnestly for the salvation of his own family. Amid the festivities of his sons and daughters, he trembled

lest his children should displease God. As a faithful priest of the household, he offered sacrifices for them individually. He knew the offensive character of sin, and the thought that his children might forget the divine claims, led him to God as an intercessor in their behalf (The Review and Herald, August 30, 1881).

Chapter 4

7-9 (Ch. 38:1, 2). Calamities Not an Index to Sins.—It is very natural for human beings to think that great calamities are a sure index of great crimes and enormous sins; but men often make a mistake in thus measuring character. We are not living in the time of retributive judgment. Good and evil are mingled, and calamities come upon all. Sometimes men do pass the boundary line beyond God's protecting care, and then Satan exercises his power upon them, and God does not interpose. Job was sorely afflicted, and his friends sought to make him acknowledge that his suffering was the result of sin, and cause him to feel under condemnation. They represented his case as that of a great sinner;

but the Lord rebuked them for their judgment of His faithful servant (MS 56, 1894).

9. Job's Friends Misrepresented God.—

There is wickedness in our world, but all the suffering is not the result of a perverted course of life. Job is brought distinctly before us as a man whom the Lord allowed Satan to afflict. The enemy stripped him of all he possessed; his family ties were broken; his children were taken from him. For a time his body was covered with loathsome sores, and he suffered greatly. His friends came to comfort him, but they tried to make him see that he was responsible, by his sinful course, for his afflictions. But he defended himself, and denied the charge, declaring, Miserable comforters are ye all. By seeking to make him guilty before God, and deserving of His punishment, they brought a grievous test upon him, and represented God in a false light; but Job did not swerve from his loyalty, and God rewarded His faithful servant (MS 22, 1898).

Chapter 38

(Romans 11:33.) God Asks Questions Scholars Cannot Answer.—Men of the greatest intellect cannot understand the mysteries of Jehovah as revealed in nature. Divine inspiration asks many questions which the most profound scholar cannot answer. These questions were not asked, supposing that we could answer them, but to call our attention to the deep mysteries of God, and to make men know that their wisdom is limited; that in the common things of daily life there are mysteries past the comprehension of finite minds; that the judgment and purposes of God are past finding out, His wisdom unsearchable. If He reveals Himself to man, it is by shrouding Himself in the thick cloud of mystery.

God's purpose is to conceal more of Himself than He makes known to man. Could men fully understand the ways and works of God, they would not then believe Him to be the infinite One. He is not to be comprehended by man in His wisdom, and reasons, and purposes. "His ways are past

finding out” [Romans 11:33]. His love can never be explained upon natural principles. If this could be done, we would not feel that we could trust Him with the interests of our souls. Skeptics refuse to believe, because with their finite minds they cannot comprehend the infinite power by which God reveals Himself to men. Even the mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent.

Yet because human science cannot in its research explain the ways and works of the Creator, men will doubt the existence of God, and ascribe infinite power to nature. God’s existence, His character, His law, are facts that all the reasoning of men of the highest attainments cannot controvert. They deny the claims of God, and neglect the interest of their souls, because they cannot understand His ways and works. Yet God is ever seeking to instruct finite men that they may exercise faith in Him and trust themselves wholly in His hands. Every drop of rain or flake of snow, every spire of grass, every leaf and flower and shrub, testifies of God. These little things so

common around us, teach the lesson that nothing is beneath the notice of the infinite God, nothing too small for His attention (The General Conference Bulletin, February 18, 1897).

1, 2. See EGW on Ch. 4:7-9.

11. Power That Controls Waves Can Control Rebellion.—Nothing can happen in any part of the universe without the knowledge of Him who is omnipresent. Not a single event of human life is unknown to our Maker. While Satan is constantly devising evil, the Lord our God overrules all, so that it will not harm His obedient, trusting children. The same power that controls the boisterous waves of the ocean can hold in check all the power of rebellion and of crime. God says to one as to the other, “Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.”

What lessons of humility and faith may we not learn as we trace the dealings of God with His creatures. The Lord can do but little for the children of men, because they are so full of pride and vain glory. They exalt self, magnifying their

own strength, learning, and wisdom. It is necessary for God to disappoint their hopes and frustrate their plans, that they may learn to trust in Him alone. All our powers are from God; we can do nothing independent of the strength which He has given us. Where is the man or woman or child that God does not sustain? Where is the desolate place which God does not fill? Where is the want that any but God can supply? ...

He would have us make Him our protector and our guide in all the duties and affairs of life (The Signs of the Times, July 14, 1881).

Chapter 42

10. Pray for Those Who Hurt Us.—Let us strive to walk in the light as Christ is in the light. The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed, not only for himself, but for those who were opposing him. When he felt earnestly desirous that the souls that had trespassed against him might be helped, he himself received help. Let us pray, not only for ourselves, but for those who

have hurt us, and are continuing to hurt us. Pray, pray, especially in your mind. Give not the Lord rest; for His ears are open to hear sincere, importunate prayers, when the soul is humbled before Him (Letter 88, 1906).

Chapter 19

Psalm

Direction to Study Several Psalm.—How terrible it is when the acknowledgment of God is not made when it should be made! How sad to humble one's self when it is too late! Why, O why, do not men heed the invitation? The psalmist said, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek" [Psalm 27:8]. The whole of this psalm is excellent, and should be placed in the reading and spelling lessons of the classes. The twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, and seventy-eighth psalms tell of the rich blessings bestowed by God upon His people, and of their poor returns for all His benefits. The eighty-first psalm explains why Israel was scattered. They forgot God, as the churches in our land are forgetting Him today. Read the eighty-ninth, ninetieth, ninety-first, ninety-second, and ninety-third psalms. My attention has been called to these matters. Shall we not consider the Word of the Lord? These things were written for our

admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, and should they not be the objects of study in our schools? The Word of God contains instructive lessons, given in reproof, in warning, in encouragement, and in rich promises. Would not such food as this be meat in due season to the youth (MS 96, 1899)?

Psalm 1

3. What Makes an Evergreen Christian?—Seek to be an evergreen tree. Wear the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Cherish the grace of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. This is the fruit of the Christian tree. Planted by the rivers of water, it always brings forth its fruit in due season (MS 39, 1896).

Psalm 5

5-12. (James 3:8). Distinguishing Features of Speech.—Speech is one of the great gifts of God to

man. The tongue is a little member, but the words it frames, made vocal by the voice, have a great power. The Lord declares, “The tongue can no man tame.” It has set nation against nation, and has caused battle and bloodshed. Words have kindled fires that have been hard to quench. They have also brought joy and gladness to many souls. And when words are spoken because God says, “Speak unto them My words,” they often cause sorrow unto repentance.

The talent of speech carries with it great responsibility. It needs to be carefully guarded; for it is a mighty power for evil as well as for good.

[Psalm 5:5-12 quoted.]

In these verses righteousness and unrighteousness are represented. These are the distinguishing features of speech (Letter 34, 1899).

Psalm 8

3. See EGW on Isaiah 60:1.

Psalm 11

6. (Malachi 4:1). Devouring Flames Recompense the Wicked.—The wicked receive their recompense in the earth. “Upon the wicked he shall rain quick burning coals, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.” Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. The wicked “shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts.” All are punished “according to their deeds” (The Southern Work, March 14, 1905).

Psalm 17

(Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 12:12.) David’s Struggle.—David was a representative man. His

history is of interest to every soul who is striving for eternal victories. In his life two powers struggled for the mastery. Unbelief marshalled its forces, and tried to eclipse the light shining upon him from the throne of God. Day by day the battle went on in his heart, Satan disputing every step of advance made by the forces of righteousness. David understood what it meant to fight against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world. At times it seemed that the enemy must gain the victory. But in the end, faith conquered, and David rejoiced in the saving power of Jehovah.

The struggle that David went through, every other follower of Christ must go through. Satan has come down with great power, knowing that his time is short. The controversy is being waged in full view of the heavenly universe, and angels stand ready to lift up for God's hard pressed soldiers a standard against the enemy, and to put into their lips songs of victory and rejoicing (MS 38, 1905).

5. All Paths Are Beset With Peril.—You need not be surprised if everything in the journey heavenward is not pleasant. There is no use in looking to our own defects. Looking unto Jesus, the darkness passes away, and the true light shineth. Go forth daily, expressing the prayer of David, “Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.” All the paths of life are beset with peril, but we are safe if we follow where the Master leads the way, trusting the One whose voice we hear saying, “Follow Me.” “He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Let your heart repose in His love. We need sanctification, soul, body, and spirit. This we must seek for (NL No. 11, p. 2).

Psalm 18

3. Determination Increases Will Power.—As you confess before men and women your confidence in the Lord, additional strength is imparted to you. Determine to praise Him. With firm determination comes increased will power; and soon you will find that you cannot help

praising Him [Psalm 18:3 quoted] (MS 116, 1902).

25. An Illustration of Mercy and Uprightness.—The psalmist continues: “With the merciful Thou wilt shew Thyself merciful.” Let us begin to put into practise the instruction given us in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, showing mercy to those who are afflicted. “With an upright man Thou wilt shew Thyself upright.” God will reward men according to their uprightness (MS 116, 1902).

26. God Meets Us Where We Are.—“With the pure Thou wilt shew Thyself pure; and with the froward Thou wilt shew Thyself froward”—that is, as God meets us where we are, so we are to meet men where they are. Let us not, by refusing to meet our fellow-men where they are, place ourselves outside the compass of God’s love and mercy (MS 116, 1902).

Psalm 19

(Psalm 119:130.) Teach Lessons From the

Heavens.—God calls upon teachers to behold the heavens and study the works of God in nature. [Psalm 19:1-3 quoted.] Shall we not commit to memory the lessons nature teaches? Shall we not open the eyes of our senses; and take in the beautiful things of God? We would do well to read often the nineteenth psalm that we may understand how the Lord binds up His law with His created works. ...

We are to contemplate the wonderful works of God, and repeat the lessons learned from them to our children, that we may lead them to see His skill, His power, His grandeur in His created works.

What a God is our God! He rules over His kingdom with diligence and care, and He has built a hedge—the ten commandments—about His subjects, to preserve them from transgression. In requiring obedience to the laws of His kingdom, God gives His people health and happiness, peace and joy. He teaches them that the perfection of character He requires can only be attained by

becoming familiar with His Word. The psalmist declares, “The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple” (MS 96, 1899).

1-14. A Revelation of Higher Education.—

When the Son of man came among men, He brought the intelligence of heaven with Him; for He created the worlds and all things that are therein. Man’s study of the sciences and nature, unaided by the divine instruction, falls short of the precious things Christ would have him learn in the things of the natural world. He fails to be instructed by the little things in nature, which teach large and important truths essential for the salvation of the soul.

Obedience to natural laws is obedience to divine laws. Christ came to all as the God of nature. He came to reflect upon all the things of nature in their relative importance, the glory of heaven, to impress human minds with the glory of Him who created all things, to teach men to obey His voice, and impart the science of true education, which is the simplicity of true religion. [Psalm

19:1-6 quoted.]

Then the psalmist connects the law of God in the natural world with the laws given to His created intelligences. [Psalm 19:7-14 quoted.]

This psalm reveals that higher education which all must receive, or perish in their sins. Man alone is disobedient to the laws of Jehovah. When the Lord bids nature bear testimony to the things which He has made, instantly they witness to the glory of God.

Christ represents the earthly things, that they may represent the spiritual. The parable of the sower and the seed has a lesson of the highest importance. As a lesson-book Christ has opened it before us to represent the spiritual sowing. The Lord calls attention to the things which He has created, and those things repeat the lessons of Christ. He bids the things of nature speak to the senses, that man may take heed to the voice of God therein. The things of nature speak eternal truths (MS 28, 1898).

1. (see EGW on Isaiah 40:26). Moon and Stars May Be Our Companions.—The heavens may be to them [the youth] a study-book, from which they may learn lessons of intense interest. The moon and the stars may be their companions, speaking to them in the most eloquent language of the love of God (The Youth's Instructor, October 25, 1900).

Natural Science, God's Storehouse.—If the follower of Christ will believe His Word and practice it, there is no science in the natural world but he will be able to grasp and appropriate, nothing but will furnish him means by which he can impart truth to others. Natural science is God's storehouse from which every student in the school of Christ may draw. The ways of God in natural philosophy, and the mysteries connected with His dealings with man, are a treasury from which all may draw (MS 95, 1898).

Science and Religion Cannot Be Divorced.—Nature is full of lessons of the love of God. Rightly

understood, these lessons lead to the Creator. They point from nature to nature's God, teaching those simple, holy truths which cleanse the mind, bringing it into close touch with God. These lessons emphasize the truth that science and religion cannot be divorced.

Christ came to this earth to teach men the mysteries of the kingdom of God. But men could not by human reasoning understand His lessons. Man's wisdom cannot originate the science which is divine.... When man is reconciled to God, nature speaks to him in words of heavenly wisdom, bearing testimony to the eternal truth of God's Word. As Christ tells us the meaning of the things in nature, the science of true religion flashes forth, explaining the relation of the law of God to the natural and spiritual world (MS 67, 1901).

1-3. (see EGW on Psalm 147:4). Study of Creation Lifts the Mind.—If the frivolous and pleasure-seeking will allow their minds to dwell upon the real and the true, the heart cannot but be filled with reverence, and they will adore the God

of nature. The study of God's character as revealed in His created works will open a field of thought that will draw the mind away from low, enervating pleasures. The knowledge of God's works and ways we can only begin to obtain in this world; the study will be continued throughout eternity (The Youth's Instructor, May 6, 1897).

1-6. Forces of Nature Are God's Ministers.—[Psalm 19:1-6 quoted.] God encourages us to contemplate His works in the natural world. He desires that we shall turn our mind from the study of the artificial to the natural. We shall understand this better as we lift up our eyes to the hills of God, and contemplate the works which His own hands have created. They are God's work. His hand has molded the mountains and balances them in their position, that they shall not be moved except at His command. The wind, the sun, the rain, the snow, and the ice, are all His ministers to do His will (MS 16, 1897).

14. (Proverbs 4:23; Matthew 12:34-37; Philippians 4:8). Controlled, Noble Thinking

Acceptable to God.—[Psalm 19:14 quoted.] As God works upon the heart by His Holy Spirit, man must cooperate with Him. The thoughts must be bound about, restricted, withdrawn from branching out and contemplating things that will only weaken and defile the soul. The thoughts must be pure, the meditations of the heart must be clean, if the words of the mouth are to be words acceptable to heaven, and helpful to your associates....[Matthew 12:34-37 quoted.]

In the sermon on the mount, Christ presented before His disciples the far-reaching principles of the law of God. He taught His hearers that the law was transgressed by the thoughts before the evil desire was carried out in actual commission. We are under obligation to control our thoughts, and to bring them into subjection to the law of God. The noble powers of the mind have been given to us by the Lord, that we may employ them in contemplating heavenly things. God has made abundant provision that the soul may make continual progression in the divine life. He has placed on every hand agencies to aid our

development in knowledge and virtue; and yet, how little these agencies are appreciated or enjoyed! How often the mind is given to the contemplation of that which is earthly, sensual, and base! We give our time and thought to the trivial and commonplace things of the world, and neglect the great interests that pertain to eternal life. The noble powers of the mind are dwarfed and enfeebled by lack of exercise on themes that are worthy of their concentration. [Philippians 4:8 quoted.]

Let every one who desires to be a partaker of the divine nature appreciate the fact that he must escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. There must be a constant, earnest struggling of the soul against the evil imaginings of the mind. There must be a steadfast resistance of temptation to sin in thought or act. The soul must be kept from every stain, through faith in Him who is able to keep you from falling. We should meditate upon the scriptures, thinking soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. The infinite mercy and love of Jesus, the sacrifice made

in our behalf, call for most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should seek to comprehend the meaning of the plan of salvation. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins. By constantly contemplating heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger. Our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love. They will be more intelligent and fervent. There will be more constant confidence in Jesus, and you will have a daily, living experience in the willingness and power of Christ to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him.

By beholding we are to become changed, and as we meditate upon the perfections of our divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. There will be a hungering and thirsting of soul to be made like Him whom we adore. The more our thoughts are upon Christ, the more we shall speak of Him to others, and represent Him to

the world. We are called to come out and be separate from the world, that we may be the sons and daughters of the Most High; and we are under sacred obligation to glorify God, as His children upon the earth. It is essential that the mind should be stayed upon Christ, that we may hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ from heaven (The Review and Herald, June 12, 1888).

Psalm 19, 20

Nineteenth and Twentieth Psalm Especially for Us.—The Lord would have us awake to our true spiritual condition. He desires that every soul shall humble heart and mind before Him. The words of inspiration found in the nineteenth and twentieth psalms are presented to me for our people. It is our privilege to accept these precious promises, and to believe the warnings. I pray that our hearts may be fully awake to the perils that surround those who are indifferent to the soul's eternal welfare. We need to search the Scriptures as never before. The Word of God is to be our

educator, our guide. We are to understand what saith the Scriptures.

In the night season I seemed to be repeating these words to the people: There is need of close examination of self. We have no time now to spend in self-indulgence. If we are connected with God, we shall humble our hearts before Him, and be very zealous in the perfecting of Christian characters. We have a grand and solemn work to do, for the world is to be enlightened in regard to the times in which we live; and they will be enlightened when a straight testimony is borne. They will be led to earnest examination of self (Letter 12, 1909).

Psalm 25

18. (2 Samuel 16:12). A Strong Man in a Storm.—David was never more worthy of admiration than in his hour of adversity. Never was this cedar of God truly greater than when wrestling with the storm and tempest. He was a man of the keenest temperament, which might have been

raised to the strongest feelings of resentment. He was cut to the quick with the imputation of unmerited wrong. Reproach, he tells us, had broken his heart. And it would not have been surprising if, stung to madness, he had given vent to his feelings of uncontrollable irritation, to bursts of vehement rage, and expressions of revenge. But there was nothing of this which would naturally be expected of a man with his stamp of character. With spirits broken and in tearful emotion, but without one expression of repining, he turns his back upon the scenes of his glory and also of his crime, and pursues his flight for his life (Letter 6, 1880).

Psalm 32

1, 2. David Was Reconverted.—David was pardoned of his transgression because he humbled his heart before God in repentance and contrition of soul, and believed that God's promise to forgive would be fulfilled. He confessed his sin, repented, and was reconverted. In the rapture of the assurance of forgiveness, he exclaimed, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is

covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” The blessing comes because of pardon; pardon comes through faith that the sin, confessed and repented of, is borne by the great Sin-bearer. Thus from Christ cometh all our blessings. His death is an atoning sacrifice for our sins. He is the great Medium through whom we receive the mercy and favor of God. He, then, is indeed the Originator, the Author, as well as the Finisher, of our faith (MS 21, 1891).

Psalm 33

6, 9. See EGW on Genesis 1:1-3, Vol. 1, p. 1081.

Psalm 34

12-15. Assurance Fosters Health.—[1 Peter 3:10-12 quoted.] ...

The assurance of God’s approval will promote physical health. It fortifies the soul against doubt,

perplexity, and excessive grief, that so often sap the vital forces and induce nervous diseases of a most debilitating and distressing character. The Lord has pledged His unfailing word that His eye shall be over the righteous, and His ear open to their prayer, while He is against all them that do evil. We make very hard work for ourselves in this world when we take such a course that the Lord is against us (The Review and Herald, October 16, 1883).

Psalm 35

28. Education for the Tongue.—The tongue needs to be educated and disciplined and trained to speak of the glories of heaven, to talk of the matchless love of Jesus Christ (Letter 32, 1890).

Psalm 42

1. Our Souls Should Hunger for Heaven's Gifts.—We are to come to God in faith, and pour out our supplications before Him, believing that He will work in our behalf, and in the behalf of those

we are seeking to save. We are to devote more time to earnest prayer. With the trusting faith of a little child, we are to come to our heavenly Father, telling Him of all our needs. He is always ready to pardon and help. The supply of divine wisdom is inexhaustible, and the Lord encourages us to draw largely from it. The longing that we should have for spiritual blessings is described in the words, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." We need a deeper soul-hunger for the rich gifts that heaven has to bestow. We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

O that we might have a consuming desire to know God by an experimental knowledge, to come into the audience chamber of the Most High, reaching up the hand of faith, and casting our helpless souls upon the One mighty to save. His loving kindness is better than life (MS 38, 1905).

Psalm 51

1-17. The Way Back to God.—I present

before you the fifty-first psalm, a psalm filled with precious lessons. From it we may learn what course to follow if we have departed from the Lord. To the king of Israel, exalted and honored, the Lord sent a message of reproof by His prophet. David confessed his sin and humbled his heart, declaring God to be just in all His dealings [Psalm 51:1-17 quoted] (MS 147, 1903).

Chief Guilt Is Sin Against God.—Sin is sin, whether committed by one sitting on a throne, or by one in the humbler walks of life. The day is coming when all who have committed sin will make confession, even though it is too late for them to receive pardon. God waits long for the sinner to repent. He manifests a wonderful forbearance. But He must at last call the transgressor of His law to account.

A man incurs guilt by injuring a fellow-being, but his chief guilt is the sin that he has committed against the Lord, and the evil influence of his example upon others.

The sincere child of God does not make light of any of His requirements (MS 147, 1903).

3. A Live Conscience Leads to Confession.—

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

It is not safe for us to close our eyes and harden our consciences, that we shall not see or realize our sins. We need to cherish the instruction we have had in regard to the hateful character of sin in order that we may repent of and confess our sins (Letter 71, 1893).

Psalm 63

5, 6. (Psalm 104:34). Meditation Leads to Love and Fellowship.—Rest yourself wholly in the hands of Jesus. Contemplate His great love, and while you meditate upon His self-denial, His infinite sacrifice made in our behalf in order that we should believe in Him, your heart will be filled with holy joy, calm peace, and indescribable love. As we talk of Jesus, as we call upon Him in prayer, our confidence that He is our personal, loving Saviour will strengthen and His character will appear more and more lovely.... We may enjoy rich feasts of love, and as we fully believe that we are His by adoption, we may have a foretaste of heaven. Wait upon the Lord in faith. The Lord draws out the soul in prayer, and gives us to feel His precious love. We have a nearness to Him, and can hold sweet communion with Him. We obtain distinct views of His tenderness and compassion, and our hearts are broken and melted with contemplation of the love that is given to us. We feel indeed an abiding Christ in the soul. We abide in Him, and feel at home with Jesus. The promises

flow into the soul. Our peace is like a river, wave after wave of glory rolls into the heart, and indeed we sup with Jesus and He with us. We have a realizing sense of the love of God, and we rest in His love. No language can describe it, it is beyond knowledge. We are one with Christ, our life is hid with Christ in God. We have the assurance that when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. With strong confidence, we can call God our Father (Letter 52, 1894).

Psalm 66

1-5. This Psalm Often Sung by Christ.— [Psalm 66:1-5 quoted.] This psalm and portions of the sixty-eighth and seventy-second psalms were often sung by Christ. Thus in the most simple and unassuming way He taught others (The Youth's Instructor, September 8, 1898).

16. Praise God More.—Would it not be well to cultivate gratitude, and to offer grateful songs of thanksgiving to God? As Christians we ought to

praise God more than we do. We ought to bring more of the brightness of His love into our lives. As by faith we look to Jesus His joy and peace are reflected from the countenances. How earnestly we should seek so to relate ourselves to God that our faces may reflect the sunshine of His love! When our own souls are vivified by the Holy Spirit, we shall exert an uplifting influence upon others who know not the joy of Christ's presence.

Said David, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul" (MS 115, 1903).

Psalm 71

9, 17, 19 (Psalm 92:13-15). Guard Against Evils Attending Old Age.—David entreated the Lord not to forsake him in old age. And why did he thus pray? He saw that most of the aged around him were unhappy, because of the unfortunate traits of their character being increased with their age. If they had been naturally close and covetous, they were most disagreeably so in mature years. If

they had been jealous, fretful, and impatient, they were especially so when aged.

David was distressed as he saw those who once seemed to have the fear of God before them, now in old age seemingly forsaken of God and exposed to ridicule by the enemies of the Lord. And why were they thus situated? As age crept on they seemed to lose their former powers of discernment, and were ready to listen to the deceptive advice of strangers in regard to those whom they should confide in. Their jealousy unrestrained sometimes burned into a flame, because all did not agree with their failing judgment. Some thought that their own children and relatives wanted them to die in order to take their places and possess their wealth, and receive the homage which had been bestowed upon them. And others were so controlled by their jealous, covetous feelings, as to destroy their own children.

David was strongly moved. He was distressed. He looked forward to the time when he should be aged, and feared that God would leave him and he

would be as unhappy as other aged persons whose course he had noticed, and that he should be left to the reproach of the enemies of the Lord. With this burden upon him he earnestly prays [Psalm 71:9, 17, 19 quoted]. David felt the necessity of guarding against the evils which attend old age.

It is frequently the case that aged persons are unwilling to acknowledge that their mental strength is failing, and therefore shorten their days by taking care which belongs to their children. Satan often plays upon their imagination, and leads them to hoard their means with miserly care, and thus create a continual anxiety about their earthly goods. Some will even deprive themselves of many of the comforts of life, and labor beyond their strength, rather than use the means which they have. Thus they are in continual vexation, through fear that some time in the future they shall want.

If such would take the position God would have them, their last days might be their best, their happiest. Those who have children in whose honesty and management they have reason to

confide, should allow them to manage for them and provide for their happiness. Unless they do this, Satan will take advantage of their lack of mental strength, and will manage for them. They should lay aside anxiety and burdens, and occupy their time as happily as they can, in ripening up for heaven (The Signs of the Times, February 19, 1880).

17. See EGW on 1 Samuel 2:26, Vol. 2, p. 1010.

Psalm 77

7, 10-12. David's Varying Mental Experience.—The psalmist David in his experience had many changes of mind. At times, as he obtained views of God's will and ways, he was highly exalted. Then as he caught sight of the reverse of God's mercy and changeless love, everything seemed to be shrouded in a cloud of darkness. But through the darkness he obtained a view of the attributes of God, which gave him confidence and strengthened his faith. But when he

meditated upon the difficulties and danger of life, they looked so forbidding that he thought himself abandoned by God because of his sins. He viewed his sin in such a strong light that he exclaimed, “Will the Lord cast off for ever? will he be favorable no more?”

But as he wept and prayed, he obtained a clearer view of the character and attributes of God, being educated by heavenly agencies, and he decided that his ideas of God’s justice and severity were exaggerated. He rejected his impressions as being the result of his weakness, ignorance, and physical infirmities, and as dishonoring to God, and with renewed faith he exclaimed, “This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.”

Most earnestly he studied the ways of God, expressed by Christ when enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, and given to Moses to be faithfully repeated to all Israel. He called to mind what God had wrought to secure for Himself a people to whom He could entrust sacred and vital truth for

future ages. God wrought most wondrously to free more than a million people; and as David considered His pledges and promises to them, knowing they were for all who need them as much as for Israel, he appropriated them to himself, saying, “I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doing.”

His faith laid hold of God, and he was strengthened and encouraged; although he recognized God’s ways as mysterious, yet he knew they were merciful and good; for this was His character as revealed to Moses: “The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”

As David appropriated these promises and privileges to himself he decided that he would no longer be hasty in judgment, becoming

discouraged, and casting himself down in helpless despair. His soul took courage as he contemplated the general character of God as displayed in His teaching, His forbearance, His surpassing greatness and mercy, and he saw that the works and wonders of God are to have no confined application.

But again David's experience changed [Psalm 73:2-5, 12, 17-23, 28 quoted] (MS 4, 1896).

Psalm 89

14. Twin Sisters.—Justice has a twin sister that should ever stand by her side, which is Mercy and Love (Letter 18e, 1890).

(1 Peter 5:3.) Men Must Not Dominate Others.—Let those who occupy positions of trust rid themselves of the unmerciful spirit which so greatly offends God. Justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne. Let no one suppose that God has given to men the power of ruling their fellow-men. He will accept the service of no man who hurts and discourages Christ's heritage. Now

is the time for every man to examine himself, to prove himself, that he may see whether he is in the faith. Investigate closely the motives which prompt you to action. We are engaged in the work of the Most High. Let us not weave into the web of our work one thread of selfishness. Let us rise to a higher plane in our daily experience. God will not serve with the sins of any man (MS 42, 1901).

Psalm 90

8. We May See Our Lives as God Does.—To dwell upon the beauty, goodness, mercy, and love of Jesus is strengthening to the mental and moral powers, and while the mind is kept trained to do the works of Christ, to be obedient children, you will habitually inquire, Is this the way of the Lord? Will Jesus be pleased to have me do this? Will this course be to please myself or to please Jesus?

Then will every soul remember the words of the Lord: Thou hast my secret sins in the light of thy countenance. Many need to make a decided change in the tenor of their thoughts and actions, if

they would please Jesus. We can seldom see our sins in the grievous light that God can. Many have habituated themselves to pursue a course of sin, and their hearts harden, under the influence of the power of Satan. And their thoughts are brought into captivity to his evil influences; but when in the strength and grace of God they place their minds against the temptations of Satan, their minds are made clear, their hearts and consciences by being influenced by the Spirit of God are made sensitive, and then sin appears as it is—exceedingly sinful. Then is the time when the secret sins are set in the light of their countenance. They confess their sins to God, and repent of them and become ashamed of sin.... He casts them from the light of His countenance behind His back (Letter 43, 1892).

Psalm 91

Loss Sustained by the Wicked.—In the ninety-first psalm is a most wonderful description of the coming of the Lord to bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end, and to give to those who have chosen Him as their Redeemer the assurance

of His love and protecting care.

[Psalm 91:1-15 quoted.]

The righteous understand God's government, and will triumph with holy gladness in the everlasting protection and salvation that Christ through His merits has secured for them. Let all remember this, and forget not that the wicked, who do not receive Christ as their personal Saviour, understand not His providence. The way of righteousness they have not chosen, and they know not God. Notwithstanding all the benefits He has so graciously bestowed upon them, they have abused His mercy by neglecting to acknowledge His goodness and mercy in showing them these favors. At any moment God can withdraw from the impenitent the tokens of His wonderful mercy and love.

Oh, that human agencies might consider what will be the sure result of their ingratitude to Him, and of their disregard of the infinite gift of Christ to our world! If they continue to love transgression

more than obedience, the present blessings and the great mercy of God that they now enjoy, but do not appreciate, will finally become the occasion of their eternal ruin. They may for a time choose to engage in worldly amusements and sinful pleasures, rather than to check themselves in their course of sin, and live for God and for the honor of the Majesty of heaven; but when it is too late for them to see and to understand that which they have slighted as a thing of naught, they will know what it means to be without God, without hope. Then they will sense what they have lost by choosing to be disloyal to God and to stand in rebellion against His commandments. In the past they defied His power and rejected His overtures of mercy; finally His judgments will fall upon them. Then they will realize that they have lost happiness—life, eternal life, in the heavenly courts....

In the time when God's judgments are falling without mercy, oh, how enviable to the wicked will be the position of those who abide "in the secret place of the Most High"—the pavilion in which the Lord hides all who have loved Him and have

obeyed His commandments! The lot of the righteous is indeed an enviable one at such a time to those who are suffering because of their sins. But the door of mercy is closed to the wicked, no more prayers are offered in their behalf, after probation ends.

But this time has not yet come. Mercy's sweet voice is still to be heard. The Lord is now calling sinners to come to Him (MS 151, 1901).

Psalm 92

12. A "Palm-tree" Christian.—The palm tree well represents the life of a Christian. It stands upright amid the burning desert sand, and dies not; for it draws its sustenance from the springs of life beneath the surface (The Review and Herald, September 1, 1885).

The Christian a Palm in the Desert.—[Psalm 92:12 quoted.] See the weary traveler toiling over the hot sands of the desert, with no shelter to protect him from the rays of a tropical sun. His

water supply fails, and he has nothing to slake his burning thirst. His tongue becomes swollen; he staggers like a drunken man. Visions of home and friends pass before his mind, as he believes himself ready to perish in the terrible desert. Suddenly those in advance send forth a shout of joy. In the distance, looming up out of the dreary, sandy waste, is a palm tree, green and flourishing. Hope quickens his pulses. That which gives vigor and freshness to the palm tree will cool the fevered pulses, and give life to those who are perishing with thirst.

As the palm tree, drawing nourishment from fountains of living water, is green and flourishing in the midst of the desert, so the Christian may draw rich supplies of grace from the fountain of God's love, and may guide weary souls, that are full of unrest and ready to perish in the desert of sin, to those waters of which they may drink, and live. The Christian is ever pointing his fellow-men to Jesus, who invites, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." This fountain never fails us; we may draw, and draw again (The Signs of the

Times, October 26, 1904).

If the Christian thrives and progresses at all, he must do so amid strangers to God, amid scoffing, subject to ridicule. He must stand upright like the palm tree in the desert. The sky may be as brass, the desert sand may beat about the palm tree's roots, and pile itself in heaps about its trunk. Yet the tree lives as an evergreen, fresh and vigorous amid the burning desert sands. Remove the sand till you reach the rootlets of the palm tree, and you discover the secret of its life; it strikes down deep beneath the surface, to the secret waters hidden in the earth. Christians indeed may be fitly represented by the palm tree. They are like Enoch; although surrounded by corrupting influences, their faith takes hold of the Unseen. They walk with God, deriving strength and grace from Him to withstand the moral pollution surrounding them. Like Daniel in the courts of Babylon, they stand pure and uncontaminated; their life is hid with Christ in God. They are virtuous in spirit amid depravity; they are true and loyal, fervent and zealous, while surrounded by infidels, hypocritical

professors, godless and worldly men. Their faith and life are hid with Christ in God. Jesus is in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Faith, like the rootlets of the palm tree, penetrates beneath the things which are seen, drawing spiritual nourishment from the Fountain of life (The Signs of the Times, July 8, 1886).

(Ezekiel 31:7.) The Christian a Sturdy Cedar.—When the love of Jesus is abiding in the soul, many who are now but withered branches will become as the cedars of Lebanon, “whose root is by the great waters.” The cedar is noted for the firmness of its roots. Not content to cling to the earth with a few weak fibers, it thrusts its rootlets, like a sturdy wedge, into the cloven rock, and reaches down deeper and deeper for strong holds to grasp. When the tempest grapples with its boughs, that firm-set tree cannot be uprooted. What a goodly cedar might not every follower of Christ become, if he were but rooted and grounded in the truth, firmly united to the Eternal Rock (The Review and Herald, June 20, 1882).

13-16. See EGW on Psalm 71:9, 17, 19.

Psalm 104

14. (see EGW on Genesis 1:29, Vol. 1, p. 1081). **A Harmony of Words and Works.**—The words and works of the Lord harmonize. His words are gracious and His works bountiful. “He causeth grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man.” How liberal are the provisions He has made for us. How wonderfully He has displayed His munificence and power in our behalf. Should our gracious Benefactor treat us as we treat one another, where would we be? Shall we not strive earnestly to follow the golden rule, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets” (Letter 8, 1901).

34. See EGW on Psalm 63:5, 6.

Psalm 119

17, 18, 33-40. **An Example of Prayer.**—

[Psalm 119:17, 18, 33-40 quoted.] Such prayers as this the Lord's servants should be continually offering to Him. This prayer reveals a consecration to God of heart and mind; it is the consecration that God is asking us to make (The Review and Herald, September 18, 1908).

18. The Reservoir of Heaven Not Locked.—

The Bible should be studied with prayer. We should pray as did David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." No man can have insight into the Word of God without the illumination of the Holy Spirit. If we will but come into the right position before God, His light will shine upon us in rich, clear rays. This was the experience of the early disciples.... [Acts 2:1-4 quoted.] God is willing to give us a similar blessing, when we seek for it as earnestly.

The Lord did not lock the reservoir of heaven after pouring His Spirit upon the early disciples. We, also, may receive of the fullness of His blessing. Heaven is full of the treasures of His grace, and those who come to God in faith may

claim all that He has promised. If we do not have His power, it is because of our spiritual lethargy, our indifference, our indolence. Let us come out of this formality and deadness (The Review and Herald, June 4, 1889).

111-115, 125-130, 165. Commandments a Delight to the Obedient.—To the obedient child of God, the commandments are a delight. David declares: [Psalm 119:111-115, 125 quoted].

Did the contempt shown to the law of God extinguish David's loyalty? Hear his words. He calls upon God to interfere and vindicate His honor, to show that there is a God, that there are limits to His forbearance, that it is possible to so presume upon the mercy of God as to exhaust it. "It is time for thee, Lord, to work," he says, "for they have made void thy law."

David saw the divine precepts thrown aside, and obstinacy and rebellion increasing. Was he swept away by the prevalence of apostasy? Did the scorn and contempt cast upon the law lead him to

cowardly refrain from making an effort to vindicate the law? On the contrary his reverence for the law of Jehovah increased as he saw the disregard and contempt shown for it by others [Psalm 119:126-130, 165 quoted] (MS 27, 1899).

126, 127. Time for God to Work.—David was greatly tried in his day in seeing men pouring contempt upon God’s law. Men threw off restraint, and depravity was the result. The law of God had become a dead letter to those whom God had created. Men refused to receive the holy precepts as the rule of their life. Wickedness was so great that David feared lest God’s forbearance should cease, and he sent up a heart-felt prayer to heaven, saying, “It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law. Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.”

If David thought in his day that men had exceeded the limits of God’s mercy, and that God would work to vindicate the honor of His law, and bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end, then what influence should the widespread iniquity of

our day have upon those who love and fear God? When there is widespread disobedience, when iniquity is increasing to a swelling tide, will the professed Christian world be evil with the evil, unrighteous with the unrighteous? Shall we place our influence on the side of the great apostate, and shall universal scorn be heaped upon God's law, the great standard of righteousness? Shall we be swept away by the strong tide of transgression and apostasy? Or shall the righteous search the Scriptures, and know for themselves the conditions upon which the salvation of their souls depend? Those who make the Word of God the man of their counsel will esteem the law of God, and their appreciation of it will rise in proportion as it is set aside and despised. Loyal subjects of Christ's kingdom will re-echo the words of David and say, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law. Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold." This is the position those will occupy who love God sincerely and their neighbors as themselves. They will exalt the commandments in proportion as contempt increases (Undated MS 145).

126. When David in his day saw the departing from the law of God, he expected that a manifestation of divine displeasure would be seen. He looked for the Lord to show forth His righteous indignation. “It is time for thee, Lord, to work,” he exclaimed, “for they have made void thy law.” He supposed that in their lawlessness men had exceeded the bounds of God’s forbearance, and that the Lord would not longer restrain Himself (MS 15, 1906).

Where Will the Church Stand?—It is possible for men to go so far in wickedness, under continual remonstrance, that God sees that He must arise and vindicate His honor. Thus it is at the present period of this earth’s history. Crime of every degree is becoming more and more strikingly manifest. The earth is filled with violence of men against their fellow-men.

What position will the church take? Will those who in the past have had respect for the law of God, be drawn into the current of evil? Will the

almost universal transgression and contempt of the law of God, darken the spiritual atmosphere of the souls of all alike? Will the disrespect of the law of God sweep away the protecting barriers? Because wickedness and lawlessness prevail, is the law of God to be less highly esteemed? Because it is made void by the great majority of those living on the earth, shall the few loyal ones become like all the disloyal, and act as the wicked act? Shall they not rather offer up the prayer of David, “It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law” (MS 15, 1906)?

130. See EGW on Psalm 19.

165. In Harmony With Heaven.—There is no peace in unrighteousness; the wicked are at war with God. But he who receives the righteousness of the law in Christ, is in harmony with heaven (Letter 96, 1896).

Obedience Leads to Peace.—Each law of God is an enactment of mercy, love, and saving power. These laws, obeyed, are our life, our salvation, our

happiness, our peace [Psalm 119:165 quoted]
(Letter 112, 1902).

Psalm 121

5. God Comes Near to Supply All Needs.—
True happiness may be found in unselfishly striving to help those who need help. God helps the feeble, and strengthens those who have no strength. In the fields where the trials and the conflicts and poverty are the greatest, God's workmen must have increased protection. To those laboring in the heat of the conflict, God says, "The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand."

Our Lord adapts Himself to our special needs. He is a shade on our right hand. He walks close by our side, ready to supply all our necessities. He comes very near to those who are engaged in willing service for Him. He knows every one by name. O what assurances we have of the tender love of Christ (MS 51, 1903).

Psalm 135

7. See EGW on Psalm 147:8, 16-18.

Psalm 139

1-12. (Revelation 20:12, 15). Where You Are, God Is.—We are never alone. We have a Companion, whether we choose Him or not. Remember, young men and young women, that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, God is there. To your every word and action you have a witness,—the holy, sin-hating God. Nothing that is said or done or thought can escape His infinite eye. Your words may not be heard by human ears, but they are heard by the Ruler of the universe. He reads the inward anger of the soul when the will is crossed. He hears the expression of profanity. In the deepest darkness and solitude He is there. No one can deceive God; none can escape from their accountability to Him.

[Psalm 139:1-12 quoted.]

Day by day the record of your words, your actions, and your influence, is being made in the books of heaven. This you must meet [Revelation 20:12, 15 quoted] (The Youth's Instructor, May 26, 1898).

8. No Solitude Without God.—The psalmist represents the presence of the Infinite One as pervading the universe. “If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.” [Psalm 139:8.] We can never find a solitude where God is not. The ever watchful eye of Omniscience is upon all our works, and although He can marshal the armies of heaven to do His will, He condescends to accept the services of frail, erring mortals (The Signs of the Times, July 14, 1881).

Psalm 144

12. God Spends Time on Jewels.—We are God's workmanship. The value of the human agent depends wholly upon the polishing he receives. When the rough stones are prepared for the

building, they must be taken into the shop, and hewed and squared. The process is often sharp as the stone is pressed down upon the wheel, but the rough coarseness is being removed, and the lustre begins to appear. The Lord spends not His time upon worthless material; only His jewels are polished after the similitude of a palace. Every soul must not only submit to this work of the divine hand, but must put to the tax every spiritual sinew and muscle, that the character may become more pure, the words more helpful, the actions such as God can approve (Letter 27, 1896).

The divine Worker spends little time on worthless material. Only the precious jewels does He polish after the similitude of a palace, cutting away the rough edges. The process is severe and trying; Christ cuts away the surplus surface, and putting the stone to the polishing wheel, presses it close, that all roughness may be worn off. Then, holding the jewel up to the light, the Master sees in it a reflection of Himself, and He pronounces it worthy of a place in His casket.

Blessed be the experience, however severe, that gives new value to the stone, causing it to shine with living brightness (Letter 69, 1903).

A Painful but Necessary Process.—By the mighty cleaver of truth God has brought His people, as rough stones, from the quarry of the world. These stones must be squared and polished. The rough edges must be removed. This is a painful process; but it is a necessary one. Without it, we could not be prepared for a place in God's temple. By trial, by warnings, by admonitions, God seeks to prepare us to fulfill His purpose. If we cooperate with Him, our characters will be fashioned "after the similitude of a palace." It is the specified work of the Comforter to transform us. At times it is hard for us to submit to the purifying, refining process. But this we must do if we would be saved at last (Letter 139, 1903).

Children May Be Polished for God.—Patiently, lovingly, as faithful stewards of the manifold grace of God, parents are to do their appointed work. It is expected of them that they

will be found faithful. Everything is to be done in faith. Constantly they must pray that God will impart His grace to their children. Never must they become weary, impatient, or fretful in their work. They must cling closely to their children and to God.

If parents work in patience and love, earnestly endeavoring to help their children to reach the highest standard of purity and modesty, they will succeed. In this work parents need to manifest patience and faith, that they may present their children to God, polished after the similitude of a palace (NL No. 28, p. 3).

(1 Peter 2:5; 1 Corinthians 3:11-13.) Some Are Not What They Appear.—Many, from worldly policy, endeavor, by their own efforts, to become as polished stones, but cannot be living stones, because they are not built upon the true foundation. The day of God will reveal that they are, in reality, only hay, wood, and stubble (Redemption: or the Teachings of Paul, and his Mission to the Gentiles, 78).

Psalm 147

4. (Psalm 19:1-3; see EGW on Isaiah 60:1). The World Only a Jot.—He made the night, marshaling the shining stars in the firmament. He calls them all by name. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork, showing man that this little world is but a jot in God's creation (The Youth's Instructor, April 4, 1905).

8, 16-18. (Psalm 135:7). Operations of Nature Are God's Servants.—There is scarcely an operation of nature to which we may not find reference in the Word of God. ...

[Psalm 147:8, 16-18; 135:7 quoted.]

These words of Holy Writ say nothing of the independent laws of nature. God furnishes the matter and the properties with which to carry out His plans. He employs His agencies that vegetation may flourish. He sends the dew and the rain and

the sunshine that verdure may spring forth and spread its carpet over the earth, that the shrubs and fruit trees may bud and blossom and bring forth. It is not to be supposed that a law is set in motion for the seed to work itself, that the leaf appears because it must do so of itself. God has laws which He has instituted, but they are only the servants through which He effects results. It is through the immediate agency of God that every tiny seed breaks through the earth and springs into life. Every leaf grows, every flower blooms, by the power of God (The Review and Herald, November 8, 1898).

Chapter 20

Proverbs

Chapter 1

10. (Isaiah 43:10; 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18). Dart a Prayer to Heaven; Then Firmly Resist.—Hear the voice of God: “My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.” Those who are controlled by the Spirit of God are to keep their perceptive faculties awake; for the time has come when their integrity and loyalty to God and to one another will be tested. Do not commit the least injustice in order to gain an advantage for yourselves. Do unto others, in small matters as well as in great, as you would that others should do unto you. God says, “Ye are my witnesses.” You are to act in My place.

Could the curtain be rolled back, you would see the heavenly universe looking with intense interest upon the one who is tempted. If you do not yield to the enemy, there is joy in heaven. When the first suggestion of wrong is heard, dart a prayer to

heaven, and then firmly resist the temptation to tamper with the principles condemned in God's Word. The first time the temptation comes, meet it in such a decided manner that it will never be repeated. Turn from the one who has ventured to present wrong practises to you. Resolutely turn from the tempter, saying, I must separate from your influence; for I know you are not walking in the footsteps of our Saviour.

Even though you may not feel able to speak a word to those who are working on wrong principles, leave them. Your withdrawal and silence may do more than words. Nehemiah refused to associate with those who were untrue to principle, and he would not permit his workmen to associate with them. The love and fear of God were his safeguard. He lived and worked as in view of the unseen world. And David said, "I have set the Lord always before me."

Dare to be a Daniel. Dare to stand alone. Thus, as did Moses, you will endure the seeing of Him who is invisible. But a cowardly and silent reserve

before evil associates, while you listen to their devices, makes you one with them. [2 Corinthians 6:17, 18 quoted.]

Have courage to do right. The Lord's promise is more valuable than gold and silver to all who are doers of His Word. Let all regard it as a great honor to be acknowledged by God as His children (The Review and Herald, May 9, 1899).

Chapter 3

6. God Guides Us in Doing His Will.—Has not God said He would give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? and is not this spirit a real, true actual guide? Some men seem afraid to take God at His word as though it would be presumption in them. They pray for the Lord to teach us and yet are afraid to credit the pledged word of God and believe we have been taught of Him. So long as we come to our heavenly Father humbly and with a spirit to be taught, willing and anxious to learn, why should we doubt God's fulfilment of His own promise? You must not for a moment doubt Him

and dishonor Him thereby. When you have sought to know His will, your part in the operation with God is to believe that you will be led and guided and blessed in the doing of His will. We may mistrust ourselves lest we misinterpret His teachings, but make even this a subject of prayer, and trust Him, still trust Him to the uttermost, that His Holy Spirit will lead you to interpret aright His plans and the working of His providence (Letter 35, 1893).

It was Christ who guided the Israelites through the wilderness. And it is Christ who is guiding His people today, showing them where and how to work (Letter 335, 1904).

13, 14. The Meaning of Enduring Wisdom.— True wisdom is a treasure as lasting as eternity. Many of the world's so-called wise men are wise only in their own estimation. Content with the acquisition of worldly wisdom, they never enter the garden of God, to become acquainted with the treasures of knowledge contained in His holy Word. Supposing themselves to be wise, they are

ignorant concerning the wisdom which all must have who gain eternal life. They cherish a contempt for the Book of God, which, if studied and obeyed, would make them truly wise. The Bible is to them an impenetrable mystery. The grand, deep truths of the Old and New Testaments are obscure to them, because spiritual things are not spiritually discerned. They need to learn that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that without this wisdom, their learning is of little worth.

Those who are striving for an education in the sciences, but who have not learned the lesson that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, are working helplessly and hopelessly, questioning the reality of everything. They may acquire an education in the sciences, but unless they gain a knowledge of the Bible and a knowledge of God, they are without true wisdom. The unlearned man, if he knows God and Jesus Christ, has a more enduring wisdom than has the most learned man who despises the instruction of God (MS 33, 1911).

17. (1 Timothy 4:8). Devotion to God Advances Health and Cheerfulness.—The wise man says that wisdom’s “ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” Many cherish the impression that devotion to God is detrimental to health and to cheerful happiness in the social relations of life. But those who walk in the path of wisdom and holiness find that “godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” They are alive to the enjoyment of life’s real pleasures, while they are not troubled with vain regrets over misspent hours, nor with gloom or horror of mind, as the worldling too often is when not diverted by some exciting amusement....

Godliness does not conflict with the laws of health, but is in harmony with them. Had men ever been obedient to the law of ten commandments, had they carried out in their lives the principles of these ten precepts, the curse of disease that now floods the world would not be.... One whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is on the highway to

health (The Signs of the Times, October 23, 1884).

Chapter 4

18. Christian Life Lights Way for Others.—

A soul filled with the love of Jesus lends to the words, the manners, the looks, hope, courage and serenity. It reveals the spirit of Christ. It breathes a love which will be reflected. It awakens a desire for a better life; souls ready to faint are strengthened; those struggling against temptation will be fortified and comforted. The words, the expression, the manners throw out a bright ray of sunshine, and leave behind them a clear path toward heaven, the source of all light. Every one of us has opportunities of helping others. We are constantly making impressions upon the youth about us. The expression of the countenance is itself a mirror of the life within. Jesus desires that we shall become like Himself, filled with tender sympathy, exerting a ministry of love in the small duties of life (MS 24, 1887).

The Light Burns Dimly.—The light which is

given to shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, burns dimly. The church no longer sends out the clear bright rays of light amidst the moral darkness that is enveloping the world as a funeral pall. The light of many does not burn or shine. They are moral icebergs (Letter 1f, 1890).

20-22. See EGW on Exodus 20:3-17, Vol. 1, p. 1105.

23 (1 Thessalonians 5:17; see EGW on Psalm 19:14). How Hearts May Be Kept for God.—“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” Diligent heart-keeping is essential to a healthy growth in grace. The heart in its natural state is a habitation for unholy thoughts and sinful passions. When brought into subjection to Christ, it must be cleansed by the Spirit from all defilement. This can not be done without the consent of the individual.

When the soul has been cleansed, it is the duty of the Christian to keep it undefiled. Many seem to think that the religion of Christ does not call for the

abandonment of daily sins, the breaking loose from habits which have held the soul in bondage. They renounce some things condemned by the conscience, but they fail to represent Christ in the daily life. They do not bring Christlikeness into the home. They do not show a thoughtful care in their choice of words. Too often, fretful, impatient words are spoken, words which stir the worst passions of the human heart. Such ones need the abiding presence of Christ in the soul. Only in His strength can they keep guard over the words and actions.

In the work of heart-keeping we must be instant in prayer, unwearied in petitioning the throne of grace for assistance. Those who take the name of Christian should come to God in earnestness and humility, pleading for help. The Saviour has told us to pray without ceasing. The Christian can not always be in the position of prayer, but his thoughts and desires can always be upward. Our self-confidence would vanish, did we talk less and pray more (The Youth's Instructor, March 5, 1903).

(Psalm 19:14; Ephesians 4:13.) Christians should be careful that they keep the heart with all diligence. They should cultivate a love for meditation, and cherish a spirit of devotion. Many seem to begrudge moments spent in meditation, and the searching of the Scriptures, and prayer, as though the time thus occupied was lost. I wish you could all view these things in the light God would have you; for you would then make the kingdom of heaven of the first importance. To keep your heart in heaven, will give vigor to all your graces, and put life into all your duties. To discipline the mind to dwell upon heavenly things, will put life and earnestness into all our endeavors. Our efforts are languid, and we run the Christian race slowly, and manifest indolence and sloth, because we so little value the heavenly prize. We are dwarfs in spiritual attainments. It is the privilege and duty of the Christian to be “increasing in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” [Ephesians 4:13.] As exercise increases the appetite, and gives strength and healthy vigor to the body, so will

devotional exercises bring an increase of grace and spiritual vigor.

The affections should center upon God. Contemplate His greatness, His mercy and excellences. Let His goodness and love and perfection of character captivate your heart. Converse upon His divine charms, and the heavenly mansions He is preparing for the faithful. He whose conversation is in heaven, is the most profitable Christian to all around him. His words are useful and refreshing. They have a transforming power upon those who hear them, and will melt and subdue the soul (The Review and Herald, March 29, 1870).

Practical Religion Breathes Fragrance.—Let the prayer go up to God, “Create in me a clean heart;” for a pure, cleansed soul has Christ abiding therein, and out of the abundance of the heart are the issues of life. The human will is to be yielded to Christ. Instead of passing on, closing the heart in selfishness, there is need of opening the heart to the sweet influences of the Spirit of God. Practical

religion breathes its fragrance everywhere. It is a savor of life unto life (Letter 31a, 1894).

Chapter 6

6. Ant Industry Reproaches Idleness.—
[Proverbs 6:6 quoted.] The habitations which the ants build for themselves show skill and perseverance. Only one little grain at a time can they handle, but by diligence and perseverance they accomplish wonders. Solomon presents to the world the industry of the ant as a reproach to those who waste their hours in sinful idleness, in practices which corrupt soul and body. The ant prepares for future seasons. This is a lesson which many gifted with reasoning powers disregard. They fail entirely to prepare for the future immortal life which God has in His providence secured for the fallen race (MS 35, 1899).

Chapter 10

9. Uprightness Makes a Man a Blessing.—
The very first step in the path of life is to keep the

mind stayed on God, to have His fear continually before the eyes. A single departure from moral integrity blunts the conscience, and opens the door to the next temptation. “He that walketh uprightly walketh surely; but he that perverteth his way shall be known.” [Proverbs 10:9.] We are commanded to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves; but the daily experience of life shows that this law is disregarded. Uprightness in deal and moral integrity will secure the favor of God, and make a man a blessing to himself and to society; but amid the varied temptations that assail one whichever way he may turn, it is impossible to keep a clear conscience and the approval of heaven without divine aid and a principle to love honesty for the sake of the right.

A character that is approved of God and man is to be preferred to wealth. The foundation should be laid broad and deep, resting on the rock Christ Jesus. There are too many who profess to work from the true foundation, whose loose dealing shows them to be building on sliding sand; but the great tempest will sweep away their foundation,

and they will have no refuge.

Many plead that unless they are sharp, and watch to advantage themselves, they will meet with loss. Their unscrupulous neighbors, who take selfish advantages, are prospered; while they, although trying to deal strictly in accordance with Bible principles, are not so highly favored. Do these persons see the future? Or are their eyes too dim to see, through the miasma-laden fogs of worldliness, that honor and integrity are not rewarded in the coin of this world? Will God reward virtue with mere worldly success? He has their names graven on the palms of His hands, as heirs to enduring honors, riches that are imperishable. What did that dishonest man gain by his worldly policy? How high a price did he pay for his success? He has sacrificed his noble manhood, and has started on the road that leads to perdition. He may be converted; he may see the wickedness of his injustice to his fellow-men, and, as far as possible, make restitution; but the scars of a wounded conscience will ever remain (The Signs of the Times, February 7, 1884).

Chapter 11

1. All Business on Square Principles.—In all business transactions, we are to let the light shine decidedly. There is to be no sharp practice. Everything is to be done with the strictest integrity. Better consent to lose something financially than to gain a few shillings by sharp practice. We shall lose nothing in the end by fair dealing. We are to live the law of God in our world, and perfect a character after the divine similitude. All business, with those in the faith and those not in the faith, is to be transacted on square, righteous principles. Everything is to be seen in the light of God's law, everything done without fraud, without duplicity, without one tinge of guile (MS 47, 1898).

God Honors Honesty, Curses Injustice.—“A false balance is abomination to the Lord.” A false balance is a symbol of all unfair dealing, all devices to conceal selfishness and injustice under an appearance of fairness and equity. God will not in the slightest degree favor such practices. He

hates every false way. He abhors all selfishness and covetousness. Unmerciful dealing He will not tolerate, but will repay in kind. God can give prosperity to the working men whose means are acquired honestly. But His curse rests upon all that is gained by selfish practices.

When one indulges in selfishness or sharp dealing, he shows that he does not fear the Lord or reverence His name. Those who are connected with God will not only shun all injustice, but will manifest His mercy and goodness toward all with whom they have to do. The Lord will sanction no respect of person; but He will not approve the course of those who make no difference in favor of the poor, the widow, and the orphan (Letter 20a, 1893).

14. See EGW on 1 Chronicles 27:32-34.

Chapter 12

18. Words Mean Much.—The voice and tongue are gifts from God, and if rightly used, they

are a power for God. Words mean very much. They may express love, devotion, praise, melody to God, or hatred and revenge. Words reveal the sentiments of the heart. They may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. The tongue is a world of blessing, or a world of iniquity (MS 40, 1896).

Desolating Hail or Seeds of Love?—Some are seen to come forth from their daily communion with God clothed with the meekness of Christ. Their words are not like a desolating hail, crushing everything before it; they come forth sweetly from their lips. They scatter seeds of love and kindness all along their path, and that all unconsciously, because Christ lives in their heart. Their influence is felt more than it is seen (MS 24, 1887).

19. The Honest Are His Jewels Forever.—Truthfulness and frankness should be ever cherished by all who claim to be followers of Christ. God and the right should be the motto. Deal honestly and righteously in this present evil world. Some will be honest when they see that honesty will not endanger their worldly interests; but all

who act from this principle will have their names blotted out of the book of life.

Strict honesty must be cultivated. We can go through the world but once; we cannot come back to rectify any mistakes; therefore every move made should be with godly fear and careful consideration. Honesty and policy will not harmonize; either policy will be subdued, and truth and honesty hold the lines of control, or policy will take the lines, and honesty cease to direct. Both cannot act together; they can never be in agreement. When God makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be His chosen ones, His treasures. Angels are preparing crowns for such; and light from the throne of God will be reflected in its splendor from these star-gemmed diadems (The Review and Herald, December 29, 1896).

Chapter 14

30. (Ch. 27:4). A Despicable Trait of Satanic Character.—Envy is one of the most despicable

traits of Satanic character. It is constantly seeking the lifting up of self, by casting slurs upon others. A man who is envious will belittle his neighbor, thinking to exalt himself. The sound of praise is grateful to him who has approbateness highly developed, and he hates to hear the praises of another. Oh, what untold mischief has this evil trait of character worked in our world! The same enmity existed in the heart of Saul that stirred the heart of Cain against his brother Abel, because Abel's works were righteous, and God honored him, and his own works were evil, and the Lord could not bless him.

Envy is the offspring of pride, and, if it is entertained in the heart, it will lead to cruel deeds, to hatred, revenge, and murder. The great controversy between Christ and the prince of darkness, is carried on in everyday, practical life (The Signs of the Times, August 17, 1888).

Chapter 15

1, 2. Seeds That Produce a Bad Crop.—

Passionate words sow seeds that produce a bad crop which no one will care to garner. Our own words have an effect upon our character, but they act still more powerfully upon the characters of others. The infinite God alone can measure the mischief that is done by careless words. These words fall from our lips, and we do not perhaps mean any harm; yet they are the index of our inward thoughts, and work on the side of evil. What unhappiness has been produced by the speaking of thoughtless, unkind words in the family circle! Harsh words rankle in the mind, it may be for years, and never lose their sting. As professed Christians, we should consider the influence our words have upon those with whom we come into association, whether they are believers or unbelievers. Our words are watched, and mischief is done by thoughtless utterances. No after association with believers or unbelievers will wholly counteract the unfavorable influence of thoughtless, foolish words. Our words evidence the manner of food upon which the soul feeds (The Youth's Instructor, June 27, 1895).

33. See EGW on Judges 6:15, Vol. 2, p. 1003.

Chapter 16

2. God Reads the Secret Devisings.—It is for the eternal interest of every one to search his own heart, and to improve every God-given faculty. Let all remember that there is not a motive in the heart of any man that the Lord does not clearly see. The motives of each one are weighed as carefully as if the destiny of the human agent depended upon this one result. We need a connection with divine power, that we may have an increase of clear light and an understanding of how to reason from cause to effect. We need to have the powers of the understanding cultivated, by our being partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Let each one consider carefully the solemn truth, God in heaven is true, and there is not a design, however intricate, nor a motive, however carefully hidden, that He does not clearly understand. He reads the secret devisings of every heart. Men may plan out crooked actions for the future, thinking that God

does not understand; but in that great day when the books are opened, and every man is judged by the things written in the books, those actions will appear as they are....

[Psalm 139:1-5, 11, 12 quoted.]

The Lord sees and understands all dishonesty in planning, all unlawful appropriation in any degree of property or means, all injustice in man's dealing with his fellow men ...[Daniel 5:27 quoted] (RH March 8, 1906).

11. (Hosea 12:7). Religion With Deceitful Balances an Abomination.—Fraud in any business transaction is a grievous sin in God's sight; for the goods men are handling belong to Him, and must be used to the glory of His name if men would be pure and clean in His sight. The religion that carries in its hand the scant measure and the deceitful balance is an abomination in the sight of God. He who cherishes such a religion will be brought to confusion; for God is a jealous God (Letter 8, 1901).

28. See EGW on Ch. 26:20-22.

32. (See EGW on 1 Samuel 24:6, Vol. 2, p. 1021). **How to Be Stronger Than Kings or Conquerors.**—Is Christ using cutting words, stern criticism and unkind suspicion toward His people who commit faults? No. He takes every infirmity into account; He acts with discernment. He knows every one of our failings; but He uses patience; for otherwise we would have perished long ago on account of our bad treatment of Him. The greatest insult we can inflict upon Him, is to pretend to be His disciples while manifesting the spirit of Satan in our words, our dispositions and our actions. It does not behoove those from whom Jesus has so much to bear, in their failings and perversity, to be ever mindful of slights and real or imaginary offense. And yet there are those who are ever suspecting the motives of others about them. They see offense and slights where no such thing was intended. All this is Satan's work in the human heart. The heart filled with that love which thinketh no evil will not be on the watch to notice

discourtesies and grievances of which he may be the object. The will of God is that His love shall close the eyes, the ears and the heart to all such provocations and to all the suggestions with which Satan would fill them. There is a noble majesty in the silence of the one exposed to evil-surmising or outrage. To be master of one's spirit is to be stronger than Kings or conquerors. A Christian leads one to think of Christ. He will be affable, kind, patient, humble and yet courageous and firm in vindicating the truth and the name of Christ (MS 24, 1887).

We must not consider as our enemies all those who do not receive us with a smile upon their lips and with demonstrations of love. It is much easier to play the martyr than to overcome a bad temper.

We must give others an example of not stopping at every trifling offense in order to vindicate our rights. We may expect that false reports will circulate about us; but if we follow a straight course, if we remain indifferent to these things, others will also be indifferent. Let us leave

to God the care of our reputation. And thus, like sons and daughters of God, we shall show that we have self-control. We shall show that we are led by the Spirit of God, and that we are slow to anger. Slander can be lived down by our manner of living; it is not lived down by words of indignation. Let our great anxiety be to act in the fear of God, and show by our conduct that these reports are false. No one can injure our character as much as ourselves. It is the weak trees and the tottering houses that need to be constantly propped. When we show ourselves so anxious to protect our reputation against attacks from the outside, we give the impression that it is not blameless before God, and that it needs therefore to be continually bolstered up (MS 24, 1887).

Avoid Intoxication Through Wrath.—One class have come up without self-control; they have not bridled the temper or the tongue; and some of these claim to be Christ's followers, but they are not. Jesus has set them no such example. When they have the meekness and lowliness of the Saviour, they will not act out the promptings of the

natural heart, for this is of Satan. Some are nervous, and if they begin to lose self-control in word or spirit under provocation, they are as much intoxicated with wrath as the inebriate is with liquor. They are unreasonable, and not easily persuaded or convinced. They are not sane; Satan for the time has full control. Every one of these exhibitions of wrath weakens the nervous system and the moral powers, and makes it difficult to restrain anger or another provocation. With this class there is only one remedy,—positive self-control under all circumstances. The effort to get into a favorable place, where self will not be annoyed, may succeed for a time; but Satan knows where to find these poor souls, and will assail them in their weak points again and again. They will be continually troubled so long as they think so much of self. They carry the heaviest load a mortal can lift, that is self, unsanctified and unsubdued. But there is hope for them. Let this life, so stormy with conflicts and worries, be brought into connection with Christ, and then self will no longer clamor for the supremacy (The Youth's Instructor, November 10, 1886).

Chapter 17

9. See EGW on Ch. 26:20-22.

Chapter 18

12. See EGW on Judges 6:15.

21. Devil May Use Christians' Tongues to Ruin.—Do not allow the devil to use your tongue and your voice to ruin those weak in the faith; for at the day of final reckoning God will call upon you to give an account of your work (MS 39, 1896).

Chapter 20

1. See EGW on Ch. 23:29-35.

Chapter 21

2. Sometimes on Lucifer's Ground.—When a man takes the position that when he has once made

a decision he must stand by it, and never to alter his decision, he is on the same ground as was Lucifer when he rebelled against God. He held his plans regarding the government of heaven as an exalted, unchangeable theory.

No man should think that human opinions are to be immortalized. Any man taking the stand that he will never change his views places himself on dangerous ground. Those who hold the position that their views are unchangeable can not be helped; for they place themselves where they are not willing to receive counsel and admonition from their brethren (Letter 12, 1911).

Chapter 22

29. God Demands Vigorous and Earnest Efforts.—Put your highest powers into your effort. Call to your aid the most powerful motives. You are learning. Endeavor to go to the bottom of everything you set your hand to. Never aim lower than to become competent in the matters which occupy you. Do not allow yourself to fall into the

habit of being superficial and neglectful in your duties and studies; for your habits will strengthen and you will become incapable of anything better. The mind naturally learns to be satisfied with that which requires little care and effort, and to be content with something cheap and inferior. There are, young men and young women, depths of knowledge which you have never fathomed, and you are satisfied and proud of your superficial attainments. If you knew much more than you do now, you would be convinced that you know very little.

God demands of you vigorous and earnest intellectual efforts, and with every determined effort, your powers will strengthen. Your work will then always be agreeable, because you will know that you are progressing. You can either become accustomed to slow, uncertain, irresolute movements, so much so that the work of your life will not be one-half what it could be; or, your eyes fixed upon God, and your soul strengthened by prayer, you can overcome a disgraceful slowness and a dislike for work, and train your mind to think

rapidly and to put forth strong efforts at the proper time. If your highest motive is to labor for wages, you will never, in any position, be qualified to carry high responsibilities, never be fit to teach (MS 24, 1887).

Chapter 23

26. Youth's Most Precious Offering.—Then, children, come to Jesus. Give to God the most precious offering that it is possible for you to make; give Him your heart. He speaks to you saying, “My son, my daughter, give me thine heart. Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow; for I will cleanse you with my own blood. I will make you members of my family—children of the heavenly King. Take my forgiveness, my peace which I freely give you. I will clothe you with my own righteousness,—the wedding garment,—and make you fit for the marriage supper of the Lamb. When clothed in my righteousness, through prayer, through watchfulness, through diligent study of my Word, you will be able to reach a high standard. You will

understand the truth, and your character will be molded by a divine influence; for this is the will of God, even your sanctification” (The Youth’s Instructor, June 30, 1892).

29-35 (Ch. 20:1). Satan’s Control Through Strong Drink.—[Proverbs 23:29-35 quoted.] Is not this description true to life? Does it not represent to us the experience of the poor, besotted drunkard, who is plunged in degradation and ruin because he has put the bottle to his lips, and who says, “I will seek it yet again”? The curse has come upon such a soul through indulgence in evil, and Satan has control of his being....

The man who has formed the habit of drinking intoxicating liquor, is in a desperate situation. He cannot be reasoned with, or persuaded to deny himself the indulgence. His stomach and brain are diseased, his will power is weakened, and his appetite uncontrollable. The prince of the powers of darkness holds him in bondage that he has no power to break. For the aid of such victims the liquor traffic should be stopped. Do not the rulers

of this land see that awful results are the fruit of this traffic? Daily the papers are filled with accounts that would move a heart of stone; and if the senses of our rulers were not perverted, they would see the necessity of doing away with this death-dealing traffic. May the Lord move upon the hearts of those in authority, until they shall take measures that will prohibit the drink traffic (The Review and Herald, May 1, 1894).

Chapter 24

6. See EGW on 1 Chronicles 27:32-34.

Chapter 26

20-22. (Chs. 16:28; 17:9; Jeremiah 20:10). Floating Rumors Destroy Unity.—Brethren sometimes associate together for years, and they think they can trust those they know so well just as they would trust members of their own family. There is a freedom and confidence in this association which could not exist between those not of the same faith. This is very pleasant while

mutual faith and brotherly love last; but let the “accuser of the brethren” gain admittance to the heart of one of these men, controlling the mind and the imagination, and jealousies are created, suspicion and envy are harbored; and he who supposed himself secure in the love and friendship of his brother, finds himself mistrusted and his motives misjudged. The false brother forgets his own human frailties, forgets his obligation to think and speak no evil lest he dishonor God and wound Christ in the person of His saints, and every defect that can be thought of or imagined is commented upon unmercifully, and the character of a brother is represented as dark and questionable.

There is a betrayal of sacred trust. The things spoken in brotherly confidence are repeated and misrepresented; and every word, every action, however innocent and well-meaning, is scrutinized by the cold, jealous criticism of those who were thought too noble, too honorable to take the least advantage of friendly association or brotherly trust. Hearts are closed to mercy, judgment, and the love of God; and the cold, sneering, contemptuous spirit

which Satan manifests toward his victim is revealed.

The Saviour of the world was treated thus, and we are exposed to the influence of the same malicious spirit. The time has come when it is not safe to put confidence in a friend or a brother.

As in the days of Christ spies were on His track, so they are on ours now. If Satan can employ professed believers to act as accusers of the brethren, he is greatly pleased; for those who do this are just as truly serving him as was Judas when he betrayed Christ, although they may be doing it ignorantly. Satan is no less active now than in Christ's day, and those who lend themselves to do his work will represent his spirit.

Floating rumors are frequently the destroyers of unity among brethren. There are some who watch with open mind and ears to catch flying scandal. They gather up little incidents which may be trifling in themselves, but which are repeated and exaggerated until a man is made an offender for a

word. Their motto seems to be, “Report, and we will report it.” These tale bearers are doing the devil’s work with surprising fidelity, little knowing how offensive their course is to God. If they would spend half the energy and zeal that is given to this unholy work in examining their own hearts, they would find so much to do to cleanse their souls from impurity that they would have no time or disposition to criticize their brethren, and they would not fall under the power of this temptation. The door of the mind should be closed against “they say” or “I have heard.” Why should we not, instead of allowing jealousy or evil-surmising to come into our hearts, go to our brethren, and, after frankly but kindly setting before them the things we have heard detrimental to their character and influence, pray with and for them? While we cannot love and fellowship those who are the bitter enemies of Christ, we should cultivate that spirit of meekness and love that characterized our Master,—a love that thinketh no evil and is not easily provoked (The Review and Herald, June 3, 1884).

Chapter 27

4. (Ch. 14:30; Song of Solomon 8:6). Envy Is a Hellish Shadow.—Envy, jealousy, and evil surmising is a hellish shadow by which Satan seeks to intercept your views of the character of Christ, so that by beholding the evil you may be fully changed into its likeness (Letter 9, 1892).

9. The Value of a Friend.—Things will go wrong with every one; sadness and discouragement press every soul; then a personal presence, a friend who will comfort and impart strength, will turn back the darts of the enemy that are aimed to destroy. Christian friends are not half as plentiful as they should be. In hours of temptation, in a crisis, what a value is a true friend! Satan at such times sends along his agents to cause the trembling limbs to stumble; but the true friends who will counsel, who will impart magnetic hopefulness, the calming faith that uplifts the soul,—oh, such help is worth more than precious pearls (Letter 7, 1883)!

Chapter 29

1. Rejecting Reproof Leads to Loss of Soul.—Satan will move upon minds that have been indulged, upon men who have always had their own way, and anything presented to them in counsel or reproof to change their objectionable traits of character, is considered fault-finding, binding them, restraining them, that they cannot have liberty to act themselves. The Lord in great mercy has sent messages of warning to them, but they would not listen to reproof. Like the enemy who rebelled in heaven, they did not like to hear; they do not correct the wrong they have done, but become accusers, declaring themselves misused and unappreciated.

Now is the time of trial, of test, of proving. Those who like Saul, will persist in having their own way, will suffer as he did, loss of honor, and finally the loss of the soul (Letter 13, 1892).

Chapter 31

26. The Law of Kindness on Your Lips.—

The Lord will help every one of us where we need help the most in the grand work of overcoming and conquering self. Let the law of kindness be upon your lips and the oil of grace in your heart. This will produce wonderful results. You will be tender, sympathetic, courteous. You need all these graces. The Holy Spirit must be received and brought into your character; then it will be as holy fire, giving forth incense which will rise up to God, not from lips that condemn, but as a healer of the souls of men. Your countenance will express the image of the divine. No sharp, critical, blunt, or severe words should be spoken. This is common fire, and must be left out of all our councils and intercourse with our brethren. God requires every soul in His service to kindle their censers from the coals of sacred fire. The common, severe, harsh words that come from your lips so readily must be withheld, and the Spirit of God speak through the human agent. By beholding the character of Christ you will become changed into His likeness. The grace

of Christ alone can change your heart and then you will reflect the image of the Lord Jesus. God calls upon us to be like Him,—pure, holy, and undefiled. We are to bear the divine image (Letter 84, 1899).

(Colossians 3:12, 13.) Live the Law of Kindness.—The Lord Jesus is our only helper. Through His grace we shall learn to cultivate love, to educate ourselves to speak kindly and tenderly. Through His grace our cold, harsh manners will be transformed. The law of kindness will be upon our lips, and those who are under the precious influences of the Holy Spirit, will not feel that it is an evidence of weakness to weep with those who weep, to rejoice with them that rejoice. We are to cultivate heavenly excellences of character. We are to learn what it means to have good-will toward all men, a sincere desire to be as sunshine and not as shadow in the lives of others.

My brethren, let your hearts become broken and contrite. Let expressions of sympathy and love, which will not blister the tongue, flow from your lips. Let others feel that warmth which love can

create in the heart, and educate the professed disciples of Christ to correct the evils that have so long existed,—selfishness, coldness, and hardheartedness. All these traits reveal the fact that Christ is not abiding in the soul [Colossians 3:12, 13 quoted] (RH Jan. 2, 1894).

27. (Isaiah 65:21-23). No Idle Believers.—The Bible does not acknowledge a believer who is idle, however high his profession may be. There will be employment in heaven. The redeemed state is not one of idle repose. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God, but it is a rest found in loving service (Letter 203, 1905).

Chapter 21

Ecclesiastes

Solomon's Mournful Autobiography.—The book of Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon in his old age, after he had fully proved that all the pleasures earth is able to give are empty and unsatisfying. He there shows how impossible it is for the vanities of the world to meet the longings of the soul. His conclusion is that it is wisdom to enjoy with gratitude the good gifts of God, and to do right; for all our works will be brought into judgment.

Solomon's autobiography is a mournful one. He gives us the history of his search for happiness. He engaged in intellectual pursuits; he gratified his love for pleasure; he carried out his schemes of commercial enterprise. He was surrounded by the fascinating splendor of court life. All that the carnal heart could desire was at his command; yet he sums up his experience in this sad record: [Ecclesiastes 1:14-2:11 quoted] (HR June, 1878).

Chapter 1

13, 14. Learning Without God Is Foolishness.—Solomon had great learning; but his wisdom was foolishness; for he did not know how to stand in moral independence, free from sin, in the strength of a character molded after the divine similitude. Solomon has told us the result of his research, his painstaking efforts, his persevering inquiry. He pronounces his wisdom altogether vanity (The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906).

13-18. See EGW on Genesis 3:6, Vol. 1, p. 1083.

14. (Ch. 10:16-19; 1 Kings 10:18-23; 2 Chronicles 9:17-22). “All Is Vanity.”—Solomon sat upon a throne of ivory, the steps of which were of solid gold, flanked by six golden lions. His eyes rested upon highly cultivated and beautiful gardens just before him. Those grounds were visions of loveliness, arranged to resemble, as far as possible, the garden of Eden. Choice trees and shrubs, and

flowers of every variety, had been brought from foreign lands to beautify them. Birds of every variety of brilliant plumage flitted from tree to tree, making the air vocal with sweet songs. Youthful attendants, gorgeously dressed and decorated, waited to obey his slightest wish. Scenes of revelry, music, sports, and games were arranged for his diversion at an extravagant expenditure of money.

But all this did not bring happiness to the king. He sat upon his magnificent throne, his frowning countenance dark with despair. Dissipation had left its impress upon his once fair and intellectual face. He was sadly changed from the youthful Solomon. His brow was furrowed with care and unhappiness, and he bore in every feature the unmistakable marks of sensual indulgence. His lips were prepared to break forth into reproaches at the slightest deviation from his wishes.

His shattered nerves and wasted frame showed the result of violating Nature's laws. He confessed to a wasted life, an unsuccessful chase after

happiness. His is the mournful wail, “All is vanity and vexation of spirit.” [Ecclesiastes 10:16-19 quoted.]

It was customary for the Hebrews to eat but twice a day, their heartiest meal coming not far from the middle of the day. But the luxurious habits of the heathen had been engrafted into the nation, and the king and his princes were accustomed to extend their festivities far into the night. On the other hand, if the earlier part of the day was devoted to feasting and wine-drinking, the officers and rulers of the kingdom were totally unfitted for their grave duties.

Solomon was conscious of the evil growing out of the indulgence of perverted appetite, yet seemed powerless to work the required reformation. He was aware that physical strength, calm nerves, and sound morals can only be secured through temperance. He knew that gluttony leads to drunkenness, and that intemperance in any degree disqualifies a man for any office of trust. Gluttonous feasts, and food taken into the stomach

at untimely seasons, leave an influence upon every fiber of the system; and the mind also is seriously affected by what we eat and drink.

The life of Solomon teaches a lesson of warning not only to the youth, but also to those of mature age. We are apt to look upon men of experience as safe from the allurements of sinful pleasure. But still we often see those whose early life has been exemplary being led away by the fascinations of sin, and sacrificing their God-given manhood for self-gratification. For a time they vacillate between the promptings of principle, and their inclination to pursue a forbidden course; but the current of evil finally proves too strong for their good resolutions, as in the case of the once wise and righteous king, Solomon....

Dear reader, as you stand in imagination on the slopes of Moriah, and look across the Kidron valley upon those ruined pagan shrines, take the lesson of the repentant king home to your heart, and be wise. Make God your trust. Turn your face resolutely against temptation. Vice is a costly

indulgence. Its effects are fearful upon the constitutions of those whom it does not speedily destroy. A dizzy head, loss of strength, loss of memory, derangements of the brain, heart, and lungs, follow quickly upon such transgression of the rules of health and morality (The Review and Herald, June, 1878).

Chapter 8

11. God's Long-suffering Leads Some to Carelessness.—In His dealings with the human race, God bears long with the impenitent. He uses His appointed agencies to call men to allegiance, and offers them His full pardon if they will repent. But because God is long-suffering, men presume on His mercy. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” The patience and long-suffering of God, which should soften and subdue the soul, has an altogether different influence upon the careless and sinful. It leads them to cast off restraint, and strengthens them in resistance. They think that the

God who has borne so much from them will not heed their perversity. If we lived in a dispensation of immediate retribution, offenses against God would not occur so often. But though delayed, the punishment is none the less certain. There are limits even to the forbearance of God. The boundary of His long-suffering may be reached, and then He will surely punish. And when He does take up the case of the presumptuous sinner, He will not cease till He has made a full end.

Very few realize the sinfulness of sin; they flatter themselves that God is too good to punish the offender. But the cases of Miriam, Aaron, David, and many others show that it is not a safe thing to sin against God in deed, in word, or even in thought. God is a being of infinite love and compassion, but He also declares Himself to be a “consuming fire, even a jealous God” (The Review and Herald, August 14, 1900).

(Matthew 26:36-46; Revelation 15:3.) Every Offense Set Down for Reckoning.—The death of Christ was to be the convincing, everlasting

argument that the law of God is as unchangeable as His throne. The agonies of the Garden of Gethsemane, the insult, the mockery, and abuse heaped upon God's dear Son, the horrors and ignominy of the crucifixion, furnish sufficient and thrilling demonstration that God's justice, when it punishes, does the work thoroughly. The fact that His own Son, the Surety for man, was not spared, is an argument that will stand to all eternity before saint and sinner, before the universe of God, to testify that He will not excuse the transgressor of His law. Every offense against God's law, however minute, is set down in the reckoning, and when the sword of justice is taken in hand, it will do the work for impenitent transgressors that was done to the divine Sufferer. Justice will strike; for God's hatred of sin is intense and overwhelming (MS 58, 1897).

11, 12. See EGW on Genesis 15:16.

Chapter 10

16-19. See EGW on Ecclesiastes 1:14.

Chapter 22

Song of Solomon

No Commentary.

Chapter 23

Isaiah

Chapter 1

1. (Hebrews 11:37). Isaiah Was Sawn Asunder.—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 Signs of the Times, February 17, 1898).

2, 3. A People Professedly Serving God.— [Isaiah 1:2, 3 quoted.] The course pursued by Israel toward God called forth these words. It was a proof of the people's perversity that they manifested less

gratitude, less attachment, less acknowledgment of ownership, toward God than the animals of the field manifest toward their masters....

The first chapter of Isaiah is a description of a people professedly serving God, but walking in forbidden paths (MS 29, 1911).

4. Separation Led to Presumptuous, Foolhardy Madness.—The professed people of God had separated from God, and had lost their wisdom and perverted their understanding. They could not see afar off; for they had forgotten that they had been purged from their old sins. They moved restlessly and uncertainly under darkness, seeking to obliterate from their minds the memory of the freedom, assurance, and happiness of their former estate. They plunged into all kinds of presumptuous, foolhardy madness, placed themselves in opposition to the providences of God, and deepened the guilt that was already upon them. They listened to the charges of Satan against the divine character, and represented God as devoid of mercy and forgiveness. The prophet

writes of them, saying:

“Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward” (The Review and Herald, August 6, 1895).

19. Obedience Leads to Perfection.—We cannot overestimate the value of simple faith and unquestioning obedience. It is by following in the path of obedience in simple faith that the character obtains perfection (Lt 119, 1895).

Chapter 3

18-23 (1 Peter 3:1-5). Beauty of Soul a Standing Rebuke.—In the third chapter of Isaiah’s prophecy mention is made of the prevailing pride of the “daughters of Zion,” with “their tinkling ornaments, ... the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, ... and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose

jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crimping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails.”

Verses 18-23. How different this picture from that portrayed by the apostle Peter of the God-fearing woman, who, estimating at its real value the “outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel,” chooses rather to cultivate beauty of soul, “even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” It was “after this manner in the old time” that “the holy women ... who trusted in God, adorned themselves”; and their “chaste conversation coupled with fear” (1 Peter 3:1-5), as revealed in daily life, was ever a standing rebuke to their sisters who followed after folly (The Review and Herald, March 4, 1915).

Chapter 5

18-23. (ch. 8:12). Confidence in Man Blocks God’s Messages.—[Isaiah 5:18 quoted.] Men may

seek to strengthen their forces by confederating together, making, as they suppose, strong societies to carry out the plans they have formed. They may lift up their souls in pride and self-sufficiency; but the One mighty in counsel does not plan with them. Their unbelief in His purposes and work, and their confidence in man, will not permit them to receive the messages He sends (The Review and Herald, December 22, 1896).

19-23. (ch. 50:11). Men Call Evil Good, and Good Evil.—[Isaiah 5:19-23 quoted.] The class here represented, in order to exalt their own opinions, employ a reasoning which is not authorized by the Word of God. They walk in the sparks of their own kindling. By their specious reasoning, they confuse the distinction that God desires to have drawn between good and evil. The sacred is brought down on a level with common things. Avarice and selfishness are called by false names; they are called prudence. Their rising up in independence and rebellion, their revenge and stubbornness, in their eyes are proofs of dignity, evidences of a noble mind. They act as though

ignorance of divine things were not dangerous and even fatal to the soul; and they prefer their own reasoning to divine revelation, their own plans and human wisdom to the admonitions and commands of God. The piety and conscientiousness of others are called fanaticism, and those who practise truth and holiness are watched and criticized. They deride those who teach and believe the mystery of godliness, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” The principles underlying these things are not discerned by them; and they go on in wrong-doing, leaving the bars open for Satan to find ready access to the soul (The Review and Herald, December 22, 1896).

20. Watch to Praise, Not Condemn.—The lips that have uttered perverse things of God’s delegated servants and have scorned the message they have borne, have put darkness for light, and light for darkness. Instead of watching, as did the Pharisees, for something to condemn in the message or the messengers, something to scoff at and deride, had they opened their hearts to the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness, they

would have been offering grateful praise rather than watching for something which they could misinterpret or twist so as to find fault (Letter 31a, 1894).

Capable but Unconverted Men Do Great Harm.—[Isaiah 5:20 quoted.] Men may possess capabilities given them in trust of God, but if they are not humble men, daily converted men, as vessels of honor, they will do the greater harm because of their capabilities. If they are not learners of Christ Jesus, if they do not pray and keep their natural hereditary and cultivated tendencies under control, traits of character that God abhors will pervert the judgment of those who associate with them (Letter 31a, 1894).

Chapter 6

1-7 (Revelation 11:19). Isaiah's Experience Represents Last-Day Church.—[Isaiah 6:1-4 quoted.] As the prophet Isaiah beheld the glory of the Lord, he was amazed, and, overwhelmed with a sense of his own weakness and unworthiness, he

cried, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.”

Isaiah had denounced the sin of others; but now he sees himself exposed to the same condemnation he had pronounced upon them. He had been satisfied with a cold, lifeless ceremony in his worship of God. He had not known this until the vision was given him of the Lord. How little now appeared his wisdom and talents as he looked upon the sacredness and majesty of the sanctuary. How unworthy he was! how unfitted for sacred service! His view of himself might be expressed in the language of the apostle Paul, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

But relief was sent to Isaiah in his distress. [Isaiah 6:6, 7 quoted.] ...

The vision given to Isaiah represents the condition of God’s people in the last days. They

are privileged to see by faith the work that is going forward in the heavenly sanctuary. “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.” As they look by faith into the holy of holies, and see the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, they perceive that they are a people of unclean lips,—a people whose lips have often spoken vanity, and whose talents have not been sanctified and employed to the glory of God. Well may they despair as they contrast their own weakness and unworthiness with the purity and loveliness of the glorious character of Christ. But if they, like Isaiah, will receive the impression the Lord designs shall be made upon the heart, if they will humble their souls before God, there is hope for them. The bow of promise is above the throne, and the work done for Isaiah will be performed in them. God will respond to the petitions coming from the contrite heart (The Review and Herald, December 22, 1896).

Isaiah had a wonderful view of God’s glory. He saw the manifestation of God’s power, and after

beholding His majesty, a message came to him to go and do a certain work. He felt wholly unworthy for the work. What made him esteem himself unworthy? Did he think himself unworthy before he had a view of God's glory?—No; he imagined himself in a righteous state before God; but when the glory of the Lord of hosts was revealed to him, when he beheld the inexpressible majesty of God, he said, "I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a living coal in his hands, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." This is the work that as individuals we need to have done for us. We want the living coal from off the altar placed upon our lips. We want to hear the word spoken, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (The Review and Herald, June 4, 1889).

1-8. Shekinah Glory Revealed to Isaiah.—

Christ Himself was the Lord of the temple. When He should leave it, its glory would depart—that glory once visible in the holy of holies over the mercy seat, where the high priest entered only once a year, on the great day of atonement, with the blood of the slain victim (typical of the blood of the Son of God shed for the sins of the world), and sprinkled it upon the altar. This was the Shekinah, the visible pavilion of Jehovah.

It was this glory that was revealed to Isaiah, when he says, “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple” [Isaiah 6:1-8 quoted] (MS 71, 1897).

Vision of Glory Leads to Genuine Conviction of Unworthiness.—In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah was permitted in vision to look into the holy place, and into the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary. The curtains of the innermost sanctuary were drawn aside, and a throne high and lifted up, towering as it were to the very heavens, was revealed to his gaze. An

indescribable glory emanated from a personage on the throne, and His train filled the temple, as His glory will finally fill the earth. Cherubim were on either side of the mercy-seat, as guards round the great king, and they glowed with the glory that enshrouded them from the presence of God. As their songs of praise resounded in deep, earnest notes of adoration, the pillars of the gate trembled, as if shaken by an earthquake. These holy beings sang forth the praise and glory of God with lips unpolluted with sin. The contrast between the feeble praise which he had been accustomed to bestow upon the Creator and the fervid praises of the seraphim, astonished and humiliated the prophet. He had for the time being the sublime privilege of appreciating the spotless purity of Jehovah's exalted character.

While he listened to the song of the angels, as they cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory," the glory, the infinite power, and the unsurpassed majesty of the Lord passed before his vision, and was impressed upon his soul. In the light of this matchless

radiance that made manifest all he could bear in the revelation of the divine character, his own inward defilement stood out before him with startling clearness. His very words seemed vile to him.

Thus when the servant of God is permitted to behold the glory of the God of heaven, as He is unveiled to humanity, and realizes to a slight degree the purity of the Holy One of Israel, he will make startling confessions of the pollution of his soul, rather than proud boasts of his holiness. In deep humiliation Isaiah exclaimed, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: ... for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts.” This is not that voluntary humility and servile self-reproach that so many seem to consider it a virtue to display. This vague mockery of humility is prompted by hearts full of pride and self-esteem. There are many who demerit themselves in words, who would be disappointed if this course did not call forth expressions of praise and appreciation from others. But the conviction of the prophet was genuine. As humanity, with its weakness and deformity, was brought out in

contrast with the perfection of divine holiness and light and glory, he felt altogether inefficient and unworthy. How could he go and speak to the people the holy requirements of Jehovah, who was high and lifted up, and whose train filled the temple? While Isaiah was trembling and conscience-smitten, because of his impurity in the presence of this unsurpassed glory, he said, “Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me” (The Review and Herald, October 16, 1888).

2. Angels Fully Satisfied to Glorify God.—

The seraphim before the throne are so filled with reverential awe in beholding the glory of God that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with self-complacency, or in admiration of themselves or one another. Their praise and glory

are for the Lord of Hosts, who is high and lifted up, and the glory of whose train fills the temple. As they see the future, when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, the triumphant song of praise is echoed from one to another in melodious chant, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts.” They are fully satisfied to glorify God; and in His presence, beneath His smile of approbation, they wish for nothing more. In bearing His image, in doing His service and worshiping Him, their highest ambition is fully reached (The Review and Herald, December 22, 1896).

5-7 (Matthew 12:34-36). Consider Words in Light of Heaven.—Let every soul who claims to be a son or a daughter of God examine himself in the light of heaven; let him consider the polluted lips that make him “undone.” They are the medium of communication. [Matthew 12:34, 35 quoted.] Then let them not be used in bringing from the treasure of the heart words that will dishonor God and discourage those around you, but use them for the praise and glory of God, who has formed them for this purpose. When the cleansing coal is applied

from the glowing altar, the conscience will be purged from dead works to serve the living God; and when the love of Jesus is the theme of contemplation, the words coming from human lips will be full of praise and thanksgiving to God and to the Lamb.

How many words are spoken in lightness and foolishness, in jesting and joking! This would not be so did the followers of Christ realize the truth of the words, “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

Harsh and unkind words, words of censure and criticism of God’s work and His messengers, are indulged in by those who profess to be His children. When these careless souls discern the greatness of God’s character, they will not mingle their spirit and attributes with His service. When our eyes look by faith into the sanctuary, and take in the reality, the importance and holiness, of the work there being done, everything of a selfish

nature will be abhorred by us. Sin will appear as it is,—the transgression of God’s holy law. The atonement will be better understood; and by living, active faith, we shall see that whatever of virtue humanity possesses, it exists only in Jesus Christ, the world’s Redeemer (The Review and Herald, December 22, 1896).

5-8. When One Is Ready to Work With God, He Carries Message.—Isaiah had a message from the God of heaven to give to the backsliding people of Israel, and he gave them this message. He knew what elements he had to deal with; he knew the stubbornness and perversity of the heart, and how hard it would be to make any impression upon them. As he stood in the portico of the temple, the Lord revealed Himself to him. The veil of the temple was withdrawn, the door lifted, and he had a view of the holy of holies within the veil. He saw the God of Israel before the throne high and lifted up, and the train of His glory filled the temple. As Isaiah senses his own sinfulness, he cries out, “I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.” And there was seen the

hand that took the live coal from off the altar, and touched his lips, and bade him be clean. Then he was ready to go with the message, and he said, "Send me"; for he knew that the Spirit of God would be with the message.

To those who are engaged in the work of God, in the conversion of souls, it would seem as though it was impossible to reach the obdurate heart. This is how Isaiah felt, but when he saw that there was a God above the cherubim, and that they were ready to work with God, he was ready to carry the message (The Review and Herald, May 3, 1887).

6. Live Coal Symbolizes Purity and Power.—The live coal is symbolical of purification. If it touches the lips, no impure word will fall from them. The live coal also symbolizes the potency of the efforts of the servants of the Lord. God hates all coldness, all commonness, all cheap efforts. Those who labor acceptably in His cause, must be men who pray fervently, and whose works are wrought in God; and they will never have cause to be ashamed of their record. They will

have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and their reward will be given them,—even eternal life (The Review and Herald, October 16, 1888).

Chapter 8

12. (see EGW comments on ch. 5:18-23). Satan Seeks to Widen Distance Between Heaven and Earth.—The satanic agencies are constantly at work, sowing and watering the seeds of rebellion against the law of God, and Satan is gathering souls under his black banner of revolt. He forms a confederacy with human beings to contend against purity and holiness. He has worked diligently, perseveringly, increasing the number who will confederate with him. By his representations he seeks to widen the distance between heaven and earth, and he grows into the conviction that he can wear out the patience of God, extinguish His love for man, and bring condemnation upon the whole human family (The Review and Herald, October 21, 1902).

No Confederacy With Those Opposing the Truth.—Let the watchmen on the walls of Zion not join with those who are making of none effect the truth as it is in Christ. Let them not join the confederacy of infidelity, popery, and Protestantism in exalting tradition above Scripture, reason above revelation, and human talent above the divine influence and the vital power of godliness (The Review and Herald, March 24, 1896).

The Divine Touch Needed.—The gospel is now resolutely opposed on every hand. Never was the confederacy of evil greater than at the present time. The spirits of darkness are combining with human agencies to set them firmly against the commandments of God. Traditions and falsehoods are exalted above the Scriptures; reason and science above revelation; human talent above the teachings of the Spirit; forms and ceremonies above the vital power of godliness. We need the divine touch (The Review and Herald, March 19, 1895).

Fallen Men and Fallen Angels in Same Confederacy.—Through apostasy, fallen men and fallen angels are in the same confederacy, leagued to work against good. They are united in a desperate companionship. Through his evil angels, Satan contrives to form an alliance with professedly pious men, and thus he leavens the church of God. He knows that if he can induce men, as he induced the angels, to join in rebellion, under the guise of servants of God, he will have in them his most successful allies in his enterprise against heaven. Under the name of godliness, he can inspire them with his own accusing spirit, and lead them to charge God's servants with evil and guile. They are his trained detectives; their work is to create feuds, to make charges which create discord and bitterness among brethren, to set tongues in active service for Satan, to sow seeds of dissension by watching for evil, and by speaking of that which will create discord.

I beseech all who engage in the work of murmuring and complaining because something has been said or done that does not suit them, and

that does not, as they think, give them due consideration, to remember that they are carrying on the very work begun in heaven by Satan. They are following in his track, sowing unbelief, discord, and disloyalty; for no one can entertain feelings of disaffection, and keep them to himself. He must tell others that he is not treated as he should be. Thus they are led to murmur and complain. This is the root of bitterness springing up, whereby many are defiled.

Thus Satan works today through his evil angels. He confederates with men who claim to be in the faith; and those who are trying to carry forward the work of God with fidelity, having no man's person in admiration, working without hypocrisy and partiality, will have just as severe trials brought against them as Satan can bring through those who claim to love God. Proportionate to the light and knowledge these opposers have is Satan's success. The root of bitterness strikes deep, and is communicated to others. Thus many are defiled. Their statements are confused and untruthful, their principles are

unscrupulous, and Satan finds in them the very helpers he needs (The Review and Herald, September 14, 1897).

What Is a Confederacy?—The question has been asked, What do you mean by a confederacy? Who have formed confederacies? You know what a confederacy is,—a union of men in a work that does not bear the stamp of pure, straightforward, unswerving integrity (MS 29, 1911).

(2 Corinthians 6:17.) The wicked are being bound up in bundles, bound up in trusts, in unions, in confederacies. Let us have nothing to do with these organizations. God is our Ruler, our Governor, and He calls us to come out from the world and be separate. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.” If we refuse to do this, if we continue to link up with the world, and to look at every matter from a worldly standpoint, we shall become like the world. When worldly policy and worldly ideas govern our transactions, we cannot stand on the high and holy platform of eternal truth

(MS 71, 1903).

Good and Evil Angels in Human Form on Field of Action.—Satanic agencies in human form will take part in this last great conflict to oppose the building up of the kingdom of God. And heavenly angels in human guise will be on the field of action. Men and women have confederated to oppose the Lord God of heaven, and the church is only half awake to the situation. There needs to be much more of prayer, much more of earnest effort among professed believers.

The two opposing parties will continue to exist till the closing up of the last great chapter in this world's history. Satanic agencies are in every city. We cannot afford to be off our guard for one moment (Letter 42, 1909).

Chapter 14

12-14 (see EGW on Ezekiel 28:13-15). Satan's Rebellion of Long Standing.—The records of some are similar to that of the exalted

angel who was given a position next to Jesus Christ in the heavenly courts. Lucifer was enshrouded with glory as the covering cherub. Yet this angel whom God had created, and entrusted with power, became desirous of being as God. He gained the sympathy of some of his associates by suggesting thoughts of criticism regarding the government of God. This evil seed was scattered in a most seducing manner; and after it had sprung up and taken root in the minds of many, he gathered the ideas that he himself had first implanted in the minds of others, and brought them before the highest order of angels as the thoughts of other minds against the government of God. Thus, by ingenious methods of his own devising, Lucifer introduced rebellion in heaven.

God desired that a change take place, and that the work of Satan be brought out in its genuine aspect. But the exalted angel standing next to Christ was opposed to the Son of God. The underworking was so subtle that it could not be made to appear before the heavenly host as the thing that it really was; and so there was war in

heaven, and Satan was expelled with all who would not stand on the side of loyalty to God's government. The Lord God stood forth as Supreme Ruler.

This condition of things had existed a long period of time before Satan was unmasked and the evil ones expelled (Letter 162, 1906).

Chapter 25

1-4. Hang His Mercies in Memory's Hall.— [Isaiah 25:1-4 quoted]. Wherein do we show our gratitude to God? His benefits to us are inexpressibly great. Do we frame His mercies and blessings, and hang them in memory's hall, where we can see them and be led to offer thanksgiving to God for His goodness and love? There are thousands upon thousands who have no eyes to see, no ears to hear, no hearts to appreciate God's work in their behalf. They pass by the goodness of the Lord as theirs by right (MS 145, 1899).

Chapter 26

19. Sleeping Saints Guarded as Precious Jewels.—[Isaiah 26:19 quoted]. The Life-giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour, when the last trump shall sound and the vast army shall come forth to eternal victory, every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name. By the power of the Saviour that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead (Letter 65a, 1894).

20. (ch. 49:16). How to Prepare for Future Protection.—When tempted to sin, let us remember that Jesus is pleading for us in the heavenly sanctuary. When we put away our sins and come to Him in faith, He takes our names on His lips, and presents them to His Father, saying, “I have graven them upon the palms of my hands; I know them by name.” And the command goes forth to the angels to protect them. Then in the day

of fierce trial He will say, “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.” What are the chambers in which they are to hide?—They are the protection of Christ and holy angels. The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth; and they will be tried singly, not in groups. Every one must stand the test for himself (The Review and Herald, November 19, 1908).

21. Earth’s Cup of Iniquity Soon Full.—The point is fast being reached when the iniquity of transgressors will be to the full. God gives nations a certain time of probation. He sends light and evidence, that, if received, will save them, but if refused as the Jews refused light, indignation and punishment will fall upon them. If men refuse to be benefited, and choose darkness rather than light, they will reap the results of their choice. “Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more

cover her slain.” The professed Christian world is advancing, as did the Jewish nation, from one degree of sinfulness to a greater degree, refusing warning after warning, and rejecting a Thus saith the Lord, while crediting the fables of men. The Lord God will soon arise in His wrath, and pour out His judgments upon those who are repeating the sins of the inhabitants of the Noachic world. Those whose hearts are fully set in them to do evil, as were the hearts of the inhabitants of Sodom, will like them be destroyed. The fact that God had long forbearance, patience and mercy, the fact that His judgments have been long delayed, will not make the punishment any less severe when it does come (Undated MS 145).

Chapter 30

15. Usefulness Not Proved by Noise and Bustle.—We need a calm waiting upon God. The need of this is imperious. It is not the noise and bustle we make in the world which proves our usefulness. See how silently God works We do not hear the noise of His steps, and yet He is walking

about us, laboring for our good. Jesus did not seek for notoriety; His life-giving virtue was going out to the needy and the afflicted through silent actions, whose influence extended far into all countries and was felt and expressed in the life of millions of human beings. Those who desire to labor with God have need of His Spirit every day; they need to walk and labor in meekness and humility of spirit, without seeking to accomplish extraordinary things, satisfied to do the work before them and doing it faithfully. Men may not see or appreciate their efforts, but the names of these faithful children of God are written in heaven among His noblest workers, as scattering His seed in view of a glorious harvest. “Ye shall know them by their fruits” (MS 24, 1887).

Take Time to Rest, Think, Appreciate.—The Lord wants human beings to take time to rest, time to think of and appreciate heavenly things. Those who do not value the things of heaven sufficiently to give time to them will at last lose all (Letter 181, 1903).

Chapter 40

1, 2. Some Jews, Firm to Principle, Influenced Idolatrous Companions.—The covenant mercy of God led Him to interpose in behalf of His people Israel after their severe chastisement before their enemies. Israel had chosen to walk in her own wisdom and righteousness in the place of the wisdom and righteousness of God, and as a result her nation was ruined. God permitted them to suffer under a double yoke, that they might be humiliated and repent. But in their dispersion and captivity, the Jews were not left in a hopeless state. Encouragement was given them, for through this humiliation they were to be brought to seek the Lord. God gave to Isaiah a message for this people: [Isaiah 40:1, 2 quoted].

When the Jews were dispersed from Jerusalem, there were among them young men and women who were firm as a rock to principle, men and women who had not pursued a course to make the Lord ashamed to call them His people. These were

sad at heart for the backsliding which they could not prevent. These innocent ones must suffer with the guilty; but God would give them strength sufficient for their day. It was to them that the message of encouragement was sent. The hope of the nation lay in those young men and maidens who would preserve their integrity. And in their captivity these obedient ones had an influence over their idolatrous companions. Had all who were taken captive held firmly to correct principles, they would have imparted light in every place where they were scattered. But they remained impenitent, and still heavier punishment came upon them. Their calamities were sent for their purification. God would bring them to the place where they would be instructed (MS 151, 1899).

9-11. Israel Fully Instructed Regarding Coming Saviour.—Isaiah saw Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem amid the praises and rejoicing of the people. His prophetic words are eloquent in their simplicity. [Isaiah 40:9-11 quoted.] Inspiration is revealed in this record of Christ's work. These closing chapters of the book of Isaiah

should be diligently studied; for they are full of the gospel of Christ. They reveal to us that Israel was fully instructed in regard to the coming Saviour (MS 151, 1899).

10. Our Daily Reward.—Whenever He comes to us, His reward is with Him. He does not leave it in heaven, but gives it to us every day. Daily He gives us confidence and light and blessing. Daily our hearts beat in unison with His great heart of infinite love (MS 116, 1902).

12-14. Man Can Teach God Nothing.— [Isaiah 40:12-14 quoted.] Men sometimes suppose that they discover new scientific truths; but they cannot teach God anything. Our God is a God of infinite knowledge (MS 116, 1902).

12-27. Questions for Meditation.—These questions are directed to us as truly as they were to the Israelites. Can we answer them (MS 116, 1902)?

18-28. Varieties of Gods Men Worship.—The

Lord urges His supremacy. But Satan well knows that the worship of the living God elevates, ennobles, and exalts a nation. He knows that idol-worship does not elevate, but that it degrades man's ideas, by associating with worship that which is base and corrupt. He is at work constantly to draw the mind away from the only true and living God. He leads men to give honor and glory to objects that human hands have made or to soulless creatures that God has created. The Egyptians and other heathen nations had many strange gods—creatures of their own fanciful imagination.

The Jews, after their long captivity, would not make any image. The image on the Roman ensign or banner, they called an abomination, especially when these emblems were placed in a prominent place for them to respect. Such respect they regarded as a violation of the second commandment. When the Roman ensign was set up in the holy place in the temple, they looked upon it as an abomination. ...

To make an image of God dishonors Him. No one should bring into service the power of imagination to worship that which belittles God in the mind and associates Him with common things. Those who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth. They must exercise living faith. Their worship will then be controlled not by the imagination, but by genuine faith.

Let men worship and serve the Lord God, and Him only. Let not selfish pride be lifted up and served as a god. Let not money be made a god. If sensuality is not kept under the control of the higher powers of the mind, base passion will rule the being. Anything that is made the subject of undue thought and admiration, absorbing the mind, is a God chosen before the Lord. God is a searcher of the heart. He distinguishes between true heart-service and idolatry (MS 126, 1901).

26. (Psalm 19:1). Angels Enlighten Minds as We Study God's Works.—God calls men to look upon the heavens. See Him in the wonders of the starry heavens. [Isaiah 40:26 quoted.] We are not

merely to gaze upon the heavens; we are to consider the works of God. He would have us study the works of infinity, and from this study, learn to love and reverence and obey Him. The heavens and the earth with their treasures are to teach the lessons of God's love, care, and power.

Satan will manufacture his diversions that men may not think about God. The world, filled with sport and pleasure-loving, is always thirsting for some new interest. And how little time and thought are given to the Creator of the heavens and the earth. God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them, and admire His handiwork. The heavenly bodies are worthy of contemplation. God has made them for the benefit of man, and as we study His works, angels of God will be by our side to enlighten our minds, and guard them from satanic deception. As you look at the wonderful things God's hand has made, let your proud, foolish heart feel its dependence and inferiority. As you consider these things, you will have a sense of God's condescension (MS 96, 1899).

All Bounties Come to Man Through the Cross.—The sun and the moon were made by Him; there is not a star that beautifies the heavens which He did not make. There is not an article of food upon our tables that He has not provided for our sustenance. The stamp and superscription of God is upon it all. Everything is included in and abundantly supplied to man, through the one unspeakable Gift, the only begotten Son of God. He was nailed to the cross that all these bounties might flow to God's workmanship (Letter 79, 1897).

Chapter 42

1-4. Christ Would Encourage Faith and Hope.—[Isaiah 42:1, 2 quoted.] He [Christ] will not be like the teachers of His day. The ostentation and show and parade of piety revealed in the priests and Pharisees is not His way. [Isaiah 42:3, 4 quoted.] Christ saw the work of the priests and rulers. The very ones who needed help, the afflicted, the distressed, were treated with words of

censure and rebuke, and He forbore to speak any word that would break the feeble reed. The dimly burning wick of faith and hope, He would encourage, and not quench. He would feed His flock like a shepherd; He would gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom (MS 151, 1899).

5-12. Faithfulness Leads Men to Praise God.—[Isaiah 42:5-12 quoted.] This work had been given to Israel, but they had neglected their God-appointed work. Had they been faithful in all parts of the Lord's vineyard, souls would have been converted. The Lord's praise would have been heard from the ends of the earth. From the wilderness and the cities thereof, and from the tops of the mountains, men would have shouted His praise, and told of His glory (MS 151, 1899).

13. We Gain Victory in His Power.—The issue of the battle does not rest upon the strength of mortal man. "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his

enemies.” In the power of Him who rides forth conquering and to conquer, weak, finite man may gain the victory (MS 151, 1899).

21. God’s Army Magnifies the Law.—Those who belong to Christ’s army must work with concerted action. They cannot be faithful soldiers unless they obey orders. United action is essential. An army in which every part acts without reference to the other parts, has no real strength. In order to add new territory to Christ’s kingdom, His soldiers must act in concert.... He calls for a united army, which moves steadily forward, not for a company composed of independent atoms. The strength of His army is to be used for one great purpose. Its efforts are to be concentrated upon one great point—the magnifying of the laws of His kingdom before the world, before angels, and before men (MS 82, 1900).

Chapter 43

6, 7. See EGW on Genesis 2:16, 17, Vol. I, p. 1082.

10. See EGW on Proverbs 1:10, Vol. III, p. 1155.

Chapter 48

10. God's Children Always Being Tested.—God's children are always being tested in the furnace of affliction. If they endure the first trial, it is not necessary for them to pass through a similar ordeal the second time; but if they fail, the trial is brought to them again and again, each time being still more trying and severe. Thus opportunity after opportunity is placed before them of gaining the victory and proving themselves true to God. But if they continue to manifest rebellion, God is compelled at last to remove His Spirit and light from them (MS 69, 1912).

Sorrow and trial must come to all, and is beautiful only as it works to polish, to sanctify, and refine the soul as a fit instrument to do service for the Lord (Letter 69, 1897).

Chapter 49

16. See EGW on ch. 26:20.

Chapter 50

10, 11. (see EGW comments on ch. 5:19-23). Walk in God's Light, Not Own Sparks.—The Lord has presented before me that those who have been in any measure blinded by the enemy, and who have not fully recovered themselves from the snare of Satan, will be in peril because they cannot discern light from heaven, and will be inclined to accept a falsehood. This will affect the whole tenor of their thoughts, their decisions, their propositions, their counsels. The evidences that God has given are no evidence to them, because they have blinded their own eyes by choosing darkness rather than light. Then they will originate something they call light, which the Lord calls sparks of their own kindling, by which they will direct their steps. The Lord declares, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him

trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have at mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.” Jesus said, “For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.” “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

By many, the words which the Lord sent will be rejected, and the words that man may speak will be received as light and truth. Human wisdom will lead away from self-denial, from consecration, and will devise many things that tend to make of no effect God’s messages. We cannot with any safety rely upon men who are not in close connection with God. They accept the opinions of men, but cannot discern the voice of the true Shepherd, and their influence will lead many astray, though

evidence is piled upon evidence before their eyes, testifying to the truth that God's people should have for this time (Letter 1f, 1890).

Chapter 53

1-3. Christ's Grace and Virtue Did Not Appeal to Jews.—[Isaiah 53:1-3 quoted.] These words do not mean that Christ was unattractive in person. In the eyes of the Jews, Christ had no beauty that they should desire Him. They looked for a Messiah who would come with outward display and worldly glory, one who would do great things for the Jewish nation, exalting it above every other nation on the earth. But Christ came with His divinity hidden by the garb of humanity, unobtrusive, humble, poor. They compared this man with the proud boasts they had made, and they could see no beauty in Him. They did not discern the holiness and purity of His character. The grace and virtue revealed in His life did not appeal to them (MS 33, 1911).

2, 3. A Picture That Will Subdue and

Humble.—Prophecy foretold that Christ was to appear as a root out of dry ground. “He hath no form nor comeliness,” wrote Isaiah, “and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” This chapter should be studied. It presents Christ as the Lamb of God. Those who are lifted up with pride, whose souls are filled with vanity, should look upon this picture of their Redeemer, and humble themselves in the dust. The entire chapter should be committed to memory. Its influence will subdue and humble the soul defiled by sin and uplifted by self-exaltation.

Think of Christ’s humiliation. He took upon Himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin. He took our sorrows, bearing our grief and shame. He endured all the temptations wherewith man is beset. He united humanity with divinity: a divine spirit dwelt in a temple of flesh. He united Himself with the temple. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,”

because by so doing He could associate with the sinful, sorrowing sons and daughters of Adam (The Youth's Instructor, December 20, 1900).

5. Christ Can Ransom Every Soul.—It was not alone by dying on the cross that Christ accomplished His work of saving men. The ignominy and suffering and humiliation was a part of His mission. “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” This penalty Christ bore for the sins of the transgressor; He has borne the punishment for every man and for this reason He can ransom every soul, however fallen his condition, if he will accept the law of God as his standard of righteousness (MS 77, 1899).

7, 9. Satan Assailed Christ, Provoked No Retaliation.—Satan assailed Him [Christ] in every point, yet He sinned not in thought, word, or deed. He did no violence, neither was guile found in His mouth. Walking in the midst of sin, He was holy, harmless, undefiled. He was wrongfully accused,

yet He opened not His mouth to justify Himself. How many now, when accused of that of which they are not guilty, feel that there is a time when forbearance ceases to be a virtue, and losing their temper, speak words which grieve the Holy Spirit (MS 42, 1901)?

11. See EGW on Zechariah 9:16.

Chapter 54

Every Specification to Be Fulfilled.—All the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah is applicable to the people of God, and every specification of the prophecy will be fulfilled. The Lord will not forsake His people in their time of trial. He says, “For a small moment have I forsaken you; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.” Are these words of comfort spoken to those who are making void the law of God? No, no, the promise is for those who amid general apostasy, keep the commandments of

God, and lift up the moral standard before the eyes of the world who have forsaken the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant [Isaiah 54:9-13 quoted] (RH Aug. 20, 1895).

Chapter 57

14. Every Hindrance Must Be Removed.— [Isaiah 57:14 quoted.] Is not this the very work that the Lord has given us to do in connection with those who see and feel the importance of the work that must be done in the earth that the truth may triumph gloriously? Every man who undertakes to hedge up the way of the servants of God, binding them about by human restrictions, so that they cannot follow the leadings of the Spirit of God, is hindering the advance of the work of God.

The Lord sends the message, “Take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.” Earnest effort is to be put forth to counterwork the influences that have kept back the message for this time. A solemn work is to be done in a short space of time (Letter 42, 1909).

15-19. Peace Only for the Humble.—[Isaiah 57:15-19 quoted.] These words are addressed to those who, awake to their true situation and susceptible to the influence of the Spirit of God, humble themselves before God with contrite hearts. But to those who will not heed the reproof of God, who are determined and froward, and who set themselves to go on in their own way, God cannot speak peace. He cannot heal them; for they will not acknowledge that they need healing. He declares their true condition, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt” (Letter 106, 1896).

Chapter 58

A Wide and Extensive Vineyard Opened.—The piety and advanced spiritual knowledge and growth of a church is proportionate to the zeal, piety, and missionary intelligence that has been brought into it, and carried out of it to be a blessing to the very ones who need our assistance the most. Again I urge you to consider Isaiah 58, which

opens a wide and extensive vineyard to be worked upon the lines which the Lord has pointed out. When this is done there will be an increase of moral sources and the church will no more remain almost stationary. There will be blessing and power attending their labor. The selfishness that has bound up their souls they have overcome, and now their light is being given to the world in clear, bright rays of a living faith and godly example. The Lord has His promises for all who will do His requirements. [Psalm 41:1-3; 37:3; Proverbs 3:9, 10; 11:24, 25; Proverbs 19:17; Isaiah 58:10, 11 quoted.]

The Word of God is full of precious promises, as the above (MS 14a, 1897).

In our work we shall find a high profession of piety and much outward exactness bound up with great inward wickedness. The people represented in Isaiah 58 complain that the Lord allows their services to go unnoticed. This complaint is the expression of hearts unsubdued by grace, rebellious against the truth. Those who receive the truth

which works by love and purifies the soul are loyal to God, honoring Him by obedience to His law, which is holy, just, and good. The spirit of true fasting and prayer is the spirit which yields mind, heart, and will to God.

Ministers of God have been guilty of the sin of disregarding a “Thus saith the Lord.” They have led the members of their churches to observe rites which have no foundation in the word of God, but are in direct opposition to His law. By perversion and misrepresentation of the Word of God, they have caused the people to commit sin. God will reward them according to their works. Even as did the priests and rulers in the time of Christ, they have caused the people to err. Christ says of them as He said of the Jewish leaders, “In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (MS 28, 1900).

1. The Only Course of Safety.—My brethren, you need to study more carefully the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. This chapter marks out the only course that we can follow with safety....

The prophet receives this word from the Lord—a message startling in its clearness and force:

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Though they are called the people of God, the house of Jacob, though they profess to be linked with God in obedience and fellowship, they are far from Him. Wonderful privileges and promises have been given to them, but they have betrayed their trust. With no words of flattery must the message be given them. “Show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Show them where they are making a mistake. Set their danger before them. Tell them of the sins they are committing, while at the same time they pride themselves on their righteousness. Apparently seeking God, they are forgetting Him, forgetting that He is a God of love and compassion, long suffering and goodness, dealing justly and loving mercy. Worldly policy has come into their business

and religious life. Their hearts are not purified through the truth. God looks on their outward ceremonies of humility as a solemn mockery. He regards all religious sham as an insult to Himself.

The people of whom the prophet spoke made a high profession of piety, and pointed to their fasting and to other external forms as an evidence of their piety. But their deeds were tainted by the leprosy of selfishness and covetousness. They had nothing except that which they had first received from God. He bestowed His goods on them that they might be His helping hand, doing what Christ would do were He in their place, giving a true representation of the principles of heaven (Letter 76, 1902)

1, 2. An Unmuffled Message.—Our work now is to rouse the people. Satan with all his angels has come down with great power, to work with every conceivable deception to counterwork the work of God. The Lord has a message for His people. This message will be borne, whether men will accept or reject it. As in the days of Christ, there will be the

deep plottings of the powers of darkness, but the message must not be muffled with smooth words or fair speeches, crying peace, peace, when there is no peace, to those who are turning away from God. “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” [Isaiah 58:1, 2, quoted.]

The whole chapter is applicable to those who are living in this period of the earth’s history. Consider this chapter attentively; for it will be fulfilled (MS 36, 1897.)

1-4. Sins of Israel Are Sins Today.—[Isaiah 58:1-4 quoted.] ... The house of Jacob, at the time this warning was given to Isaiah, appeared to be a very zealous people, seeking God daily, and delighting to know His ways; but in reality they were filled with presumptuous self-confidence. They were not walking in the truth. Goodness, mercy, and love were not practiced. While presenting an appearance of sorrow for their sins, they were cherishing pride and avarice. At the very time when they were showing such outward humiliation, they would exact hard labor from

those under them or in their employ. They placed a high estimate on all the good that they had done, but a very low estimate on the services of others. They despised and oppressed the poor. And their fasting only gave them a higher opinion of their own goodness.

There are sins of this same character among us today, and they bring the rebuke of God upon His church. Wherever such sins are found, seasons of fasting and prayer are indeed necessary; but they must be accompanied with sincere repentance and decided reformation. Without such contrition of soul, these seasons only increase the guilt of the wrong-doer. The Lord has specified the fast He has chosen, the one He will accept. It is that which bears fruit to His glory, in repentance, in devotion, in true piety. [Isaiah 58:6, 7 quoted.]

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the

poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be a proverb, “Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;” “he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey” (The Review and Herald, October 13, 1891)

1-5. A Reformatory Influence From God Needed.— [Isaiah 58:1-3 quoted.] The people here described realize that they have not the favor of God; but instead of seeking His favor in His own way, they enter into a controversy with God. They ask why, since they observe so many ceremonies, the Lord does not give them special recognition. God answers their complaints: “Behold, in the day of your fast, ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.” These fasts are only outward show, mere pretense, a mockery of humility. These worshipers, while mourning and lamenting, retain all their objectionable traits of character. Their hearts are not humbled, nor cleansed from spiritual defilement. They have not received the softening

showers of the grace of God. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit, destitute of the sweetness of the heavenly influence. They manifest no repentance, nor faith that works by love and purifies the soul. They are unjust and selfish in their dealings, mercilessly oppressing those whom they regard as their inferiors. Yet they charge God with a neglect to manifest His power to them, and exalt them above others because of their righteousness. The Lord sends them a message of positive reproof, showing why they are not visited by His grace (MS 48, 1900).

5-7. Christians Not a Band of Mourners.—

We have everything to be thankful for. Never ought Christians to move along like a band of mourners in a funeral train. God does not require this of His followers. He does not ask them to spread sackcloth and ashes under them. “Is it such a fast that I have chosen?” He asks; “a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?” God tells us what

kind of fast He has chosen. “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” This is the fast He wishes us to observe. [Isaiah 58:7 quoted.] In these words our duty is outlined. God shows us where we should place our treasures. As we follow in the path of self-denial and self sacrifice, helping the needy and suffering, we shall lay up treasure before the throne of God (MS 31, 1901).

Outward Signs Alone Are Valueless.—The outward signs of fasting and prayer, without a broken and contrite spirit, are of no value in God’s sight. The inward work of grace is needed. Humiliation of soul is essential. God looks upon this. He will graciously receive those who will humble their hearts before Him. He will hear their petitions and heal their backslidings.

Ministers and people need the work of purification in their souls, that God’s judgments may be turned away from them. God is waiting, waiting for humiliation and repentance. He will

receive all who will turn unto Him with their whole heart (MS 33, 1903).

Help Those Suffering for Truth's Sake.— [Isaiah 58:5-7 quoted.] God's cause embraces every needy, suffering saint. We are not selfishly to single out a few relatives and friends and help them, letting our work end here. All the needy who come to our notice are to be helped, but especially those who are suffering for the truth's sake. If we neglect this work, God will hold us accountable. Shall we not as a people who work righteousness, follow the conditions God has laid down, and be doers of His Word (MS 145, 1899)?

6. No Yokes to Be Placed.—The Lord has not given man the work of putting yokes on the necks of His people, binding them in such a way that they are not free to look to Him and to be led and guided by Him. It is not the Lord's design that His people shall be made amenable to their fellow-men, who are themselves wholly dependent on God (Letter 76, 1902).

8. (see EGW comments on Zechariah 4:12). God Needs Human Agencies.—We are to put into practice the precepts of the law, and thus have righteousness before us; the reward will be God's glory. The light of the righteousness of Christ will be our front guard, and the glory of the Lord will be our reward. Let us thank the Lord for this assurance. Let us constantly stand in a position where the Lord God of heaven can favor us. Let us consider that it is our high privilege to be in connection with God—to be His helping hand.

In God's great plan for the redemption of a lost race, He has placed Himself under the necessity of using human agencies as His helping hand. He must have a helping hand, in order to reach humanity. He must have the cooperation of those who will be active, quick to see opportunities, quick to discern what must be done for their fellow men (NL No. 23, p. 1).

A Visible Righteousness Required.—Note the inspired promise of the prophet to those who do all in their power to relieve distress, both physical and

spiritual. [Isaiah 58:8 quoted.]

As Christians we are to have a righteousness that shall be developed and seen—a righteousness that represents the character of Jesus Christ when He was in our world (MS 43, 1908).

8-14. Characteristics of True Reformers.—

Here are given the characteristics of those who shall be reformers, who will bear the banner of the third angel's message, those who avow themselves God's commandment-keeping people, and who honor God, and are earnestly engaged, in the sight of all the universe, in building up the old waste places. Who is it that calls them, The repairers of the breach, The restorers of paths to dwell in? It is God. Their names are registered in heaven as reformers, restorers, as raising the foundations of many generations (The Review and Herald, October 13, 1891).

9, 10. Compassion Causes Light to Rise.—

[Isaiah 58:9, 10 quoted.] All around us are afflicted souls. Let us search out these suffering ones, and

Speak a word in season to comfort their hearts. Here and there—everywhere—we shall find them. Let us ever be channels through which may flow to them the refreshing waters of compassion. To those who minister to the necessities of the hungry and afflicted, the promise is, “Then shall thy light rise in obscurity.”

Many are in obscurity. They have lost their bearings. They know not what course to pursue. Let the perplexed ones search out others who are in perplexity, and speak to them words of hope and encouragement. When they begin to do this work, the light of heaven will reveal to them the path that they should follow. By their words of consolation to the afflicted they themselves will be consoled. By helping others, they themselves will be helped out of their difficulties. Joy takes the place of sadness and gloom. The heart, filled with the Spirit of God, glows with warmth toward every fellow being. Every such an one is no longer in darkness; for his “darkness” is “as the noon day” (MS 116, 1902).

11. God's Guidance Gives Clear Discernment.—Of him who walks in the way of life everlasting, using his blessings to bless others, the prophet Isaiah declares: “The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”

These blessings we need. We need the water of life that flows from Jesus Christ, which will be in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life. “The Lord shall guide thee continually.” When we are guided by the Lord, we shall have clear discernment. We shall not call righteousness unrighteousness, nor think that things that the Lord has forbidden are right. We shall understand where the Lord is working.

Many have not understood this. There are some who I know have been led astray by the enemy. But God wants to make you a partaker of the divine nature. He wants no yoke of human authority on your neck, but that you shall look to

Him who is able to save to the uttermost every one that comes to Him in righteousness and truth. We have no time to tamper with the enemy; for we are very near the close of this earth's history (MS 43, 1908).

12-14 (Revelation 11:19; 14:9-12). Sabbathkeepers Repair the Breach.—[Isaiah 58:8-14 quoted.] Where do we find the people who are thus addressed? Who is it that shall build the old waste places, and raise up the foundation of many generations? Where are the people who have had light from heaven to see that a breach has been made in the law of God?

In the Revelation, John says, "The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." Revelation 11:19. John saw in vision the Lord's people looking for His coming and searching for truth. As the temple of God was opened unto His people, the light of the law of God, which was in the ark, shone forth. Those who receive this light are brought to view in the proclamation of the third

angel's message.

This angel is seen flying in the midst of heaven, “saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.... Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

This is the people that are repairing the breach in the law of God. They see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment has been supplanted by a spurious sabbath, a day that has no sanction in the Word of God. Amid great opposition they become loyal to their God, and take their position under the standard of the third angel (MS 48, 1900).

As the end approaches, the testimonies of God's servants will become more decided and

more powerful, flashing the light of truth upon the systems of error and oppression that have so long held the supremacy. The Lord has sent us messages for this time to establish Christianity upon an eternal basis, and all who believe present truth must stand, not in their own wisdom, but in God; and raise up the foundation of many generations. These will be registered in the books of heaven as repairers of the breach, the restorers of paths to dwell in. We are to maintain the truth because it is truth, in the face of the bitterest opposition. God is at work upon human minds; it is not man alone that is working. The great illuminating power is from Christ; the brightness of His example is to be kept before the people in every discourse (Letter 1f, 1890).

Whole-souled Men to Stand in the Gap.—I write this because many in the church are represented to me as seeing men like trees walking. They must have another and deeper experience before they discern the snares spread to take them in the net of the deceiver. There must be no halfway work done now. The Lord calls for stanch,

decided, whole-souled men and women to stand in the gap, and make up the hedge. [Isaiah 58:12-14 quoted.]

There is a decided testimony to be borne by all our ministers in all our churches. God has permitted apostasies to take place in order to show how little dependence can be placed in man. We are always to look to God; His word is not Yea and Nay, but Yea and Amen (NL No. 19, pp. 2, 3).

13, 14. See EGW on Exodus 20:1-17, Vol. I.

Chapter 59

13-17 (Revelation 12:17). Satan Setting Trained Agents at Work.—The condition of the world at the time of Christ is well described by the prophet Isaiah. He says that the people were found “transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God.” [Isaiah 59:13-17 quoted.]

The condition of the world previous to the first

appearing of Christ is a picture of the condition of the world just previous to His second advent. The same iniquity will exist, Satan manifests the same delusive power upon the minds of men. He is setting his trained agents at work, and moving them to intense activity. He is securing his army of human agents to engage in the last conflict against the Prince of life, to overthrow the law of God, which is the foundation of His throne. Satan will work with miraculous presentations to confirm men in the belief that he is what he claims to be,—the prince of this world, and that victory is his. He will turn his forces against those who are loyal to God, but though he may cause pain, distress, and human agony, he cannot defile the soul. He may cause affliction to the people of God as he did to Christ, but he cannot cause one of Christ's little ones to perish. The people of God in these last days must expect to enter into the thick of the conflict; for the prophetic Word says, "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" (Letter 43, 1895).

Chapter 60

1. (Psalm 8:3; 147:4; Daniel 12:3). Each to Give His Measure of Light.—Every shining star which God has placed in the heavens obeys His mandate, and gives its distinctive measure of light to make beautiful the heavens at night; so let every converted soul show the measure of light committed to him; and as it shines forth the light will increase and grow brighter. Give out your light, ... pour forth your beams mirrored from heaven. O daughter of Zion, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee” (Letter 38, 1890).

2. (Malachi 2:7, 8). Only Light Can Dispel Darkness.—When Christ came into the world, darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people. The living oracles of God were fast becoming a dead letter. The still, small voice of God was heard only at times by the most devout worshiper; for it had become overpowered and silenced by the dogmas, maxims, and traditions of

men. The long, intricate explanations of the priests made that which was the plainest and most simple, mysterious, indistinct, and uncertain. The clamors of rival sects confused the understanding, and their doctrines were widely apart from the correct theory of truth....

Truth looked down from heaven upon the children of men, but found no reflection of itself; for darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. If the darkness of error that hid the glory of God from the view of men was to be dispelled, the light of truth must shine amid the moral darkness of the world. It was decreed in the councils of God that the only-begotten Son of God must leave His high command in heaven, and clothe His divinity with humanity, and come to the world. No outward splendor must attend His steps, save that of virtue, mercy, goodness, and truth; for He was to represent to the world the attributes of God's character; but the world, unaccustomed to gaze upon truth, turned from the light to the darkness of error; for error was more to their perverted taste than truth (The Review and Herald,

August 6, 1895).

Chapter 61

1, 3. Guard Countenance, Words, Tone of Voice.—[Isaiah 61:1 quoted.] The Lord is not pleased to have His people a band of mourners. He wants them to repent of their sins, that they may enjoy the liberty of the sons of God. Then they will be filled with the praises of God, and will be a blessing to others. The Lord Jesus was anointed also “to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.”

“That He,” Christ Jesus, “might be glorified”—
O that this might be the purpose of our lives! Then we should have regard even to the expression of our countenance, to our words, and even to the tone of our voice when we speak. All our business transactions would be wrought in faith and

integrity. Then would the world be convinced that there is a people that are loyal to the God of heaven....

God calls for all to come into harmony with Himself. He will receive them if they will put away their evil actions. By a union with the divine nature of Christ, they may escape the corrupting influences of this world. It is time for every one of us to decide whose side we are on. The agencies of Satan will work with every mind that will allow itself to be worked by him. But there are also heavenly agencies waiting to communicate the bright rays of the glory of God to all that are willing to receive Him. It is truth that we want, precious truth in all its loveliness. Truth will bring liberty and gladness (MS 43, 1908).

Chapter 64

8. Let God Work the Clay.—While the human agent is devising and planning for himself something that God has withheld him from doing, he has a hard time. He complains and frets, and has

still increased difficulties. But when he submits to be as clay in the hands of the potter, then God works the man into a vessel of honor. The clay submits to be worked. If God had His way, hundreds would be worked and made into vessels as He sees best.

Let the hand of God work the clay for His own service. He knows just what kind of vessel He wants. To every man He has given his work. God knows what place he is best fitted for. Many are working contrary to the will of God, and they spoil the web. The Lord wants every one to be submissive under His divine guidance. He will place men where they will submit to be worked into oneness with Christ, bearing His divine similitude. If self will submit to be worked, if you will cooperate with God, if you will pray in unity, work in unity, all taking your place as threads in the web of life, you will grow into a beautiful fabric that will rejoice the universe of God. (Letter 63, 1898).

The Potter cannot mold and fashion unto honor

that which has never been placed in His hands. The Christian life is one of daily surrender, submission and continual overcoming. Every day fresh victories will be gained. Self must be lost sight of, and the love of God must be constantly cultivated. Thus we grow up into Christ. Thus the life is fashioned according to the divine model (MS 55, 1900).

Every child of God is to do his very best to uplift the standard of truth. He is to work in God's order. If self is exalted, Christ is not magnified. In His Word God compares Himself to a potter, and His people to the clay. His work is to mold and fashion them after His own similitude. The lesson they are to learn is the lesson of submission. Self is not to be made prominent. If due attention is given to the divine instruction, if self is surrendered to the divine will, the hand of the Potter will produce a shapely vessel (Letter 78, 1901).

Chapter 65

2. See EGW on Jeremiah 17:25.

21-23. See EGW on Proverbs 31:27, Vol. III.

Chapter 24

Jeremiah

Chapter 3

A lesson for Spiritual Israel.--Please read the third chapter [of Jeremiah]. This chapter is a lesson for modern Israel. Let all who claim to be children of God understand that He will not serve with their sins any more than He would with the sins of ancient Israel. God hates hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong (Letter 34, 1899).

Chapter 8

7. Birds Respond More Quickly Than Men.--The swallow and the crane observe the changes of the seasons. They migrate from one country to another to find a climate suitable to their convenience and happiness, as the Lord designed they should. But God's people sacrifice life and health by seeking to gratify appetite. In their desire to accumulate treasure, they forget the Giver of all

their blessings. Their health is abused, and their God-given powers are used to carry out their unsanctified, ambitious projects. Their days are filled with pain of body and disquietude of mind because they are determined to follow wrong habits and practices. They will not reason from cause to effect, and they sacrifice health, peace, and happiness to their ignorance (MS 35, 1899).

8. (Matthew 15:9; 22:29). Rejection of Truth Has Produced Present Condition.--The prevalence of sin is alarming; the world is being filled with violence as in the days of Noah. Would the world be in its present condition if those who claim to be the people of God had revered and obeyed the law of the Lord? It is the rejection of the truth, man's dispensing with the commandments of God, that has produced the condition of things which now exists. God's Word is made of none effect by false shepherds. The decided opposition of the shepherds of the flock to the law of the Lord reveals that they have rejected the Word of the Lord, and have put their own words in its place. In their interpretation of the

Scriptures they teach for doctrines the commandments of men. In their apostasy from the truth they have encouraged wickedness, saying, "We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us." The words of Christ to the Pharisees are applicable to them. Christ said to these teachers, Ye are both ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God. . . .

The condition of our world today is just as the prophet has represented that it would be near the close of this earth's history (MS 60, 1900).

22. See EGW on Exodus 15:23-25, Vol. I, p. 1102.

Chapter 11

16. Fruitless Branches Broken Off.-- [Jeremiah 11:16 quoted.] Where her branches should have yielded fruit without stint, they were broken off because of her stubborn disobedience. The wrong course of the people of Jerusalem brought its sure result upon them and upon those

whom they influenced. They departed from the example of the holy men who caught their inspiration from Jesus Christ, their invisible Leader. They could not possibly form characters that God could approve (Letter 34, 1899).

Chapter 17

5. Dependence on World Is Fatal.--

[Deuteronomy 4:1, 2, 5-9; 7:1-6, 9, 10 quoted.] Under David's rule, the people of Israel gained strength and uprightness through obedience to God's law. But the kings that followed strove for self-exaltation. They took to themselves glory for the greatness of the kingdom, forgetting how utterly dependent they were upon God. They regarded themselves as wise and independent, because of the honor showed them by fallible, erring man. They became corrupt, immoral, and rebelled against the Lord, turning from Him to the worship of idols.

God bore long with them, calling them often to repentance. But they refused to hear, and at last

God spoke in judgment, showing them how weak they were without Him. He saw that they were determined to have their own way, and He gave them into the hands of their enemies, who spoiled their land, and took the people captive.

The alliances made by the Israelites with their heathen neighbors resulted in the loss of their identity as God's peculiar people. They became leavened by the evil practises of those with whom they formed forbidden alliances. Affiliation with worldlings caused them to lose their first love, and their zeal for God's service. The advantages they sold themselves to gain, brought only disappointment, and caused the loss of many souls.

The experience of Israel will be the experience of all who go to the world for strength, turning away from the living God. Those who forsake the mighty One, the source of all strength, and affiliate with worldlings, placing on them their dependence, become weak in moral power, as are those in whom they trust.

God comes with entreaties and assurances to those who are making mistakes. He seeks to show them their error, and lead them to repentance. But if they refuse to humble their hearts before Him, if they strive to exalt themselves above Him, He must speak to them in judgment. No semblance of nearness to God, no assertion of connection with Him, will be accepted from those who persist in dishonoring Him by leaning upon the arm of worldly power (RH Aug. 4, 1904).

25. (Isaiah 65:2; Ezekiel 12:2). Israel Blind to Light, Deaf to Messages.--Had God's chosen people stood in their appointed place, as the repositories of sacred, eternal truth, which was to come to the heathen world Jerusalem would have stood to this day. But they were a rebellious people. And when God had done all that a God could do, even to the sending of His only begotten Son, they were so ignorant of the Scriptures and the power of God, that they refused the only help that could save them from ruin. "This is the heir," they said, "come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours."

God appointed Israel to be a light to the Gentiles, thus to call them back to their loyalty. But Israel herself became blind to the light, deaf to the messages sent to open her understanding (MS 151, 1899).

Chapter 18

1-10. God's Way.--[Jeremiah 18:1-10 quoted.] This presents before us God's way of dealing with His people. He sends warnings. He pleads with them to cease to do evil and learn to do well. Hear the words of Christ, for they are spoken to all who claim to be His people. Blessings are promised to all who follow the Lord to do righteousness, but those who walk in their own ways show that under the trying circumstances liable to occur anywhere, they will prove unfaithful, and God cannot bless them (Letter 34, 1899).

Chapter 20

7-10. God's Messengers as Sheep Among

Wolves.--The messages of reproof that God gave through His prophets to backsliding, apostate Israel, did not lead them to repentance. Misrepresented, misunderstood, His messengers were as sheep in the midst of wolves. Many of them were cruelly put to death.

How scornfully the Jewish nation treated the message that the Lord gave to them through His prophet Jeremiah! Of his experience Jeremiah the prophet says: "O Lord, Thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily."

So strong was the opposition against Jeremiah's message, so often was he derided and mocked, that he said, "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name." Thus it has ever been. Because of the bitterness, hatred, and opposition manifested against the word of God spoken in

reproof, many other messengers of God have decided to do as Jeremiah decided. But what did this prophet of the Lord do after his decision? Try as much as he would, he could not hold his peace. As soon as he came into the assemblies of the people, he found that the Spirit of the Lord was stronger than he was. The record is: "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him."

In this generation, when God's servants speak the word of the Lord to reprove wrong-doers, to rebuke those who bring in wrong principles, have they not had an experience similar to that which Jeremiah had? When a course of action to pervert justice and judgment is introduced, the word of the Lord must be spoken in reproof. In this our day we find the very same difficulties that the Lord's

servants found in the days of ancient Israel when they were sent to expose existing evils that were corrupting in their influence (MS 56, 1902).

Chapter 23

**1. (Hosea 8:1; 13:9; Matthew 15:6).
Shepherds That Scatter.--**There are professedly pious men who screen the sinner by their own transgression. They disregard the commandments of God, choosing the traditions of men, making void the law of God, and promoting apostasy. The excuses they make are feeble and weak and will bring destruction to their own souls and the souls of others. . . .

Upon those who have taken upon them the work of shepherds of the flock, will be visited the heaviest judgments, because they have presented to the people fables instead of truth. Children will rise up and curse their parents. Church members, who have seen the light and been convicted, but who have trusted the salvation of their souls to the minister, will learn in the day of God that no other

soul can pay the ransom for their transgression. A terrible cry will be raised, "I am lost, eternally lost." Men will feel as though they could rend in pieces the ministers who have preached falsehoods and condemned the truth. The pure truth for this time requires a reformation in the life, but they separate themselves from the love of the truth, and of them it can be said, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." The Lord sends a message to the people, "Set a trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant and trespassed against my law" (Letter 30, 1900).

6. The Coronation Day.--On the Saviour's coronation day He will not acknowledge as His any who bear spot or wrinkle. But to His faithful ones He will give crowns of immortal glory. Those who would not that He should reign over them will see Him surrounded by the army of the redeemed, each bearing the sign, The Lord our Righteousness. They will see the head once crowned with thorns crowned with a diadem of glory (RH May 5, 1903).

28. (1 Corinthians 3:13. Preach the Word, Omit the Chaff.--In regard to entering into the subject of the divine mystery of the essence of God, Christ ever maintained a wise reserve. He did this that He might close the door where human conjectures should not be encouraged. The most sacred, holy, and eternal mysteries which God has not revealed are but speculations when considered from a human standpoint, mere theories that confuse the mind. There are those who know the truth but do not practice it. These greatly long for some new, strange thing to present. In their great zeal to become original some will bring in fanciful ideas which are but chaff. Even now there is a descending from the sublime and living issues for this time to the ridiculous and fanciful, and sensational minds stand ready to catch up suppositions and guesses and human theories and false science as truth to be accepted and taught.

These put the test of salvation on speculation without one plain, "Thus saith the Lord." They thus bring in a mass of rubbish, wood, hay, and stubble, as precious material to be laid upon the foundation

stone. This will not stand the test of fire, but will be consumed, and if the ones who have made themselves believe these theories are so self-deceived and know not the truth yet are converted, their life is saved as by fire through repentance and humiliation before God. They have been dealing in common things in place of the sacred. Many catch up ideas which are of no consequence and place them before the flock of God as food, when they are only chaff which will never benefit or strengthen the flock of God, but will keep them in the lowlands, because they are feeding upon that which contains not the least virtue or nourishment. What is the chaff to the wheat (MS 45, 1900)?

Chapters 25; 27-29; 30, 31

(Daniel 9:1.) Records Studied by Daniel.--A copy of the letters sent by Jeremiah to the Hebrew captives in Babylon, and of the letters sent by the false prophets to these captives and to the authorities of Jerusalem, together with a story of the controversy between the true and the false, is found in the twenty-seventh to the twenty-ninth

chapters of Jeremiah.

It was immediately after this interchange of letters between Jeremiah and the elders of the Israelites in captivity, that the prophet was instructed to write in a book all that had been revealed to him regarding the restoration of Israel. This is recorded in the thirtieth and the thirty-first chapters of Jeremiah.

These, with the prophecies of the twenty-fifth chapter, are the letters and the records that Daniel the prophet, during "the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede," prayerfully studied, three-score years and more after they were written (RH March 21, 1907).

Chapter 25

11, 12. (chs. 28; 29:14). Punishment in Proportion to Intelligence and Warnings Despised.--"In the fourth year of Jehoiakim," very soon after Daniel was taken to Babylon, Jeremiah predicted the captivity of many of the Jews, as their

punishment for not heeding the Word of the Lord. The Chaldeans were to be used as the instrument by which God would chastise His disobedient people. Their punishment was to be in proportion to their intelligence and to the warnings they had despised. "This whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment," the prophet declared; "and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations."

In the light of these plain words foretelling the duration of the captivity, it seems strange that any one should hold that the Israelites would soon return from Babylon. And yet there were in Jerusalem and in Babylon those who persisted in encouraging the people to hope for a speedy deliverance. God dealt summarily with some of these false prophets, and thus vindicated the truthfulness of Jeremiah, His messenger.

To the end of time, men will arise to create confusion and rebellion among the people who profess to obey the law of God. But as surely as divine judgment was visited upon the false prophets in Jeremiah's day, so surely will the evil workers of today receive their full measure of retribution, for the Lord has not changed. Those who prophesy lies, encourage men to look upon sin as a light thing. When the terrible results of their evil deeds are made manifest, they seek, if possible, to make the one who has faithfully warned them responsible for their difficulties, even as the Jews charged Jeremiah with their evil fortunes.

Those who pursue a course of rebellion against the Lord can always find false prophets who will justify them in their acts, and flatter them to their destruction. Lying words often make many friends, as is illustrated in the case of these false teachers among the Israelites. These so-called prophets, in their pretended zeal for God, found many more believers and followers than the true prophet who delivered the simple message of the Lord.

In view of the work of these false prophets, Jeremiah was directed by the Lord to write letters to the captains, elders, priests, prophets, and all the people who had been taken captive to Babylon, bidding them not to be deluded into believing their deliverance nigh, but to submit quietly, pursue their vocations, and make for themselves peaceful homes among their conquerors. The Lord bade them not to allow so-called prophets or diviners to deceive them with false expectations. Through His servant Jeremiah He assured them that after seventy years' bondage they should be delivered, and should return to Jerusalem. God would listen to their prayers and show them His favor, when they would turn to Him with all their hearts [Jeremiah 29:14 quoted] (RH March 14, 1907).

Chapter 27

12-22. See EGW on 2 Kings 24:17-20, Vol. II, p. 1040.

Chapter 28

See EGW on ch. 25:11, 12.

Chapter 29

14. See EGW on ch. 25:11, 12.

Chapter 31

10-12. Divine Help Available for Correction.--[Jeremiah 31:10-12 quoted.] Corn and wine are symbols of grace and plenty.

All who receive the messages that the Lord sends to purify and cleanse them from all habits of disobedience to His commandments and conformity to the world, and who repent of their sins and reform, looking to God for help and walking in the way of obedience to His commandments, will receive divine help to correct their evil course of action. But those who apparently repent and seek the Lord, yet do not put away the evil of their doings, will not only

disappoint themselves, but when their course is placed before them in symbols or parables, they will feel shame and sorrow because they have disappointed the Lord. They have hoped and trusted in their own course of action. As a people they have been reprov'd, and yet they have not put away the evil works that called for reproof (MS 65, 1912).

Chapter 36

Now Covering the Same Ground.--[Jeremiah 36:1-7 quoted.] This chapter is a record of historical events that will be repeated. Let all who desire to receive warning, read carefully.

[Jeremiah 36:22, 23, 27, 28, 32 quoted] (MS 65, 1912).

Chapter 39

4-7. See EGW on 2 Kings 24:17-20, Vol. II, p. 1040.

Chapter 48

10-12. Spirit Does Not Work Beyond Human Power of Resistance.--The influence of the Spirit upon the human mind will regulate it after the divine order. But the Spirit does not work in a manner and power beyond the human agent's power of resistance. A man may refuse to hear the counsels and admonitions of God. He may choose to take the regulating of his conduct into his own hands; but when he does this, he is not made a vessel unto honor. Like Moab, he refuses to be changed, emptied from vessel to vessel, and therefore his scent remaineth in him. He refuses to correct his defective traits of character, although the Lord has plainly pointed out his work, his privileges, his opportunities, and the advancement to be made. It is too much trouble to break up his old ways, and transform his ideas and methods. "His scent is not changed." He clings to his defects, and is thus unfitted for the sacred work of the ministry. He was not willing to make a close examination of himself, or to closely inquire for light to shine upon him in a clear, distinct manner.

His prayers have not ascended to God in humility, while with humble endeavor he sought to live his prayers by understanding and performing his duty.

After the Lord has put one on test and trial, that he may be assured of his calling to the ministry, if he is content to follow his own way and his own will, if he will not heed the manifestations of the Spirit of God, if he refuses to profit by growth in grace and depth of understanding, be assured that the Lord does not need him; for he cannot communicate that which he has never received.

Every soul is to minister. He is to use every physical, moral, and mental power, through sanctification of the Spirit, that he may be a laborer together with God. All are bound to devote themselves actively and unreservedly to God's service. They are to cooperate with Jesus Christ in the great work of helping others. Christ died for every man. He has ransomed every man by giving His life on the cross. This He did that man might no longer live an aimless, selfish life, but that he might live unto Jesus Christ, who died for his

salvation. All are not called upon to enter the ministry, but nevertheless, they are to minister. It is an insult to the Holy Spirit of God for any man to choose a life of self-serving.

Ministry means not only the study of books and preaching. It means service (Letter 10, 1897).

Knowledge of Truth Not Practiced.--This description of Moab represents the churches that have become like Moab. They have not stood at their post of duty as faithful sentinels. They have not cooperated with the heavenly intelligences by exercising their God-given ability to do the will of God, pressing back the powers of darkness, and using every power God has given them to advance truth and righteousness in our world. They have a knowledge of the truth, but they have not practiced what they know (MS 7, 1891).

God Disciplines His Workers.--God has given to every man his work, and we are to acknowledge the wisdom of His plan for us by a hearty cooperation with Him. It is in a life of service only

that true happiness is found. He who lives a useless, selfish life is miserable. He is dissatisfied with himself and with every one else.

The Lord disciplines His workers, that they may be prepared to fill the places appointed them. Thus He desires to fit them to do more acceptable service.

A life of monotony is not the most conducive to spiritual growth. Some can reach the highest standard of spirituality only through a change in the regular order of things. When in His providence God sees that changes are essential for the success of the character-building, He disturbs the smooth current of the life.

There are those who desire to be a ruling power, and who need the sanctification of submission. God brings about a change in their lives. Perhaps He places before them duties that they would not choose. If they are willing to be guided by Him, He will give them grace and strength to perform these duties in a spirit of

submission and helpfulness. Thus they are being qualified to fill places where their disciplined abilities will make them of great service.

Some God trains by bringing to them disappointment and apparent failure. It is His purpose that they shall learn to master difficulty. He inspires them with a determination to make every apparent failure prove a success. Often men pray and weep because of the perplexities and obstacles that confront them. But if they will hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end, He will make their ways clear. Success will come to them as they struggle against apparently insurmountable difficulties. . . .

Many are ignorant of how to work for God, not because they need to be ignorant, but because they are unwilling to submit to His training. Moab is spoken of as a failure because, the prophet declares, "Moab hath been at ease from his youth, . . . and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not

changed."

Thus it is with those whose hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are not purged from them. Their hearts are not cleansed from defilement. They were given an opportunity to do a work for God, but this work they did not choose to do, because they wished to carry out their own plans.

The Christian is to be prepared for the doing of a work that reveals kindness, forbearance, longsuffering, gentleness, patience. The cultivation of these precious gifts is to come into the life of the Christian, that, when called into service by the Master, he may be ready to use his highest powers in helping and blessing those around him (RH May 2, 1907).

Chapter 25

Lamentations

No Commentary.

Chapter 26

Ezekiel

Chapter 1

Glorious Revelations During Darkest Days.--

All who serve God with purity of soul will know that He is jealous that His honor should be preserved. Many of the most glorious revelations recorded in the Bible were made by the Lord in the darkest days of the church's history. The Lord has given these revelations of His glory in order that men may be deeply impressed regarding the sacredness of His service. Impressions have been made that should bear with solemn force on the mind, showing that God is God, and that He has not lost His glory. He requires the utmost fidelity in His service today. The impression must be left on human minds that the Lord God is holy, and that He will vindicate His glory (MS 81, 1906).

8. (ch. 10:8, 21). Divine Power Gives Success.--In Ezekiel's vision, God had His hand

beneath the wings of the cherubim. This is to teach His servants that it is divine power that gives them success. He will work with them if they will put away iniquity, and become pure in heart and life. The heavenly messengers seen by Ezekiel, like a bright light going among the living creatures with the swiftness of lightning, represent the speed with which this work will finally go forward to completion. He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, can carry forward His great work harmoniously. That which appears to finite minds entangled and complicated, the Lord's hand can keep in perfect order. He can devise ways and means to thwart the purposes of wicked counselors, and those who plot out mischief.

Those who are called to responsible positions in the work of God often feel that they are carrying heavy burdens, when they may have the satisfaction of knowing that Jesus carries them all. We permit ourselves to feel altogether too much care, trouble, and perplexity in the Lord's work. We need to trust Him, believe in Him, and go

forward. The tireless vigilance of the heavenly messengers, their unceasing employment in their ministry in connection with the beings of earth, show us how God's hand is guiding the wheel within a wheel. The divine Instructor is saying to every actor in His work, as He said to Cyrus of old, "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me" (RH Jan. 11, 1887).

15-28. Individual Freedom, Yet Complete Harmony.--God is acquainted with every man. Could our eyes be opened we would see that eternal justice is at work in our world. A powerful influence, not under man's control, is working. Man may fancy that he is directing matters, but there are higher than human influences at work. The servants of God know that He is working to counteract Satan's plans. Those who know not God cannot comprehend His movements. There is at work a wheel within a wheel. Apparently the complication of machinery is so intricate that man can see only a complete entanglement. But the divine hand, as seen by the prophet Ezekiel, is placed upon the wheels, and every part moves in

complete harmony, each doing its specified work, yet with individual freedom of action (MS 13, 1898).

Chapter 9

2-4 (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). A Mark Which Angels Read.--[Ephesians 1:13 quoted.] What is the seal of the living God, which is placed in the foreheads of His people? It is a mark which angels, but not human eyes, can read; for the destroying angel must see this mark of redemption (Letter 126, 1898).

The angel with the writer's ink horn is to place a mark upon the foreheads of all who are separated from sin and sinners, and the destroying angel follows this angel (Letter 12, 1886).

(Revelation 7:2.) Seal Is a Settling Into Truth.--Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads--it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be

moved--just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming (MS 173, 1902).

Chapter 10

8, 21. See EGW on ch. 1:8.

Chapter 12

2. See EGW on Jeremiah 17:25.

Chapter 16

49. No Imitation.--The prophet Ezekiel describes a class whose example Christians should not imitate [Ezekiel 16:49 quoted]. We are not ignorant of the fall of Sodom because of the corruption of its inhabitants. The prophet has here specified the particular evils which led to dissolute morals. We see the very sins now existing in the world which were in Sodom, and which brought

upon her the wrath of God, even to her utter destruction (HR July, 1873).

Chapter 20

12. See EGW on Daniel 7:25.

12, 13. Contempt for Law Shows Contempt for Lawgiver.--Those who trample upon God's authority, and show open contempt to the law given in such grandeur at Sinai, virtually despise the Lawgiver, the great Jehovah. . . .

By transgressing the law which God had given in such majesty, and amid glory which was unapproachable, the people showed open contempt of the great Lawgiver, and death was the penalty (3SG 294, 300).

Chapter 28

1-26. This History a Perpetual Safeguard.--[Ezekiel 28:1-26 quoted.] 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. The Scripture says: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." "Thou hast said in thine heart, . . . I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; . . . I will be like the Most High." 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.

To the very close of the controversy in heaven, the great usurper continued to justify himself. When it was announced that with all his sympathizers he must be expelled from the abodes

of bliss, then the rebel leader boldly avowed his contempt for the Creator's law. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of their liberty, and declared that it was his purpose to secure the abolition of law. With one accord, Satan and his host threw the blame of their rebellion wholly upon Christ, declaring that if they had not been reprov'd, they would never have rebelled.

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 punishment.

At any moment God can withdraw from the impenitent the tokens of His wonderful mercy and love. Oh, that human agencies might consider what will be the sure result of their ingratitude to Him and of their disregard of the infinite Gift of Christ to our world! If they continue to love transgression more than obedience, the present blessings and the great mercy of God that they now enjoy, but do not appreciate, will finally become the occasion of their eternal ruin. When it is too late for them to see and to understand that which they have slighted as a thing of naught, they will know what it means to be without God, without hope. Then they will realize what they have lost by choosing to be disloyal to God and to stand in rebellion to His commandments (MS 125, 1907).

A General Movement Represented.--I ask our people to study the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel. The representation here made, while it refers primarily to Lucifer, the fallen angel, has yet a broader significance. Not one being, but a general movement, is described, and one that we shall witness. A faithful study of this chapter should lead

those who are seeking for truth to walk in all the light that God has given to His people, lest they be deceived by the deceptions of these last days (Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 17, p. 30).

2, 6-10. Soon to Be Fulfilled.--[2 Thessalonians 2:7, 8; Ezekiel 28:2, 6-10 quoted.] The time is fast approaching when this scripture will be fulfilled. The world and the professedly Protestant churches are in this our day taking sides with the man of sin. . . . The great issue that is coming will be on the seventh-day Sabbath (RH April 19, 1898).

12. Lucifer as Near as Possible Like God.-- Evil originated with Lucifer, who rebelled against the government of God. Before his fall he was a covering cherub, distinguished by his excellence. God made him good and beautiful, as near as possible like Himself (RH Sept. 24, 1901).

12-15 (Isaiah 14:12-14). Why God Could Do No More.--Satan, the chief of the fallen angels, once had an exalted position in heaven. He was

next in honor to Christ. The knowledge which he, as well as the angels who fell with him, had of the character of God, of His goodness, His mercy, wisdom, and excellent glory, made their guilt unpardonable.

There was no possible hope for the redemption of those who had witnessed and enjoyed the inexpressible glory of heaven, and had seen the terrible majesty of God, and, in presence of all this glory, had rebelled against Him. There were no new and wonderful exhibitions of God's exalted power that could impress them so deeply as those they had already experienced. If they could rebel in the very presence of glory inexpressible, they could not be placed in a more favorable condition to be proved. There was no reserve force of power, nor were there any greater heights and depths of infinite glory to overpower their jealous doubts and rebellious murmuring (Redemption: The Temptation of Christ, pp. 18, 19).

15-19 (Isaiah 14:12-15; Revelation 12:7-9). Satan's Corrupt Working.--There is a grand

rebellion in the earthly universe. Is there not a great leader of that rebellion? Is not Satan the life and soul of every species of rebellion which he himself has instigated? Is he not the first great apostate from God? A rebellion exists. Lucifer revolted from his allegiance and makes war on the divine government. Christ is appointed to put down the rebellion. He makes this world His battlefield. He stands at the head of the human family. He clothes His divinity with humanity and He passes over the ground where Adam fell and endures all the assaults of Satan's temptations, but He does not yield in a single instance.

The salvation of a world is at stake. He resisted the archdeceiver. In behalf of man He must conquer as a man, and in the very same manner man must conquer by "It is written." His own words under the guise of humanity would be misjudged, misinterpreted, falsified. His own words spoken as the divine Son of God could not be falsified.

It will be in the last great day when every case

receives as his works have been; it will be the final and eternal condemnation of the devil and all his sympathizers and all who have served under his jurisdiction and have identified themselves with him. Will he have a reason to assign for his rebellion? When the Judge of all the world demands, Why have ye done thus? what reason can he assign, what cause can he plead? Bear in mind every tongue is silent, every mouth that has been so ready to speak evil, so ready to accuse, so ready to utter words of recrimination and falsehood is stopped, and the whole world of rebellion stands speechless before God; their tongues cleave to the roof of their mouth. The place where sin entered can be specified.

"Thou wast perfect in thy ways . . . till iniquity was found in thee." "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." All this was the gift of God. God was not chargeable with this--making the covering cherub beautiful, noble and good. "By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and

thou hast sinned: . . . thou has defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick." In this place "traffick" is the emblem of corrupt administration. It denotes the bringing of self-seeking into spiritual offices. Nothing in spiritual service is acceptable to God except the purposes and works that are for the good of the universe. To do good to others will redound to the glory of God.

The principles of Satan's working in heaven are the same principles by which he works through human agents in this world. It is through these corrupting principles that every earthly empire and the churches have been increasingly corrupted. It is by the working out of these principles that Satan deceives and corrupts the whole world from the beginning to the ending. He is continuing this same policy-working, originally begun in the heavenly universe. He is energizing the whole world with his violence with which he corrupted the world in the days of Noah (Letter 156, 1897).

Chapter 31

See EGW on Psalm 92:12.

Chapter 33

Personal Responsibility.--The thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel shows that God's government is a government of personal responsibility. Each one must stand for himself. No one can obey for his neighbor. No one is excused for neglecting his duty because of a similar neglect on the part of his neighbor (Letter 162, 1900).

A Voice of Warning Needed.--The thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel is an outline of the work that God approves. Those in positions of sacred trust, those honored of God by being appointed to stand as watchmen on the walls of Zion, are in every respect to be all that is embraced in the meaning of the word "watchmen." They are to be ever on guard against the dangers threatening the spiritual life and health and prosperity of God's heritage.

Upon us as ministers God has placed a burden of solemn responsibility. . . .

God has declared to us, "Ye are the salt of the earth." The preserving influence that we may exert in the world, is bestowed upon us by the Lord. The bounties that we constantly receive from Him are to flow through hand and heart to those around us who have not yet become connected with the Fountainhead.

When we see God dishonored, we ought not to remain quiet, but should do and say all that we can to lead others to see that the God of heaven is not to be thought of as a common man, but as the Infinite One, the One worthy of man's highest reverence. Let us present God's Word in its purity, and lift up the voice in warning against everything that would dishonor our heavenly Father (MS 165, 1902).

Chapter 34

2. A Charge to Ministers.--Upon the ministers

of God rests a solemn, serious charge. They will be called to a strict account for the manner in which they have discharged their responsibility. If they do not tell the people of the binding claims of God's law, if they do not preach the Word with clearness, but confuse the minds of the people by their own interpretations, they are shepherds who feed themselves, but neglect to feed the flock. They make of none effect the law of Jehovah, and souls perish because of their unfaithfulness. The blood of these souls will be upon their heads. God will call them to account for their unfaithfulness. But this will in no wise excuse those who listened to the sophistry of men, discarding the Word of God. God's law is a transcript of His character. And His word is not Yea and Nay, but Yea and Amen (Letter 162, 1900).

Chapter 36

25, 26 (John 3:3-7). The Sign of a New Heart.--[Ezekiel 36:26 quoted.] ... The youth especially stumble over this phrase, "a new heart." They do not know what it means. They look for a

special change to take place in their feelings. This they term conversion. Over this error thousands have stumbled to ruin, not understanding the expression, "Ye must be born again."

Satan leads people to think that because they have felt a rapture of feeling, they are converted. But their experience does not change. Their actions are the same as before. Their lives show no good fruit. They pray often and long, and are constantly referring to the feelings they had at such and such a time. But they do not live the new life. They are deceived. Their experience goes no deeper than feeling. They build upon the sand, and when adverse winds come, their house is swept away. ...

When Jesus speaks of the new heart, He means the mind, the life, the whole being. To have a change of heart is to withdraw the affections from the world, and fasten them upon Christ. To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart?--a changed life. There is a daily, hourly dying to selfishness and pride (YI Sept. 26, 1901).

26 (Psalm 51:10). How the New Heart Is Kept.--One of the most earnest prayers recorded in the Word of God is that of David when he plead, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." God's response to such a prayer is, A new heart will I give you. This is a work that no finite man can do. Men and women are to begin at the beginning, seeking God most earnestly for a true Christian experience. They are to feel the creative power of the Holy Spirit. They are to receive the new heart, that is kept soft and tender by the grace of heaven. The selfish spirit is to be cleansed from the soul. They are to labor earnestly and with humility of heart, each one looking to Jesus for guidance and encouragement. Then the building, fitly framed together, will grow into a holy temple in the Lord (Letter 224, 1907).

Chapter 37

1-10. What Can Man's Power Do?--At one time the prophet Ezekiel was in vision set down in the midst of a large valley. Before him lay a dismal

scene. Throughout its whole extent the valley was covered with the bones of the dead. The question was asked, "Son of man, can these bones live?" The prophet replied, "O Lord God, Thou knowest." What could the might and power of man accomplish with these dead bones? The prophet could see no hope of life being imparted to them. But as he looked, the power of God began to work. The scattered bones were shaken, and began to come together, "bone to his bone," and were bound together by sinews. They were covered with flesh, and as the Lord breathed upon the bodies thus formed, "the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army" (MS 85, 1903).

A Vision of Our Work.--The souls of those whom we desire to save are like the representation which Ezekiel saw in vision,--a valley of dry bones. They are dead in trespasses and sins, but God would have us deal with them as though they were living. Were the question put to us, "Son of man, can these bones live?" our answer would be only the confession of ignorance, "O Lord, Thou

knowest." To all appearance there is nothing to lead us to hope for their restoration. Yet nevertheless the word of the prophecy must be spoken even to those who are like the dry bones in the valley. We are in no wise to be deterred from fulfilling our commission by the listlessness, the dullness, the lack of spiritual perception, in those upon whom the Word of God is brought to bear. We are to preach the word of life to those whom we may judge to be as hopeless subjects as though they were in their graves.

Though they may seem unwilling to hear or to receive the light of truth, without questioning or wavering we are to do our part. We are to repeat to them the message. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

It is not the human agent that is to inspire with life. The Lord God of Israel will do that part, quickening the lifeless spiritual nature into activity. The breath of the Lord of hosts must enter into the lifeless bodies. In the judgment, when all secrets

are laid bare, it will be known that the voice of God spoke through the human agent, and aroused the torpid conscience, and stirred the lifeless faculties, and moved sinners to repentance and contrition, and forsaking of sins. It will then be clearly seen that through the human agent faith in Jesus Christ was imparted to the soul, and spiritual life from heaven was breathed upon one who was dead in trespasses and sins, and he was quickened with spiritual life.

But not only does this simile of the dry bones apply to the world, but also to those who have been blessed with great light; for they also are like the skeletons of the valley. They have the form of men, the framework of the body; but they have not spiritual life. But the parable does not leave the dry bones merely knit together into the forms of men; for it is not enough that there is symmetry of limb and feature. The breath of life must vivify the bodies, that they may stand upright, and spring into activity. These bones represent the house of Israel, the church of God, and the hope of the church is the vivifying influence of the Holy Spirit. The Lord

must breathe upon the dry bones, that they may live.

The Spirit of God, with its vivifying power, must be in every human agent, that every spiritual muscle and sinew may be in exercise. Without the Holy Spirit, without the breath of God, there is torpidity of conscience, loss of spiritual life. Many who are without spiritual life have their names on the church records, but they are not written in the Lamb's book of life. They may be joined to the church, but they are not united to the Lord. They may be diligent in the performance of a certain set of duties, and may be regarded as living men; but many are among those who have "a name that thou livest, and art dead."

Unless there is genuine conversion of the soul to God; unless the vital breath of God quickens the soul to spiritual life; unless the professors of truth are actuated by heaven-born principle, they are not born of the incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever. Unless they trust in the righteousness of Christ as their only security;

unless they copy His character, labor in His spirit, they are naked, they have not on the robe of His righteousness. The dead are often made to pass for the living; for those who are working out what they term salvation after their own ideas, have not God working in them to will and to do of His good pleasure.

This class is well represented by the valley of dry bones Ezekiel saw in vision (RH Jan. 17, 1893).

Chapter 27

Daniel

Chapter 1

1. Especially for Last Days.--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 light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The

visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass (Letter 57, 1896).

8. No Different Plan Now.--When Daniel was in Babylon, he was beset with temptations of which we have never dreamed, and he realized that he must keep his body under. He purposed in his heart that he would not drink of the king's wine or eat of his dainties. He knew that in order to come off a victor, he must have clear mental perceptions, that he might discern between right and wrong. While he was working on his part, God worked also, and gave him "knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." This is the way God worked for Daniel; and He does not propose to do any differently now. Man must cooperate with God in carrying out the plan of salvation (RH April 2, 1889).

An Intelligent Decision.--As Daniel and his fellows were brought to the test, they placed

themselves fully on the side of righteousness and truth. They did not move capriciously, but intelligently. They decided that as flesh-meat had not composed their diet in the past, it should not come into their diet in the future, and as wine had been prohibited to all who should engage in the service of God, they determined that they would not partake of it. The fate of the sons of Aaron had been presented before them, and they knew that the use of wine would confuse their senses, that the indulgence of appetite would be-cloud their powers of discernment. These particulars were placed on record in the history of the children of Israel as a warning to every youth to avoid all customs and practises and indulgences that would in any way dishonor God.

Daniel and his companions knew not what would be the result of their decision; they knew not but that it would cost them their lives; but they determined to keep the straight path of strict temperance even when in the courts of licentious Babylon (YI Aug. 18, 1898).

9. Good Behavior Gained Favor.--This officer saw in Daniel good traits of character. He saw that he was striving to be kind and helpful, that his words were respectful and courteous, and his manner possessed the grace of modesty and meekness. It was the good behavior of the youth that gained for him the favor and love of the prince (YI Nov. 12, 1907).

15. Daniel's Tempters.--In taking this step, Daniel did not act rashly. He knew that by the time he was called to appear before the king, the advantage of healthful living would be apparent. Cause would be followed by effect. Daniel said to Melzar, who had been given charge of him and his companions: "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat and water to drink." Daniel knew that ten days would be time enough to prove the benefit of abstemiousness. ...

Having done this, Daniel and his companions did still more. They did not choose as companions those who were agents of the prince of darkness.

They did not go with a multitude to do evil. They secured Melzar as their friend, and there was no friction between him and them. They went to him for advice, and at the same time enlightened him by the wisdom of their deportment (YI Sept. 6, 1900).

17. God's Blessing No Substitute for Effort.--

When the four Hebrew youth were receiving an education for the king's court in Babylon, they did not feel that the blessing of the Lord was a substitute for the taxing effort required of them. They were diligent in study; for they discerned that through the grace of God their destiny depended upon their own will and action. They were to bring all their ability to the work; and by close, severe taxation of their powers, they were to make the most of their opportunities for study and labor.

While these youth were working out their own salvation, God was working in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. Here are revealed the conditions of success. To make God's grace our own, we must act our part. The Lord does not

propose to perform for us either the willing or the doing. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort. Our souls are to be aroused to cooperate. The Holy Spirit works in us, that we may work out our own salvation. This is the practical lesson the Holy Spirit is striving to teach us (YI Aug. 20, 1903).

17, 20. Honor Without Exaltation.--Daniel and his three companions had a special work to do. Although greatly honored in this work, they did not become in any way exalted. They were scholars, being skilled in secular as well as religious knowledge; but they had studied science without being corrupted. They were well-balanced because they had yielded themselves to the control of the Holy Spirit. These youth gave to God all the glory of their secular, scientific, and religious endowments. Their learning did not come by chance; they obtained knowledge by the faithful use of their powers; and God gave them skill and understanding.

True science and Bible religion are in perfect

harmony. Let the students in our schools learn all they possibly can. But, as a rule, let them be educated in our own institutions. Be careful how you advise them to go to other schools, where error is taught, in order to complete their education. Do not give them the impression that greater educational advantages are to be obtained by mingling with those who do not seek wisdom from God. The great men of Babylon were willing to be benefited by the instruction that God gave through Daniel, to help the king out of his difficulty by the interpretation of his dream. But they were anxious to mix in their heathen religion with that of the Hebrews. Had Daniel and his fellows consented to such a compromise, they would, in the view of the Babylonians, have been complete as statesmen, fit to be entrusted with the affairs of the kingdom. But the four Hebrews entered into no such arrangement. They were true to God, and God upheld them and honored them. The lesson is for us. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Letter 57, 1896).

20. Spirituality and Intellect Grow Together.--As in the case of Daniel, in exact proportion as the spiritual character is developed, the intellectual capabilities are increased (RH March 22, 1898).

Chapter 2

18. Obedient May Speak Freely.--Those who live in close fellowship with Christ will be promoted by Him to positions of trust. The servant who does the best he can for his master, is admitted to familiar intercourse with one whose commands he loves to obey. In the faithful discharge of duty we may become one with Christ; for those who are obeying God's commands may speak to Him freely. The one who talks most familiarly with his divine Leader has the most exalted conception of His greatness, and is the most obedient to His commands (MS 82, 1900).

The history of Daniel, if all was written, would open chapters before you that would show you the temptations he had to meet, of ridicule, envy, and

hatred; but he learned to master the difficulties. He did not trust in his own strength; he laid his whole soul and all his difficulties open to his heavenly Father, and he believed God heard him, and he was comforted and blessed. He rose superior to ridicule; and so will every one who is an overcomer. Daniel acquired a serene and cheerful state of mind, because he believed God was his friend and helper. The taxing duties he had to perform were made light because he brought the light and love of God into his work. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth" to such as walk in them (YI Aug. 25, 1886).

37-42. A Dual Representation.--The image revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, while representing the deterioration of the kingdoms of the earth in power and glory, also fitly represents the deterioration of religion and morality among the people of these kingdoms. As nations forget God, in like proportion they become weak morally.

Babylon passed away because in her prosperity she forgot God, and ascribed the glory of her

prosperity to human achievement.

The Medo-Persian kingdom was visited by the wrath of heaven because in this kingdom God's law was trampled under foot. The fear of the Lord found no place in the hearts of the people. The prevailing influences in Medo-Persia were wickedness, blasphemy, and corruption.

The kingdoms that followed were even more base and corrupt. They deteriorated because they cast off their allegiance to God. As they forgot Him, they sank lower and still lower in the scale of moral value (YI Sept. 22, 1903).

43. Iron and Clay--Mingled Churchcraft and Statecraft.--We have come to a time when God's sacred work is represented by the feet of the image in which the iron was mixed with the miry clay. God has a people, a chosen people, whose discernment must be sanctified, who must not become unholy by laying upon the foundation wood, hay, and stubble. Every soul who is loyal to the commandments of God will see that the

distinguishing feature of our faith is the seventh-day Sabbath. If the government would honor the Sabbath as God has commanded, it would stand in the strength of God and in defense of the faith once delivered to the saints. But statesmen will uphold the spurious sabbath, and will mingle their religious faith with the observance of this child of the papacy, placing it above the Sabbath which the Lord has sanctified and blessed, setting it apart for man to keep holy, as a sign between Him and His people to a thousand generations. The mingling of churchcraft and statecraft is represented by the iron and the clay. This union is weakening all the power of the churches. This investing the church with the power of the state will bring evil results. Men have almost passed the point of God's forbearance. They have invested their strength in politics, and have united with the papacy. But the time will come when God will punish those who have made void His law, and their evil work will recoil upon themselves (MS 63, 1899).

46. A Divine Revelation.--Nebuchadnezzar felt that he could accept this interpretation as a

divine revelation; for to Daniel had been revealed every detail of the dream. The solemn truths conveyed by the interpretation of this vision of the night made a deep impression on the sovereign's mind, and in humility and awe he "fell upon his face, and worshipped." ...

Nebuchadnezzar saw clearly the difference between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the most learned men of his kingdom (YI Sept. 8, 1903).

47. A Reflector of Light.--Through the Hebrew captives the Lord was made known to the heathen in Babylon. This idolatrous nation was given a knowledge of the kingdom the Lord was to establish, and through His power maintain against all the power and craft of Satan. Daniel and his fellow-companions, Ezra and Nehemiah, and many others were witnesses for God in their captivity. The Lord scattered them among the kingdoms of the earth that their light might shine brightly amid the black darkness of heathenism and idolatry. To Daniel God revealed the light of His purposes,

which had been hidden for many generations. He chose that Daniel should see in vision the light of His truth, and reflect this light on the proud kingdom of Babylon. On the despot king was permitted to flash light from the throne of God. Nebuchadnezzar was shown that the God of heaven was ruler over all the monarchs and kings of earth. His name was to go forth as the God over all gods. God desired Nebuchadnezzar to understand that the rulers of earthly kingdoms had a ruler in the heavens. God's faithfulness in rescuing the three captives from the flames and vindicating their course of action showed His wonderful power.

Great light shone forth from Daniel and his companions. Glorious things were spoken of Zion, the city of the Lord. Thus the Lord designs that spiritual light shall shine from His faithful watchmen in these last days. If the saints in the Old Testament bore such a decided testimony of loyalty, how should God's people today, having the accumulated light of centuries, shine forth, when the prophecies of the Old Testament shed their veiled glory into the future (Letter 32, 1899)!

Chapter 3

1-5. A Last Day Image.--By many, the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is made void, being treated as a thing of naught; while the spurious sabbath, the child of the papacy, is exalted. In the place of God's laws, are elevated the laws of the man of sin,--laws that are to be received and regarded as the wonderful golden image of Nebuchadnezzar was by the Babylonians. Forming this great image, Nebuchadnezzar commanded that it should receive universal homage from all, both great and small, high and low, rich and poor (MS 24, 1891).

19. Something Unusual Anticipated.--When the king saw that his will was not received as the will of God, he was "full of fury," and the form of his visage was changed against these men. Satanic attributes made his countenance appear as the countenance of a demon; and with all the force he could command, he ordered that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than its wont, and

commanded the most mighty men to bind the youth, and cast them into the furnace. He felt that it required more than ordinary power to deal with these noble men. His mind was strongly impressed that something unusual would interpose in their behalf, and his strongest men were ordered to deal with them (ST May 6, 1897).

25. Christ Revealed by Captives.--How did Nebuchadnezzar know that the form of the fourth was like the Son of God? He had heard of the Son of God from the Hebrew captives that were in his kingdom. They had brought the knowledge of the living God who ruleth all things (RH May 3, 1892).

28. Associates Understood Faith.--These faithful Hebrews possessed great natural ability and intellectual culture, and they occupied a high position of honor; but all these advantages did not lead them to forget God. All their powers were yielded to the sanctifying influence of divine grace. By their godly example, their steadfast integrity, they showed forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvelous

light. In their wonderful deliverance was displayed, before that vast assembly, the power and majesty of God. Jesus placed Himself by their side in the fiery furnace, and by the glory of His presence convinced the proud king of Babylon that it could be no other than the Son of God. The light of heaven had been shining forth from Daniel and his companions, until all their associates understood the faith which ennobled their lives and beautified their characters (RH Feb. 1, 1881).

Chapter 4

17. Men of Destiny Watched With Vigilance.--The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. All kings, all nations, are His, under His rule and government. His resources are infinite. The wise man declares, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

Those upon whose actions hang the destinies of nations, are watched over with a vigilance that knows no relaxation by Him who "giveth salvation

unto kings," to whom belong "the shields of the earth" (RH March 28, 1907).

33. Some Today Like Nebuchadnezzar.--We are living in the last days of this earth's history, and we may be surprised at nothing in the line of apostasies and denials of the truth. Unbelief has now come to be a fine art, which men work at to the destruction of their souls. There is constant danger of there being shams in pulpit preachers, whose lives contradict the words they speak; but the voice of warning and of admonition will be heard as long as time shall last; and those who are guilty of transactions that should never be entered into, when reproved or counseled through the Lord's appointed agencies, will resist the message and refuse to be corrected. They will go on as did Pharaoh, and Nebuchadnezzar, until the Lord takes away their reason, and their hearts become unimpressible. The Lord's Word will come to them; but if they choose not to hear it, the Lord will make them responsible for their own ruin (NL No. 31, p. 1).

37. Nebuchadnezzar Thoroughly Converted.--In Daniel's life, the desire to glorify God was the most powerful of all motives. He realized that when standing in the presence of men of influence, a failure to acknowledge God as the source of his wisdom would have made him an unfaithful steward. And his constant recognition of the God of heaven before kings, princes, and statesmen, detracted not one iota from his influence. King Nebuchadnezzar, before whom Daniel so often honored the name of God, was finally thoroughly converted, and learned to "praise and extol and honour the King of heaven" (RH Jan. 11, 1906).

A Warm and Eloquent Testimony.--The king upon the Babylonian throne became a witness for God, giving his testimony, warm and eloquent, from a grateful heart that was partaking of the mercy and grace, the righteousness and peace, of the divine nature (YI Dec. 13, 1904).

Chapter 5

5-9. Presence of Unseen Guest Felt.--A Watcher, who was unrecognized, but whose presence was a power of condemnation, looked on this scene of profanation. Soon the unseen and uninvited Guest made His presence felt. At the moment when the sacrilegious revelry was at its height, a bloodless hand came forth, and wrote words of doom on the wall of the banqueting hall. Burning words followed the movements of the hand. "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," was written in letters of flame. Few were the characters traced by that hand on the wall facing the king, but they showed that the power of God was there.

Belshazzar was afraid. His conscience was awakened. The fear and suspicion that always follow the course of the guilty seized him. When God makes men fear, they cannot hide the intensity of their terror. Alarm seized the great men of the kingdom. Their blasphemous disrespect of sacred things was changed in a moment. A frantic terror overcame all self-control. . . .

In vain the king tried to read the burning letters. He had found a power too strong for him. He could not read the writing (YI May 19, 1898).

27. See EGW on Proverbs 16:2, Vol. III, p. 1160.

Chapter 6

5. An Unenviable Position.--Daniel's position was not an enviable one. He stood at the head of a dishonest, prevaricating, godless cabinet, whose members watched him with keen, jealous eyes, to find some flaw in his conduct. They kept spies on his track, to see if they could not in this way find something against him. Satan suggested to these men a plan whereby they might get rid of Daniel. Use his religion as a means of condemning him, the enemy said (YI Nov. 1, 1900).

10. Undeviating Integrity Is Only Safe Course.--It may be a difficult matter for men in high positions to pursue the path of undeviating

integrity whether they shall receive praise or censure. Yet this is the only safe course. All the rewards which they might gain by selling their honor would be only as the breath from polluted lips, as dross to be consumed in the fire. Those who have moral courage to stand in opposition to the vices and errors of their fellow men--it may be of those whom the world honor--will receive hatred, insult, and abusive falsehood. They may be thrust down from their high position, because they would not be bought or sold, because they could not be induced by bribes or threats to stain their hands with iniquity. Everything on earth may seem to conspire against them; but God has set His seal upon His own work. They may be regarded by their fellow men as weak, unmanly, unfit to hold office; but how differently does the Most High regard them. Those who despise them are the really ignorant. While the storms of calumny and reviling may pursue the man of integrity through life, and beat upon his grave, God has the "well done" prepared for him. Folly and iniquity will at best yield only a life of unrest and discontent, and at its close a thorny dying pillow. And how many, as

they view their course of action and its results, are led to end with their own hands their disgraceful career. And beyond all this waits the judgment, and the final, irrevocable doom, Depart (ST Feb. 2, 1882)!

Chapter 7

2-7. Messiah's Ensign, a Lamb.--To Daniel was given a vision of fierce beasts, representing the powers of the earth. But the ensign of the Messiah's kingdom is a lamb. While earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power, Christ is to banish every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion. His kingdom was to be established to uplift and ennoble fallen humanity (Letter 32, 1899).

10 (Revelation 20:12). An Unerring Register.--There is an unerring register kept of all sins committed. All man's impiety, all his disobedience to Heaven's commands, are written in the books of heaven with unerring accuracy. The figures of guilt rapidly accumulate, yet the

judgments of God are tempered with mercy, until the figures have reached their appointed limit. God bears long with the transgression of human beings, and continues through His appointed agencies to present the gospel message, until the set time has come. God bears with divine patience with the perversity of the wicked; but He declares that He will visit their transgressions with a rod. He will at last permit the destructive agencies of Satan to bear sway to destroy (MS 17, 1906).

Accurately recorded in the books of heaven are the sneers and trivial remarks made by sinners who pay no heed to the call of mercy when Christ is represented to them by a servant of God. As the artist takes on the polished glass a true picture of a human face, so God daily places upon the books of heaven an exact representation of the character of every individual (MS 105, 1901).

25 (Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12). A Signpost Turned Around.--The Lord has clearly defined the road to the city of God; but the great apostate has changed the signpost, setting up a false one--a

spurious sabbath. He says: "I will work at cross-purposes with God. I will empower my delegate, the man of sin, to take down God's memorial, the seventh-day Sabbath. Thus will I show the world that the day sanctified and blessed by God has been changed. That day shall not live in the minds of the people. I will obliterate the memory of it. I will place in its stead a day bearing not the credentials of heaven, a day that cannot be a sign between God and His people. I will lead the people who accept this day, to place upon it the sanctity that God placed upon the seventh day. Through my vicegerent I will exalt myself. The first day shall be extolled, and the Protestant world shall receive this spurious sabbath as genuine. Through the non-observance of the Sabbath God instituted, I will bring His law into contempt. The words, 'A sign between me and you throughout your generations,' I will make to serve on the side of my sabbath. Thus the world will become mine. I will be ruler of the earth, prince of the world. I will so control the minds under my power that God's Sabbath shall be an object of contempt. A sign? I will make the observance of the seventh day a sign of disloyalty

to the authorities of earth. Human laws shall be made so stringent that men and women will not dare to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. For fear of wanting food and clothing, they will join with the world in transgressing God's law; and the earth will be wholly under my dominion."

The man of sin has instituted a false sabbath, and the professed Christian world has adopted this child of the papacy, refusing to obey God. Thus Satan leads men and women in a direction opposite to the city of refuge; and by the multitudes who follow him, it is demonstrated that Adam and Eve are not the only ones who have accepted the words of the wily foe.

The enemy of all good has turned the signpost round, so that it points to the path of disobedience as the path of happiness. He has insulted Jehovah by refusing to obey a "Thus saith the Lord." He has thought to change times and laws (RH April 17, 1900).

Chapter 9

1. See EGW on Jeremiah 25; Jeremiah 27-29.

2. God Prepares the Way.--While those who had remained loyal to God in the midst of Babylon were seeking the Lord and studying the prophecies foretelling their deliverance, God was preparing the hearts of kings to show favor to His repentant people (RH March 21, 1907).

3-19. Prophecy and Prayer.--Daniel's example of prayer and confession is given for our instruction and encouragement. For nearly seventy years, Israel had been in captivity. The land which God had chosen for His own possession was given into the hands of the heathen. The beloved city, the recipient of heaven's light, once the joy of the whole earth, was now despised and degraded. The temple that had contained the ark of God's covenant and the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat, was in ruins. Its very site was desecrated by unholy feet. Faithful men who knew of the former glory were filled with anguish at the

desolation of the holy house that had distinguished Israel as God's chosen people. These men had been witnesses to the denunciations of God because of the sins of His people. They had been witnesses to the fulfillment of this word. They had been witnesses also to the promises of His favor if Israel would return to God, and walk circumspectly before Him. Aged, gray-headed pilgrims went up to Jerusalem to pray amid its ruins. They kissed its stones, and wet them with their tears, as they entreated the Lord to have mercy on Zion, and cover her with the glory of His righteousness. Daniel knew that the appointed time for Israel's captivity was nearly ended; but he did not feel that because God had promised to deliver them, they themselves had no part to act. With fasting and contrition he sought the Lord, confessing his own sins and the sins of the people (RH Feb. 9, 1897).

24. Everlasting Righteousness Brought In.--

Through His chosen agencies God will graciously make known His purposes. Then the grand work of redemption will go forward. Men will learn of the reconciliation for iniquity and of the everlasting

righteousness which the Messiah has brought in through His sacrifice. The cross of Calvary is the great center. This truth acted upon will make Christ's sacrifice effectual. This is that which Gabriel revealed to Daniel in answer to fervent prayer. It was of this that Moses and Elijah and Christ talked at His transfiguration. By the humiliation of the cross He was to bring everlasting deliverance to all who would walk after Him, giving positive evidence that they are separated from the world (Letter 201, 1899).

Chapter 10

3. See EGW on ch. 1:8.

5-7. Christ Appeared to Daniel.--No less a personage than the Son of God appeared to Daniel. This description is similar to that given by John when Christ was revealed to him upon the Isle of Patmos. Our Lord now comes with another heavenly messenger to teach Daniel what would take place in the latter days. This knowledge was given to Daniel and recorded by Inspiration for us

upon whom the ends of the world are come (RH Feb. 8, 1881).

12, 13. Right Counsel Versus Evil Counsel.-- [Daniel 10:12, 13 quoted.] By this we see that heavenly agencies have to contend with hindrances before the purpose of God is fulfilled in its time. The king of Persia was controlled by the highest of all evil angels. He refused, as did Pharaoh, to obey the word of the Lord. Gabriel declared, He withstood me twenty-one days by his representations against the Jews. But Michael came to his help, and then he remained with the kings of Persia, holding the powers in check, giving right counsel against evil counsel. Good and evil angels are taking a part in the planning of God in His earthly kingdom. It is God's purpose to carry forward His work in correct lines, in ways that will advance His glory. But Satan is ever trying to counterwork God's purpose. Only by humbling themselves before God can God's servants advance His work. Never are they to depend on their own efforts or on outward display for success (Letter 201, 1899).

13. An Invisible Struggle.--We have before us in the Word of God instances of heavenly agencies working on the minds of kings and rulers, while at the same time satanic agencies were also at work on their minds. No human eloquence, in strongly set forth human opinions, can change the working of satanic agencies. Satan seeks continually to block the way, so that the truth shall be bound about by human devising; and those who have light and knowledge are in the greatest danger unless they constantly consecrate themselves to God, humiliating self, and realizing the peril of the times.

Heavenly beings are appointed to answer the prayers of those who are working unselfishly for the interests of the cause of God. The very highest angels in the heavenly courts are appointed to work out the prayers which ascend to God for the advancement of the cause of God. Each angel has his particular post of duty, which he is not permitted to leave for any other place. If he should leave, the powers of darkness would gain an

advantage. ...

Day by day the conflict between good and evil is going on. Why is it that those who have had many opportunities and advantages do not realize the intensity of this work? They should be intelligent in regard to this. God is the Ruler. By His supreme power He holds in check and controls earthly potentates. Through His agencies He does the work which was ordained before the foundation of the world.

As a people we do not understand as we should the great conflict going on between invisible agencies, the controversy between loyal and disloyal angels. Evil angels are constantly at work, planning their line of attack, controlling as commanders, kings, and rulers, the disloyal human forces. ... I call upon the ministers of Christ to press home upon the understanding of all who come within the reach of their voice, the truth of the ministration of angels. Do not indulge in fanciful speculations. The written Word is our only safety. We must pray as did Daniel, that we may be

guarded by heavenly intelligences. As ministering spirits angels are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Pray, my brethren, pray as you have never prayed before. We are not prepared for the Lord's coming. We need to make thorough work for eternity (Letter 201, 1899).

Chapter 12

3 (see EGW comments on Isaiah 60:1). Stars and Gems in Crown.--By living a life of devotion and self-sacrifice in doing good to others, you might have been adding stars and gems to the crown that you will wear in heaven, and laying up unfading, eternal treasures (MS 69, 1912).

10. The Wicked Lack Understanding.--[Daniel 12:10 quoted.] The wicked have chosen Satan as their leader. Under his control, the wonderful faculties of the mind are used to construct agencies of destruction. God has given the human mind great power, power to show that the Creator has endowed man with ability to do a great work against the enemy of all righteousness,

power to show what victories may be gained in the conflict against evil. To those who fulfil God's purpose for them will be spoken the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The human machinery has been used to do a work that is a blessing to humanity; and God is glorified.

But when those to whom God has entrusted capabilities give themselves into the hands of the enemy, they become a power to destroy. When men do not make God first and last and best in everything, when they do not give themselves to Him for the carrying out of His purposes, Satan comes in, and uses in his service the minds that, given to God, could achieve great good. Under his direction, they do an evil work with great and masterly power. God designed them to work on a high plane of action, to enter into His mind, and thus to acquire an education that would enable them to work the works of righteousness. But they know nothing of this education. They are helpless.

Their powers do not guide them aright; for they are under the enemy's control (Letter 141, 1902).

13. Daniel Standing in His Lot Now.--[Daniel 12:9, 4, 10, 13 quoted.] The time has come for Daniel to stand in his lot. The time has come for the light given him to go to the world as never before. If those for whom the Lord has done so much will walk in the light, their knowledge of Christ and the prophecies relating to Him will be greatly increased as they near the close of this earth's history (MS 176, 1899).

Chapter 28

Hosea

Chapter 4

17. A Daniel Mark Placed.--By continual resistance the sinner places himself where he knows nothing but resistance. When he disregards the calls of God's mercy, and continues to sow the seeds of unbelief, the dread mark is placed over his doorway, "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone" (Letter 51a, 1895).

Chapter 6

6, 7 (Micah 6:6-8). When Sacrifices Are Repugnant.--[Hosea 6:6, 7 quoted.] The many sacrifices of the Jews and the flowing of blood to atone for sins for which they felt no true repentance was ever repugnant to God. He spoke through Micah saying, [Micah 6:6-8 quoted].

Costly gifts and a semblance of holiness cannot

win the favor of God. He requires for His mercies a contrite spirit, a heart open to the light of truth, love and compassion for our fellow men, and a spirit refusing to be bribed through avarice or self-love. The priests and rulers were destitute of these essentials to God's favor, and their most precious gifts and gorgeous ceremonies were an abomination in His eyes (ST March 21, 1878.)

Chapter 8

1. See EGW on Jeremiah 23:1.

Chapter 12

7. See EGW on Proverbs 16:11, Vol. III.

Chapter 13

9. See EGW on Jeremiah 23:1.

Chapter 29

Joel

Chapter 2

23. See EGW on Revelation 18:1.

28, 29 (Acts 2:17, 18). A More Evident Fulfillment.--If this prophecy of Joel met a partial fulfillment in the days of the apostles, we are living in a time when it is to be even more evidently manifest to the people of God. He will so bestow His Spirit upon His people that they will become a light amid the moral darkness; and great light will be reflected in all parts of the world. O that our faith might be increased, that the Lord might work mightily with His people (MS 49, 1908).

Chapter 30

Amos

No Commentary.

Chapter 31

Obadiah

No Commentary.

Chapter 32

Jonah

No Commentary.

Chapter 33

Micah

No Commentary.

Chapter 34

Nahum

No Commentary.

Chapter 35

Habakkuk

No Commentary.

Chapter 36

Zephaniah

No Commentary.

Chapter 37

Haggai

Chapter 1

1, 2. Pleas for Delay Dishonor God.--[Haggai 1:1, 2 quoted.] The expression, "This people say," is significant. In the hour of their opportunity, the Israelites had not shown themselves willing. Prompt obedience is expected of those whom the Lord chooses and leads. Pleas for delay are a dishonor to God. And yet those who choose to follow their own way, often frame ingenious excuses in self-justification. Thus the Israelites declared that they had begun to rebuild, but that they were broken off in their work because of the hindrances devised by their enemies. These hindrances, they reasoned, were an indication that it was not the proper time to rebuild. They declared that the Lord had interposed difficulties to reprove their hot haste. This is why, in a communication through His prophet, He referred to them not as "my people," but as "this people."

The Israelites had no real excuse for leaving their work on the temple. The time when the most serious objections were raised, was the time for them to persevere in building. But they were actuated by a selfish dislike to encounter danger by arousing the opposition of their enemies. They did not possess the faith that is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. They hesitated to move forward by faith in the opening providences of God, because they could not see the end from the beginning. When difficulties arose, they were easily turned from the work.

This history will be repeated. There will be religious failures because men do not have faith. When they look at the things that are seen, impossibilities appear; but God can lead them step by step in the course He desires them to take. His work will advance only as His servants move forward by faith. While they may be called upon to pass through trying times, yet they should ever remember that they are contending with a weakened, beaten foe. God's people will finally

triumph over every power of darkness (RH Dec. 5, 1907).

2. Misinterpretation of Prophecy Hindered God's Work.--The Lord has resources. His hand is on the machinery. When the time came for His temple to be rebuilt, He moved upon Cyrus as His agent to discern the prophecies concerning Himself, and to grant the Jewish people their liberty. And more, Cyrus furnished them the necessary facilities for rebuilding the temple of the Lord. This work began under Cyrus, and his successor carried on the work begun.

[Isaiah 45:1 and 44:28, quoted.]

The Samaritans tried to hinder this work. By their false reports they aroused suspicion in minds easily stirred up to suspect; and because of this discouragement, the Jews became unbelieving and indifferent in regard to the work that the Lord had signified He would have done. They were opposed by Smerdis the usurper. "Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it

ceased until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia." When Darius came to the throne, he set aside the work and prohibition of the usurper. But even then the people that should have been the most interested continued to be indifferent. They misapplied the prophecy given by Inspiration. They misinterpreted the Word of God, and declared that the time to build had not yet come, and that until the days were fully accomplished, they would not undertake the work. But while they left the building of the house of the Lord, the temple in which they could worship God, until the end of the time specified as the captivity of the Jews had fully come, they built mansions for themselves (MS 116, 1897).

13. Reproof Changed to Encouragement.--It was after Haggai's second message that the people felt that the Lord was in earnest with them. They dared not disregard the repeated warning that their prosperity and the blessing of God were dependent upon their entire obedience to the instructions given them. As soon as they decided that they would do the words of the Lord, His messages of

reproof changed to words of encouragement. O how merciful a God we have! He says, "I am with you." The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. He assured the people that if they were obedient, they would place themselves in a position where He could bless them for His own name's glory. If God's people will only rely upon Him, and believe in Him, He will bless them (MS 116, 1897).

Chapter 2

1-9, 11, 12. Parables Showing What God Endorses.--In speaking of the building of a house for God, the prophet Haggai shows in parables what God endorses and what He condemns.

[Haggai 2:1-9, 11, 12 quoted.]

This is a parable. The sacrifice, spoken of as holy flesh, was a representation of Christ, who was the foundation of the Jewish economy, and who is ever to be regarded as the One who makes possible the purification of man from sin (MS 95, 1902).

9. Superiority and Purpose of Second Temple.--[Haggai 2:9 quoted.] The outward glory of the temple was not the glory of the Lord. Instruction was given as to what constituted the blessing that was to rest upon the temple. Its restoration in a plainer style than that of the first temple, was to place before the people in a proper light their past error in depending upon the pomp and splendor of outward form and ceremony. The temple was to be erected at this time, also, to remove the reproach of their disloyalty to God. Haggai instructed the people that by heartfelt repentance and by a speedy completion of the temple, they were to seek to be cleansed from the sin of disobedience that had led away from God and had delayed the carrying out of the command to arise and build. ...

In neglecting the temple, which was the mirror of God's presence, the people had greatly dishonored God. They were now instructed to hold His house in sacred honor, not because of its magnificence, as did the Jews in the days of Christ, but because God had promised to be there. And

this second temple was to be superior to the first because in a special sense the Messiah would honor it with His personal presence (RH Dec. 12, 1907).

10-13, 14. Acceptable Service.--In order that the builders of the second temple might make no mistakes, the Lord plainly instructed them, in the form of a parable, regarding the nature of service acceptable in His sight. ... [Haggai 2:10-13 quoted.]

A soul corrupted by sin is represented by the figure of a dead body in a state of putrefaction. All the washings and sprinklings enjoined in the ceremonial law were lessons in parables, teaching the necessity of a work of regeneration in the inward heart for the purification of the soul dead in trespasses and sins, and also the necessity of the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit [Haggai 2:14 quoted] (RH Dec. 19, 1907).

14-19. The Heart Unveiled. [Haggai 2:14-19, quoted.] In this scripture the heart is unveiled. The

Lord takes cognizance of all the works of the children of men. He can diminish; He can increase and bless.

Professing believers who reveal by their actions that they are still clinging to selfish practises, are working upon worldly principles. The principles of justice and integrity are not carried into the life-practise (MS 95, 1902).

23. Pebbles or Polished Gems.--Christians are Christ's jewels. They are to shine brightly for Him, shedding forth the light of His loveliness. Their luster depends on the polishing they receive. They may choose to be polished or to remain unpolished. But every one who is pronounced worthy of a place in the Lord's temple must submit to the polishing process. Without the polishing that the Lord gives they can reflect no more light than a common pebble.

Christ says to man, "You are mine. I have bought you. You are now only a rough stone, but if you will place yourself in my hands, I will polish

you, and the luster with which you shall shine will bring honor to My name. No man shall pluck you out of My hand. I will make you My peculiar treasure. On My coronation day, you will be a jewel in My crown of rejoicing."

The divine Worker spends little time on worthless material. Only the precious jewels does He polish after the similitude of a palace, cutting away all the rough edges. This process is severe and trying; it hurts human pride. Christ cuts deep into the experience that man in his self-sufficiency has regarded as complete, and takes away self-uplifting from the character. He cuts away the surplus surface, and putting the stone to the polishing wheel, presses it close, that all roughness may be worn away. Then, holding the jewel up to the light, the Master sees in it a reflection of Himself, and He pronounces it worthy of a place in His casket.

"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, ... and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts." Blessed be

the experience, however severe, that gives new value to the stone, and causes it to shine with living brightness (RH Dec. 19, 1907).

Life Hidden in Christ Preserved.--God will not suffer one of His true-hearted workers to be left alone to struggle against great odds and be overcome. He preserves as a precious jewel every one whose life is hid with Christ in God. Of every such an one He says, "I ... will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee" (MS 95, 1902).

Chapter 38

Zechariah

Chapter 2

6-9. A Little-heeded Appeal.--[Zechariah 2:6-9 quoted.] How sad it is to contemplate that this touching appeal met with so little response! Had this entreaty to flee from Babylon been heeded, how different might have been the condition of the Jews in the trying times of Mordecai and Esther!

The Lord's purposes for His people have ever been the same. He desires to bestow on the children of men the riches of an eternal inheritance. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. When those who choose to become obedient subjects of the Most High are finally saved in the kingdom of glory, God's purpose for mankind will have been fulfilled (RH Dec. 26, 1907).

Chapter 3

1. Same Work Today.--Joshua is represented as pleading with the Angel. Are we engaged in the same work? Are our supplications ascending to God in living faith? Are we opening the door of the heart to Jesus, and closing every means of entrance to Satan? Are we daily obtaining clearer light, and greater strength, that we may stand in Christ's righteousness? Are we emptying our hearts of all selfishness, and cleansing them, preparatory to receiving the latter rain from heaven?

Now is the time when we are to confess and forsake our sins, that they may go beforehand to judgment and be blotted out (RH Nov. 19, 1908).

1-3. False Accuser.--Those who honor God and keep His commandments are subject to the accusations of Satan. The enemy works with all his energy to lead persons into sin. Then he pleads that on account of their past sins, he should be allowed to exercise his hellish cruelty on them as his own subjects. Of this work Zechariah has written. "And

he shewed me Joshua the high priest"--a representative of the people who keep the commandments of God--"standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him."

Christ is our High Priest. Satan stands before Him night and day as an accuser of the brethren. With his masterly power he presents every objectionable feature of character as sufficient reason for the withdrawal of Christ's protecting power, thus allowing Satan to discourage and destroy those whom he has caused to sin. But Christ has made atonement for every sinner. Can we by faith hear our Advocate saying, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

"Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments." Thus sinners appear before the enemy who by his masterly, deceptive power has led them away from allegiance to God. With garments of sin and shame the enemy clothes those who have been

overpowered by his temptations, and then he declares that it is unfair for Christ to be their Light, their Defender (MS 125, 1901).

4. Self-admiration Results From Ignorance.-

-All self-exaltation and self-admiration are the result of ignorance of God and of Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. How quickly will self-esteem die, and pride be humbled in the dust, when we view the matchless charms of the character of Christ! The holiness of His character is reflected by all who serve Him in spirit and in truth.

If our lips have need of cleansing, if we realize our destitution, and come to God in contrition of heart, the Lord will remove the uncleanness. He will say to His angel, "Take away the filthy garments," and clothe him with "change of raiment" (RH Dec. 22, 1896).

4, 5. A Change of Raiment.--Poor, repentant mortals, hear the words of Jesus, and believe as you hear: "And he answered [the accusing charge of Satan] and spake unto those [angels] that stood

before him [to do His bidding], saying, Take away the filthy garments from him." I will blot out his transgressions. I will cover his sins. I will impute to him My righteousness. "And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."

The filthy garments are removed; for Christ says, "I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee." The iniquity is transferred to the innocent, the pure, the holy Son of God; and man, all undeserving, stands before the Lord cleansed from all unrighteousness, and clothed with the imputed righteousness of Christ. Oh, what a change of raiment is this!

And Christ does more than this for them: [Zechariah 3:5 quoted].

This is the honor that God will bestow on those who are clothed with the garments of Christ's righteousness. With such encouragement as this, how can men continue in sin? How can they grieve

the heart of Christ (MS 125, 1901)?

4-7. An Experience Being Re-enacted.--

[Zechariah 3:4-7 quoted.] The one who was clothed with filthy garments represents those who have committed wrongs, but who have come into so sincere a position of repentance that the Lord, who forgives all sins that are repented of, was satisfied. Satan seeks to place in a humiliating position those who have truly repented of their sins. And those who are continuing in a wrong course of action are prompted by Satan to tantalize the one who has repented. ...

Men who have gone to great lengths in transgression, and who have never confessed their sins will seek to bring all the reproach possible upon those whom Satan has worked to destroy, but who have repented and humbled themselves before God, confessing their sins to the sin-pardoning Saviour, and receiving pardon. Men who have not repented of their sins, and have not received pardon, will tantalize the truly repentant ones, repeating their wrongdoing to those who knew

nothing of the wrong done. They accuse and condemn the repentant ones as if they themselves were guiltless.

It has been shown me that the experience recorded in the third chapter of Zechariah is now being acted over, and will continue to be while men, making profession of cleanness, refuse to humble the heart and confess their sins (Letter 360, 1906).

Chapter 4

6. See EGW on 2 Kings 2:11-15, Vol. II, p. 1037.

6, 7, 10. Assumed Power Is Not God's Strength.--This chapter is full of encouragement for those who do the work of the Lord in these last days. Zerubbabel had gone to Jerusalem to build the house of the Lord. But he was compassed with difficulties. His adversaries "weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building," "and made them to cease by force and

power." But the Lord interposed in their behalf, and the house was finished. [Zechariah 4:6, 7, 10 quoted.]

The very same difficulties which were created to hinder the restoration and upbuilding of the work of God, the great mountains of difficulty which loomed in Zerubbabel's way, will be met by all who today are loyal to God and to His work. Many human inventions are used to carry out plans after the mind and will of men with whom God is not working. But it is not boastful words nor a multitude of ceremonies that show that the Lord is working with His people. The assumed power of the human agent does not decide this question. Those who place themselves in opposition to the Lord's work may hinder for a time, but the same Spirit that has guided the Lord's work all the way through will guide it today. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." ...

The Lord would have every soul strong in His strength. He would have us look to Him, receiving our directions from Him (RH May 16, 1899).

11-14 (Matthew 25:1-13). Oil Purifies the Soul.--We all need to study as never before the parable of the ten virgins. Five of them were wise, and five were foolish. The wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. This is the holy oil represented in Zechariah [Zechariah 4:11-14 quoted]. This representation is of the highest consequence to those who claim to know the truth. But if we do not practise the truth, we have not received the holy oil, which the two golden pipes empty out of themselves. The oil is received into vessels prepared for the oil. It is the Holy Spirit in the heart which works by love and purifies the soul. . . .

Satan is working with all his hellish power to quench that light which should burn brightly in the soul and shine forth in good works. The words of God to Zechariah show from whence the holy golden oil comes, and its bright light which the Lord kindles in the chambers of the soul gives light through good works to the world. Satan will work to quench the light God has for every soul, by

casting his shadow across the pathway to intercept every ray of heavenly light. He knows that his time is short. The people of God must cleave to God, else they will lose their bearings. If they cherish hereditary and cultivated traits of character that misrepresent Christ, while professedly His disciples, they are represented by the man coming to the gospel feast without having on the wedding garment, and by the foolish virgins which had no oil in their vessels with their lamps. We must cleave to that which God pronounces to be truth, though the whole world may be arrayed against it (MS 140, 1901).

Oil Conveyed Through Messages.--
[Zechariah 4:1-3, 11-14 quoted.] By the holy beings surrounding His throne, the Lord keeps up a constant communication with the inhabitants of the earth. The golden oil represents the grace with which God keeps the lamps of believers supplied. Were it not that this holy oil is poured from heaven in the messages of God's Spirit, the agencies of evil would have entire control over men. God is dishonored when we do not receive the

communications that He sends us. Thus we refuse the golden oil which He would pour into our souls to be communicated to those in darkness (RH Feb. 3, 1903).

Word Flows Into Messengers' Hearts.-- [Zechariah 4:11-14 quoted.] These empty themselves into the golden bowls, which represent the hearts of the living messengers of God, who bear the Word of the Lord to the people in warnings and entreaties. The Word itself must be as represented, the golden oil, emptied from the two olive trees that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. This is the baptism by the Holy Spirit with fire. This will open the soul of unbelievers to conviction. The wants of the soul can be met only by the working of the Holy Spirit of God. Man can of himself do nothing to satisfy the longings and meet the aspirations of the heart (MS 109, 1897).

12 (Isaiah 58:8). To Constantly Receive, One Must Constantly Impart.--The capacity for receiving the holy oil from the two olive trees which empty themselves, is by the receiver

emptying that holy oil out of himself in word and in action to supply the necessities of other souls. Work, precious, satisfying work--to be constantly receiving and constantly imparting! The capacity for receiving is only kept up by imparting (NL No. 12, pp. 3, 4).

Chapter 8

7-13. Spiritual Restoration Coming.--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 [Zechariah 8:9, 11-13, 7, 8 quoted] (Letter 42, 1912).

Chapter 9

12-17. Responsible for Darkness.--The darkness of the Gentile world was attributable to the neglect of the Jewish nation, as is represented in the ninth chapter of Zechariah.

[Zechariah 9:12-17 quoted.] The whole world is embraced in the contract of the great plan of

redemption (MS 65, 1912).

16 (Isaiah 53:11; Ephesians 1:18). Christ's Reward.--[Zechariah 9:16; Ephesians 1:18; Isaiah 53:11 quoted.] Christ looks upon His people in their purity and perfection as the reward of all His sufferings, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory,--Christ the great center, from whom radiates all glory (RH Oct. 22, 1908).

Chapter 39

Malachi

Chapter 1

10. Do Not Hire Every Errand Done.--Today, as in the days of Malachi, there are ministers who labor, not because they dare not do otherwise, not because the woe is upon them, but for the wages they are to receive. It is entirely wrong to hire every errand that is done for the Lord. The treasury of the Lord has been drained by those who have been only an injury to the cause. If ministers give themselves wholly to the work of God, and devote all their energies to building up His cause, they will have no lack. As regards temporal things, they have a better portion than their Lord, and better than His chosen disciples, whom He sent forth (SW Jan. 3, 1905).

11. Jews' Prosperity Was to Reveal God's Glory.--[Malachi 1:11 quoted.] The prophetic words of Malachi have been meeting their

fulfillment in the proclamation of the Lord's truth to the Gentiles. God, in His infinite wisdom, chose Israel as the depository of priceless treasures of truth for all nations. He gave them His law as the standard of the character they were to develop before the world, before angels, and before the unfallen worlds. They were to reveal to the world the laws of the government of heaven. By precept and example they were to bear a decided testimony for the truth. The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their prosperity. They were to be a kingdom of priests and princes. God furnished them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth.

Through disloyalty, God's chosen people developed a character exactly the opposite of the character He desired them to develop. They placed their own mold and superscription upon the truth. They forgot God, and lost sight of their high privilege as His representatives. The blessings they had received brought no blessing to the world. All their advantages were appropriated for their own glorification. They robbed God of the service He

required of them, and they robbed their fellow men of religious guidance and a holy example. Like the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, they followed out every imagination of their evil hearts. Thus they made sacred things appear a farce, saying, "The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these," while at the same time they were misrepresenting God's character, dishonoring His name, and polluting His sanctuary (SW Jan. 10, 1905).

13. See EGW on Leviticus 1:3, Vol. I, p. 1110.

Chapter 2

1, 2. God Requires More Than We Give Him.--[Malachi 2:1, 2 quoted.] The Lord requires of all who profess to be His people, far more than they give Him. He expects believers in Christ Jesus to reveal to the world, in word and deed, the Christianity that was exemplified in the life and character of the Redeemer. If the Word of God is enshrined in their hearts, they will give a practical demonstration of the power and purity of the

gospel. The testimony thus borne to the world is of much more value than sermons, or professions of godliness that do not reveal good works. Let those who name the name of Christ remember that individually they are making an impression favorable or unfavorable to Bible religion, on the minds of all with whom they come in contact (SW Jan. 17, 1905).

Chapter 3

1-3. Truth a Continual Test.-- [Malachi 3:1-3 quoted.] Everything in our character that cannot enter the city of God will be reproved; if we submit to the Lord's refining, all the dross and the tin will be consumed. As the Lord's chosen ones will receive the light appropriate for this time, they will not be led to exalt themselves. They will not manufacture a standard whereby to measure their own character; for the Lord has given one standard, by which every character is to be tested. There is not one standard for the poor, and another for the rich; for all will be tested by that law which bids us to love God supremely and our neighbor as

ourselves. Those who win the treasure of heaven will be those who have laid up their treasure above. God gives us light and opportunities to learn from Christ; that we may be like Him in spirit and character; but we are not to conform to any human standard. We are to receive the truth of God into the heart, that it may regulate the life and form the character.

The Lord is looking upon men in the different spheres in which they move, and the character is tested under the different circumstances in which they are placed. The truth, pure, refined, elevating, is a continual test, to measure the man. If truth controls the conscience and is an abiding principle in the heart, it becomes an active working agent, it works by love and purifies the soul. But if the knowledge of the truth produces no beauty in the soul, if it does not subdue, soften, and recreate the man after God's own image, it is of no benefit to the receiver; it is as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. The truth as it is in Jesus, planted in the heart by the Holy Spirit, always works from within outward; it will be revealed in our words and spirit

and actions toward everyone with whom we are connected (Letter 20a, 1893).

3, 4. A Refining Process.--[Malachi 3:3, 4 quoted.] In this scripture is portrayed a refining, purifying process, to be carried on in the hearts of men by the Lord of hosts. The process is most trying to the soul, but it is only by this means that the dross can be removed. Of necessity we must endure trials; for through these we are brought close to our heavenly Father, in obedience to His will, that we may render to Him an offering in righteousness. . . .

The Master sees wherein we need to be purified for His heavenly kingdom. He will not leave us in the furnace until we are wholly consumed. As a refiner and purifier of silver, He is beholding His children, watching the process of purification, until He shall discern His image reflected in us. Although we often feel affliction's flame kindling about us, and at times fear that we shall be utterly consumed, yet the loving-kindness of God is just as great toward us at these times as when we are free

in spirit and triumphing in Him. The furnace is to purify and refine, but not to consume and destroy. God in His providence would try us, to purify us as the sons of Levi, that we may offer to Him an offering in righteousness (SW Feb. 7, 1905).

Every Test Necessary, Seldom Repeated.--
[Malachi 3:3, 4 quoted.] Here is the process, the refining, purifying process, to be carried on by the Lord of hosts. The work is most trying to the soul, but it is only through this process that the rubbish and defiling impurities can be removed. Our trials are all necessary to bring us close to our heavenly Father, in obedience to His will, that we may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. God has given each of us capabilities, talents to improve. We need a new and living experience in the divine life, in order to do the will of God. No amount of past experience will suffice for the present, or will strengthen us to overcome the difficulties in our path. We must have new grace and fresh strength daily in order to be victorious.

We are seldom, in all respects, placed in the

same condition twice. Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, and many others, were all sorely tried, but not in the same way. Every one has his individual tests and trials in the drama of life, but the very same trial seldom comes twice. Each has his own experience, peculiar in its character and circumstances, to accomplish a certain work. God has a work, a purpose, in the life of each and all of us. Every act, however small, has its place in our life experience. We must have the continual light and experience that come from God. We all need them, and God is more than willing we should have them, if we will take them (RH June 22, 1886).

5-17. A View of Two Groups.--In the third chapter of Malachi two parties are brought to view. Here the Lord denounces against His professed people who are not faithful sentinels. The charge and challenge of God against this people is marked and decided [Malachi 3:5-12 quoted.] Man's duty to be faithful in giving the Lord the portion which He claims in tithes and offerings, that there may be a supply to carry forward the work without embarrassment or hindrance is plainly specified.

A people is brought to view who are not filled with the Holy Spirit, because they have not walked humbly with God and been faithful and clean and pure and holy in His sight. God says, "Your words have been stout against me. . . . Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we accept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; . . . yea, they that tempt God are even delivered."

Who required them to walk mournfully? Not Christ. Their mournfulness is the fruit of their own will and unsanctified spirit. They complain of one another and of God, putting on an outside show as disappointed men, leaving the impression on the world that it does not pay to be Christians. To be envious and jealous of the brethren means to be envious and jealous of God (MS 15, 1899).

8. Robbery of Service.--Those who refuse to place themselves on the Lord's side are robbing

Him of the service He claims. What rent are they paying Him for living in His house, this world? They act as though they had created the world, as though they had a right to use what they possess as they please. God marks their misuse of His talents (MS 50, 1901).

10, 11. A Message Still Binding.--Duty is duty, and should be performed for its own sake. But the Lord has compassion upon us in our fallen condition, and accompanies His commands with promises. He calls upon His people to prove Him, declaring that He will reward obedience with the richest blessings [Malachi 3:10, 11 quoted] (SW Feb. 14, 1905).

11. God Can Scatter Means.--Those who are selfishly withholding their means need not be surprised if God's hand scatters their possessions. That which should have been devoted to the advancement of His work and cause, but which has been withheld, may in various ways be taken away. God will come near to them in judgments. Many losses will be sustained. God can scatter the means

He has lent to His stewards, if they refuse to use it to His glory. Some may have none of these losses to remind them of their remissness in duty, but their cases may be the more hopeless (SW Feb. 21, 1905).

13-16. One Person Not to Do All the Witnessing.--The fact that the Lord has been represented as hearkening to the words spoken by His witnesses, tells us that Jesus is in our very midst. He says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." One person is not to do all the witnessing for Jesus; but everyone who loves God is to testify of the preciousness of His grace and truth. Those who receive the light of truth are to have lesson upon lesson to educate them not to keep silent, but to speak often one to another. They are to keep in mind the Sabbath meeting, when those who love and fear God, and who think upon His name, can have opportunity to express their thoughts in speaking one to another. ...

Let each one seek to become an intelligent

Christian, bearing his responsibility, and acting his personal part to make the meeting interesting and profitable. ...

The Majesty of heaven identifies His interests with those of the believers, however humble may be their circumstances. And wherever they are privileged to meet together, it is appropriate that they speak often one to another, giving utterance to the gratitude and love that is a result of thinking upon the name of the Lord. Thus shall God be glorified as He hearkens and hears, and the testimony meeting will be considered the most precious of all meetings; for the words spoken are recorded in the book of remembrance (MS 32, 1894).

16. Memory Constantly Refreshed.--Every deliverance, every blessing, that God in the past has granted to His people, should be kept fresh in memory's hall as a sure pledge of further and richer, increasing blessings that He will bestow. The Lord's blessings are adapted to the needs of His people (MS 65, 1912).

Represent Bright Side of Religion.--Do not gratify the enemy by dwelling upon the dark side of your experience; trust Jesus more fully for help to resist temptation. If we thought and talked more of Jesus, and less of ourselves, we should have much more of His presence. If we abide in Him, we shall be so filled with peace, faith, and courage, and shall have so victorious an experience to relate when we come to meeting, that others will be refreshed by our clear, strong testimony for God. These precious acknowledgements to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power, which works for the salvation of souls.

The bright and cheerful side of religion will be represented by all who are daily consecrated to God. We should not dishonor our Lord by a mournful relation of trials that appear grievous. All trials that are received as educators will produce joy. The whole religious life will be uplifting, elevating, ennobling, fragrant with good words and works. The enemy is well pleased to have souls

depressed, downcast; he desires unbelievers to gain wrong impressions regarding the effect of our faith. But God desires the mind to take a higher level. He desires every soul to triumph in the keeping power of the Redeemer (SW March 7, 1905).

(Hebrews 10:25.) Reflecting Rays of Light.--
[Malachi 3:16 quoted.] To the Christian is granted the joy of gathering rays of eternal light from the throne of glory, and of reflecting these rays not only on his own path, but on the paths of those with whom he associates. By speaking words of hope and encouragement, of grateful praise and kindly cheer, he may strive to make those around him better, to elevate them, to point them to heaven and glory, and to lead them to seek, above all earthly things, the eternal substance, the immortal inheritance, the riches that are imperishable (SW March 7, 1905).

16, 17. Promises to Be Verified.--The closing words of this scripture outline the experience that the people of God are yet to have. We have a wonderful future before us as a people. The

promises of the third chapter of Malachi will be verified to the letter (Letter 223, 1904).

Angels Await Prayers.--Seek most earnestly for a deeper experience and piety, and learn to walk circumspectly. [Malachi 3:16, 17 quoted.] God does not leave His erring children who are weak in faith, and who make many mistakes. The Lord hearkens and hears their prayer and their testimony. Those who look unto Jesus day by day and hour by hour, who watch unto prayer, are drawing nigh to Jesus. Angels with wings outspread wait to bear their contrite prayers to God, and to register them in the books of heaven (Letter 90, 1895).

17. All Luster Is Reflected Light.--All the luster possessed by those who have gained the richest experience is but the reflection of the light of the Sun of righteousness. He who lives nearest to Jesus shines the brightest. And let us thank God that the Master has His hidden ones, who are not recognized by the world, but whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. The luster of the

tinest gem in God's casket will glorify Him. There are many . . . who during this life do not seem to be particularly honored. But the Lord sees those who serve Him [Malachi 3:17 quoted] (Letter 94, 1903).

Jewels Everywhere.--God has jewels in all the churches, and it is not for us to make sweeping denunciation of the professed religious world, but in humility and love, present to all the truth as it is in Jesus. Let men see piety and devotion, let them behold Christlikeness of character, and they will be drawn to the truth. He who loves God supremely and his neighbor as himself, will be a light in the world. Those who have a knowledge of the truth are to communicate the same. They are to lift up Jesus, the world's Redeemer; they are to hold forth the Word of life (RH Jan. 17, 1893).

Chapter 4

1 (Psalm 11:6; 8:44). Root and Branches of Evil.--The whole work of the father of lies is recorded in the statute books of heaven, and those who lend themselves to the service of Satan, to put

forth and present to men the lies of Satan by precept and practice, will receive according to their deeds. Root and branch will be destroyed by the fires of the last days. Satan, the great general of apostasy, is the root, and all his workers, who teach his lies in regard to the law of God, are the branches (MS 58, 1897).

5, 6. The Elijah Message.--In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as that which John did, is to be carried on in these last days. The Lord is giving messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all heed the admonitions and warnings He sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was, Repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe in Christ's soon appearing, we have a definite message to bear,-- "Prepare to meet thy God."

Our message must be as direct as was that of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding the peril his life was in, he never allowed truth to languish on his lips. Our work in this age must be as faithfully done. . . .

In this time of well-nigh universal apostasy, God calls upon His messengers to proclaim His law in the spirit and power of Elias. As John the Baptist, in preparing a people for Christ's first advent, called their attention to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." With the earnestness that characterized Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ's second advent (SW March 21, 1905).

Chapter 40

Matthew

Chapter 2

1, 2. Attention Focused on Birth of Jesus.—

The Lord moved upon the wise men to go in search of Jesus, and He directed their course by a star. This star, leaving them when near Jerusalem, led them to make inquiries in Judah; for they thought it was not possible for the chief priests and scribes to be ignorant of this great event. The coming of the wise men made the whole nation acquainted with the object of their journey, and directed their attention to the important events which were transpiring (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:26).

16-18. Faithfulness Would Have Rendered Wrath Harmless.—All this terrible calamity was suffered of God, to humble the pride of the Jewish nation. Their crimes and wickedness had been so great that the Lord permitted the wicked Herod to thus punish them. Had they been less boastful and

ambitious, their lives pure, their habits simple and sincere, God would have preserved them from being thus humiliated and afflicted by their enemies. God would, in a signal manner, have made the wrath of the king harmless to His people, had they been faithful and perfect before Him. But He could not especially work for them, for their works were abhorred by Him (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:28).

Chapter 3

1-3. See EGW on Luke 1:76, 77.

7, 8 (Luke 3:7-9). Who Were Vipers?—The Pharisees were very strict in regard to the outward observance of forms and customs, and were filled with haughty, worldly, hypocritical self-righteousness. The Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead and the existence of angels, and were skeptical in regard to God. This sect was largely composed of unworthy characters, many of whom were licentious in their habits. By the word “vipers” John meant those who were

malignant and antagonistic, bitterly opposed to the expressed will of God.

John exhorted these men to “bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.” That is, Show that you are converted, that your characters are transformed.... Neither words nor profession, but fruits—the forsaking of sins, and obedience to the commandments of God—show the reality of genuine repentance and true conversion (MS 112, 1901).

13-17 (Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:32, 33). Angels and a Golden Dove.—Jesus was our example in all things that pertain to life and godliness. He was baptized in Jordan, just as those who come to Him must be baptized. The heavenly angels were looking with intense interest upon the scene of the Saviour’s baptism, and could the eyes of those who were looking on, have been opened, they would have seen the heavenly host surrounding the Son of God as He bowed on the banks of the Jordan. The Lord had promised to give John a sign whereby he might know who was

the Messiah, and now as Jesus went up out of the water, the promised sign was given; for he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God, like a dove of burnished gold, hovered over the head of Christ, and a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (The Youth’s Instructor, June 23, 1892).

(Romans 8:26; Hebrews 4:16.) Heaven Open to Petitions.—[Matthew 3:13-17 quoted.] What does this scene mean to us? How thoughtlessly we have read the account of the baptism of our Lord, not realizing that its significance was of the greatest importance to us, and that Christ was accepted of the Father in man’s behalf. As Jesus bowed on the banks of Jordan and offered up His petition, humanity was presented to the Father by Him who had clothed His divinity with humanity. Jesus offered Himself to the Father in man’s behalf, that those who had been separated from God through sin, might be brought back to God through the merits of the divine Petitioner. Because of sin the earth had been cut off from heaven, but with His human arm Christ encircles the fallen

race, and with His divine arm He grasps the throne of the Infinite, and earth is brought into favor with heaven, and man into communion with his God. The prayer of Christ in behalf of lost humanity cleaved its way through every shadow that Satan had cast between man and God, and left a clear channel of communication to the very throne of glory. The gates were left ajar, and heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God, in the form of a dove, encircled the head of Christ, and the voice of God was heard saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

The voice of God was heard in answer to the petition of Christ, and this tells the sinner that his prayer will find a lodgment at the throne of the Father. The Holy Spirit will be given to those who seek for its power and grace, and will help our infirmities when we would have audience with God. Heaven is open to our petitions, and we are invited to come “boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” We are to come in faith, believing that we shall obtain the very things we ask of Him

(The Signs of the Times, April 18, 1892).

The Sound of a Death Knell.—When Christ presented Himself to John for baptism, Satan was among the witnesses of that event. He saw the lightnings flash from the cloudless heavens. He heard the majestic voice of Jehovah that resounded through heaven, and echoed through the earth like peals of thunder, announcing, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” He saw the brightness of the Father’s glory overshadowing the form of Jesus, thus pointing out with unmistakable assurance the One in that crowd whom He acknowledged as His Son. The circumstances connected with this baptismal scene were of the greatest interest to Satan. He knew then for a certainty that unless he could overcome Christ, from thenceforth there would be a limit to his power. He understood that this communication from the throne of God signified that heaven was now more directly accessible to man than it had been, and the most intense hatred was aroused in his breast.

When Satan led man to sin, he hoped that God's abhorrence of sin would forever separate Him from man, and break the connecting link between heaven and earth. When from the opening heavens he heard the voice of God addressing His Son, it was to him as the sound of a death knell. It told him that now God was about to unite man more closely to Himself, and give moral power to overcome temptation, and to escape from the entanglements of satanic devices. Satan well knew the position which Christ had held in heaven as the Son of God, the Beloved of the Father; and that Christ should leave the joy and honor of heaven, and come to this world as a man, filled him with apprehension. He knew that this condescension on the part of the Son of God boded no good to him.

...

The time had now come when Satan's empire over the world was to be contested, his right disputed, and he feared that his power would be broken. He knew, through prophecy, that a Saviour was predicted, and that His kingdom would not be established in earthly triumph and with worldly

honor and display. He knew that the prophecies foretold a kingdom to be established by the Prince of heaven upon the earth which he claimed as his dominion. This kingdom would embrace all the kingdoms of the world, and then the power and glory of Satan would cease, and he would receive his retribution for the sins he had introduced into the world, and for the misery he had brought upon the human race. He knew that everything which concerned his prosperity was depending upon his success or failure in overcoming Christ with his temptations; and he brought to bear on the Saviour every artifice at his command to allure Him from His integrity (The Signs of the Times, August 4, 1887).

16, 17 (Ephesians 1:6. See EGW on Matthew 4:1-11). A Pledge of Love and Light.—In our behalf the Saviour laid hold of the power of Omnipotence, and as we pray to God, we may know that Christ's prayer has ascended before, and that God has heard and answered it. With all our sins and weaknesses we are not cast aside as worthless. "He hath made us accepted in the

beloved.” The glory that rested upon Christ is a pledge of the love of God for us. It tells of the power of prayer,—how the human voice may reach the ear of God, and our petitions find acceptance in the courts of heaven. The light that fell from the open portals upon the head of our Saviour, will fall upon us as we pray for help to resist temptation. The voice that spoke to Jesus says to every believing soul, “This is my beloved child, in whom I am well pleased” (MS 125, 1902).

Assurance of Acceptance.—Through the gates ajar there streamed bright beams of glory from the throne of Jehovah, and this light shines even upon us. The assurance given to Christ is assurance to every repenting, believing, obedient child of God that he is accepted in the Beloved (The Signs of the Times, July 31, 1884).

A Way Through the Dark Shadow.—Christ’s prayer on the banks of the Jordan includes every one who will believe in Him. The promise that you are accepted in the Beloved comes to you. God said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well

pleased.” This means that through the dark shadow which Satan has thrown athwart your pathway Christ has cleaved the way for you to the throne of the infinite God. He has laid hold of almighty power, and you are accepted in the Beloved (The General Conference Bulletin, April 4, 1901).

Chapter 4

1, 2 (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9; Luke 4:2). Moses’ Fasting Not Like Christ’s.—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. He was elevated above the human. He was especially sustained by the glory of God which enshrouded him (The Signs of the Times, June 11, 1874).

1-4 (Luke 4:1-4). The Power of Debased Appetite.—All was lost when Adam yielded to the power of appetite. The Redeemer, in whom was united both the human and the divine, stood in

Adam's place, and endured a terrible fast of nearly six weeks. The length of this fast is the strongest evidence of the extent of the sinfulness and power of debased appetite upon the human family (The Review and Herald, August 4, 1874).

A Lesson to Take to Ourselves.—Christ was our example in all things. As we see His humiliation in the long trial and fast in the wilderness to overcome the temptations of appetite in our behalf, we are to take this lesson home to ourselves when we are tempted. If the power of appetite is so strong upon the human family, and its indulgence so fearful that the Son of God subjected Himself to such a test, how important that we feel the necessity of having appetite under the control of reason. Our Saviour fasted nearly six weeks, that He might gain for man the victory upon the point of appetite. How can professed Christians with an enlightened conscience, and Christ before them as their pattern, yield to the indulgence of those appetites which have an enervating influence upon the mind and heart? It is a painful fact that habits of self-gratification at the expense of health, and the

weakening of moral power, are holding in the bonds of slavery at the present time a large share of the Christian world.

Many who profess godliness do not inquire into the reason of Christ's long period of fasting and suffering in the wilderness. His anguish was not so much from enduring the pangs of hunger as from His sense of the fearful result of the indulgence of appetite and passion upon the race. He knew that appetite would be man's idol, and would lead him to forget God, and would stand directly in the way of his salvation (The Review and Herald, September 1, 1874).

Satan Attacks at Weakest Moment.—While in the wilderness, Christ fasted, but He was insensible to hunger. Engaged in constant prayer to His Father for a preparation to resist the adversary, Christ did not feel the pangs of hunger. He spent the time in earnest prayer, shut in with God. It was as if He were in the presence of His Father. He sought for strength to meet the foe, for the assurance that He would receive grace to carry out

all that He had undertaken in behalf of humanity. The thought of the warfare before Him made Him oblivious to all else, and His soul was fed with the bread of life, just as today those tempted souls will be fed who go to God for aid. He ate of the truth which He was to give to the people as having power to deliver them from Satan's temptations. He saw the breaking of Satan's power over fallen and tempted ones. He saw Himself healing the sick, comforting the hopeless, cheering the desponding, and preaching the gospel to the poor,—doing the work that God had outlined for Him; and He did not realize any sense of hunger until the forty days of His fast were ended.

The vision passed away, and then, with strong craving Christ's human nature called for food. Now was Satan's opportunity to make his assault. He resolved to appear as one of the angels of light that had appeared to Christ in His vision (Letter 159, 1903).

The Trial Not Diminished.—Christ knew that His Father would supply Him food when it would

gratify Him to do so. He would not in this severe ordeal, when hunger pressed Him beyond measure, prematurely diminish one particle of the trial allotted to Him by exercising His divine power.

Fallen man, when brought into straightened places, could not have the power to work miracles on his own behalf, to save himself from pain or anguish, or to give himself victory over his enemies. It was the purpose of God to test and prove the race, and give them an opportunity to develop character by bringing them frequently into trying positions to test their faith and confidence in His love and power. The life of Christ was a perfect pattern. He was ever, by His example and precept, teaching man that God was his dependence, and that in God should be his faith and firm trust (The Review and Herald, August 18, 1874).

1-11 (Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-13; see EGW on John 2:1, 2). The Whole Energies of Apostasy Rallied.—In the councils of Satan it was determined that He [Christ] must be overcome. No

human being had come into the world and escaped the power of the deceiver. The whole forces of the confederacy of evil were set upon His track to engage in warfare against Him, and if possible to prevail over Him. The fiercest and most inveterate enmity was put between the seed of the woman and the serpent. The serpent himself made Christ the mark of every weapon of hell....

The life of Christ was a perpetual warfare against satanic agencies. Satan rallied the whole energies of apostasy against the Son of God. The conflict increased in fierceness and malignity, as again and again the prey was taken out of his hands. Satan assailed Christ through every conceivable form of temptation (The Review and Herald, October 29, 1895).

No Failure on Even One Point.—Christ passed from this scene of glory [His baptism] to one of the greatest temptation. He went into the wilderness, and there Satan met Him, and tempted Him on the very points where man will be tempted. Our Substitute and Surety passed over the ground

where Adam stumbled and fell. And the question was, Will He stumble and fall as Adam did over God's commandments? He met Satan's attacks again and again with, "It is written," and Satan left the field of conflict a conquered foe. Christ has redeemed Adam's disgraceful fall, and has perfected a character of perfect obedience, and left an example for the human family, that they may imitate the Pattern. Had He failed on one point in reference to the law of God, He would not have been a perfect offering; for it was on one point only that Adam failed (The Review and Herald, June 10, 1890).

Satan's Lies to Christ.—Satan told Christ that He was only to set His feet in the blood-stained path, but not to travel it. Like Abraham He was tested to show His perfect obedience. He also stated that he was the angel that stayed the hand of Abraham as the knife was raised to slay Isaac, and he had now come to save His life; that it was not necessary for Him to endure the painful hunger and death from starvation; he would help Him bear a part of the work in the plan of salvation (The

Review and Herald, August 4, 1874).

(Matthew 3:16, 17; Mark 1:10, 11; Luke 3:21, 22.) Precious Tokens Showing Approval.—

Christ did not appear to notice the reviling taunts of Satan. He was not provoked to give him proofs of His power. He meekly bore his insults without retaliation. The words spoken from heaven at His baptism were very precious, evidencing to Him that His Father approved the steps He was taking in the plan of salvation as man's substitute and surety. The opening heavens, and descent of the heavenly dove, were assurances that His Father would unite His power in heaven with that of His Son upon the earth, to rescue man from the control of Satan, and that God accepted the effort of Christ to link earth to heaven, and finite man to the Infinite.

These tokens, received from His Father, were inexpressibly precious to the Son of God through all His severe sufferings, and terrible conflict with the rebel chief (The Review and Herald, August 18, 1874).

(Genesis 3:1-6.) Satan Powerless to Hypnotize Christ.—Satan tempted the first Adam in Eden, and Adam reasoned with the enemy, thus giving him the advantage. Satan exercised his power of hypnotism over Adam and Eve, and this power he strove to exercise over Christ. But after the word of Scripture was quoted, Satan knew that he had no chance of triumphing (Letter 159, 1903).

(Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15.) The Two Adams Contrasted.—When Adam was assailed by the tempter in Eden he was without the taint of sin. He stood in the strength of his perfection before God. All the organs and faculties of his being were equally developed, and harmoniously balanced.

Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure. Here Christ overcame in the sinner's behalf, four thousand years after Adam turned his back upon the light of his home. Separated from the presence of God, the human family had been departing every

successive generation, farther from the original purity, wisdom, and knowledge which Adam possessed in Eden. Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when He came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon Him, He was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed....

In what contrast is the second Adam as He entered the gloomy wilderness to cope with Satan single-handed. Since the fall the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and sinking lower in the scale of moral worth, up to the period of Christ's advent to the earth. And in order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us. He humiliated Himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that He might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him (The Review and Herald, July 28, 1874).

The Severest Discipline.—To keep His glory veiled as the child of a fallen race, this was the most severe discipline to which the Prince of life could subject Himself. Thus He measured His strength with Satan. He who had been expelled from heaven fought desperately for the mastery over the One of whom in the courts above he had been jealous. What a battle was this! No language is adequate to describe it. But in the near future it will be understood by those who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony (Letter 19, 1901).

(Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15; 2 Peter 1:4.) The Power That Man May Command.—The Son of God was assaulted at every step by the powers of darkness. After His baptism He was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness, and suffered temptation for forty days. Letters have been coming in to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations. If He did not have man's nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been

tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man's behalf. His temptation and victory tell us that humanity must copy the Pattern; man must become a partaker of the divine nature.

In Christ, divinity and humanity were combined. Divinity was not degraded to humanity; divinity held its place, but humanity, by being united to divinity, withstood the fiercest test of temptation in the wilderness. The prince of this world came to Christ after His long fast, when He was an hungered, and suggested to Him to command the stones to become bread. But the plan of God, devised for the salvation of man, provided that Christ should know hunger, and poverty, and every phase of man's experience. He withstood the temptation, through the power that man may command. He laid hold on the throne of God, and there is not a man or woman who may not have access to the same help through faith in God. Man may become a partaker of the divine nature; not a

soul lives who may not summon the aid of Heaven in temptation and trial. Christ came to reveal the source of His power, that man might never rely on his unaided human capabilities.

Those who would overcome must put to the tax every power of their being. They must agonize on their knees before God for divine power. Christ came to be our example, and to make known to us that we may be partakers of the divine nature. How?—By having escaped the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Satan did not gain the victory over Christ. He did not put his foot upon the soul of the Redeemer. He did not touch the head though he bruised the heel. Christ, by His own example, made it evident that man may stand in integrity. Men may have a power to resist evil—a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a power that will place them where they may overcome as Christ overcame. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them (The Review and Herald, February 18, 1890).

(Isaiah 53:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21.) The

Terrible Consequences of Transgression.—

Unless there is a possibility of yielding, temptation is no temptation. Temptation is resisted when man is powerfully influenced to do a wrong action and, knowing that he can do it, resists, by faith, with a firm hold upon divine power. This was the ordeal through which Christ passed. He could not have been tempted in all points as man is tempted, had there been no possibility of His failing. He was a free agent, placed on probation, as was Adam, and as is every man. In His closing hours, while hanging upon the cross, He experienced to the fullest extent what man must experience when striving against sin. He realized how bad a man may become by yielding to sin. He realized the terrible consequences of the transgression of God's law; for the iniquity of the whole world was upon Him (The Youth's Instructor, July 20, 1899).

Christ a Free Moral Agent.—The temptations to which Christ was subjected were a terrible reality. As a free agent, He was placed on probation, with liberty to yield to Satan's temptations and work at cross-purposes with God.

If this were not so, if it had not been possible for Him to fall, He could not have been tempted in all points as the human family is tempted (The Youth's Instructor, October 26, 1899).

Christ on Probation.—For a period of time Christ was on probation. He took humanity on Himself, to stand the test and trial which the first Adam failed to endure. Had He failed in His test and trial, He would have been disobedient to the voice of God, and the world would have been lost (The Signs of the Times, May 10, 1899).

3, 4. An Argument With Satan.—Bear in mind that it is none but God that can hold an argument with Satan (Letter 206, 1906).

4 (see EGW on Genesis 3:24). Deviation More Grievous Than Death.—[Matthew 4:4 quoted.] He told Satan that in order to prolong life, obedience to God's requirements was more essential than temporal food. To pursue a course of deviation from the purposes of God, in the smallest degree, would be more grievous than hunger or

death (Redemption: or The First Advent of Christ, page 48).

5, 6. Who Can Stand a Dare?—Jesus would not place Himself in peril to please the devil. But how many today can stand a dare (MS 17, 1893)?

8-10 (Luke 4:5-8). A View of Real Conditions.—He [Satan] asked the Saviour to bow to his authority, promising that if He would do so, the kingdoms of the world would be His. He pointed Christ to his success in the world, enumerating the principalities and powers that were subject to him. He declared that what the law of Jehovah could not do, he had done.

But Jesus said, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” This was to Christ just what the Bible declares it to be—a temptation. Before His sight the tempter held the kingdoms of the world. As Satan saw them, they possessed great external grandeur. But Christ saw them in a different aspect, just as they were—earthly

dominions under the power of a tyrant. He saw humanity full of woe, suffering under the oppressive power of Satan. He saw the earth defiled by hatred, revenge, malice, lust, and murder. He saw fiends in the possession of the bodies and souls of men (MS 33, 1911).

10 (Luke 4:8). Command Compelled Satan.—Jesus said to this wily foe, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Satan had asked Christ to give him evidence that He was the Son of God, and he had in this instance the proof he had asked. At the divine command of Christ he was compelled to obey. He was repulsed and silenced. He had no power to enable him to withstand the peremptory dismissal. He was compelled without another word to instantly desist and to leave the world’s Redeemer (The Review and Herald, September 1, 1874).

11 (Luke 4:13). A Council of Strategy.—Although Satan had failed in his most powerful temptations, yet he had not given up all hope that

he might, at some future time, be successful in his efforts. He looked forward to the period of Christ's ministry, when he should have opportunities to try his artifices against Him. Baffled and defeated, he had no sooner retired from the scene of conflict than he began to lay plans for blinding the understanding of the Jews, God's chosen people, that they might not discern in Christ the world's Redeemer. He determined to fill their hearts with envy, jealousy, and hatred against the Son of God, so that they would not receive Him, but would make His life upon earth as bitter as possible.

Satan held a council with his angels, as to the course they should pursue to prevent the people from having faith in Christ as the Messiah whom the Jews had so long been anxiously expecting. He was disappointed and enraged that he had prevailed nothing against Jesus by his manifold temptations. But he now thought if he could inspire in the hearts of Christ's own people, unbelief as to His being the Promised One, he might discourage the Saviour in His mission and secure the Jews as his agents to carry out his own diabolical purposes. So he went

to work in his subtle manner, endeavoring to accomplish by strategy what he had failed to do by direct, personal effort (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:97, 98).

Chapter 5

1-12. Sufficient to Prevent Bewilderment.—

A study of Christ's wonderful sermon on the mount will teach the believer what must be the characteristics of those whom the Lord calls "Blessed." [Matthew 5:1-12 quoted.] ...

I thank the Lord that such plain directions are given to believers. If we had no other instruction than is contained in these few words, here is sufficient, so that none need become bewildered. But we have a whole Bible full of precious instruction. None need be in darkness and uncertainty. Those who will seek by faith and prayer and earnest study of the Scriptures to obtain the virtues here brought to view, will easily be distinguished from those who walk not in the light. Those who refuse to follow a "Thus saith the Lord"

will have no excuse to render for their persistent resistance of the Word of God (Letter 258, 1907).

Words of a Different Character.—As if enshrouded in a cloud of heavenly brightness, Christ pronounced from the mount of beatitudes His benedictions. The words spoken by Him were of an entirely different character from those which had fallen from the lips of the scribes and pharisees. The ones whom He pronounced blessed were the very ones they would have denounced as cursed of God. To that large concourse of people He declared that He could dispense the treasures of eternity to whomsoever He willed. Although His divinity was clothed with humanity, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. In this public manner He described the attributes of those who were to share the eternal rewards. He pointed out in particular those who would suffer persecution for His name's sake. They were to be richly blessed, becoming heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Great would be their reward in heaven (MS 72, 1901).

A Treasury of Goodness.—Christ longed to fill the world with a peace and joy that would be a similitude of that found in the heavenly world. [Matthew 5:1-12 quoted.] ...

With clearness and power He spoke the words that were to come down to our time as a treasure of goodness. What precious words they were, and how full of encouragement. From His divine lips there fell with fullness and abundant assurance the benedictions that showed Him to be the fountain of all goodness, and that it was His prerogative to bless and impress the minds of all present. He was engaged in His peculiar, sacred province, and the treasures of eternity were at His command. In the disposal of them He knew no control. It was no robbery with Him to act in the office of God. In His blessings He embraced those who were to compose His kingdom in this world. He had brought into the world every blessing essential to the happiness and joy of every soul, and before that vast assembly He presented the riches of the grace of heaven, the accumulated treasures of the eternal, everlasting Father.

Here He specified who should be the subjects of His heavenly kingdom. He did not speak one word to flatter the men of the highest authority, the worldly dignitaries. But He presents before all the traits of character which must be possessed by the peculiar people who will compose the royal family in the kingdom of heaven. He specifies those who shall become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Himself. He proclaims publicly His choice of subjects, and assigns them their place in His service as united with Himself. Those who possess the character specified, will share with Him in the blessing and the glory and the honor that will ever come to Him.

Those who are thus distinguished and blessed will be a peculiar people, trading upon the Lord's gifts. He speaks of those who shall suffer for His name's sake as receiving a great reward in the kingdom of heaven. He spoke with the dignity of One who had unlimited authority, One who had all heavenly advantages to bestow upon those who would receive Him as their Saviour.

Men may usurp the authority of greatness in this world; but Christ does not recognize them; they are usurpers.

There were occasions when Christ spoke with an authority that sent His words home with irresistible force, with an overwhelming sense of the greatness of the speaker, and the human agencies shrunk into nothingness in comparison with the One before them. They were deeply moved; their minds were impressed that He was repeating the command from the most excellent glory. As He summoned the world to listen, they were spellbound and entranced and conviction came to their minds. Every word made for itself a place, and the hearers believed and received the words that they had no power to resist. Every word He uttered seemed to the hearers as the life of God. He was giving evidence that He was the light of the world and the authority of the church, claiming pre-eminence over them all (MS 118, 1905).

13, 14 (chs. 15:9; 22:29). Humble Men Are

Salt of Earth.—In His teachings, Christ likened His disciples to objects most familiar to them. He compared them to salt and to light. “Ye are the salt of the earth,” He said; “ye are the light of the world.” These words were spoken to a few poor, humble fishermen. Priests and rabbis were in that congregation of hearers, but these were not the ones addressed. With all their learning, with all their supposed instruction in the mysteries of the law, with all their claims of knowing God, they revealed that they knew Him not. To these leading men had been committed the oracles of God, but Christ declared them to be unsafe teachers. He said to them, Ye teach for doctrine the commandments of men. “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” Turning from these men to the humble fishermen, He said, “Ye are the salt of the earth” (The Review and Herald, August 22, 1899).

No Self-originated Light.—The light that shines from those who receive Jesus Christ is not self-originated. It is all from the Light and Life of the world. He kindles this light, even as He kindles the fire that all must use in doing His service.

Christ is the light, the life, the holiness, the sanctification of all who believe, and His light is to be received and imparted in all good works. In many different ways His grace is also acting as the salt of the earth; whithersoever this salt finds its way, to homes or communities, it becomes a preserving power to save all that is good, and to destroy all that is evil (The Review and Herald, August 22, 1899).

17-19. Least Among Human Agencies.—
[Matthew 5:17-19 quoted.] This is the judgment pronounced in the kingdom of heaven. Some have thought that the commandment breaker will be there, but will occupy the lowest place. This is a mistake. Sinners will never enter the abode of bliss. The commandment breaker, and all who unite with him in teaching that it makes no difference whether men break or observe the divine law, will by the universe of heaven be called least among the human agencies. For not only have they been disloyal themselves, but they have taught others to break the law of God. Christ pronounces judgment upon those who claim to have a knowledge of the

law, but who, by precept and example, lead souls into confusion and darkness (The Review and Herald, November 15, 1898).

21, 22, 27, 28 (Revelation 20:12). Features of Character in Books of Heaven.—God's law reaches the feelings and motives, as well as the outward acts. It reveals the secrets of the heart, flashing light upon things before buried in darkness. God knows every thought, every purpose, every plan, every motive. The books of heaven record the sins that would have been committed had there been opportunity. God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing. By His law He measures the character of every man. As the artist transfers to the canvas the features of the face, so the features of each individual character are transferred to the books of heaven. God has a perfect photograph of every man's character, and this photograph He compares with His law. He reveals to man the defects that mar his life, and calls upon him to repent and turn from sin (The Signs of the Times, July 31, 1901).

48. Perfection in Character-building.—The Lord requires perfection from His redeemed family. He calls for perfection in character-building. Fathers and mothers especially need to understand the best methods of training children, that they may cooperate with God. Men and women, children and youth, are measured in the scales of heaven in accordance with that which they reveal in their home life. A Christian in the home is a Christian everywhere. Religion brought into the home exerts an influence that cannot be measured (MS 34, 1899).

The Life of a Perfect Man.—Our Saviour took up the true relationship of a human being as the Son of God. We are sons and daughters of God. In order to know how to behave ourselves circumspectly, we must follow where Christ leads the way.

For thirty years He lived the life of a perfect man, meeting the highest standard of perfection (Letter 69, 1897).

Chapter 6

16 (ch. 9:16). Manufactured Religion Not Life and Light.—There are times before us that will try the souls of men, and there will be need of watchfulness, of the right kind of fasting. This will not be like the fasting of the Pharisees. Their seasons of fasting were occasions of outward ceremony. They did not humble their hearts before God. They were filled with bitterness, envy, malice, strife, selfishness, and self-righteousness. While their heads were bowed in pretended humiliation, they were covetous, full of self-esteem, self-importance. They were oppressive, exacting, proud in spirit.

Everything in the Jewish service had been misinterpreted and misapplied. The purpose of the sacrificial offerings had been perverted. They were to symbolize Christ and His mission, that when He should come in the flesh, the world might recognize God in Him, and accept Him as the world's Redeemer. But their lack of true heart service for God had blinded the Jews to a

knowledge of God. Exactions and ceremonies and traditions were the sum total of their religion.

The Pharisees had yet to learn that righteousness exalts a nation, that form and ceremony cannot take the place of righteousness. Christ was teaching the people as verily when enshrouded in the pillar of cloud as when seated on the mount. The same compassionate consideration for the poor was enjoined as in the lessons given to the disciples. But the responsibility of every individual in the sight of God, His mercy, love, and compassion, were not included in the lessons given to the people by the rulers in Israel. Said Christ, “No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.” The truth, the life, the light, which should characterize true godliness could not be united with the manufactured religion of the Pharisees (MS 3, 1898).

24 (Luke 16:13; James 4:4). Double-minded Men Satan’s Allies.—[Matthew 6:24 quoted.]

Those who begin their Christian life by being half and half, will at last be found enlisted on the enemy's side, whatever may have been their first intentions. And to be an apostate, a traitor to the cause of God, is more serious than death; for it means the loss of eternal life.

Double-minded men and women are Satan's best allies. Whatever favorable opinion they may have of themselves, they are dissemblers. All who are loyal to God and the truth must stand firmly for the right because it is right. To yoke up with those who are unconsecrated, and yet be loyal to the truth, is simply impossible. We cannot unite with those who are serving themselves, who are working on worldly plans, and not lose our connection with the heavenly Counselor. We may recover ourselves from the snare of the enemy, but we are bruised and wounded, and our experience is dwarfed (The Review and Herald, April 19, 1898).

28, 29. Toil Cannot Duplicate Simplicity.— Here He shows that notwithstanding that persons may toil with weariness to make themselves

objects of admiration, that which they value so highly will not bear comparison with the flowers of the field. Even these simple flowers, with God's adornment, would outvie in loveliness the gorgeous apparel of Solomon (MS 153, 1903).

An Idea of God's Regard.—If the lilies of the field are objects upon which the great Master Artist has bestowed care, making them so beautiful that they outrival the glory of Solomon, the greatest king that ever wielded a scepter; if the grass of the field is made into a beautiful carpet for the earth, can we form any idea of the regard which God bestows upon man, who was formed in His image (Letter 4, 1896)?

Every Flower Expresses Love.—The great Master Artist calls our attention to the soulless flowers of the field, pointing out the beautiful tints and the wonderful variety of shades one flower may possess. Thus God has revealed His skill and care. Thus He would show the great love He has for every human being.

Every flower is an expression of the love of God (Letter 24, 1899).

The flowers of the field, in their endless variety, are always ministering to the delight of the children of men. God Himself nourishes every root, that He may express His love to all who will be softened and subdued by the works of His hands. We need no artificial display. God's love is represented by the beautiful things of His creation. These things mean more than many suppose (Letter 84, 1900).

28-30. A Lesson of Faith.—Notwithstanding the curse was pronounced upon the earth that it should bring forth thorns and thistles, there is a flower upon the thistle. The world is not all sorrow and misery. God's great book of nature is open for us to study, and from it we are to gain more exalted ideas of His greatness and unexcelled love and glory. He who laid the foundation of the earth, who garnished the heavens and marshaled the stars in their order, He who has clothed the earth with a living carpet, and beautified it with lovely flowers

of every shade and variety, would have His children appreciate His works, and delight in the simple, quiet beauty with which He has adorned their earthly home.

Christ sought to draw the attention of His disciples away from the artificial to the natural: “If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” Why did not our heavenly Father carpet the earth with brown or gray? He chose the color that was most restful, the most acceptable to the senses. How it cheers the heart and refreshes the weary spirit to look upon the earth, clad in its garments of living green! Without this covering the air would be filled with dust, and the earth would appear like a desert. Every spire of grass, every opening bud and blooming flower is a token of God’s love, and should teach us a lesson of faith and trust in Him. Christ calls our attention to their natural loveliness, and assures us that the most gorgeous array of the greatest king that ever wielded an earthly scepter was not equal to that worn by the humblest flower.

You who are sighing for the artificial splendor which wealth alone can purchase, for costly paintings, furniture, and dress, listen to the voice of the divine Teacher. He points you to the flower of the field, the simple design of which cannot be equaled by human skill (The Review and Herald, October 27, 1885).

Chapter 7

1, 2 (Luke 6:37; Romans 2:1; see EGW on 1 Samuel 14:44). Satan Judged by Own Idea of Justice.—Satan will be judged by his own idea of justice. It was his plea that every sin should meet its punishment. If God remitted the punishment, he said, He was not a God of truth or justice. Satan will meet the judgment which he said God should exercise (MS 111, 1897).

13, 14. See EGW on ch. 16:24.

15. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 11:14.

20, 21. See EGW on ch. 24:23, 24.

21-23 (ch. 24:24; 11:14, 15; 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10; Revelation 13:13, 14). A Profession Is Not Enough.—Those who claim modern sanctification would have come boastingly forward, saying, “Lord, Lord, do you not know us? Have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?” The people here described, who make these pretentious claims, apparently weaving Jesus into all their doings, fitly represent those who claim modern sanctification, but who are at war with the law of God. Christ calls them workers of iniquity, because they are deceivers, having on the garments of righteousness to hide the deformity of their characters, the inward wickedness of their unholy hearts. Satan has come down in these last days, to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. His satanic majesty works miracles in the sight of false prophets, in the sight of men, claiming that he is indeed Christ Himself. Satan gives his power to those who are aiding him in his deceptions; therefore those who claim to have the great power

of God can only be discerned by the great detector, the law of Jehovah. The Lord tells us if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. The sheep's clothing seems so real, so genuine, that the wolf cannot be discerned only as we go to God's great moral standard and there find that they are transgressors of the law of Jehovah (The Review and Herald, August 25, 1885).

29. See EGW on Luke 4:18, 19.

Chapter 9

9, 10. See EGW on Luke 5:29.

11 (Isaiah 58:4; Luke 5:30). Fasting in Pride Versus Eating in Humility.—The Pharisees beheld Christ sitting and eating with publicans and sinners. He was calm and self-possessed, kind, courteous, and friendly; and while they could not but admire the picture presented, it was so unlike their own course of action, they could not endure the sight. The haughty Pharisees exalted themselves, and disparaged those who had not been

blessed with such privileges and light as they themselves had had. They hated and despised the publicans and sinners. Yet in the sight of God their guilt was the greater. Heaven's light was flashing across their pathway, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it"; but they had spurned the gift. Turning to the disciples of Christ they said, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" By this question they hoped to arouse the prejudice which they knew had existed in the minds of the disciples, and thus shake their weak faith. They aimed their arrows where they would be most likely to bruise and wound.

Proud but foolish Pharisees, who fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness! Christ eats with publicans and sinners that He may draw men to Himself. The world's Redeemer cannot honor the fasts observed by the Jewish nation. They fast in pride and self-righteousness, while Christ eats in humility with publicans and sinners.

Since the fall, the work of Satan has been

accuse, and those who refuse the light which God sends, pursue the same course today. They lay open to others those things which they consider an offense. Thus it was with the Pharisees. When they found something of which they could accuse the disciples, they did not speak to those whom they thought to be in error. They spoke to Christ of the things which they thought to be so grievous in His disciples. When they thought that Christ offended, they accused Him to the disciples. It was their work to alienate hearts (MS 3, 1898).

12, 13 (ch. 20:28; Mark 2:17; 10:45; Luke 5:31, 32). Relief in Every Case.—Christ was a physician of the body as well as of the soul. He was minister and missionary and physician. From His childhood He was interested in every phase of human suffering that came under His notice. He could truly say, I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. In every case of woe He brought relief, His kind words having a healing balm. None could say He had worked a miracle, yet He imparted His virtue to those He saw in suffering and in need. Through the whole thirty years of His

private life He was humble, meek, and lowly. He had a living connection with God; for the Spirit of God was upon Him, and He gave evidence to all who were acquainted with Him that He lived to please, honor, and glorify His Father in the common things of life (The Review and Herald, October 24, 1899).

13 (Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32). Rejected Pleasantness to Fulfill Need.—He [Christ] might have gone to the pleasant homes of the unfallen worlds, to the pure atmosphere where disloyalty and rebellion had never intruded; and there He would have been received with acclamations of praise and love. But it was a fallen world that needed the Redeemer. “I came not to call the righteous,” said He, “but sinners to repentance” (The Review and Herald, February 15, 1898).

16. See EGW on ch. 6:16.

17 (Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 38). New Bottles for New Wine.—The work of Jesus was to reveal the character of the Father, and to unfold the truth

which He Himself had spoken through prophets and apostles; but there was found no place for the truth in those wise and prudent men. Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, had to pass by the self-righteous Pharisees, and take his disciples from unlearned fishers and men of humble rank. These who had never been to the rabbis, who had never sat in the schools of the prophets, who had not been members of the Sanhedrin, whose hearts were not bound about with their own ideas,—these He took and educated for His own use. He could make them as new bottles for the new wine of His kingdom. These were the babes to whom the Father could reveal spiritual things; but the priests and rulers, the scribes and Pharisees, who claimed to be the depositaries of knowledge, could give no room for the principles of Christianity, afterward taught by the apostles of Christ. The chain of truth, link after link, was given to those who realized their own ignorance, and were willing to learn of the great Teacher.

Jesus knew that He could do the scribes and Pharisees no good, unless they would empty

themselves of self-importance. He chose new bottles for His new wine of doctrine, and made fishermen and unlearned believers the heralds of His truth to the world. And yet, though His doctrine seemed new to the people, it was in fact not a new doctrine, but the revelation of the significance of that which had been taught from the beginning. It was His design that His disciples should take the plain, unadulterated truth for the guide of their life. They were not to add to His words, or give a forced meaning to His utterances. They were not to put a mystical interpretation upon the plain teaching of the Scriptures, and draw from theological stores to build up some man-made theory. It was through putting a mystical meaning upon the plain words of God, that sacred and vital truths were made of little significance, while the theories of men were made prominent. It was in this way that men were led to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and that they rejected the commandment of God, that they might keep their own tradition (The Review and Herald, June 2, 1896).

34. See EGW on ch. 12:24-32.

Chapter 10

32. See EGW on Luke 22:70.

34 (Luke 12:51). No Peace Because of Rejected Messages.—Christ declared, “I came not to send peace, but a sword.” Why? Because men would not receive the word of life. Because they warred against the message sent them to bring them joy and hope and life.

We look upon the Jews as inexcusable because they rejected and crucified Christ. But today the messages that the Lord sends are often received in a manner similar to the way in which the Jews received Christ’s message. If the instruction of the Lord does not harmonize with the opinions of men, anger takes control of reason, and men play into the enemy’s hands by opposing the message that God sends. Satan uses them as sharp instruments to oppose the progress of truth (MS 31, 1889).

Chapter 11

12 (Genesis 32:26). Spiritual Violence Brings Reward.—With the great truth we have been privileged to receive, we should, and under the Holy Spirit's power we could, become living channels of light. We could then approach the mercy seat; and seeing the bow of promise, kneel with contrite hearts, and seek the kingdom of heaven with a spiritual violence that would bring its own reward. We would take it by force, as did Jacob. Then our message would be the power of God unto salvation. Our supplications would be full of earnestness, full of a sense of our great need; and we would not be denied. The truth would be expressed by life and character, and by lips touched with the living coal from off God's altar. When this experience is ours, we shall be lifted out of our poor, cheap selves, that we have cherished so tenderly. We shall empty our hearts of the corroding power of selfishness, and shall be filled with praise and gratitude to God. We shall magnify the Lord, the God of all grace, who has magnified Christ. And He will reveal His power through us,

making us as sharp sickles in the harvest field (The Review and Herald, February 14, 1899).

14 (Malachi 4:5; Luke 1:17). The Spirit and Power of Elijah.—In the spirit and with the power of Elijah, John denounced the corruptions of the Jews, and raised his voice in reproof of their prevailing sins. His discourses were plain, pointed, and convincing. Many were brought to repentance of their sins, and, as evidence of their repentance, were baptized of him in Jordan. This was the preparatory work for the ministry of Christ. Many were convicted because of the plain truths uttered by this faithful prophet; but, by rejecting the light, they became enshrouded in deeper darkness, so that they were fully prepared to turn from the evidences attending Jesus, that He was the true Messiah (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:48, 49).

20-24 (Luke 10:13-15). Witness Rejected.—The deeds of love and compassion performed by Jesus in the cities of Judea, were regarded with wonder by the angels of heaven; and yet multitudes in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum looked on

with indifference, and in their hardness of heart they acted as though time or eternity was scarcely worth their attention. The majority of the inhabitants of these cities spent their time in caviling over themes of little importance, and but a few took the position that the Saviour of mankind was the Christ.

The prophecies of the Scriptures were plain, and gave clear predictions of His life, character, and work; and from the testimony of men who had spoken as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, evidence was sufficient to prove that Jesus was all He claimed to be—the Son of God, the Messiah of whom Moses and the prophets did write, the Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel. But it was in vain that He sought to convince the priests and rulers, and to draw the hearts of common people to His light. Priests and rulers, scribes and Pharisees, clung to their traditions, their ceremonies, customs, and theories, and suffered not their hearts to be touched and cleansed and sanctified by divine grace. The few who did follow Christ came from among the lowly and unlearned

(The Review and Herald, June 2, 1896).

28-30. The Yoke of Restraint and Obedience.—Christ says, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you”—the yoke of restraint and obedience—“and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” We are to find rest by wearing His yoke and bearing His burdens. In being co-workers with Christ in the great work for which He gave His life, we shall find true rest. When we were sinners, He gave His life for us. He wants us to come to Him and learn of Him. Thus we are to find rest. He says He will give us rest. “Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” In doing this you will find in your own experience the rest that Christ gives, the rest that comes from wearing His yoke and lifting His burdens (The General Conference Bulletin, April 4, 1901).

In accepting Christ’s yoke of restraint and obedience, you will find that it is of the greatest help to you. Wearing this yoke keeps you near the

side of Christ, and He bears the heaviest part of the load.

“Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” To learn the lessons Christ teaches is the greatest treasure students can find. Rest comes to them in the consciousness that they are trying to please the Lord (Letter 144, 1901).

Help to Bear Every Burden.—There is a condition to the rest and peace here offered us by Christ. It is that of yoking up with Him. All who will accept the condition will find that the yoke of Christ will help them to bear every burden needful for them to carry. Without Christ at our side to bear the heaviest part of the load, we must indeed say that it is heavy. But yoked with Him to the car of duty, the burdens of life may all be lightly carried. And just as a man acts in willing obedience to the requirements of God, will come his peace of mind.

...

Meekness and humility will characterize all who are obedient to the law of God, all who will

wear the yoke of Christ with submission. And these graces will bring the desirable result of peace in the service of Christ (The Signs of the Times, April 16, 1912).

(Ch. 16:24; 9:23.) Symbol of Submission to God's Will.—We are to bear the yoke of Christ that we may be placed in complete union with Him. “Take my yoke upon you,” He says. Obey My requirements. But these requirements may be in direct opposition to the will and purposes of the human agent. What then is to be done? Hear what God says: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” The yoke and the cross are symbols representing the same thing,—the giving up of the will to God. Wearing the yoke unites finite man in companionship with the dearly beloved Son of God. Lifting the cross cuts away self from the soul, and places man where he learns how to bear Christ's burdens. We cannot follow Christ without wearing His yoke, without lifting the cross and bearing it after Him. If our will is not in accord with the divine requirements, we are to deny our

inclinations, give up our darling desires, and step in Christ's footsteps....

Men frame for their own necks yokes that seem light and pleasant to wear, but they prove galling in the extreme. Christ sees this, and He says, "Take My yoke upon you. The yoke you would place upon your own neck, thinking it a precise fit, will not fit at all. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me the lessons essential for you to learn; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." The Lord never makes a false estimate concerning His heritage. He measures the men with whom He is working. When they submit to His yoke, when they give up the struggle that has been unprofitable for themselves and for the cause of God, they will find peace and rest. When they become sensible of their own weakness, their own deficiencies, they will delight to do God's will. They will submit to the yoke of Christ. Then God can work in them to will and to do of His good pleasure, which is often entirely contrary to the plans of the human mind. When the heavenly

anointing comes to us, we shall learn the lesson of meekness and lowliness, which always brings rest to the soul (The Review and Herald, October 23, 1900).

Christ's Yoke Never Galling.—Your work is not to gather up burdens of your own. As you take the burdens that Christ would have you, then you can realize what burdens He carried. Let us study the Bible, and find out what kind of yoke He bore. He was a help to those around Him. He says: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” You see there is a yoke to bear. Now this is the very faith that we want—a faith that will grasp the promises of God, one that will take the yoke of Christ and bear the burdens that He would have us. We often think we are having a hard time in bearing burdens, and it is too often the case, because God has not made any provision for us to carry these burdens; but when we bear His yoke and carry His burdens, we can testify that the yoke

of Christ is easy and His burdens are light, because He has made provision for these. But when you feel depressed and discouraged, do not give up the battle; you have a living Saviour that will help you, and you will have rest in Him. You must not put your neck under the yoke of fashion, and yokes that God has never designed that you should bear. It is not our work to study how to meet the world's standard, but the great question with each one should be, How can I meet God's standard? Then it is that you will find rest to the soul; for Christ has said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

When you have a yoke that is galling to the neck, you may know it is not Christ's yoke; for He says His yoke is easy. What God wants of us is to be learning every day of our lives how to build our characters for time and for eternity. He does not want us to get into one channel and never turn out of that; to have fixed ideas, and hold them fast, whether they are right or wrong. He will place us amid trials and difficulties, and when we have learned to overcome obstacles in a right spirit, with high and holy purpose, He will give us another

lesson. And if we have not the meekness of Christ to be constantly learning of Jesus in His school, then we must know that we have not the yoke of Christ (The Review and Herald, May 10, 1887).

29 (John 15:4, 5). Hard to Give Up Own Will and Way.—If you are willing to learn meekness and lowliness of heart in Christ's school, He will surely give you rest and peace. It is a terribly hard struggle to give up your own will and your own way. But this lesson learned, you will find rest and peace. Pride, selfishness, and ambition must be overcome; your will must be swallowed up in the will of Christ. The whole life may become one constant love sacrifice, every action a manifestation, and every word an utterance of love. As the life of the vine circulates through stem and cluster, descends into the lower fibers, and reaches to the topmost leaf, so will the grace and love of Christ burn and abound in the soul, sending its virtues to every part of the being, and pervading every exercise of body and mind (Letter 14, 1887).

How to Wear the Yoke.—Take hold of the

arm of God, and say, “I am nothing, and Thou art everything. Thou hast said, ‘Without me ye can do nothing.’ Now, Lord, I must have Thee abiding in me, that I may abide in Thee.” Then advance step by step, by living faith abiding in Jesus Christ. This is wearing His yoke, the yoke of obedience (MS 85, 1901).

Wearing the yoke with Christ, means to work in His lines, to be a copartner with Him in His sufferings and toils for lost humanity. It means to be a wise instructor of souls. We shall be what we are willing to be made by Christ in these precious hours of probation. We shall be the sort of a vessel that we allow ourselves to be molded into. We must unite with God in the molding and fashioning work, having our wills submitted to the divine will (Letter 71, 1895).

30. Easy Yoke Does Not Give Life of Ease.—

The Lord calls His yoke easy, and His burden light. Yet that yoke will not give us a life of ease and freedom and selfish indulgence. The life of Christ was one of self-sacrifice and self-denial at every

step; and with consistent, Christlike tenderness and love, His true follower will walk in the footsteps of the Master; and as he advances in this life, he will become more and more inspired with the spirit and life of Christ (The Signs of the Times, April 16, 1912).

Chapter 12

24-32 (ch. 9:34; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15). Eyes Closed to Evidence.—They [the Pharisees] attributed to satanic agencies the holy power of God, manifested in the works of Christ. Thus the Pharisees sinned against the Holy Ghost. Stubborn, sullen, ironhearted, they determined to close their eyes to all evidence, and thus they committed the unpardonable sin (The Review and Herald, January 18, 1898).

29, 30 (Luke 11:21-23). Stronger Than the Strong Man.—“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.” He who is with Christ, maintaining His unity, enthroning Him in the heart, and obeying His

orders, is safe from the snares of the wicked one. He who unites himself with Christ will gather to himself the graces of Christ, and will give strength and efficiency and power to the Lord by winning souls to Christ. When Christ takes possession of the citadel of the soul, the human agent becomes one with Him. By cooperation with the Saviour, he becomes the instrument through which God works. Then when Satan comes and strives to take possession of the soul, he finds that Christ has made him stronger than the strong man armed (MS 78, 1899).

30. See EGW on ch. 16:24.

31, 32 (Mark 3:28, 29; Luke 12:10; see EGW on Exodus 4:21). Firm, Determined Resistance of Truth.—Christ was not warring against finite men, but against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places. He tells His hearers that all manner of sin and blasphemy may be forgiven if done in ignorance. In their great blindness they might speak words of insult and derision against the Son of man, and yet be within

the boundary of mercy. But when the power and Spirit of God rested upon His messengers, they were on holy ground. To ignore the Spirit of God, to charge it with being the spirit of the devil, placed them in a position where God had no power to reach their souls. No power in any of God's provisions to correct the erring can reach them. ...

To speak against Christ, charging His work to satanic agencies, and attributing the manifestations of the Spirit to fanaticism, is not of itself a damning sin, but the spirit that leads men to make these assertions places them in a position of stubborn resistance, where they cannot see spiritual light....

They think they are following sound reason, but they are following another leader. They have placed themselves under the control of a power which in their blindness they are wholly ignorant of. They have resisted the only Spirit that could lead them, enlighten them, save them. They are following in the path of guilt for which there can be no forgiveness, in this life or in the life to come. Not that any degree of guilt would exhaust the

mercy of God, but because pride and persistent stubbornness leads them to do despite to the Spirit of God, to occupy a place where no manifestation of the Spirit can convince them of their error. They will not yield their stubborn wills.

In this our day men have placed themselves where they are wholly unable to fulfill the conditions of repentance and confession: therefore they cannot find mercy and pardon. The sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit does not lie in any sudden word or deed; it is the firm, determined resistance of truth and evidence (MS 30, 1890).

Sin Against the Holy Ghost.—No one need look upon the sin against the Holy Ghost as something mysterious and indefinable. The sin against the Holy Ghost is the sin of persistent refusal to respond to the invitation to repent (The Review and Herald, June 29, 1897).

34-37. See EGW on Psalm 19:14; Isaiah 6:5-7.

37. A Sanctified Tongue Needed.—Cease to

dwell upon the shortcomings of others. Keep the tongue sanctified unto God. Refrain from saying anything that might detract from the influence of another; for by indulging in these words of criticism, you blaspheme God's holy name as verily as you would were you to swear. ...

We need especially to guard against having a tongue that is sanctified to Satan. The tongue that God has given is to be used to glorify Him in speech. Unless it is, we shall be standing directly in the way of God's work in this world, and the judgments of heaven will surely fall upon us (MS 95, 1906).

42 (Luke 11:31). A Greater Than Solomon.—Christ knew that the Israelites regarded Solomon as the greatest king that ever wielded a scepter over an earthly kingdom. By special appointment of God, he had built their first magnificent temple, which was a marvel of beauty, richness, and glory, and gave influence and dignity to Israel as a nation. He was endowed with wisdom, and his name had been glorified by them.

To be superior to him was, in their eyes, to be more than human, to possess the prerogatives of Deity [Matthew 12:42 quoted] (The Youth's Instructor, September 23, 1897).

43-45 (Luke 11:24-26). No Neutrality Possible.—[Matthew 12:43-45 quoted.] Christ shows that there can be no such thing as neutrality in His service. The soul must not be satisfied with anything short of entire consecration—consecration of thought, voice, spirit, and every organ of mind and body. It is not enough that the vessel be emptied; it must be filled with the grace of Christ (MS 78, 1899).

(Isaiah 57:12; 2 Peter 2:20, 21.) The Curse of Self-righteousness.—The garnished house represents the self-righteous soul. Satan is driven out by Christ. But he returned, in the hope of finding entrance. He finds the house empty, swept, and garnished. Only self-righteousness is abiding there. “Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that

man is worse than the first.”

Self-righteousness is a curse, a human embellishment, which Satan uses for his glory. Those who garnish the soul with self-praise and flattery prepare the way for the seven other spirits more wicked than the first. In their very reception of the truth these souls deceive themselves. They are building upon a foundation of self-righteousness. The prayers of congregations may be offered to God with a round of ceremonies, but if they are offered in self-righteousness God is not honored by them. The Lord declares, “I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.” In spite of all their display, their garnished habitation, Satan comes in with a troop of evil angels and takes his place in the soul, to help in the deception. The apostle writes, “If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after

they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them” (MS 78, 1899).

Chapter 13

15. See EGW on Luke 7:29, 30.

24-30. Tares Attract Attention.—The growth of the tares among the wheat would draw special attention to it. The grain would be subjected to severe criticism. Indeed, the whole field might be set down as worthless by some superficial observer, or by one who delighted to discover evil. The sower might be condemned by him, as one who had mingled the bad seed with the good for his own wicked purpose. Just so the erring and hypocritical ones who profess to follow Jesus bring reproach upon the cause of Christianity, and cause the world to doubt concerning the truths of Christ. As the presence of the tares among the wheat counteracted to a great degree the work of the sower, so sin among the people of God frustrates, in a measure, the plan of Jesus to save fallen man

from the power of Satan and render the barren ground of the human heart fruitful of good works (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:248, 249).

52. Old and New Testaments Inseparable.—
[Matthew 13:52 quoted.] In this parable, Jesus presented before His disciples the responsibility of those whose work it is to give to the world the light which they have received from Him. The Old Testament was all the Scripture then in existence; but it was not written merely for the ancients; it was for all ages and for all people. Jesus would have the teachers of His doctrine diligently search the Old Testament for that light which establishes His identity as the Messiah foretold in prophecy, and reveals the nature of His mission to the world. The Old and the New Testament are inseparable, for both are the teachings of Christ. The doctrine of the Jews, who accept only the Old Testament, is not unto salvation, since they reject the Saviour whose life and ministry was a fulfillment of the law and the prophecies. And the doctrine of those who discard the Old Testament is not unto salvation, because it rejects that which is direct testimony of

Christ. Skeptics begin with discounting upon the Old Testament, and it takes but another step to deny the validity of the New, and thus both are rejected.

The Jews have little influence over the Christian world in showing them the importance of the commandments, including the binding law of the Sabbath, because in bringing forth the old treasures of truth, they throw aside the new ones in the personal teachings of Jesus. On the other hand, the strongest reason why Christians fail to influence the Jews to accept the teachings of Christ as the language of divine wisdom, is because, in bringing forth the treasures of His Word, they treat with contempt the riches of the Old Testament, which are the earlier teachings of the Son of God, through Moses. They reject the law proclaimed from Sinai, and the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, instituted in the Garden of Eden. But the minister of the gospel, who follows the teachings of Christ, will gain a thorough knowledge of both the Old and New Testament, that he may present them in their true light to the

people an inseparable whole—the one depending upon and illuminating the other. Thus, as Jesus instructed His disciples, they will bring forth from their treasure “things new and old” (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:254, 255).

Chapter 14

9 (Mark 6:26; 1 Samuel 25:32-34). Wrong to Keep a Wrong Vow.—David had taken an oath that Nabal and his household should perish; but now he saw that it was not only wrong to make such a vow, but it would be wrong to keep it. If Herod had had the moral courage of David, no matter how humiliating it might have been, he would have retracted the oath that devoted John the Baptist’s head to the ax of the executioner, that the revenge of an evil woman might be accomplished, and he would not have had upon his soul the guilt of the murder of the prophet of God (The Signs of the Times, October 26, 1888).

Chapter 15

6. See EGW on Jeremiah 23:1.

9 (see EGW on ch. 5:13, 14; Jeremiah 8:8).
Error as Parasites on Tree of Truth.—Satan has wrought with deceiving power, bringing in a multiplicity of errors that obscure truth. Error could not stand alone, and would soon become extinct, if it did not fasten itself like a parasite upon the tree of truth. Error draws its life from the truth of God. The traditions of men, like floating germs, attach themselves to the truth of God, and men regard them as a part of the truth. Through false doctrines Satan gains a foothold, and captivates the minds of men, causing them to hold theories that have no foundation in truth. Men boldly teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and as traditions pass on from age to age, they acquire a power over the human mind. But age does not make error truth, neither does its burdensome weight cause the plant of truth to become a parasite. The tree of truth bears its own genuine fruit, showing its true origin and nature. The parasite of error also bears its own

fruit, and makes manifest that its character is diverse from the plant of heavenly origin (Letter 43, 1895).

Chapter 16

6. See EGW on Luke 12:1. 18. The True Foundation.—[Matthew 16:18 quoted.] The word “Peter” signifies a loose stone. Christ did not refer to Peter as being the rock upon which He would found His church. His expression “this rock,” applied to Himself as the foundation of the Christian church (The Signs of the Times, October 28, 1913).

18, 19. See EGW on John 20:23.

22, 23 (Luke 22:31, 32). Satan Between Peter and Christ.—See what the Lord said to Peter.... He said, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” What was Satan doing? He came right up face to face with Peter and between the Lord and Peter, so that Peter even took it upon him to reprove the Lord. But the Lord came close to Peter and Satan was put behind

Christ. The Lord told Peter that Satan had desired him, that he might sift him as wheat, but He says, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." If Peter had learned the lessons he ought to have learned, if he had stood right with God at the time of his trial, he would have stood then. If he had not been indifferent to the lessons Christ taught, he would have never denied his Lord (MS 14, 1894).

Satan Spoke Through Peter.—When Christ revealed to Peter the time of trial and suffering that was just before Him, and Peter replied, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee," the Saviour commanded, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Satan was speaking through Peter, making him act the part of the tempter. Satan's presence was unsuspected by Peter, but Christ could detect the presence of the deceiver, and in His rebuke to Peter He addressed the real foe (Letter 244, 1907).

Satan's work was to discourage Jesus as He strove to save the depraved race, and Peter's words were just what he wished to hear. They were opposed to the divine plan; and whatever bore this

stamp of character was an offense to God. They were spoken at the instigation of Satan; for they opposed the only arrangement God could make to preserve His law and control His subjects, and yet save fallen man. Satan hoped they would discourage and dishearten Christ; but Christ addressed the author of the thought, saying, “Get thee behind me, Satan” (The Review and Herald, April 6, 1897).

24 (Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; see EGW on Matthew 11:28-30). Travel Christ’s Road.—Those who are saved must travel the same road over which Christ journeyed. He says, “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” The character is to be formed according to the Christlikeness (MS 105, 1901).

The Cross Lifts.—We are to lift the cross, and follow the steps of Christ. Those who lift the cross will find that as they do this, the cross lifts them, giving them fortitude and courage, and pointing them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin

of the world (The Review and Herald, July 13, 1905).

(Job 19:25.) Up From the Lowlands.—The cross lifts you up from the lowlands of earth, and brings you into sweetest communion with God. Through bearing the cross your experience may be such that you can say, “‘I know that my Redeemer liveth,’ and because He lives, I shall live also.” What an assurance is this (MS 85, 1901)!

(Ch. 7:13, 14.) At the Dividing of the Way.—The cross stands where two roads diverge. One is the path of obedience leading to heaven. The other leads into the broad road, where man can easily go with his burden of sin and corruption, but it leads to perdition (MS 50, 1898).

(Ch. 12:30; Luke 11:23.) Living for Self Dishonors Redeemer.—Christians who live for self dishonor their Redeemer. They may apparently be very active in the service of the Lord, but they weave self into all that they do. Sowing the seeds of selfishness, they must at last reap a harvest of

corruption.... Service for self takes a variety of forms. Some of these forms seem harmless. Apparent goodness gives them the appearance of genuine goodness. But they bring no glory to the Lord. By their service His cause is hindered. Christ says, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.”

Those who bring self into their work cannot be trusted. If they would lose sight of self in Christ, their efforts would be of value to His cause. They would then conform the life to His teachings. They would form their plans in harmony with His great plan of love. Selfishness would be banished from their efforts.... Self-denial, humility of mind, nobility of purpose, marked the Saviour’s life ... [Matthew 16:24 quoted] (MS 2, 1903).

Chapter 17

1-3 (Mark 9:2-4; Luke 9:28-31). Fittest to Minister to Christ.—The Father chose Moses and Elijah to be His messengers to Christ, and glorify Him with the light of heaven, and commune with

Him concerning His coming agony, because they had lived upon earth as men; they had experienced human sorrow and suffering, and could sympathize with the trial of Jesus, in His earthly life. Elijah, in his position as a prophet to Israel, had represented Christ, and his work had been, in a degree, similar to that of the Saviour. And Moses, as the leader of Israel, had stood in the place of Christ, communing with Him and following His directions; therefore, these two, of all the hosts that gathered around the throne of God were fittest to minister to the Son of God (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:329).

Chapter 18

6. The Young in Christ.—[Matthew 18:1-6 quoted.] The little ones here referred to who believe in Christ, are not simply those who are young in years, but little children in Christ. There is a warning contained in these words lest we shall selfishly neglect or hold in contempt our weak brethren; lest we shall be unforgiving and exacting and judge and condemn others, and thus discourage them (The Review and Herald, April 16, 1895).

15-17 (Joshua 7:10-26). Some Are Not to Be Retained.—The names of those who sin and refuse to repent should not be retained on the church books, lest the saints be held accountable for their evil deeds. Those who pursue a course of transgression should be visited and labored with, and if they then refuse to repent, they should be separated from church fellowship, in accordance with the rules laid down in the Word of God....

Those who refuse to hear the admonitions and warnings given by God's faithful messengers are not to be retained in the church. They are to be disfellowshipped; for they will be as Achan in the camp of Israel—deceived and deceiving.

Who, after reading the record of Achan's sin and punishment, can think it according to the will of God that those who do wickedly, refusing to repent, are to be retained in the church? To retain them would be an insult to the God of heaven (Letter 215, 1902).

18. See EGW on John 20:23.

Chapter 19

13-15 (Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17).
Memory Kept Children From Straying.—Could the afterlife of that little group be opened before us, we should see the mothers recalling to the minds of their children the scene of that day, and repeating to them the loving words of the Saviour. We should see, too, how often, in after years, the memory of these words kept the children from straying from the path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord (The Signs of the Times, December 18, 1907).

Chapter 20

28. See EGW on ch. 9:12, 13.

30-34. See EGW on Mark 10:46-52.

Chapter 21

18-20 (Mark 11:12-14). Fruit-bearing Branches.—The Lord was hungry. He represented a people hungering for fruit that they ought to have had, but did not receive from an apparently flourishing fig tree. The spiritual necessities were not supplied to satisfy the people whom Christ had pledged His life to save by His grace and righteousness.

When the Lord is with the people who have knowledge and advantages in spiritual enlightenment, and when they impart that which they have received from God, they are fruit-bearing branches. They receive God's rich blessing, and are producers of fruit. As a sure result, in the hand of God and under the influence of the Holy Spirit they are mighty men. Constantly they represent before the world the great goodness of God, not only in spiritual lines, but in temporal lines as well. They shall prevail; for of a truth God is with them (MS 65, 1912).

28-31. Nothing to Commend.—Christ did not condemn the first son for refusing the command. At the same time He did not commend him. The class who act the part of the son who said, “I will not,” deserve no credit for holding the position they do. This open frankness is not to be commended as a virtue. This openness of character, sanctified by truth and holiness will make bold witnesses for Christ; but used as it is by the sinner it is insulting and defiant, and approaches to blasphemy. Because a man is not a hypocrite he is none the less a sinner. When the appeals of the Holy Spirit come to the heart our only safety lies in responding to them without delay (MS 127, 1899).

More Than a Promise Is Needed.—The history of Israel as presented in this parable should be studied by all who would practice the teachings of Christ. The vineyard represents the church. The two sons are the two classes of men and women in the world. The Lord calls every member of His church to work in His vineyard. We are to understand our relation to Christ. Christ must abide in our hearts that we may keep before us pure

principles, high incentives to moral rectitude. Our work is not merely to promise, but to do. Honesty and integrity must bind us up with God to fulfill His word to the letter. Let those who hear the message God sends today beware, lest they follow the example of the self-exalted Jews. God does not propose to remove from our path everything that creates question or doubt in regard to the working of His servants. He gives ground for faith sufficient to convince the candid, sincere mind; but more evidence than this will never change the inward determination to resist light (MS 127, 1899).

Chapter 22

2-4 (Luke 14:16, 17). The Heavenly Banquet.—The spiritual banquet has been set before us in rich abundance. We have had presented to us by the messengers of God the richest feast—the righteousness of Christ, justification by faith, the exceeding great and precious promises of God in His Word, free access to the Father by Jesus Christ, the comforts of the Holy Spirit, and the well-grounded assurance of

eternal life in the kingdom of God. We ask, What could God do for us that He has not done in preparing the great supper, the heavenly banquet (The Review and Herald, January 17, 1899)?

11, 12. Feasting on the Word.—A banquet has been prepared for us. The Lord has spread before us the treasures of His Word. But we must not come to the repast clothed in citizen's dress. We must have on the white robe of Christ's righteousness, which has been prepared for all the guests (MS 70, 1901).

(Revelation 7:13, 14.) Out of Tribulation.—Remember that every one who shall be found with the wedding garment on will have come out of great tribulation (The Review and Herald, April 17, 1894).

29. See EGW on ch. 5:13, 14; Jeremiah 8:8; Luke 4:18, 19.

37-39 (Mark 12:30, 31; Luke 10:27; Colossians 2:10). Complete in Christ.—The law

of God requires that man shall love God supremely, and his neighbor as himself. When through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, this is perfectly done, we shall be complete in Christ (Letter 11, 1892).

Chapter 23

8 (see EGW on John 13:14, 15). No First or Last in Christ.—Those who, in the spirit and love of Jesus, will become one with Him, will be in close fellowship one with another, bound up by the silken cords of love. Then the ties of human brotherhood would not be always on the strain, ready at any provocation to snap asunder. “All ye are brethren” will be the sentiment of every child of faith. When the followers of Christ are one with Him, there will be no first and last, no less respected or less important ones. A blessed brotherly fellowship one with another will bind all who truly receive the Lord Jesus Christ in a firm loyalty that cannot be broken. All will be equally one with Christ (MS 28, 1897).

All Ye Are Brethren.—God has made men responsible beings, and placed them in circumstances favorable to obedience to His will. In the dignity of their God-given manhood, they are to be governed and controlled by God Himself, not by any human intelligence in our world. Man is ever to acknowledge that God lives and reigns; men are never to become lords over God's heritage. They are to consider that "all ye are brethren." In the very fact that men are free moral agents, God teaches us not to be forced or compelled into any course of action, also that as responsible beings in copartnership with God we are to represent God in character. We are to have an interest in our brother, in our neighbor, in all around (Letter 65, 1895).

8-10. None to Place Spiritual Interests Under Another.—The oft repeated "Rabbi," was very acceptable to the ear, but Jesus warned His disciples against this. He said to them, "But be not ye called rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which

is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.”

By these words Christ meant that no man is to place his spiritual interest under another as a child is guided and directed by his earthly father. This has encouraged a spirit to desire ecclesiastical superiority, which has always resulted in the injury of the men who have been trusted, and addressed as “Father.” It confuses the sense of the sacredness of the prerogatives of God (MS 71, 1897).

12. See EGW on Genesis 39:20.

13-33 (Luke 11:42-44). Legal Religion an Abomination.—The rebuke of Christ to the Pharisees is applicable to those who have lost from the heart their first love. A cold, legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. When fastings and prayers are practiced in a self-justifying spirit, they are abominable to God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposed sacrifice, all

proclaim to the world the testimony that the doer of these things considers himself as righteous. These things call attention to the observer of rigorous duties, saying, This man is entitled to heaven. But it is all a deception. Works will not buy for us an entrance into heaven. The one great offering that has been made is ample for all who will believe (MS 154, 1897).

37-39 (Luke 13:34, 35; 19:42). Loading the Clouds of Vengeance.—Christ’s heart had said “How can I give thee up?” He had dealt with Israel as a loving, forgiving father would deal with an ungrateful, wayward child. With the eye of Omniscience He saw that the city of Jerusalem had decided her own destiny. For centuries there had been a turning away from God. Grace had been resisted, privileges abused, opportunities slighted. The people themselves had been loading the cloud of vengeance which unmingled with mercy was about to burst upon them. With choked, half-broken utterance, Christ exclaimed, “O that thou hadst known, even thou in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid

from thine eyes.” The irrevocable sentence was pronounced (MS 30, 1890).

Chapter 24

2 (Luke 19:44). Angels Did Work of Destruction.—Men will continue to erect expensive buildings, costing millions of money; special attention will be called to their architectural beauty, and the firmness and solidity with which they are constructed; but the Lord has instructed me that despite the unusual firmness and expensive display, these buildings will share the fate of the temple in Jerusalem. That magnificent structure fell. Angels of God were sent to do the work of destruction, so that one stone was not left upon another that was not thrown down (MS 35, 1906).

23, 24 (ch. 7:20, 21; Isaiah 8:20; Mark 13:21, 22; Luke 21:8; 10:2-5; John 15:10; 1 John 2:4). How to Know a False Christ.—We need to be anchored in Christ, rooted and grounded in the faith. Satan works through agents. He selects those who have not been drinking of the living waters,

whose souls are athirst for something new and strange, and who are ever ready to drink at any fountain that may present itself. Voices will be heard, saying, “Lo, here is Christ,” or “Lo, there;” but we must believe them not. We have unmistakable evidence of the voice of the True Shepherd, and He is calling upon us to follow Him. He says, “I have kept my Father’s commandments.” He leads His sheep in the path of humble obedience to the law of God, but He never encourages them in the transgression of that law.

“The voice of a stranger” is the voice of one who neither respects nor obeys God’s holy, just, and good law. Many make great pretensions to holiness, and boast of the wonders they perform in healing the sick, when they do not regard this great standard of righteousness. But through whose power are these cures wrought? Are the eyes of either party opened to their transgressions of the law? and do they take their stand as humble, obedient children, ready to obey all of God’s requirements? John testifies of the professed children of God: “He that saith, I know him, and

keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

None need be deceived. The law of God is as sacred as His throne, and by it every man who cometh into the world is to be judged. There is no other standard by which to test character. “If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Now, shall the case be decided according to the Word of God, or shall man’s pretensions be credited? Says Christ, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” If those through whom cures are performed, are disposed, on account of these manifestations, to excuse their neglect of the law of God, and continue in disobedience, though they have power to any and every extent, it does not follow that they have the great power of God. On the contrary, it is the miracle-working power of the great deceiver. He is a transgressor of the moral law, and employs every device that he can master to blind men to its true character. We are warned that in the last days he will work with signs and lying wonders. And he will continue these wonders until the close of probation that he may point to

them as evidence that he is an angel of light and not of darkness.

Brethren, we must beware of the pretended holiness that permits transgression of the law of God. Those cannot be sanctified who trample that law under their feet, and judge themselves by a standard of their own devising (The Review and Herald, November 17, 1885).

24. See EGW on ch. 7:21-23; 2 Corinthians 11:14.

30. See EGW on ch. 28:2-4.

Chapter 25

1-10. The Wise Arouse From Sleep.—All who wait for the heavenly Bridegroom are represented in the parable as slumbering because their Lord delayed His coming; but the wise roused themselves at the message of His approach, and responded to the message, and their spiritual discernment was not all gone, and they sprang into

line. As they took hold of the grace of Christ, their religious experience became vigorous and abundant, and their affections were set upon things above. They discerned where was the source of their supply, and appreciated the love that God had for them. They opened their hearts to receive the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts. Their lights were trimmed and burning, and sent forth steady rays into the moral darkness of the world. They glorified God, because they had the oil of grace in their hearts, and did the very work that their Master did before them—went forth to seek and to save those who were lost (The Signs of the Times, June 28, 1910).

7 (Luke 12:35). A Trimmed and Burning Lamp.—The very best credentials we can carry is love for one another. All strife, all dissension, is to cease. God will not accept the talents of the smartest, the most eloquent man if the inner lamp of the soul is not trimmed and burning. There must be a consecrated heart, and consecrated surrender of the soul (Letter 119, 1899).

14, 15 (Luke 19:12, 13; see EGW on John 17:20, 21). Talents Not Restricted to a Few.—To every man is committed individual gifts, termed talents. Some regard these talents as being limited to certain men who possess superior mental endowments and genius. But God has not restricted the bestowal of His talents to a favored few. To every one is committed some special endowment, for which he will be held responsible by the Lord. Time, reason, means, strength, mental powers, tenderness of heart—all are gifts from God, entrusted to be used in the great work of blessing humanity.

Some apparently have but few talents, but by diligent trading on their Lord's goods their endowments will be greatly increased....

The Lord is watching every one to see whether he will use his talents wisely and unselfishly, or whether he will seek his own advancement. The talents are distributed to every man according to his several ability, that he may add to them by wise investment. Each one must give an account to the

Master for his own actions.

The Lord will not require from those who are poor that which they have not to give; He will not require from the sick the active energies which bodily weakness forbids. No one need mourn because he cannot glorify God with talents that were never entrusted to Him. But if you have only one talent, use it well, and it will accumulate. If the talents are not buried, they will gain yet other talents.

The goods we receive are not our own. The entrusted capital is to be used, and when the returns are made, they are still the Lord's property. We have no right to hoard these talents; when the Lord Jesus returns He expects to receive His own with usury (Letter 180, 1907).

21. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 15:51-55.

Chapter 26

2 (Mark 14:1; Luke 22:1, 2). Attention

Called to Sacrifice.—**Christ** was crowned with thorns. His hands and feet were pierced by nails. Every step onward in the shameful scene was one of intense suffering. But it was God's purpose that publicity should be given to the whole transaction, point after point, scene after scene, one phase of humiliation reaching into another. It was appointed that these events should take place on the occasion of the Passover (MS 111, 1897).

3 (Mark 14:53; Luke 22:54; John 18:13). A Corrupted Priesthood.—The priesthood had become so corrupt that the priests had no scruples in engaging in the most dishonest and criminal acts to accomplish their designs. Those who assumed the office of high priest prior to, and at, the time of Christ's first advent, were not men divinely appointed to the sacred work. They had eagerly aspired to the office through love of power and show. They desired a position where they could have authority, and practice fraud under a garb of piety, and thereby escape detection. The high priest held a position of power and importance. He was not only counselor and mediator, but judge; and

there was no appeal from his decision. The priests were held in restraint by the authority of the Romans, and were not allowed the power of legally putting anyone to death. This power rested with those who bore rule over the Jews. Men of corrupt hearts sought the distinguished office of high priest, and frequently obtained it by bribery and assassination. The high priest, clad in his consecrated and expensive robes, with the breastplate upon his breast, the light flashing upon the precious stones inlaid in the breastplate, presented a most imposing appearance, and struck the conscientious, true-hearted people with admiration, reverence, and awe. The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, who was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec (The Review and Herald, December 17, 1872).

No High Priest.—With Caiaphas the Jewish high priesthood ended. The service had become base and corrupt. It had no longer any connection with God. Truth and righteousness were hateful in the eyes of the priests. They were tyrannical and

deceptive, full of selfish, ambitious schemes. Such ministration could make nothing perfect; for it was itself utterly corrupt. The grace of God had naught to do with it.

Virtually Caiaphas was no high priest. He wore the priestly robes, but he had no vital connection with God. He was uncircumcised in heart. Proud and overbearing, he proved his unworthiness ever to have worn the garments of the high priest. He had no authority from heaven for occupying the position. He had not one ray of light from God to show him what the work of the priest was, or for what the office was instituted (The Review and Herald, June 12, 1900).

6-13 (Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8). An Illustration of God's Methods.—There are gifts that we rightly proportion to the character and necessities of the ones upon whom we bestow them. Not many of the poor would appreciate Mary's offering, or our Lord's sacrifice of Himself, which gift was the highest that could be given. That ointment was a symbol of the overflowing

heart of the giver. It was an outward demonstration of a love fed by heavenly streams until it overflowed. And that ointment of Mary, which the disciples called waste, is repeating itself a thousand times in the susceptible hearts of others.

The Lord God is profuse in His gifts to our world. The question may be asked, Why does the Lord show such waste, such extravagance in the multitude of His gifts that cannot be enumerated? The Lord would be so bountiful toward His human family that it cannot be said of Him that He could do more. When He gave Jesus to our world, He gave all heaven. His love is without a parallel. It did not stop short of anything....

To human reasoning the whole plan of salvation is a waste of mercies and resources. They are provided to accomplish the restoration of the moral image of God in man. The atonement is abundantly able to secure to all who will receive it, mansions in heaven. The supposed prodigality of Mary is an illustration of the methods of God in the plan of salvation; for nature and grace, related to

each other, manifest the ennobling fullness of the Source from which they flow (MS 28, 1897).

14-16 (Mark 14:10, 11; Luke 22:3-5; 1 Timothy 6:10). No Outbreaking Sin.—The love of money in the heart of Judas was growing with the exercise of his shrewd abilities. His practical financiering ability if exercised and enlightened and moulded by the Holy Spirit, would have been of great service to the little church, and by the sanctification of his spirit he would have had a clear insight, a correct discernment to appreciate heavenly things. But worldly policy plans were constantly cherished by Judas. There was no outbreaking sin on his part, but his sharp scheming, the selfish, parsimonious spirit that took possession of him, finally led him to sell his Lord for a small sum of money (MS 28, 1897).

Two Kinds of Experience Confused by Judas.—There are two kinds of experience—the outside showing and the inward working. The divine and human were at work in the character of Judas. Satan was working the human, Christ the

divine. The Lord Jesus longed to see Judas rise to his appointed privileges. But the human side of Judas' character was confused with his religious sentiments, and treated by him as essential attributes. By taking this view of things, he left an open door for Satan to enter and take possession of the entire man. If Judas had practiced the lessons of Christ, he would have surrendered to Christ, he would have consecrated his heart fully to God; but his confused experience was misleading him (MS 28, 1897).

A Religious Fraud.—The case of Judas has been presented to me as a lesson for all. Judas was with Christ through the entire period of the Saviour's public ministry. He had all that Christ could give him. Had he used his capabilities with earnest diligence, he could have accumulated talents. Had he sought to be a blessing, instead of a questioning, criticizing, selfish man, the Lord would have used him to advance His kingdom. But Judas was a speculator. He thought that he could manage the finances of the church, and by his sharpness in business get gain. He was divided in

heart. He loved the praise of the world. He refused to give up the world for Christ. He never committed his eternal interests to Christ. He had a superficial religion, and therefore he speculated upon his Master and betrayed Him to the priests, being fully persuaded that Christ would not allow Himself to be taken.

Judas was a religious fraud. He held up a high standard for others, but he himself utterly failed to reach the Bible standard. He did not bring the religion of Christ into his life. How many today are, like Judas, betraying their Lord? Those who follow dishonest practices in business, sacrifice Christ for gain and reveal a wisdom that is after Satan's order. Speculation for selfish gain will not be brought into the life of the man who has that faith which works by love and purifies the soul (Letter 40, 1901).

(Mark 3:19.) Jesus Dealt Wisely With Judas.—Christ knew, when He permitted Judas to connect with Him as one of the twelve, that Judas was possessed of the demon of selfishness. He

knew that this professed disciple would betray Him, and yet He did not separate him from the other disciples, and send him away. He was preparing the minds of these men for His death and ascension, and He foresaw that should He dismiss Judas, Satan would use him to spread reports that would be difficult to meet and explain.

The leaders of the Jewish nation were watching and searching for something that they could use to make of no effect the words of Christ. The Saviour knew that Judas, if dismissed, could so misconstrue and mystify His statements that the Jews would accept a false version of His words, using this version to bring terrible harm to the disciples, and to leave on the minds of Christ's enemies the impression that the Jews were justified in taking the attitude that they did toward Jesus and His disciples.

Christ did not, therefore, send Judas from His presence, but kept him by His side, where He could counteract the influence that he might exert against His work (The Review and Herald, May 12, 1903).

26-29. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 11:18-34, 23-26.

28 (1 Corinthians 11:25; see EGW on Leviticus 17:11). The Peace-making Cup.—The atoning sacrifice is full and sufficient. It is the new covenant, sealed with His blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins. This Christ declared at the last supper. In this cup there is to those who drink in faith, peace-making, soul-cleansing efficacy. It is the balm of Gilead, which God has provided to restore health and soundness to the sin-stricken soul (Letter 108, 1899).

31-35 (Mark 14:27-31; Luke 22:31-34; 13:36-38; 1 Corinthians 10:12). The Self-sufficient Go On in Supposed Strength.—Many today stand where Peter stood when in self-confidence he declared that he would not deny his Lord. And because of their self-sufficiency, they fall an easy prey to Satan's devices. Those who realize their weakness trust in a power higher than self. And while they look to God, Satan has no

power against them. But those who trust in self are easily defeated. Let us remember that if we do not heed the cautions that God gives us, a fall is before us. Christ will not save from wounds the one who places himself unbidden on the enemy's ground. He lets the self-sufficient one, who acts as if he knew more than his Lord, go on in his supposed strength. Then comes suffering and a crippled life, or perhaps defeat and death (MS 115, 1902).

36-46 (Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46; see EGW on Ecclesiastes 8:11). Satan Sought to Crush Christ.—At the thought of the grievous character of the guilt of the world, Christ felt that He must go apart, and be alone. The hosts of darkness are there to make sin appear as extensive, deep, and horrible as possible. In his hatred of God, in falsifying His character, in manifesting irreverence, contempt, and hatred toward the laws of His government, Satan had made iniquity reach unto the heavens, and it was his purpose to swell iniquity to such great proportions, that it would make atonement seem impossible, so that the Son of God, who sought to save a lost world, should be

crushed beneath the curse of sin. The working of the vigilant foe in presenting to Christ the vast proportions of transgression, caused such poignant pain that He felt that He could not remain in the immediate presence of any human being. He could not bear that even His disciples should witness His agony as He contemplated the woe of the world. Even His most dearly loved friends must not be in His companionship. The sword of justice was unsheathed, and the wrath of God against iniquity rested upon man's substitute, Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father.

In the Garden of Gethsemane Christ suffered in man's stead, and the human nature of the Son of God staggered under the terrible horror of the guilt of sin, until from His pale and quivering lips was forced the agonizing cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:" but if there is no other way by which the salvation of fallen man may be accomplished, then "not as I will, but as thou wilt." Human nature would then and there have died under the horror of the sense of sin, had not an angel from heaven strengthened Him to bear

the agony.

The power that inflicted retributive justice upon man's substitute and surety, was the power that sustained and upheld the suffering One under the tremendous weight of wrath that would have fallen upon a sinful world. Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God's law.

It is a fearful thing for the unrepenting sinner to fall into the hands of the living God. This is proved by the history of the destruction of the old world by a flood, by the record of the fire which fell from heaven and destroyed the inhabitants of Sodom. But never was this proved to so great an extent as in the agony of Christ, the Son of the infinite God, when He bore the wrath of God for a sinful world. It was in consequence of sin, the transgression of God's law, that the Garden of Gethsemane has become pre-eminently the place of suffering to a sinful world. No sorrow, no agony, can measure with that which was endured by the Son of God.

Man has not been made a sin-bearer, and he will never know the horror of the curse of sin which the Saviour bore. No sorrow can bear any comparison with the sorrow of Him upon whom the wrath of God fell with overwhelming force. Human nature can endure but a limited amount of test and trial. The finite can only endure the finite measure, and human nature succumbs; but the nature of Christ had a greater capacity for suffering; for the human existed in the divine nature, and created a capacity for suffering to endure that which resulted from the sins of a lost world. The agony which Christ endured, broadens, deepens, and gives a more extended conception of the character of sin, and the character of the retribution which God will bring upon those who continue in sin. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ to the repenting, believing sinner (MS 35, 1895).

(Genesis 3:1-24.) Eden and Gethsemane.—The Garden of Eden with its disobedience and the Garden of Gethsemane with its obedience are presented before us. What a costly work was that in

Eden! How much was involved in the fatal eating of the forbidden tree! But many are following in the very same footprints, in disobedience, in breaking away from the law of God. When men selfishly enter a course of disobedience to God they go on imperceptibly. They do not calculate what the sure result will be when they enter the path of temptation, and make but feeble efforts to resist, and some make none at all. But when the scroll is unrolled, and God looks over it, He will find that He has been denied in that place, dishonored in another place; and as the roll is opened more and more, the results of un-Christlike actions are revealed. The Word of God was not fed upon, therefore their actions were not the result of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God (Letter 69, 1897).

The Garden of Eden with its foul blot of disobedience, is to be carefully studied and compared with the Garden of Gethsemane, where the world's Redeemer suffered superhuman agony when the sins of the whole world were rolled upon Him.... Adam did not stop to calculate the result of

His disobedience (MS 1, 1892).

39. See EGW on Romans 8:11.

42 (Mark 14:36; Luke 12:50; 22:42, 53; Philippians 2:7). Stronger Than Human Desire.—The human nature of Christ was like unto ours, and suffering was more keenly felt by Him; for His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin. Therefore His desire for the removal of suffering was stronger than human beings can experience. How intense was the desire of the humanity of Christ to escape the displeasure of an offended God, how His soul longed for relief, is revealed in the words, “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.”

Yet Christ had not been forced to take this step. He had contemplated this struggle. To His disciples He had said, “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” “Now is your hour, and the power of darkness.” He had volunteered to lay down His life to save the

world (The Signs of the Times, December 9, 1897).

43 (Mark 14:40; Luke 22:45). Picture of a Sleeping Church.—In this fearful hour of trial Christ's human nature longed even for the sympathy of His disciples. A second time He rose from the earth and went to them and found them sleeping. This was not a deep sleep. They were in a drowse. They had a limited sense of their Lord's suffering and anguish. In tenderness Jesus stood for a moment bending over them, and regarding them with mingled feelings of love and pity. In these sleeping disciples He sees a representation of a sleeping church. When they should be watching, they are asleep (The Sufferings of Christ, 19, 20).

57 (John 18:13, 14). Need Not Be Instruments of Unrighteousness.—Caiaphas was the one who was to be in office when type met antitype, when the true High Priest came into office. Each actor in history stands in his lot and place; for God's great work after His own plan will be carried out by men who have prepared themselves to fill positions for good or evil. In

opposition to righteousness, men become instruments of unrighteousness. But they are not forced to take this course of action. They need not become instruments of unrighteousness, any more than Cain needed to (The Review and Herald, June 12, 1900).

63, 64 (Mark 14:61, 62; Luke 22:70). A Wonderful Moment.—This is one of the times when Christ publicly confessed His claim to be the Messiah, the One for whom the Jews had long looked. Weighted with such great results, it was to Christ one of the most wonderful moments of His life. He realized that all disguise must be swept away. The declaration that He was one with God must be openly made. His judges looked upon Him as only a man, and they thought Him guilty of blasphemous presumption. But He proclaimed Himself as the Son of God. He fully asserted His divine character before the dignitaries who had arraigned Him before their earthly tribunal. His words, spoken calmly, yet with conscious power, showed that He claimed for Himself the prerogatives of the Son of God (MS 111, 1897).

65 (Mark 14:63). Priestly Robes Not to Be Rent.—The pattern of the priestly robes was made known to Moses in the mount. Every article the high priest was to wear, and the way it should be made, were specified. These garments were consecrated to a most solemn purpose. By them was represented the character of the great antitype, Jesus Christ. They covered the priest with glory and beauty, and made the dignity of his office to appear. When clothed with them, the priest presented himself as a representative of Israel, showing by his garments the glory that Israel should reveal to the world as the chosen people of God. Nothing but perfection, in dress and attitude, in spirit and word, would be acceptable to God. He is holy; and His glory and perfection must be represented in the earthly service. Nothing but perfection could properly represent the sacredness of the heavenly service. Finite man might rend his own heart by showing a contrite and humble spirit; but no rent must be made in the priestly robes (The Youth's Instructor, June 7, 1900).

An Outward Appearance.—So perverted had the priesthood become that when Christ declared Himself the Son of God, Caiaphas, in pretended horror, rent his robe, and accused the Holy One of Israel of blasphemy.

Many today who claim to be Christians are in danger of rending their garments, making an outward show of repentance, when their hearts are not softened nor subdued. This is why so many continue to make failures in the Christian life. An outward appearance of sorrow is shown for wrong, but their repentance is not that which needs not to be repented of (The Review and Herald, June 12, 1900).

Christ's Heart Rent.—How different was the true High Priest from the false and corrupted Caiaphas. Christ stood before the false high priest, pure and undefiled, without a taint of sin.

Christ mourned for the transgression of every human being. He bore even the guiltiness of Caiaphas, knowing the hypocrisy that dwelt in his

soul, while for pretense he rent his robe. Christ did not rend His robe, but His soul was rent. His garment of human flesh was rent as He hung on the cross, the sin-bearer of the race. By His suffering and death a new and living way was opened (The Review and Herald, June 12, 1900).

(Leviticus 10:6.) A Positive Prohibition.—It was the general custom for the garments to be rent at the death of friends. The only exception to this was in the case of the high priest. Even Aaron, when he lost his two sons because they did not glorify God as had been specified, was forbidden to show sorrow and mourning by rending his garments. The prohibition was positive [Leviticus 10:6 quoted] (MS 102, 1897).

The Condemned Pronounced Sentence on the Innocent.—For thus rending his garment in pretended zeal, the high priest might have been arraigned before the Sanhedrin. He had done the very thing that the Lord had commanded should not be done. Standing under the condemnation of God, he pronounced sentence on Christ as a

blasphemer. He performed all his actions toward Christ as a priestly judge, as an officiating high priest, but he was not this by the appointment of God. The priestly robe he rent in order to impress the people with his horror of the sin of blasphemy covered a heart full of wickedness. He was acting under the inspiration of Satan. Under a gorgeous priestly dress, he was fulfilling the work of the enemy of God. This has been done again and again by priests and rulers.

The rent garment ended Caiaphas' priesthood. By his own action he disqualified himself for the priestly office. After the condemnation of Christ he was unable to act without showing the most unreasonable passion. His tortured conscience scourged him, but he did not feel that sorrow that leads to repentance.

The religion of those that crucified Christ was a pretense. The supposed holy vestments of the priests covered hearts that were full of corruption, malignity, and crime. They interpreted gain to be godliness. The priests were appointed, not by God,

but by an unbelieving government. The position of priest was bought and sold like goods of merchandise. Thus it was that Caiaphas obtained the office. He was not a priest after the order of Melchisedec, by God's appointment. He was bought and sold to work wickedness. He never knew what it was to be obedient to God. He had the form of godliness, and this gave him the power to oppress (MS 102, 1897).

Chapter 27

15-26 (Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:18-25; 18:39, 40). A Symbol of Last Days.—The scene in the judgment hall in Jerusalem is a symbol of what will take place in the closing scenes of this earth's history. The world will accept Christ, the Truth, or they will accept Satan, the first great rebel, a robber, apostate, and murderer. They will either reject the message of mercy in regard to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, or they will accept the truth as it is in Jesus. If they accept Satan and his falsehoods, they identify themselves with the chief of all liars, and with all

who are disloyal, while they turn from no less a personage than the Son of the infinite God (The Review and Herald, January 30, 1900).

A Matter of Choice.—When Jesus was on earth, Satan led the people to reject the Son of God, and to choose Barabbas, who in character represented Satan, the God of this world. The Lord Jesus Christ came to dispute the usurpation of Satan in the kingdoms of the world. The conflict is not yet ended; and as we draw near the close of time, the battle waxes more intense. As the second appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ draws near, satanic agencies are moved from beneath. Satan will not only appear as a human being, but he will personate Jesus Christ; and the world that has rejected the truth will receive him as the Lord of lords and King of kings. He will exercise his power, and work upon the human imagination. He will corrupt both the minds and the bodies of men, and will work through the children of disobedience, fascinating and charming, as does a serpent. What a spectacle will the world be for heavenly intelligences! What a spectacle for God,

the Creator of the world, to behold!

The form Satan assumed in Eden when leading our first parents to transgress, was of a character to bewilder and confuse the mind. He will work in as subtle a manner as we near the end of earth's history. All his deceiving power will be brought to bear upon human subjects, to complete the work of deluding the human family. So deceptive will be his working, that men will do as they did in the days of Christ; and when asked, Whom shall I release unto you, Christ or Barabbas? the almost universal cry will be, Barabbas, Barabbas! And when the question is asked, "What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?" the cry again will be, "Crucify him!"

Christ will be represented in the person of those who accept the truth, and who identify their interest with that of their Lord. The world will be enraged at them in the same way that they were enraged at Christ, and the disciples of Christ will know that they are to be treated no better than was their Lord. But Christ will surely identify His interest with that

of those who accept Him as their personal Saviour. Every insult, every reproach, every false accusation made against them by those who have turned their ears away from the truth and are turned unto fables, will be charged upon the guilty ones as done to Christ in the person of His saints (The Review and Herald, April 14, 1896).

When Christ was upon this earth, the world preferred Barabbas. And today the world and the churches are making the same choice. The scenes of the betrayal, the rejection, and the crucifixion of Christ have been re-enacted, and will again be re-enacted on an immense scale. People will be filled with the attributes of the enemy, and with them his delusions will have great power. Just to that degree that light is refused will there be misconception and misunderstanding. Those who reject Christ and choose Barabbas work under a ruinous deception. Misrepresentation and false witness will grow to open rebellion. The eye being evil, the whole body will be full of darkness. Those who give their affections to any leader but Christ will find themselves under the control, body, soul, and spirit,

of an infatuation that is so entrancing that under its power souls turn away from hearing the truth to believe a lie. They are ensnared and taken, and by their every action they cry, Release unto us Barabbas, but crucify Christ.

Even now this decision is being made. The scenes enacted at the cross are being re-enacted. In the churches that have departed from truth and righteousness it is being revealed what human nature can do and will do when the love of God is not an abiding principle in the soul. We need not be surprised at anything that may take place now. We need not marvel at any developments of horror. Those who trample under their unholy feet the law of God have the same spirit as had the men who insulted and betrayed Jesus. Without any compunction of conscience, they will do the deeds of their father, the devil. They will ask the question that came from the traitorous lips of Judas, What will you give me if I betray unto you Jesus the Christ? Even now Christ is being betrayed in the person of His saints.

In view of the history of the life and death of Christ, can we be surprised if the world is hollow and insincere? Can we in our day trust in man, or make flesh our arm? Shall we not choose Christ as our Leader? He alone can save us from sin.

When the world is at last brought up for trial before the great white throne, to account for its rejection of Jesus Christ, God's own messenger to our world, what a solemn scene it will be! What a reckoning will have to be made for nailing to the cross One who came to our world as a living epistle of the law. God will ask each one the question, What have you done with My only-begotten Son? What will those answer who have refused to accept the truth? They will be obliged to say, We hated Jesus, and cast Him out. We cried, Crucify Him, crucify Him. We chose Barabbas in His stead. If those to whom the light of Heaven is presented reject it, they reject Christ. They reject the only provision whereby they may be cleansed from pollution. They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. To them it will be said, "I never knew you: depart

from me.” God will assuredly avenge the death of His Son (The Review and Herald, January 30, 1900).

21. See EGW on Romans 3:19.

21, 22, 29 (Philippians 2:9; Hebrews 2:9; Revelation 6:16; 14:10). Two Kinds of Crowns.—On whose side are we? The world cast Christ out, the heavens received Him. Man, finite man, rejected the Prince of life; God, our sovereign Ruler, received Him into the heavens. God has exalted Him. Man crowned Him with a crown of thorns, God has crowned Him with a crown of royal majesty. We must all think candidly. Will you have this man Christ Jesus to rule over you, or will you have Barabbas? The death of Christ brings to the rejecter of His mercy the wrath and judgments of God, unmixed with mercy. This is the wrath of the Lamb. But the death of Christ is hope and eternal life to all who receive Him and believe in Him (Letter 31, 1898).

Under Satan’s Black Banner.—Each son and

daughter of Adam chooses either Christ or Barabbas as his general. And all who place themselves on the side of the disloyal are standing under Satan's black banner, and are charged with rejecting and despitefully using Christ. They are charged with deliberately crucifying the Lord of life and glory (The Review and Herald, January 30, 1900).

22, 23 (Mark 15:12-14; Luke 23:20-23; John 19:14, 15). A Representative Scene.—The scene transacted in Jerusalem at the betrayal and rejection of Christ represents the scene which will take place in the future history of the world, when Christ is finally rejected. The religious world will take sides with the first great rebel, and will reject the message of mercy in regard to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (MS 40, 1897).

25, 26 (Mark 15:14, 15; Luke 23:23, 24; 19:15, 16). Angels Could Not Interfere.—Be astonished, O heaven, and be everlastingly ashamed, O inhabitants of earth! With sorrow and indignation the angels heard the choice made by

the people and the sentence passed upon Christ. But they could not interfere; for in the great controversy between good and evil, Satan must be given every opportunity to develop his true character, that the heavenly universe and the race for whom Christ was giving His life might see the righteousness of God's purposes. Those under the control of the enemy must be allowed to reveal the principles of his government (MS 136, 1899).

32 (Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26). A Means of Conversion.—The cross he [Simon] was forced to bear became the means of his conversion. His sympathies were deeply stirred in favor of Jesus; and the events of Calvary, and the words uttered by the Saviour, caused him to acknowledge that He was the Son of God (Undated MS 127).

37 (Psalm 85:10; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19). An Arranged Superscription.—Look at the superscription written above the cross. The Lord arranged it. Written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, it is a call for all, Jew and Gentile, barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, hopeless,

helpless, and perishing, to come. Christ has made of none effect the power of Satan. He laid hold of the pillars of Satan's kingdom, and passed through the conflict, destroying him that had the power of death. A way was now opened whereby mercy and truth could meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other (MS 111, 1897).

38 (Mark 15:27; Luke 23:33; 19:18). Christ Placed as Most Notorious Criminal.—Joseph and Nicodemus watched every development at the condemnation and crucifixion of Christ. Not an action escaped them. These men were diligent searchers of the Scriptures, and they were deeply indignant as they saw this man, whom the judges had pronounced to be entirely without fault, placed in the center of two thieves, “on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.” This instruction had been given by the chief priests and rulers, that by his position all might judge that Christ was the most notorious of the three (MS 103, 1897).

42. See EGW on Luke 24:13-15.

45 (Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44). In Sympathy and Confirmation.—The darkness upon the face of nature expressed her sympathy with Christ in His expiring agony. It evidenced to humanity that the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the world, was withdrawing His beams from the once favored city of Jerusalem, and from the world. It was a miraculous testimony given of God, that the faith of after generations might be confirmed (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:167).

God and Angels Clothed in Darkness.—The dark cloud of human transgression came between the Father and the Son. The interruption of the communion between God and His Son caused a condition of things in the heavenly courts which cannot be described by human language. Nature could not witness such a scene as Christ dying in agony while bearing the penalty of man's transgression. God and the angels clothed themselves with darkness, and hid the Saviour from the gaze of the curious multitude while He drank the last dregs of the cup of God's wrath (Letter 139, 1898).

45, 46 (verse 54; Mark 15:33, 34, 39; Luke 23:46, 47; John 19:30). Circumstances Sowed Seed.—The conviction forced upon many at the time of Christ’s trial, at the time when the three hours’ darkness enshrouded the cross, without any natural cause for it, and when the last sentences were uttered, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” “It is finished,” “Into thy hands I commend my spirit,” was seed sown that ripened into harvest when at a future date the gospel was boldly proclaimed by His disciples. The shaking earth, the piercing cry, the sudden death which called forth in no whispered tones the cry, “It is finished,” forced from many the words, “Assuredly this man was righteous”; “Truly this was the Son of God.” Many who had scoffed and jeered at, and taunted the Son of God were terribly afraid that the shaking earth, the rent and trembling rocks would put an end to their own lives. They hastened away from the scene, beating upon their breasts, stumbling, falling, in awful terror lest the earth should open and swallow them up. The veil of the temple rent so mysteriously, changed the religious

ideas of many of the Jewish priests, and a large company changed their faith. After the day of Pentecost, we read that “the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people (MS 91, 1897).

Father Suffered With Son.—In the scenes that transpired in the judgment hall and at Calvary, we see what the human heart is capable of when under the influence of Satan. Christ submitted to crucifixion, although the heavenly host could have delivered Him. The angels suffered with Christ. God Himself was crucified with Christ; for Christ was one with the Father. Those who reject Christ, those who will not have this man to rule over them, choose to place themselves under the rule of Satan, to do his work as his bondslaves. Yet for them Christ yielded up His life on Calvary (BE Aug. 6, 1894).

50 (Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30; Hebrews 2:14). Satan Overcome by Christ's Human Nature.—When Christ bowed His head and died, He bore the pillars of Satan's kingdom with Him to the earth. He vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory. The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Saviour's Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power. This is the privilege of all. In proportion to our faith will be our victory (The Youth's Instructor, April 25, 1901).

51 (Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45; Ephesians 2:14, 15; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:19, 20; See EGW on John 19:30). The Mercy Seat Opened to All.—Christ was nailed to the cross between the third and sixth hour, that is, between nine and twelve o'clock. In the afternoon He died. This was the hour of the evening sacrifice. Then the veil of the temple, that which hid God's glory from the view of the congregation of Israel, was rent in twain from top to bottom.

Through Christ the hidden glory of the holy of holies was to stand revealed. He had suffered death for every man, and by this offering the sons of men were to become the sons of God. With open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, believers in Christ were to be changed into the same image, from glory to glory. The mercy seat, upon which the glory of God rested in the holiest of all, is opened to all who accept Christ as the propitiation for sin, and through its medium, they are brought into fellowship with God. The veil is rent, the partition walls broken down, the handwriting of ordinances canceled. By virtue of His blood the enmity is abolished. Through faith in Christ Jew and Gentile may partake of the living bread (Letter 230, 1907).

(Ch. 26:65; Daniel 5:5, 25-28; Hebrews 10:19, 20.) Israel a Nation Unchurched.—In Christ the shadow reached its substance, the type its antitype. Well might Caiaphas rend his clothes in horror for himself and for the nation; for they were separating themselves from God, and were

fast becoming a people unchurched by Jehovah. Surely the candlestick was being removed out of its place.

It was not the hand of the priest that rent from top to bottom the gorgeous veil that divided the holy from the most holy place. It was the hand of God. When Christ cried out, "It is finished," the Holy Watcher that was an unseen guest at Belshazzar's feast pronounced the Jewish nation to be a nation unchurched. The same hand that traced on the wall the characters that recorded Belshazzar's doom and the end of the Babylonian kingdom, rent the veil of the temple from top to bottom, opening a new and living way for all, high and low, rich and poor, Jew and Gentile. From henceforth people might come to God without priest or ruler (MS 101, 1897).

(Hebrews 6:19; 8:6, 7; Hebrews 10:19, 20.)
God's Presence Withdrawn From Earthly Sanctuary.—By the rending of the veil of the temple, God said, I can no longer reveal My presence in the most holy place. A new and living

Way, before which there hangs no veil, is offered to all. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest.

Type had met antitype in the death of God's Son. The Lamb of God had been offered as a sacrifice. It was as if a voice had said to the worshipers, "There is now an end to all sacrifices and offerings" (The Youth's Instructor, June 21, 1900).

A New Way Opened to Fallen Man.—When Christ on the cross cried out, "It is finished," the veil of the temple was rent in twain. This veil was significant to the Jewish nation. It was of most costly material, of purple and gold, and was of great length and breadth. At the moment when Christ breathed His last, there were witnesses in the temple who beheld the strong, heavy material rent by unseen hands from top to bottom. This act signified to the heavenly universe, and to a world corrupted by sin, that a new and living way had been opened to the fallen race, that all sacrificial offerings terminated in the one great offering of the

Son of God. He who had hitherto dwelt in the temple made with hands, had gone forth never again to grace it with His presence (The Signs of the Times, December 8, 1898).

52, 53 (see EGW on ch. 28:2-4). Resurrection Known to Priests and Rulers.—The captives brought up from the graves at the time of the resurrection of Jesus were His trophies as a conquering Prince. Thus He attested His victory over death and the grave; thus He gave a pledge and an earnest of the resurrection of all the righteous dead. Those who were called from their graves went into the city, and appeared unto many in their resurrected forms, and testified that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead, and that they had risen with Him....

It was well known to the priests and rulers that certain persons who were dead had risen at the resurrection of Jesus. Authentic reports were brought to them of different ones who had seen and conversed with these resurrected ones, and heard their testimony that Jesus, the Prince of life, whom

the priests and rulers had slain, was risen from the dead (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:223).

54 (Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47; see EGW on verses 45, 46; 1:1-3, 14). The Sermon in Action.—[Matthew 27:54 quoted.] ... What so enlightened and convinced these men that they could not refrain from confessing their faith in Jesus? It was the sermon that was given in every action of Christ and in His silence under cruel abuse. At His trial one seemed to vie with the other in making His humiliation as degrading as possible. But His silence was eloquence. In that lacerated, bruised, broken body hanging on the cross, the centurion recognized the form of the Son of God (MS 115, 1897).

Chapter 28

1. See EGW on Mark 16:1, 2.

2. Mightiest Angel Caused Earthquake.—Before anyone had reached the sepulcher, there was a great earthquake. The mightiest angel from

heaven, he who held the position from which Satan fell, received his commission from the Father, and clothed with the panoply of heaven, he parted the darkness from his track. His face was like the lightning, and his garments white as snow. As soon as his feet touched the ground it quaked beneath his tread. The Roman guard were keeping their weary watch when this wonderful scene took place, and they were enabled to endure the sight, for they had a message to bear as witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. The angel approached the grave, rolled away the stone as though it had been a pebble, and sat upon it. The light of heaven encircled the tomb, and the whole heaven was lighted by the glory of the angels. Then his voice was heard, “Thy Father calls Thee; come forth” (MS 115, 1897).

2-4 (chs. 24:30; 27:52, 53; Isaiah 24:20; John 5:28, 29; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 6:14-17). A Lively Image of Glory.—In this scene of the resurrection of the Son of God is given a lively image of the glory that will be revealed at the general resurrection of the just at the second appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Then

the dead that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth to life; and not only the earth, but the heavens themselves, shall be shaken. A few graves were opened at the resurrection of Christ; but at His second coming all the precious dead, from righteous Abel to the last saint that dies, shall awake to glorious, immortal life.

If the soldiers at the sepulcher were so filled with terror at the appearance of one angel clothed with heavenly light and strength, that they fell as dead men to the ground, how will His enemies stand before the Son of God, when He comes in power and great glory, accompanied by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels from the courts of heaven? Then the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed as a cottage. The elements shall be in flames, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll (The Signs of the Times, April 22, 1913).

5, 6. See EGW on Mark 16:6.

17. Doubt Closes Door to Blessings.—But some doubted. So it will ever be. There are those who find it hard to exercise faith, and they place themselves on the doubting side. These lose much because of their unbelief. If they would control their feelings, and refuse to allow doubt to bring a shadow over their own minds and the minds of others, how much happier and more helpful they would be. They close the door to many blessings that they might enjoy if they would refuse to place themselves on the doubting side, and would, instead, talk hope and courage (Letter 115, 1904).

18 (Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1; see EGW on John 20:16, 17). A Friend at Court.—What a Friend we have at court. After His resurrection Christ spoke to His disciples, saying, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” These words were spoken to all who will receive them as a living assurance (MS 13, 1899).

19 (Romans 6:4). Facilities of Heaven Pledged.—The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the three holy dignitaries of heaven, have

declared that they will strengthen men to overcome the powers of darkness. All the facilities of heaven are pledged to those who by their baptismal vows have entered into a covenant with God (MS 92, 1901).

19, 20. See EGW on Romans 1:14.

20. See EGW on Acts 1:11.

Chapter 41

Mark

Chapter 1

9-11. See EGW on Matthew 3:13-17.

10-13. See EGW on Matthew 4:1-11.

Chapter 2

14, 15. See EGW on Luke 5:29.

17. See EGW on Matthew 9:12, 13.

22. See EGW on Matthew 9:17.

Chapter 3

1-3. See EGW on Luke 1:76, 77.

22. See EGW on Matthew 12:24-32.

28, 29. See EGW on Matthew 12:31, 32.

Chapter 4

30 (Luke 13:18). Not Like Earthly Governments.—The government of the kingdom of Christ is like no earthly government. It is a representation of the characters of those who compose the kingdom. “Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God?” Christ asked, “or with what comparison shall we compare it?” He could find nothing on earth that would serve as a perfect comparison. His court is one where holy love presides, and whose offices and appointments are graced by the exercise of charity. He charges His servants to bring pity and loving-kindness, His own attributes, into all their office work, and to find their happiness and satisfaction in reflecting the love and tender compassion of the divine nature on all with whom they associate (The Review and Herald, March 19, 1908).

Chapter 6

26. See EGW on Matthew 14:9.

Chapter 8

34. See EGW on Matthew 16:24; Luke 9:23.

Chapter 9

2-4. See EGW on Matthew 17:1-3.

Chapter 10

13-16. See EGW on Matthew 19:13-15.

45. See EGW on Matthew 9:12, 13.

46-52 (Matthew 20:30-34; Luke 18:35-43).
Some With Eyes See Nothing.—It is only when the sinner feels the need of a Saviour, that his heart goes after the One who can help him. When Jesus walked among men, it was the sick that wanted a physician. The poor, the afflicted and distressed,

followed after Him, to receive the help and comfort which they could not find elsewhere. Blind Bartimaeus is waiting by the wayside; he has waited long to meet Christ. Throngs of people who possess their sight are passing to and fro, but they have no desire to see Jesus. One look of faith would touch His heart of love, and bring them the blessings of His grace; but they know not the sickness and poverty of their souls, and they feel no need of Christ. Not so with the poor blind man. His only hope is in Jesus. As he waits and watches, he hears the tread of many feet, and he eagerly inquires, What means this noise of travel? The bystanders answer that "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." With the eagerness of intense desire, he cries, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!" They try to silence him, but he cries the more vehemently, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!" This appeal is heard. His persevering faith is rewarded. Not only is physical sight restored, but the eyes of his understanding are opened. In Christ he sees his Redeemer, and the Sun of Righteousness shines into his soul. All who feel their need of Christ as did blind Bartimaeus, and

who will be as earnest and determined as he was, will, like him, receive the blessing which they crave.

The afflicted, suffering ones who sought Christ as their helper, were charmed with the divine perfection, the beauty of holiness, that shone forth in His character. But the Pharisees could see no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. His simple attire, and humble life, devoid of outward show, rendered Him to them as a root out of dry ground (The Review and Herald, March 15, 1887).

Chapter 11

12-14. See EGW on Matthew 21:18-20.

Chapter 12

30 (Ecclesiastes 9:10; Luke 10:27; Romans 12:11; Colossians 3:23). The Service of Every Power.—The physical powers are to be brought into service from love to God. The Lord requires the physical strength, and you can reveal your love

for Him by the right use of your physical powers, doing the very work which needs to be done. There is no respect of persons with God. ...

There is science in the humblest kind of work, and if all would thus regard it, they would see nobility in labor. Heart and soul are to be put into work of any kind; then there is cheerfulness and efficiency. In agricultural or mechanical occupations, men may give evidence to God that they appreciate His gift in the physical powers, and the mental faculties as well. Let the educated ability be employed devising improved methods of work. This is just what the Lord wants. There is honor in any class of work that is essential to be done. Let the law of God be made the standard of action and it ennobles and sanctifies all labor. Faithfulness in the discharge of every duty makes the work noble, and reveals a character that God can approve.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.” God desires the love that

is expressed in heart service, in soul service, in the service of the physical powers. We are not to be dwarfed in any kind of service for God. Whatever He has lent us is to be used intelligently for Him. The man who exercises his faculties will surely strengthen them; but he must seek to do his best. There is need of intelligence and educated ability to devise the best methods in farming, in building, and in every other department, that the worker may not labor in vain....

It is the duty of every worker not merely to give his strength but his mind and intellect to that which he undertakes to do....You can choose to become stereo-typed in a wrong course of action because you have not the determination to take yourselves in hand and reform, or you may cultivate your powers to do the very best kind of service, and then you will find yourselves in demand anywhere and everywhere. You will be appreciated for all that you are worth. “Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord” (MS 8, 1894).

30, 31. See EGW on Matthew 22:37-39.

37. See EGW on Luke 4:18, 19.

Chapter 13

21, 22. See EGW on Matthew 24:23, 24.

34. See EGW on John 17:20, 21.

Chapter 14

1. See EGW on Matthew 26:2.

3-9. See EGW on Matthew 26:6-13; 12:3.

10, 11. See EGW on Matthew 26:14-16; Luke 22:3-5.

27-31. See EGW on Matthew 26:31-35.

29-31. See EGW on Luke 22:31-34.

32-42. See EGW on Matthew 26:36-46.

36. See EGW on Matthew 26:42; Luke 22:42; Romans 8:11.

40. See EGW on Matthew 26:43.

53. See EGW on Matthew 26:3.

61, 62. See EGW on Matthew 26:63, 64; Luke 22:70.

63. See EGW on Matthew 26:65.

Chapter 15

6-15. See EGW on Matthew 27:15-26.

12-14. See EGW on Matthew 27:22, 23.

14, 15. See EGW on Matthew 27:25, 26.

21. See EGW on Matthew 27:32.

26. See EGW on Matthew 27:37.

27. See EGW on Matthew 27:38.

31. See EGW on Luke 24:13-15.

33. See EGW on Matthew 27:45.

33, 34, 39. See EGW on Matthew 27:45, 46.

37. See EGW on Matthew 27:50; John 19:30.

38. See EGW on Matthew 27:51; 19:30.

39. See EGW on Matthew 27:54.

Chapter 16

1, 2 (Matthew 28:1; Luke 24:1; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:26). Resurrection Did Not Consecrate First Day.—Christ rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day, and when holy beings of both heaven and earth were astir on the morning of the first day of the week, He rose from the grave to

renew His work of teaching His disciples. But this fact does not consecrate the first day of the week, and make it a Sabbath. Jesus, prior to His death, established a memorial of the breaking of His body and the spilling of His blood for the sins of the world, in the ordinance of the Lord's supper, saying "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." And the repentant believer, who takes the steps required in conversion, commemorates in his baptism the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. He goes down into the water in the likeness of Christ's death and burial, and he is raised out of the water in the likeness of His resurrection—not to take up the old life of sin, but to live a new life in Christ Jesus (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:204).

6 (John 1:1-3, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:6, 8; 2:14-17; Hebrews 4:15). Deity Did Not Die.—Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the two natures were mysteriously blended in one person—the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness

of the Godhead bodily. When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible. Christ, the sinless One, will save every son and daughter of Adam who accepts the salvation proffered them, consenting to become the children of God. The Saviour has purchased the fallen race with His own blood.

This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely understood in all its greatness until the translation of the redeemed shall take place. Then the power and greatness and efficacy of the gift of God to man will be understood. But the enemy is determined that this gift shall be so mystified that it will become as nothingness (Letter 280, 1904).

(Matthew 28:5, 6; Luke 24:5, 6; 2:19; John 10:17, 18; Acts 13:32, 33.)—When the voice of the angel was heard saying, “Thy Father calls thee,” He who had said, “I lay down my life, that I might take it again,” “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,” came forth from the

grave to life that was in Himself. Deity did not die. Humanity died, but Christ now proclaims over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, “I am the resurrection, and the life.” In His divinity Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death. He declares that He had life in Himself to quicken whom He will.

“I am the resurrection, and the life.” This language can be used only by the Deity. All created things live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capabilities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, could say, “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.” All the human beings in our world take their life from Him. He is the spring, the fountain of life (MS 131, 1897).

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Christ was invested with the right to give immortality. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity. “I am come,” He says, “that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (The Youth’s Instructor, August 4, 1898).

Only the Father Could Release Christ.—He who died for the sins of the world was to remain in the tomb the allotted time. He was in that stony

prison house as a prisoner of divine justice. He was responsible to the Judge of the universe. He was bearing the sins of the world, and His Father only could release Him. A strong guard of mighty angels kept watch over the tomb, and had a hand been raised to remove the body, the flashing forth of their glory would have laid him who ventured powerless on the earth.

There was only one entrance to the tomb, and neither human force nor fraud could tamper with the stone that guarded the entrance. Here Jesus rested during the Sabbath. But prophecy had pointed out that on the third day Christ would rise from the dead. Christ Himself had assured His disciples of this. “Destroy this temple,” He said, “and in three days I will raise it up.” Christ never committed sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. His body was to come forth from the tomb untarnished by corruption (MS 94, 1897).

Chapter 42

Luke

Chapter 1

1-4. See EGW on Acts 1:1-5.

5-17. An Answer to Prayer.—Throughout his married life, Zacharias had prayed for a son. He and his wife were now old, and as yet their prayer had remained unanswered; but he murmured not. God had not forgotten. He had his appointed time for answering this prayer, and when the case seemed hopeless, Zacharias received his answer....

As Zacharias entered the holy place, and performed the required service with solemn reverence, another form appeared, standing between the altar and the table of shewbread. It was Gabriel, the mighty messenger of God ... [Luke 1:12-17 quoted].

The answer had come. God had not forgotten

the prayer of His servants. He had written it in His record book, to be answered in His own good time. Looking at outward appearances, Zacharias and Elisabeth had buried their hopes; but the Lord had not forgotten. He knew of the long years of disappointment, and when His own name could best be glorified, their son was born. How tender, how kind, how full of love and compassion, is the great heart of infinite love. God gave Zacharias as a son no ordinary person, but one who should hold a high place in His work, and from whom the light from heaven should shine in clear, distinct rays (MS 27, 1898).

17. See EGW on Matthew 11:14.

22. Shining With Reflected Light.—When Zacharias came out of the temple, his countenance was shining with the light which the heavenly angel had reflected upon him. But he could not speak to the people. He made signs to them that an angel had appeared to him in the temple, and because of his unbelief he was deprived of the power of speech, until the prediction of the angel

should be fulfilled (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:45).

31-35. See EGW on John 1:1-3, 14.

35 (see EGW on John 1:1-3, 14). The Son of God in a New Sense.—Christ brought men and women power to overcome. He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature. In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God. Said the angel to Mary, “The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” While the Son of a human being, He became the Son of God in a new sense. Thus He stood in our world—the Son of God, yet allied by birth to the human race....

From all eternity Christ was united with the Father, and when He took upon Himself human nature, He was still one with God. He is the link that unites God with humanity [Hebrews 2:14

quoted] (The Signs of the Times, August 2, 1905).

76, 77 (ch. 3:2-4; Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:1-3; Mark 1:1-3; 1:19-23). John Born for a Special Work.—In every stage of this earth's history God has had His agencies to carry forward His work, which must be done in His appointed way. John the Baptist had a special work, for which he was born and to which he was appointed—the work of preparing the way of the Lord. ... His wilderness ministry was a most striking, literal fulfillment of prophecy (MS 112, 1901).

80. No Suitable School.—There was a great work appointed for the prophet John, but there was no school on the earth with which he could connect. His learning must be obtained away from the cities, in the wilderness. The Old Testament Scriptures, God, and the nature which God had created, were to be his study books. God was fitting John for his work of preparing the way of the Lord. His food was simply locusts and wild honey. The customs and practices of men were not to be the education of this man. Worldly

engrossment was to act no part in the formation of his character (MS 131, 1901).

Satan Had Access Despite Closed Avenues.—John did not feel strong enough to stand the great pressure of temptation he would meet in society. He feared his character would be molded according to the prevailing customs of the Jews, and he chose the wilderness as his school, in which his mind could be properly educated and disciplined from God's great book of nature. In the wilderness, John could the more readily deny himself and bring his appetite under control, and dress in accordance to natural simplicity. And there was nothing in the wilderness that would take his mind from meditation and prayer. Satan had access to John, even after he had closed every avenue in his power through which he would enter. But his habits of life were so pure and natural that he could discern the foe, and had strength of spirit and decision of character to resist him.

The book of nature was open before John with its inexhaustible store of varied instruction. He

sought the favor of God, and the Holy Spirit rested upon him, and kindled in his heart a glowing zeal to do the great work of calling the people to repentance, and to a higher and holier life. John was fitting himself, by the privations and hardships of his secluded life, to so control all his physical and mental powers that he could stand among the people as unmoved by surrounding circumstances as the rocks and mountains of the wilderness that had surrounded him for thirty years (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:47).

Satan Could Not Move John.—The childhood, youth, and manhood of John, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah to do a special work in preparing the way for the world's Redeemer, was marked with firmness and moral power. Satan could not move him from his integrity (The Review and Herald, March 3, 1874).

Chapter 2

9. Strengthened to Endure Greater Light.—
[Luke 2:8, 9 quoted.] ... Suddenly the heavens are

lighted up with a brightness which alarms the shepherds. They know not the reason of this grand display. They do not at first discern the myriads of angels that are congregated in the heavens. The brightness and glory from the heavenly host illuminate and glorify the entire plain. While the shepherds are terrified at the glory of God, the leading angel of the throng quiets their fears by revealing himself to them, saying, “Fear not. ...”

As their fears are dispelled, joy takes the place of astonishment and terror. They could not, at first, bear the radiance of glory, which attended the whole heavenly host, to break upon them suddenly. One angel only appears to the gaze of the watching shepherds to dissipate their fears, and make known their mission. As the light of the angel encircles them, the glory rests upon them, and they are strengthened to endure the greater light and glory attending the myriads of heavenly angels (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:17, 18).

13, 14, 29-32. Satan Filled With Frenzy.—The heavenly heralds aroused all the wrath of the

synagogue of Satan. He followed the steps of those who had charge of the infant Jesus. He heard the prophecy of Simeon in the temple courts, who had long been waiting for the consolation of Israel. The Holy Ghost was upon him and he came by the Spirit into the temple. Taking the infant Saviour in his arms, he blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Satan was filled with frenzy as he saw that the aged Simeon recognized the divinity of Christ (The Review and Herald, October 29, 1895).

25-32. In the Atmosphere of Heaven.—Simeon no sooner saw the infant in the priest's arms than he was divinely impressed ... [Luke 2:29-32 quoted].

Simeon realized that he held in his arms One who was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. There was at this time nothing in Christ's outward

appearance to give him this assurance, but Simeon had lived in the atmosphere of heaven. The bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness gave him spiritual discernment. His one desire had been to see Christ. The purity of his life corresponded to the light he had received, and he was prepared for the revelation of the great truth that this helpless infant was the Lord's anointed, even the Messiah. Joy and exultation transfigured his face as he held in his arms God's most precious gift to men. His illumined mind received the light flowing from the Source of all light. He saw that Christ was to be the hope of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. The walls of tradition built up by Jewish prejudice did not exist in his mind. He realized that the Messiah was to bring redemption to all (The Review and Herald, April 2, 1901).

Two Classes Represented.—Simeon and the priests represent two classes—those who are guided by the Spirit of God because they are willing to be instructed, and those who, refusing to receive the light which would lead them into all truth, are guided by the spirit of the power of

darkness, and are daily being led into deeper darkness.

By divine illumination Simeon understood Christ's mission. The Holy Spirit impressed his heart. But the priests and rulers were imbued with the spirit of the enemy of God; and today the same spirit influences human minds, controlling with power the hearts of men, and making of none effect the appeals of the Spirit (The Review and Herald, April 2, 1901).

38. Pious Jews Waited Day and Night.—The pious Jews were looking, believing, and earnestly praying, for the coming of the Messiah. God could not manifest His glory and power to His people through a corrupt priesthood. The set time to favor His people had come. The faith of the Jews had become clouded, in consequence of their departure from God. Many of the leaders of the people brought in their own traditions, and enforced them upon the Jews, as the commandments of God. The pious Jews believed, and trusted in God that He would not leave His people in this condition, to be

a reproach to the heathen. He had, in time past, raised them up a deliverer when in their distress they had called upon Him. From the predictions of the prophets, they thought the time appointed of God had arrived when Messiah would come. And when He should come, they would have a clear revelation of the divine will, and that their doctrines would be freed from the traditions and needless ceremonies which had confused their faith. The pious, aged Jews waited day and night for the coming Messiah, praying that they might see the Saviour before they died. They longed to see the cloud of ignorance and bigotry dispelled from the minds of the people (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:41, 42).

40. An Example of What Children May Strive to Be.—It is not correct to say, as many writers have said, that Christ was like all children. He was not like all children. Many children are misguided and mismanaged. But Joseph, and especially Mary, kept before them the remembrance of their child's divine Fatherhood. Jesus was instructed in accordance with the sacred

character of His mission. His inclination to right was a constant gratification to His parents. The questions He asked them led them to study most earnestly the great elements of truth. His soul-stirring words about nature and the God of nature opened and enlightened their minds.

On the rocks and knolls about His home the eye of the Son of God often rested. He was familiar with the things of nature. He saw the sun in the heavens, the moon and the stars fulfilling their mission. With the voice of singing He welcomed the morning light. He listened to the lark caroling forth music to its God, and joined His voice with the voice of praise and thanksgiving....

[Luke 2:40 quoted.] He was an example of what all children may strive to be if parents will seek the Lord most earnestly, and if children will cooperate with their parents. In His words and actions He manifested tender sympathy for all. His companionship was as a healing, soothing balm to the disheartened and depressed.

No one, looking upon the childlike countenance, shining with animation, could say that Christ was just like other children. He was God in human flesh. When urged by His companions to do wrong, divinity flashed through humanity, and He refused decidedly. In a moment He distinguished between right and wrong, and placed sin in the light of God's commands, holding up the law as a mirror which reflected light upon wrong. It was this keen discrimination between right and wrong that often provoked Christ's brothers to anger. Yet His appeals and entreaties, and the sorrow expressed in His countenance, revealed such a tender, earnest love for them that they were ashamed of having tempted Him to deviate from His strict sense of justice and loyalty (The Youth's Instructor, September 8, 1898).

40, 52. Growth in Knowledge and Service.— Though He increased in knowledge, and the grace of God was upon Him, yet He did not become lifted up in pride, or feel that He was above doing the most humble toil. He took His share of the burden, together with His father, mother, and

brethren. He toiled to sustain the family, and shared in the work that would meet the expenses of the household. Though His wisdom had astonished the doctors, yet He meekly subjected Himself to His human guardians, bore His part in the family burdens, and worked with His own hands as any toiler would work. It is stated of Jesus that (as He advanced in years) He “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”

The knowledge He was daily obtaining of His wonderful mission did not disqualify Him for performing the most humble duties. He cheerfully took up the work that devolves upon youth who dwell in humble households pressed by poverty. He understood the temptations of children; for He bore their sorrows and trials. Firm and steadfast was His purpose to do the right. Though enticed to evil, He refused to depart in a single instance from the strictest truth and rectitude. He maintained perfect filial obedience; but His spotless life aroused the envy and jealousy of His brethren. His childhood and youth were anything but smooth and joyous. His brethren did not believe on Him, and

were annoyed because He did not in all things act as they did, and become one of them in the practice of evil. In His home life He was cheerful, but never boisterous. He ever maintained the attitude of a learner. He took great delight in nature, and God was His teacher (The Signs of the Times, July 30, 1896).

The Light and Joy of the Family.—Christ is the ideal for all humanity. He has left a perfect example for childhood, youth, and manhood. He came to this earth, and passed through the different phases of human life. He talked and acted like other children and youth, except that He did no wrong. Sin found no place in His life. Ever He lived in an atmosphere of heavenly purity. From childhood to manhood He preserved unsullied His trust in God. The Word says of Him, ... He “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”

In the sanctuary of the home, Jesus received His education, not merely from His parents, but from His heavenly Father. As He grew older, God

opened to Him more and more of the great work before Him. But notwithstanding His knowledge of this, He assumed no airs of superiority. Never did He by disrespect cause His parents pain or anxiety. He delighted to honor and obey them. Although He was not ignorant of His great mission, He consulted their wishes, and submitted to their authority.

Christ had been Commander of the heavenly host; but He did not because of this excuse Himself from labor, allowing His parents to support Him. While still quite young, He learned a trade, and faithfully discharged His daily duties, contributing to the support of the family.

Christ was the light and joy of the family circle (The Youth's Instructor, August 22, 1901).

41-49. No Lesson to Be Lost.—Not one act in the life of Christ was unimportant. Every event of His life was for the benefit of His followers in future time. This circumstance of the tarry of Christ in Jerusalem teaches an important lesson to those

who should believe on Him....

Jesus was acquainted with hearts. He knew that, as the crowd returned in company from Jerusalem, there would be much talking and visiting which would not be seasoned with humility and grace, and the Messiah and His mission would be nearly forgotten. It was His choice to return from Jerusalem with His parents alone; for in being retired, His father and mother would have more time for reflection, and for meditation upon the prophecies which referred to His future sufferings and death. He did not wish the painful events which they were to experience in His offering up His life for the sins of the world, to be new and unexpected to them. He was separated from them in their return to Jerusalem. After the celebration of the Passover, they sought Him sorrowing three days. When He should be slain for the sins of the world, He would be separated from them, lost to them, for three days. But after that, He would reveal Himself to them, and be found of them, and their faith rely upon Him as the Redeemer of the fallen race, the advocate with the Father in their

behalf.

Here is a lesson of instruction to all the followers of Christ. He designed that none of these lessons should be lost, but be written for the benefit of future generations. There is necessity of carefulness of words and actions when Christians are associated together, lest Jesus be forgotten of them, and they pass along careless of the fact that Jesus is not among them. When they are aroused to their condition, they discover that they have journeyed without the presence of Him who could give peace and joy to their hearts, and days are occupied in returning, and searching for Him whom they should have retained with them every moment. Jesus will not be found in the company of those who are careless of His presence, and who engage in conversation having no reference to their Redeemer, in whom they profess their hopes of eternal life are centered. Jesus shuns the company of such, so also do the angels who do His commands. These heavenly messengers are not attracted to the crowd where minds are diverted from heavenly things. These pure and holy spirits

cannot remain in the company where Jesus' presence is not desired and encouraged, and His absence not marked. For this reason, great mourning, grief, and discouragement exist. Through lack of meditation, watchfulness, and prayer, they have lost all that is valuable. The divine rays of light emanating from Jesus are not with them, cheering them with their loving, elevating influence. They are enshrouded in gloom, because their careless, irreverent spirit has separated Jesus from their company, and driven the ministering angels from them. Many who attend meetings of devotion, and have been instructed by the servants of God, and been greatly refreshed and blessed in seeking Jesus, have returned to their homes no better than they left them, because they did not feel the importance of praying and watching thereunto, as they returned to their homes. They frequently feel inclined to complain of others, because they realize their loss. Some murmur against God, and do not reproach themselves as being the cause of their own darkness, and sufferings of mind. These should not reflect upon others. The fault is in themselves.

They talked and jested, and visited away the heavenly Guest, and themselves they have only to blame. It is the privilege of all to retain Jesus with them. If they do this, their words must be select, seasoned with grace. The thoughts of their hearts must be disciplined to meditate upon heavenly and divine things (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:35-38).

46. A Pattern in Courtesy.—After Joseph and Mary had searched for Him for three days, they found Him in the court of the temple, “sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.” He asked His questions with a grace that charmed these learned men. He was a perfect pattern for all youth. Ever He manifested deference and respect for age. The religion of Jesus will never lead any child to be rude and uncourteous (The Youth’s Instructor, September 8, 1898).

50, 51. A Constant Ministry.—[Luke 2:50, 51 quoted.] Christ did not enter upon His public ministry for eighteen years after this, but He was

constantly ministering to others, improving every opportunity offered Him. Even in His childhood He spoke words of comfort and tenderness to young and old. His mother could not but mark His words, His spirit, His willing obedience to all her requirements (The Youth's Instructor, September 8, 1898).

51. See EGW on John 2:1, 2.

Chapter 3

2-4. See EGW on ch. 1:76, 77.

7-9. See EGW on Matthew 3:7, 8.

15, 16 (John 1:26, 27). No Worldly Aspirations.—The people thought that John might be the promised Messiah. His life was so unselfish, marked with humility and self-denial. His teachings, exhortations, and reproofs, were fervent, sincere, and courageous. In his mission, he turned not to the right or to the left to court the favors or applause of any. He did not aspire to worldly honor

or worldly dignity, but was humble in heart and life, and did not assume honors that did not belong to him. He assured his followers that he was not the Christ (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:57).

21, 22. See EGW on Matthew 3:13-17; 4:1-11.

Chapter 4

1-4. See EGW on Matthew 4:1-4.

1-13. See EGW on Matthew 4:1-11; 2:1, 2.

2. See EGW on Matthew 4:1, 2.

5-8 (Matthew 4:8-10). Satan Tried to Make a Contract With Christ.—[Luke 4:5-8 quoted.] This presumptuous blasphemy, and insult to Jehovah, excited the indignation of Christ, and led Him to exercise His divine authority, and command Satan in an authoritative, dignified manner to desist. Here Satan, in his pride and arrogance, declared himself to be the rightful and permanent ruler of the world, the possessor of all

its glory, as though he had created the world and all the riches and glory contained in it. He endeavored to make a special contract with Christ, to make over to Him at once the whole of his claim, if He would worship him.

Here Satan showed Jesus the kingdoms of the world. They were presented in the most attractive light. He offered them to Jesus if He would there worship him. He told Jesus that he would relinquish his claims of the possessions of earth. Satan knew that his power must be limited, and finally taken away, if the plan of salvation should be carried out. He knew that if Jesus should die to redeem man, his power would end after a season, and he would be destroyed. Therefore it was his studied plan to prevent, if possible, the completion of the great work which had been commenced by the Son of God. If the plan of man's redemption should fail, he would retain the kingdom which he then claimed. And if he should succeed, he flattered himself that he would reign in opposition to the God of heaven (Redemption: or The First Advent of Christ, pages 50, 51).

6. Two Parties and Two Banners.—Satan has called this world his territory. Here his seat is, and he holds in allegiance to himself all who refuse to keep God’s commandments, who reject a plain, “Thus saith the Lord.” They stand under the enemy’s banner; for there are but two parties in the world. All rank either under the banner of the obedient or under the banner of the disobedient (MS 41, 1898).

8. See EGW on Matthew 4:10.

13. See EGW on Matthew 4:11.

18, 19. (Matthew 7:29; 22:29; Mark 12:37).
The Gospel to the Poor.—Christ came to preach the gospel to the poor. He reached the people where they were. He brought plain, simple truth to their comprehension. How simple His language! Even the poorest, the unlearned and ignorant, could understand Him. Not one needed go to a dictionary to obtain the meaning of the high-sounding titles or words that fell from the lips of the greatest Teacher

the world ever knew. While the priests, the rulers, and the expounders of the law were considering themselves as the only teachers of the people, He told these learned rabbis that they were both ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God (The Review and Herald, July 19, 1887).

Chapter 5

29 (Matthew 9:9, 10; Mark 2:14, 15). Matthew Honored Christ Before Friends.—In his grateful humility, Matthew desired to show his appreciation of the honor bestowed upon him, and, calling together those who had been his associates in business, in pleasure, and sin, he made a great feast for the Saviour. If Jesus would call him, who was so sinful and unworthy, He would surely accept his former companions who were, thought Matthew, far more deserving than himself. Matthew had a great longing that they should share the benefits of the mercies and grace of Christ. He desired them to know that Christ did not, as did the scribes and Pharisees, despise and hate the publicans and sinners. He wanted them to know

Christ as the blessed Saviour.

At the feast the Saviour occupied the most honored seat. Matthew was now the servant of Christ, and he would have his friends know in what light he regarded his Leader and Master. He would have them know that he felt highly honored in entertaining so royal a guest.

Jesus never refused an invitation to such a feast. The object ever before Him was to sow in the hearts of His hearers the seeds of truth, through His winning conversation to draw hearts to Himself. In His every act Christ had a purpose, and the lesson which He gave on this occasion was timely and appropriate. By this act He declared that even publicans and sinners were not excluded from His presence. Publicans and sinners could now bear the testimony that Christ honored them with His presence and conversed with them (MS 3, 1898).

30. See EGW on Matthew 9:11.

31, 32. See EGW on Matthew 9:12, 13.

32. See EGW on Matthew 9:13.

37, 38. See EGW on Matthew 9:17.

Chapter 6

37. See EGW on Matthew 7:1, 2.

Chapter 7

29, 30 (Matthew 13:15; John 12:39, 40). Pharisees Did Not Blindly Oppose Christ.—The scribes, Pharisees, and rulers were determined that they would not see the evidences of truth, and they evaded the most manifest conclusions. To justify their course of stubborn unbelief, they lost no possible opportunity of seizing upon anything in the teaching of Jesus that they could misconstrue, misapply, or falsify. When there was no possibility of misapplying the truth of Christ's words, these men who rejected the counsel of God against themselves, started questions that had no reference to the matter in hand, so as to attract the attention

of the people away from the lesson that Jesus sought to teach, and adroitly evade the truth. The Pharisees were not blindly opposing the doctrines of Christ; for the truth made deep impressions upon their minds; but they resisted truth, and went contrary to their convictions, closing their eyes lest they should see, hardening the heart, lest they should perceive, and be converted, and Christ should heal them (The Review and Herald, October 18, 1892).

Chapter 8

46. See EGW on Acts 19:11, 12, 17.

Chapter 9

23 (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; see EGW on Matthew 11:28-30). Shunning Cross Means Shunning Reward.—[Luke 9:23 quoted.] These words are spoken to every one who desires to be a Christian. He who shuns the cross shuns the reward promised to the faithful (Letter 144, 1901).

28-31. See EGW on Matthew 17:1-3.

Chapter 10

13-15. See EGW on Matthew 11:20-24.

27. See EGW on Matthew 22:37-39; Mark 12:30.

Chapter 11

15. See EGW on Matthew 12:24-32.

21-23. See EGW on Matthew 12:29, 30.

23. See EGW on Matthew 16:24.

24-26. See EGW on Matthew 12:43-45.

31. See EGW on Matthew 12:42.

42-44. See EGW on Matthew 23:13-33.

Chapter 12

1 (Matthew 16:6). Hypocrisy Is Like Leaven.—[Luke 12:1 quoted.] ... Our Saviour presented before the people of that time the character of their sins. His plain words aroused the consciences of the hearers, but Satan's counter-working agencies were seeking for a place for their theories, to attract minds from the plainly spoken truth. As the great Teacher would speak impressive truth, the scribes and Pharisees, under pretense of being interested, would assemble around the disciples and Christ, and divert the minds of the disciples by starting questions to create controversy. They pretended that they wanted to know the truth. Christ was interrupted on this occasion as on many similar occasions. And He wished His disciples to listen to the words He had to say, and not allow anything to attract and hold their attention. Therefore He warned them, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." They feigned a desire to get as close as possible to the inner circle. As the Lord Jesus presented truth in contrast to error, the Pharisees

pretended to be desirous of understanding the truth, yet they were trying to lead His mind in other channels.

Hypocrisy is like leaven or yeast. Leaven may be hidden in the flour, and its presence is not known until it produces its effect. By insinuating itself, it soon pervades the whole mass. Hypocrisy works secretly, and if indulged, it will fill the mind with pride and vanity. There are deceptions practiced now similar to those practiced by the Pharisees. When the Saviour gave this caution, it was to warn all who believe in Him to be on guard. Watch against imbibing this spirit, and becoming like those who tried to ensnare the Saviour (MS 43, 1896).

10. See EGW on Matthew 12:31, 32.

16-21. See EGW on 1 Samuel 25:10, 11.

35. See EGW on Matthew 25:7.

48 (John 15:22). God's Tests Differ.—God's

test of the heathen, who have not the light, and of those living where the knowledge of truth and light has been abundant, is altogether different. He accepts from those in heathen lands a phase of righteousness which does not satisfy Him when offered by those of Christian lands. He does not require much where much has not been bestowed (MS 130, 1899).

50. See EGW on Matthew 26:42.

51. See EGW on Matthew 10:34.

Chapter 13

18. See EGW on Mark 4:30.

34, 35. See EGW on Matthew 23:37-39.

Chapter 14

16, 17. See EGW on Matthew 22:2-4.

28-33. The Weak May Do Deeds of

Omnipotence.—To us as well as to the disciples, Christ has given the work of carrying the truth to the world. But before engaging in this great and aggressive warfare, upon which eternal results depend, Christ invites all to count the cost. He assures them that if they take hold of the work with undivided hearts, giving themselves as light bearers to the world, if they will take hold of His strength, they will make peace with Him, and obtain supernatural assistance that will enable them in their weakness to do the deeds of Omnipotence. If they go forward with faith in God, they will not fail nor become discouraged, but will have the assurance of infallible success (The Review and Herald, March 15, 1898).

Chapter 16

13. See EGW on Matthew 6:24.

Chapter 17

5. Increasing Faith.—You have to talk faith, you have to live faith, you have to act faith, that

you may have an increase of faith; and thus exercising that living faith you will grow to strong men and women in Christ Jesus (MS 1, 1889).

10 (Ephesians 1:6; 2:8-10; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 2:14; 3:5; James 2:22). Good Works No Plea for Salvation.—Our acceptance with God is sure only through His beloved Son, and good works are but the result of the working of His sin-pardoning love. They are no credit to us, and we have nothing accorded to us for our good works by which we may claim a part in the salvation of our souls. Salvation is God's free gift to the believer, given to him for Christ's sake alone. The troubled soul may find peace through faith in Christ, and his peace will be in proportion to his faith and trust. He cannot present his good works as a plea for the salvation of his soul.

But are good works of no real value? Is the sinner who commits sin every day with impunity, regarded of God with the same favor as the one who through faith in Christ tries to work in his integrity? The Scripture answers, "We are his

workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” In His divine arrangement, through His unmerited favor, the Lord has ordained that good works shall be rewarded. We are accepted through Christ’s merit alone; and the acts of mercy, the deeds of charity, which we perform, are the fruits of faith; and they become a blessing to us; for men are to be rewarded according to their works. It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us. Our works in and of themselves have no merit. When we have done all that it is possible for us to do, we are to count ourselves as unprofitable servants. We deserve no thanks from God. We have only done what it was our duty to do, and our works could not have been performed in the strength of our own sinful natures.

The Lord has bidden us to draw nigh to Him and He will draw nigh to us; and drawing nigh to Him, we receive the grace by which to do those works which will be rewarded at His hands (The

Review and Herald, January 29, 1895).

28-30 (Genesis 19:24, 25). Rocked in Cradle of Carnal Security.—As the sun arose for the last time upon the cities of the plain, the people thought to commence another day of godless riot. All were eagerly planning their business or their pleasure, and the messenger of God was derided for his fears and his warnings. Suddenly as the thunder peal from an unclouded sky, fell balls of fire on the doomed capital. “So shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” The people will be eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, until the wrath of God shall be poured out without mixture of mercy. The world will be rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. ... The multitudes are striving to forget God, and they eagerly accept fables, that they may pursue the path of self-indulgence undisturbed (The Review and Herald, October 26, 1886).

Chapter 18

15-17. See EGW on Matthew 19:13-15.

35-43. See EGW on Mark 10:46-52.

Chapter 19

12, 13. See EGW on Matthew 25:14, 15.

41-44. Present Sins Fix Guilt.—The generation that Jesus denounced was not responsible for the sins of their fathers, only so far as they followed their evil practices, and thus made themselves accountable for their course of hatred and revenge in persecuting the ancient messengers of God. It was the present mercies and warnings which that generation were rejecting that fastened upon them guilt which the blood of bulls and goats could not wash away. Proud, self-righteous, and independent, they had separated farther and farther from heaven until they had become willing subjects of Satan. The Jewish nation for centuries had been forging the fetters which that generation were irrevocably fastening upon themselves. (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:10, 11).

42. See EGW on Matthew 23:37-39.

44. See EGW on Matthew 24:2.

Chapter 21

8. See EGW on Matthew 24:23, 24.

16-19. A Desperate Companionship for Evil.—Christ shows that without the controlling power of the Spirit of God humanity is a terrible power for evil. Unbelief, hatred of reproof, will stir up satanic influences. Principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places will unite in a desperate companionship. They will be leagued against God in the person of His saints. By misrepresentation and falsehood they will demoralize both men and women who to all appearances believe the truth. False witnesses will not be wanting in this terrible work [Luke 21:16-19 quoted] (MS 40, 1897).

20. Scenes to Be Repeated.—After speaking

of the end of the world, Jesus comes back to Jerusalem, the city then sitting in pride and arrogance, and saying, “I sit a queen, ... and shall see no sorrow.” As His prophetic eye rested upon Jerusalem, He sees that as she was given up to destruction, the world will be given up to its doom. The scenes that transpired at the destruction of Jerusalem will be repeated at the great and terrible day of the Lord, but in a more fearful manner (MS 40, 1897).

Chapter 22

1, 2. See EGW on Matthew 26:3.

3-5 (Matthew 26:14-16; Mark 14:10, 11; John 13:2, 27). Christ Purchased by Temple Money.—At the Passover the case of Judas was decided. Satan took control of heart and mind. He thought that Christ was either to be crucified, or would have to deliver Himself out of the hands of His enemies. At all events, he would make something out of the transaction, and make a sharp bargain by betraying his Lord. He went to the

priests and offered to aid them in searching for Him who was accounted the troubler of Israel. Thus it was that the Lord was sold as a slave, purchased by the temple money used for the buying of the sacrifices (The Signs of the Times, December 17, 1912).

31, 32. See EGW on Matthew 16:22, 23.

31-34 (Matthew 26:31-35; Mark 14:29-31). Peter Tempted the Devil.—[Luke 22:31 quoted.] How true was the Saviour's friendship for Peter! how compassionate His warning! But the warning was resented. In self-sufficiency Peter declared confidently that he would never do what Christ had warned him against. "Lord," he said, "I am ready to go with thee to prison and to death." His self-confidence proved his ruin. He tempted Satan to tempt him, and he fell under the arts of the wily foe. When Christ needed him most, he stood on the side of the enemy, and openly denied his Lord (MS 115, 1902).

39-46. See EGW on Matthew 26:36-46.

42 (Matthew 26:42; Mark 14:36; see EGW on Romans 8:11). Father Is Beside Every Struggling Soul.—Christ conquered by divine strength, and so must every tempted soul overcome. God was with Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, and by the experience of Christ we are to learn to trust our heavenly Father; at all times and in all places we are to believe that He is tender, true, and faithful, able to keep that which is committed to His care. In the agonizing struggle of Christ, our Substitute and Surety, the Father was beside His son, and He is beside every soul that struggles with discouragement and difficulty (Letter 106, 1896).

42, 43. Gabriel Strengthened Christ.—In the supreme crisis, when heart and soul are breaking under the load of sin, Gabriel is sent to strengthen the divine sufferer, and brace Him to tread His bloodstained path. And while the angel supports His fainting form, Christ takes the bitter cup, and consents to drink its contents. Before the suffering One comes up the wail of a lost and perishing

world, and the words come from the blood-stained lips, “Nevertheless, if man must perish unless I drink this bitter cup, Thy will, not Mine, be done” (The Signs of the Times, December 9, 1897).

43. Life Hid in Christ Cannot Be Touched.—

The strength given to Christ in the hour of bodily suffering and mental anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane, has been and will be given to those who suffer for His dear name’s sake. The same grace given to Jesus, the same comfort, the more than mortal steadfastness, will be given to every believing child of God, who is brought into perplexity and suffering, and threatened with imprisonment and death, by Satan’s agents. Never has a soul that trusts in Christ been left to perish. The rack, the stake, the many inventions of cruelty, may kill the body, but they cannot touch the life that is hid with Christ in God (The Signs of the Times, June 3, 1897).

44 (Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14-17). Christ Took No Make-believe Humanity.—Of Christ it is said, “And being in an agony he prayed

more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” We need to realize the truth of Christ’s manhood in order to appreciate the truth of the above words. It was not a make-believe humanity that Christ took upon Himself. He took human nature and lived human nature. Christ worked no miracles in His own behalf. He was compassed with infirmities, but His divine nature knew what was in man. He needed not that any should testify to Him of this. The Spirit was given Him without measure; for His mission on earth demanded this.

Christ’s life represents a perfect manhood. Just that which you may be, He was in human nature. He took our infirmities. He was not only made flesh, but He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. His divine attributes were withheld from relieving His soul anguish or His bodily pains (Letter 106, 1896).

**44, 53 (See EGW on Matthew 26:42).
Passing Into the Hands of the Powers of
Darkness.—**Could mortals view the amazement

and sorrow of the angels as they watched in silent grief the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory, from His Son, they would better understand how offensive is sin in His sight. As the Son of God in the Garden of Gethsemane bowed in the attitude of prayer, the agony of His Spirit forced from His pores sweat like great drops of blood. It was here that the horror of great darkness surrounded Him. The sins of the world were upon Him. He was suffering in man's stead, as a transgressor of His Father's law. Here was the scene of temptation. The divine light of God was receding from His vision, and He was passing into the hands of the powers of darkness. In the agony of His soul He lay prostrate on the cold earth. He was realizing His Father's frown. The cup of suffering Christ had taken from the lips of guilty man, and proposed to drink it Himself, and, in its place, give to man the cup of blessing. The wrath that would have fallen upon man, was now falling upon Christ (The Sufferings of Christ, 17, 18).

45. See EGW on Matthew 26:43.

54. See EGW on Matthew 26:3.

70 (Matthew 10:32; 26:63, 64; Mark 14:61, 62). A Time to Speak.—When Jesus was asked the question, Art thou the Son of God? He knew that to answer in the affirmative would make His death certain; a denial would leave a stain upon His humanity. There was a time to be silent, and a time to speak. He had not spoken until plainly interrogated. In His lessons to His disciples He had declared: “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.” When challenged, Jesus did not deny His relationship with God. In that solemn moment His character was at stake and must be vindicated. He left on that occasion an example for man to follow under similar circumstances. He would teach him not to apostatize from his faith to escape suffering or even death (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:127).

Chapter 23

18-25. See EGW on Matthew 27:15-26.

20-23. See EGW on Matthew 27:22, 23.

23, 24. See EGW on Matthew 27:25, 26.

26. See EGW on Matthew 27:32.

33. See EGW on Matthew 27:38.

38. See EGW on Matthew 27:37.

40-43. Salvation in the Last Hours of Life.—

Some among the redeemed will have laid hold of Christ in the last hours of life, and in heaven instruction will be given to these, who, when they died, did not understand perfectly the plan of salvation. Christ will lead the redeemed ones beside the river of life, and will open to them that which while on this earth they could not understand (Letter 203, 1905).

42, 43. Dying Sinner Lays Hold on Dying Saviour.—To the last of His work Christ is a sin-pardoner. At deepest midnight, as the Star of

Bethlehem was about to sink into oblivion, lo there shines amid the moral darkness with distinct brightness the faith of a dying sinner as he lays hold upon a dying Saviour.

Such faith may be represented by the eleventh hour laborers who receive as much reward as do those who have labored for many hours. The thief asked in faith, in penitence, in contrition. He asked in earnestness, as if he fully realized that Jesus could save him if He would. And the hope in his voice was mingled with anguish as he realized that if He did not, he would be lost, eternally lost. He cast his helpless, dying soul and body on Jesus Christ (MS 52, 1897).

44. See EGW on Matthew 27:45.

45. See EGW on Matthew 27:51.

46. See EGW on Matthew 27:50; 19:30.

46, 47. See EGW on Matthew 27:45, 46.

47. See EGW on Matthew 27:54.

Chapter 24

1. See EGW on Mark 16:1, 2.

5, 6. See EGW on Mark 16:6.

13-15 (Matthew 27:42; Mark 15:31). Grief, Fear, and Wonder Mingled.—Those strong men were so burdened with grief that they wept as they traveled on. Christ’s pitying heart of love saw here a sorrow which He could relieve. The disciples were reasoning with each other concerning the events of the past few days, and marveling how the fact of Jesus yielding Himself up to a shameful death could be reconciled with His claims as the Son of God.

One maintained that He could be no pretender, but had been Himself deceived in regard to His mission and His future glory. They both feared that what His enemies had flung in His teeth was too true—“He saved others; himself he cannot save.”

Yet they wondered how He could be so mistaken in Himself, when He had given them such repeated evidence that He could read the hearts of others. And the strange reports of the women threw them into still greater uncertainty (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:207).

13-31. Understanding Bible of First Importance.—Jesus did not first reveal Himself in His true character to them, and then open the Scriptures to their minds; for He knew that they would be so overjoyed to see Him again, risen from the dead, that their souls would be satisfied. They would not hunger for the sacred truths which He wished to impress indelibly upon their minds, that they might impart them to others, who should in their turn spread the precious knowledge, until thousands of people should receive the light given that day to the despairing disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus.

He maintained His disguise till He had interpreted the Scriptures, and had led them to an intelligent faith in His life, His character, His

mission to earth, and His death and resurrection. He wished the truth to take firm root in their minds, not because it was supported by His personal testimony, but because the typical law, and the prophets of the Old Testament, agreeing with the facts of His life and death, presented unquestionable evidence of that truth. When the object of His labors with the two disciples was gained, He revealed Himself to them, that their joy might be full, and then vanished from their sight (The Signs of the Times, October 6, 1909).

15, 16. Jesus Smooths Hard Paths.—This mighty conqueror of death, who had reached to the very depths of human misery to rescue a lost world, assumed the humble task of walking with the two disciples to Emmaus, to teach and comfort them. Thus He ever identifies Himself with His suffering and perplexed people. In our hardest and most trying paths, lo, Jesus is with us to smooth the way. He is the same Son of man, with the same sympathies and love which He had before He passed through the tomb and ascended to His Father (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:212).

39 (Acts 1:9-11). Christ Took Humanity With Him.—Christ ascended to heaven, bearing a sanctified, holy humanity. He took this humanity with Him into the heavenly courts, and through the eternal ages He will bear it, as the One who has redeemed every human being in the city of God, the One who has pleaded before the Father, “I have graven them upon the palms of my hands.” The palms of His hands bear the marks of the wounds that He received. If we are wounded and bruised, if we meet with difficulties that are hard to manage, let us remember how much Christ suffered for us. Let us sit together with our brethren in heavenly places in Christ. Let us bring heaven’s blessing into our hearts (The Review and Herald, March 9, 1905).

Jesus took the nature of humanity, in order to reveal to man a pure, unselfish love, to teach us how to love one another.

As a man Christ ascended to heaven. As a man He is the substitute and surety for humanity. As a

man He liveth to make intercession for us. He is preparing a place for all who love Him. As a man He will come again with power and glory, to receive His children. And that which should cause us joy and thanksgiving is, that God “hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.” Then we may have the assurance forever that the whole unfallen universe is interested in the grand work Jesus came to our world to accomplish, even the salvation of man (MS 16, 1890).

50, 51. See EGW on Acts 1:9-11.

Chapter 43

John

Chapter 1

1-3 (Proverbs 8:22-27; Romans 9:5; Philippians 2:6; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:8). The Eternity of Christ.—If Christ made all things, He existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity. God over all, blessed forevermore.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by Him as His right. This was no robbery of God [Proverbs 8:22-27 quoted].

There are light and glory in the truth that Christ

was One with the Father before the foundation of the world was laid. This is the light shining in a dark place, making it resplendent with divine, original glory. This truth, infinitely mysterious in itself, explains other mysterious and otherwise unexplainable truths, while it is enshrined in light unapproachable and incomprehensible (The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906).

1-3, 14 (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:6, 8; 2:14-17; see EGW on Mark 16:6). Divine-Human Saviour.—The apostle would call our attention from ourselves to the Author of our salvation. He presents before us His two natures, divine and human. Here is the description of the divine: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” He was “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.”

Now, of the human: He “was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death.” He voluntarily assumed human nature.

It was His own act, and by His own consent. He clothed His divinity with humanity. He was all the while as God, but He did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstrations of Deity, which had commanded the homage, and called forth the admiration, of the universe of God. He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man. He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for a while relinquished. Though He walked among men in poverty, scattering His blessings wherever He went, at His word legions of angels would surround their Redeemer, and do Him homage. But He walked the earth unrecognized, unconfessed, with but few exceptions, by His creatures. The atmosphere was polluted with sin and curses, in place of the anthem of praise. His lot was poverty and humiliation. As He passed to and fro upon His mission of mercy to relieve the sick, to lift up the depressed, scarce a solitary voice called Him blessed, and the very

greatest of the nation passed Him by with disdain.

Contrast this with the riches of glory, the wealth of praise pouring forth from immortal tongues, the millions of rich voices in the universe of God in anthems of adoration. But He humbled Himself, and took mortality upon Him. As a member of the human family, He was mortal; but as a God, He was the fountain of life to the world. He could, in His divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but He voluntarily laid down His life, that in so doing He might give life and bring immortality to light. He bore the sins of the world, and endured the penalty, which rolled like a mountain upon His divine soul. He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will. This was humility. The whole treasure of heaven was poured out in one gift to save fallen man. He brought into His human nature all the life-giving energies that human beings will need and must receive.

Wondrous combination of man and God! He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature. He did this that the Scripture might be fulfilled; and the plan was entered into by the Son of God, knowing all the steps in His humiliation, that He must descend to make an expiation for the sins of a condemned, groaning world. What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man! It was a wonderful humility.

But He stepped still lower; the man must humble Himself as a man to bear insult, reproach, shameful accusations, and abuse. There seemed to be no safe place for Him in His own territory. He had to flee from place to place for His life. He was betrayed by one of His disciples; He was denied by one of His most zealous followers. He was mocked. He was crowned with a crown of thorns. He was scourged. He was forced to bear the burden

of the cross. He was not insensible to this contempt and ignominy. He submitted, but, oh! He felt the bitterness as no other being could feel it. He was pure, holy, and undefiled, yet arraigned as a criminal! The adorable Redeemer stepped down from the highest exaltation. Step by step He humbled Himself to die—but what a death! It was the most shameful, the most cruel the death upon the cross as a malefactor. He did not die as a hero in the eyes of the world, loaded with honors, as men in battle. He died as a condemned criminal, suspended between the heavens and the earth—died a lingering death of shame, exposed to the tauntings and revilings of a debased, crime-loaded, profligate multitude! “All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head.” Psalm 22:7. He was numbered with the transgressors, He expired amid derision, and His kinsmen according to the flesh disowned Him. His mother beheld His humiliation, and He was forced to see the sword pierce her heart. He endured the cross, despised the shame. He made it of small account in consideration of the results that He was working out in behalf of, not only the inhabitants

of this speck of a world, but the whole universe, every world which God had created.

Christ was to die as man's substitute. Man was a criminal under the sentence of death for transgression of the law of God, as a traitor, a rebel; hence a substitute for man must die as a malefactor, because He stood in the place of the traitors, with all their treasured sins upon His divine soul. It was not enough that Jesus should die in order to fully meet the demands of the broken law, but He died a shameful death. The prophet gives to the world His words, "I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

In consideration of this, can men have one particle of exaltation? As they trace down the life and sufferings and humiliation of Christ, can they lift their proud heads as if they were to bear no trials, no shame, no humiliation? I say to the followers of Christ, Look to Calvary, and blush for shame at your self-important ideas. All this humiliation of the Majesty of heaven was for guilty, condemned man. He went lower and lower

in His humiliation, until there were no lower depths that He could reach, in order to lift man up from his moral defilement. All this was for you who are striving for the supremacy—striving for human praise, for human exaltation; you who are afraid you will not receive all that deference, that respect from human minds, that you think is your due. Is this Christlike?

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” He died to make an atonement, and to become a pattern for every one who would be His disciple. Shall selfishness come into your hearts? And will those who set not before them the pattern, Jesus, extol your merits? You have none except as they come through Jesus Christ. Shall pride be harbored after you have seen Deity humbling Himself, and then as man debasing Himself, till there was no lower point to which He could descend? “Be astonished, O ye heavens,” and be amazed, ye inhabitants of the earth, that such returns should be made to our Lord! What contempt! what wickedness! what formality! what pride! what efforts made to lift up man and glorify

self, when the Lord of glory humbled Himself, agonized, and died the shameful death upon the cross in our behalf (The Review and Herald, September 4, 1900)!

Christ could not have come to this earth with the glory that He had in the heavenly courts. Sinful human beings could not have borne the sight. He veiled His divinity with the garb of humanity, but He did not part with His divinity. A divine-human Saviour, He came to stand at the head of the fallen race, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood (The Review and Herald, June 15, 1905).

Christ had not exchanged His divinity for humanity; but He had clothed His divinity in humanity (The Review and Herald, October 29, 1895).

(Ch. 14:30; Luke 1:31-35; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45; Hebrews 4:15.)—Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is

the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden.

Bro. _____, avoid every question in relation to the humanity of Christ which is liable to be misunderstood. Truth lies close to the track of presumption. In treating upon the humanity of Christ, you need to guard strenuously every assertion, lest your words be taken to mean more than they imply, and thus you lose or dim the clear perceptions of His humanity as combined with divinity. His birth was a miracle of God; for, said the angel, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy

womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

These words do not refer to any human being, except to the Son of the infinite God. Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ, or that He in any way yielded to corruption. He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted, yet He is called “that holy thing.” It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be without sin. The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain a

mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be. The exact time when humanity blended with divinity, it is not necessary for us to know. We are to keep our feet on the Rock Christ Jesus, as God revealed in humanity.

I perceive that there is danger in approaching subjects which dwell on the humanity of the Son of the infinite God. He did humble Himself when He saw He was in fashion as a man, that He might understand the force of all temptations wherewith man is beset.

The first Adam fell; the second Adam held fast to God and His Word under the most trying circumstances, and His faith in His Father's goodness, mercy, and love did not waver for one moment. "It is written" was His weapon of resistance, and it is the sword of the Spirit which every human being is to use. "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world

cometh, and hath nothing in me”—nothing to respond to temptation. On not one occasion was there a response to his manifold temptations. Not once did Christ step on Satan’s ground, to give him any advantage. Satan found nothing in Him to encourage his advances (Letter 8, 1895).

(Matthew 27:54; 1 Timothy 3:16.)—But although Christ’s divine glory was for a time veiled and eclipsed by His assuming humanity, yet He did not cease to be God when He became man. The human did not take the place of the divine, nor the divine of the human. This is the mystery of godliness. The two expressions “human” and “divine” were, in Christ, closely and inseparably one, and yet they had a distinct individuality. Though Christ humbled Himself to become man, the Godhead was still His own. His deity could not be lost while He stood faithful and true to His loyalty. Surrounded with sorrow, suffering, and moral pollution, despised and rejected by the people to whom had been intrusted the oracles of heaven, Jesus could yet speak of Himself as the Son of man in heaven. He was ready to take once

more His divine glory when His work on earth was done.

There were occasions when Jesus stood forth while in human flesh as the Son of God. Divinity flashed through humanity, and was seen by the scoffing priests and rulers. Was it acknowledged? Some acknowledged that He was the Christ, but the larger portion of those who upon these special occasions were forced to see that He was the Son of God, refused to receive Him. Their blindness corresponded to their determined resistance of conviction.

When Christ's indwelling glory flashed forth, it was too intense for His pure and perfect humanity entirely to conceal. The scribes and Pharisees did not speak in acknowledgment of Him, but their enmity and hatred were baffled as His majesty shone forth. The truth, obscured as it was by a veil of humiliation, spoke to every heart with unmistakable evidence. This led to the words of Christ, "Ye know who I am." Men and devils were compelled, by the shining forth of His glory, to

confess, “Truly, this is the Son of God.” Thus God was revealed; thus Christ was glorified (The Signs of the Times, May 10, 1899).

Christ left His position in the heavenly courts, and came to this earth to live the life of human beings. This sacrifice He made in order to show that Satan’s charge against God is false—that it is possible for man to obey the laws of God’s kingdom. Equal with the Father, honored and adored by the angels, in our behalf Christ humbled Himself, and came to this earth to live a life of lowliness and poverty—to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Yet the stamp of divinity was upon His humanity. He came as a divine Teacher, to uplift human beings, to increase their physical, mental, and spiritual efficiency.

There is no one who can explain the mystery of the incarnation of Christ. Yet we know that He came to this earth and lived as a man among men. The man Christ Jesus was not the Lord God Almighty, yet Christ and the Father are one. The Deity did not sink under the agonizing torture of

Calvary, yet it is nonetheless true that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

In every possible way Satan sought to prevent Jesus from developing a perfect childhood, a faultless manhood, a holy ministry, and an unblemished sacrifice. But he was defeated. He could not lead Jesus into sin. He could not discourage Him, or drive Him from the work He had come to this earth to do. From the desert to Calvary the storm of Satan’s wrath beat upon Him, but the more mercilessly it fell, the more firmly did the Son of God cling to the hand of His Father, and press on in the blood-stained path (MS 140, 1903).

When Jesus took human nature, and became in fashion as a man, He possessed all the human organism. His necessities were the necessities of a man. He had bodily wants to be supplied, bodily weariness to be relieved. By prayer to the Father He was braced for duty and for trial (Letter 32, 1899).

4 (chs. 10:18; 17:3). Christ's Life Was Unborrowed.—“In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.” It is not physical life that is here specified, but eternal life, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual received. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Lifegiver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. “I lay it down of myself,” He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He cannot earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Christ as his personal Saviour. “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3. This is the open fountain of life for the world (The Signs of the Times, February 13, 1912).

12, 13. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

14 (Philippians 2:6-8; Colossians 1:26, 27; 2:9; Hebrews 1:3; 2:14-18; see EGW on Luke 2:40, 52). The Incarnation an Unfathomable Mystery.—In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God, and see in Him the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person (The Signs of the Times, July 30, 1896).

(Hebrews 2:14; 3:3.) The Wonderful Condescension of God.—The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, “even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.” It is the great and profound mystery of godliness. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Christ took upon Himself human nature, a nature inferior to His heavenly nature. Nothing so shows the wonderful condescension of God as this....

Christ did not make-believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. “As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” He was the Son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a man, even the man Christ Jesus. “This man,” writes Paul, “was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house” (The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906).

(See EGW on Romans 5:12-19; 1 Timothy

2:5; Hebrews 1:1-3.) The Human Characteristics of Jesus.—Jesus was the Commander of heaven, one equal with God, and yet He condescended to lay aside His kingly crown, His royal robe, and clothed His divinity with humanity. The incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery. He could have come to earth as one with a remarkable appearance, unlike the sons of men. His countenance could have shone with glory, and His form could have been of remarkable grace. He could have presented such an appearance as to charm the beholder; but this was not according to the plan devised in the courts of God. He was to bear the characteristics of the human family, and the Jewish race. In all respects the Son of God was to wear the same features as did other human beings. He was not to have such beauty of person as would make Him singular among men. He was to manifest no wonderful charms by which to attract attention to Himself. He came as a representative of the human family before heaven and earth. He was to stand as man's substitute and surety. He was to live the life of humanity in such a way as to contradict the assertion that Satan had

made that humanity was his everlasting possession, and that God Himself could not take man out of His adversary's hands (The Signs of the Times, July 30, 1896).

Veiled Glory of Christ.—Had Christ come in His divine form, humanity could not have endured the sight. The contrast would have been too painful, the glory too overwhelming. Humanity could not have endured the presence of one of the pure, bright angels from glory; therefore Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He came in the likeness of men.

But thirty years was all that the world could endure of its Redeemer. For thirty years He dwelt in a world all seared and marred with sin, doing the work that no other one ever had done or ever could do (The Signs of the Times, February 15, 1899).

(Genesis 3:15; Matthew 8:17; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 1:19.) Perfect Sinlessness of Christ's Human Nature.—In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen

condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He “knew no sin.” He was the lamb “without blemish and without spot.” Could Satan in the least particular have tempted Christ to sin, he would have bruised the Saviour’s head. As it was, he could only touch His heel. Had the head of Christ been touched, the hope of the human race would have perished. Divine wrath would have come upon Christ as it came upon Adam. Christ and the church would have been without hope.

We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning sacrifice (The Signs of the Times, June 9, 1898).

16. See EGW on Colossians 2:9, 10.

18. Manifestation of the Father.—What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, that man might bear the image of the invisible God. He made known in His words, His character, His power and majesty, the nature and attributes of God. Divinity flashed through humanity in softening, subduing light. He was the embodiment of the law of God, which is the transcript of His character (MS 77, 1899).

19-23. See EGW on Luke 1:76, 77.

26, 27. See EGW on Luke 3:15, 16.

29 (Leviticus 14:4-8; Revelation 7:14; see EGW on John 12:32). Washing and Ironing Time.—Remember that just as you are in your family, so will you be in the church. Just as you

treat your children, so will you treat Christ. If you cherish an un-Christlike spirit, you are dishonoring God.... Position does not make the man. It is Christ formed within that makes a man worthy of receiving the crown of life, that fadeth not away....

This is our washing and ironing time—the time when we are to cleanse our robes of character in the blood of the Lamb. John says, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” ... Shall we not let Him take them away? Shall we not let our sins go (The General Conference Bulletin, April 6, 1903, p. 89)?

32, 33. See EGW on Matthew 3:13-17.

Chapter 2

1, 2 (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 2:51; 4:1-13).
Between the Temptation of Christ and the Marriage at Cana.—There was to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The parties were relatives of Joseph and Mary. Christ knew of this family gathering, and that many influential persons would

be brought together there, so, in company with His newly made disciples, He made His way to Cana. As soon as it was known that Jesus had come to the place, a special invitation was sent to Him and His friends. This was what He had purposed, and so He graced the feast with His presence.

He had been separated from His mother for quite a length of time. During this period He had been baptized by John and had endured the temptations in the wilderness. Rumors had reached Mary concerning her son and His sufferings. John, one of the new disciples, had searched for Christ and had found Him in His humiliation, emaciated, and bearing the marks of great physical and mental distress. Jesus, unwilling that John should witness His humiliation, had gently yet firmly dismissed him from His presence. He wished to be alone; no human eye must behold His agony, no human heart be called out in sympathy with His distress.

The disciple had sought Mary in her home and related to her the incidents of this meeting with Jesus, as well as the event of His baptism, when the

voice of God was heard in acknowledgment of His Son, and the prophet John had pointed to Christ, saying “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” For thirty years this woman had been treasuring up evidences that Jesus was the Son of God, the promised Saviour of the world. Joseph was dead, and she had no one in whom to confide the cherished thoughts of her heart. She had fluctuated between hope and perplexing doubts, but always feeling more or less of an assurance that her son was indeed the Promised One (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:99, 100).

19. See EGW on Mark 16:6.

Chapter 3

3-7. See EGW on Ezekiel 36:25, 26.

5-8. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

14, 15. See EGW on John 12:32.

14-17(ch. 1:29; Galatians 6:14; Hebrews

2:14). The Efficacy of the Cross.—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 (The Signs of the Times, December 30, 1889).

(1 Corinthians 2:2; Colossians 1:20.) Light From the Cross.—Without the cross, man could have no connection with the Father. On it hangs our every hope. In view of it the Christian may advance with the steps of a conqueror; for from it streams the light of the Saviour's love. When the sinner reaches the cross, and looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ; and the words of pardon are spoken: Live, O ye guilty sinners, live. Your repentance is accepted; for I have found a ransom.

Through the cross we learn that our heavenly Father loves us with an infinite and everlasting love, and draws us to Him with more than a mother's yearning sympathy for a wayward child. Can we wonder that Paul exclaimed, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"? It is our privilege also to glory in the cross of Calvary, our privilege to give ourselves

wholly to Him who gave Himself for us. Then with the light of love that shines from His face on ours, we shall go forth to reflect it to those in darkness (The Review and Herald, April 29, 1902).

Love Is Stronger Than Death.—Jesus placed the cross in line with the light coming from heaven, for it is there that it shall catch the eye of man. The cross is in direct line with the shining of the divine countenances, so that by beholding the cross men may see and know God and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. In beholding God we behold the One who poured out His soul unto death. In beholding the cross the view is extended to God, and His hatred of sin is discerned. But while we behold in the cross God's hatred of sin, we also behold His love for sinners, which is stronger than death. To the world the cross is the incontrovertible argument that God is truth and light and love (The Signs of the Times, March 7, 1895).

16. The Science of Redemption.—The scheme of redemption far exceeds the comprehension of the human mind. The great condescension on the

part of God is a mystery that is beyond our fathoming. The greatness of the plan cannot be fully comprehended, nor could infinite Wisdom devise a plan that would surpass it. It could only be successful by the clothing of divinity with humanity, by Christ becoming man, and suffering the wrath which sin has made because of the transgression of God's law. Through this plan the great, the dreadful God can be just, and yet be the justifier of all who believe in Jesus, and who receive Him as their personal Saviour. This is the heavenly science of redemption, of saving men from eternal ruin, and can be carried out only through the incarnation of the Son of God in humanity, through His triumph over sin and death, and in seeking to fathom this plan all finite intelligences are baffled (Letter 43, 1895).

(Genesis 9:13-17; Revelation 4:3.) Bow Shows Righteousness of Christ, Mercy, and Justice.—In the rainbow above the throne is an everlasting testimony that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish....” Whenever

the law is presented before the people, let the teacher of truth point to the throne arched with the rainbow of promise, the righteousness of Christ. The glory of the law is Christ; He came to magnify the law, and to make it honorable. Make it appear distinct that mercy and peace have met together in Christ, and righteousness and truth have embraced each other....

As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of the sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. It is not justice alone that is to be maintained; for this would eclipse the glory of the rainbow of promise above the throne; men could see only the penalty of the law. Were there no justice, no penalty, there would be no stability to the government of God. It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation complete. It is the blending of the two that leads us, as we view the world's Redeemer, and the law of Jehovah, to exclaim, "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (The Review and Herald, December 13, 1892).

Chapter 4

14. No Thirst for the World.—“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst”—never crave the world’s advantages and attractions—“but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life” (Letter 5, 1900).

A Channel.—You must seek to have an indwelling Saviour, who will be to you as a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. The water of life flowing from the heart always waters the hearts of others (MS 69, 1912).

A Revelation of Grace.—The water that Christ referred to was the revelation of His grace in His Word. His Spirit, His teaching, is as a satisfying fountain to every soul.... In Christ is fullness of joy forevermore.... Christ’s gracious presence in His Word is ever speaking to the soul, representing Him as the well of living water to refresh the thirsting. It is our privilege to have a living, abiding

Saviour. He is the source of spiritual power implanted within us, and His influence will flow forth in words and actions, refreshing all within the sphere of our influence, begetting in them desires and aspirations for strength and purity, for holiness and peace, and for that joy which brings with it no sorrow. This is the result of an indwelling Saviour (Letter 73, 1897).

35. Christ Was Above All Prejudice.—[John 4:35 quoted.] He here referred to the gospel field, to the work of Christianity among the poor, despised Samaritans. His hand reached out to gather them into the garner; they were ready for the harvest.

The Saviour was above all prejudice of nation or people; He was willing to extend the blessings and privileges of the Jews to all who would accept the light which He came to the world to bring. It caused Him great joy to behold even one soul reaching out to Him from the night of spiritual blindness. That which Jesus had withheld from the Jews and enjoined upon His disciples to keep

secret, was distinctly opened before the inquiring woman of Samaria; for He who knew all things perceived that she would make a right use of her knowledge and be the means of leading others to the true faith (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:147).

Chapter 5

17. See EGW on Acts 17:28.

22 (see EGW on 2 Corinthians 5:10). Christ Appointed as Judge.—To His Son the Father has committed all judgment. Christ will declare the reward of loyalty. “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.... And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.” Christ accepted humanity and lived on this earth a pure, sanctified life. For this reason He has received the appointment of judge. He who occupies the position of judge is God manifest in the flesh (The Review and Herald, June 18, 1901).

He Alone Is the Judge.—To Christ has been

committed all judgment, because He is the Son of man. Nothing escapes His knowledge. However high the rank and great the power of spiritual apostates, One higher and greater has borne the sin of the whole world. He is infinite in righteousness, in goodness, and in truth. He has power to withstand principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. Armed and equipped as the Captain of the Lord's host, He comes to the front in defense of His people. His righteousness covers all who love and trust Him. The General of armies, He leads out the heavenly host to stand as a wall of fire about His people. He alone is the judge of their righteousness, for He created them, and at infinite cost to Himself redeemed them. He will see that obedience to God's commandments is rewarded, and that transgressors receive according to their works (Letter 19, 1901).

28, 29. See EGW on Matthew 28:2-4.

39 (Revelation 22:2). Scriptures Testify of Christ.—In the Word the Saviour is revealed in all His beauty and loveliness. Every soul will find

comfort and consolation in the Bible, which is full of promises concerning what God will do for the one who comes into right relation to Him. Especially will the sick be comforted by hearing the Word; for in giving the Scriptures God has given to mankind a leaf from the tree of life, which is for the healing of the nations. How can anyone who reads the Scriptures or who has heard them read, lose his interest in heavenly things, and find pleasure in amusements and enchantments of the world (MS 105, 1901)?

40. See EGW on ch. 15:22.

Chapter 6

35. A Heaven-sent Teacher.—“I am the bread of life,” the Author, Nourisher, and Supporter of eternal, spiritual life. In the thirty-fifth verse of the sixth chapter of John, Christ represents Himself under the similitude of heavenly bread. To eat His flesh and to drink His blood means to receive Him as a heaven-sent teacher. Belief in Him is essential to spiritual life. Those who feast on the Word never

hunger, never thirst, never desire any higher or more exalted good (MS 81, 1906).

53-57. Eating and Drinking Represents Nearness to Christ.—Christ explained the meaning of His words so clearly that none need stumble over them. His statement regarding eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God, is to be taken in a spiritual sense. We eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood when by faith we lay hold upon Him as our Saviour.

Christ used the figure of eating and drinking to represent that nearness to Him which all must have who are at last partakers with Him in His glory. The temporal food we eat is assimilated, giving strength and solidity to the body. In a similar manner, as we believe and receive the words of the Lord Jesus, they become a part of our spiritual life, bringing light and peace, hope and joy, and strengthening the soul as physical food strengthens the body (MS 33, 1911).

(Revelation 22:2.) A Practical Application.—

It is not enough for us to know and respect the words of the Scriptures. We must enter into the understanding of them, studying them earnestly, eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God. Christians will reveal the degree to which they do this by the healthiness of their spiritual character. We must know the practical application of the Word to our own individual character-building. We are to be holy temples, in which God can live and walk and work. Never must we strive to lift ourselves above the servants whom God has chosen to do His work and to honor His holy name. “All ye are brethren.” Let us apply this Word to our individual selves, comparing scripture with scripture.

In our daily lives, before our brethren and before the world, we are to be living interpreters of the Scriptures, doing honor to Christ by revealing His meekness and His lowliness of heart. Christ’s teachings are to be to us as the leaves of the tree of life. As we eat and digest the bread of life, we shall reveal a symmetrical character. By our unity, by esteeming others better than ourselves, we are to

bear to the world a living testimony of the power of the truth....

When men submit entirely to God, eating the bread of life and drinking the water of salvation, they will grow up into Christ. Their characters are composed of that which the mind eats and drinks. Through the Word of life, which they receive and obey, they become partakers of the divine nature. Then their entire service is after the divine similitude, and Christ, not man, is exalted (Letter 64, 1900).

53-57, 63. Eating of the Tree of Life.—
“Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood,” says Christ, “hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.... It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” This is

eating the fruit of the tree of life (MS 112, 1898).

63. See EGW on Genesis 3:24.

Chapter 7

1-5. Relatives Dimly Understood Christ's Mission.—[John 7:1-5 quoted.] The brethren here referred to were the sons of Joseph, and their words were spoken in irony. It was very painful to Christ that His nearest relatives should so dimly understand His mission, and should entertain the ideas suggested by His enemies. But the Saviour did not answer the cruel sarcasm with words of like character. He pitied the spiritual ignorance of His brethren, and longed to give them a clear understanding of His mission (MS 33, 1911).

1-53. See EGW on Exodus 23:16.

16. Rescued From Error.—“Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.” My words are in perfect harmony with the Old Testament Scriptures, and with the

law spoken from Sinai. I am not preaching a new doctrine. I am presenting old truths rescued from the framework of error, and placed in a new setting (MS 33, 1911).

41, 50-52. Priests and Rulers Deceived.—
[John 7:51 quoted.] The lesson that Christ had given to Nicodemus had not been in vain. Conviction had fastened upon his mind, and in his heart he had accepted Jesus. Since his interview with the Saviour, he had earnestly searched the Old Testament Scriptures, and he had seen truth placed in the true setting of the gospel.

The question asked by him was wise, and would have commended itself to those presiding at the council had they not been deceived by the enemy. But they were so filled with prejudice that no argument in favor of Jesus of Nazareth, however convincing, had any weight with them. The answer that Nicodemus received, was, “Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.”

The priests and rulers had been deceived, as Satan meant them to be, into believing that Christ came out of Galilee. Some who knew that he was born in Bethlehem, kept silent, that the falsehood might not be robbed of its power (MS 33, 1911).

Chapter 8

31-38. Some Under Satan's Training.—[John 8:31-37 quoted.] What stern truth is here spoken. How many there are who boast that they are not in bondage to any one, when they are bound to the most cruel of all tyrants. They have placed themselves under Satan's training, and they treat God's people as he directs them to. How many there are who hear the word of truth, but hate the message and the messenger, because the truth disturbs them in their deceptive practices!

“I speak that which I have seen with my Father,” Christ continued, “and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.” Two classes are plainly brought to view in these words—the children of light, who obey the truth, and the

children of darkness, who reject the truth (MS 136, 1899).

44 (see EGW on Genesis 2:17; Malachi 4:1). Satan's Masterpiece.—The forces of the powers of darkness will unite with human agents who have given themselves unto the control of Satan, and the same scenes that were exhibited at the trial, rejection and crucifixion of Christ will be revived. Through yielding to satanic influences men will be merged into fiends, and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an apostate race his masterpiece of evil—men who reflect his own image (MS 39, 1894).

Devilish Songs.—When a soul is captured from the ranks of Christ the synagogue of Satan sing in hellish triumph (Letter 12a, 1893).

Chapter 10

2-5. See EGW on Matthew 24:23, 24.

4. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 11:14.

17, 18 (Isaiah 6:8; Philippians 2:6-8; see EGW on Mark 16:6). Christ Man's Surety.— Not one of the angels could have become surety for the human race: their life is God's; they could not surrender it. The angels all wear the yoke of obedience. They are the appointed messengers of Him who is the Commander of all heaven. But Christ is equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. He could pay the ransom for man's freedom. He is the eternal self-existing Son, on whom no yoke had come; and when God asked, "Whom shall I send?" He could reply, "Here am I; send Me." He could pledge Himself to become man's surety; for He could say that which the highest angel could not say,—I have power over My own life, "power to lay it down, and ... power to take it again" (The Youth's Instructor, June 21, 1900).

18. See EGW on ch. 1:4; 20:17.

Chapter 11

50, 51 (John 18:14). Caiaphas Prophesied Unknowingly.—[John 11:50, 51 quoted.] These words were uttered by one who knew not their significance. He had lost the sense of the sacredness of the sacrifices and offerings. But his words meant more than he or those connected with him knew. By them he bore testimony that the time had come for the Aaronic priesthood to cease forever. He was condemning One who had been prefigured in every sacrifice made, but One whose death would end the need of types and shadows. Unknowingly he was declaring that Christ was about to fulfill that for which the system of sacrifices and offerings had been instituted (The Review and Herald, June 12, 1900).

Chapter 12

1-8. See EGW on Matthew 26:6-13.

3 (Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9). Love and Talents Blended.—Pure, sanctified love,

expressed by Christ's lifework, is as sacred perfume. Like an opened bottle of perfume, it fills the whole house with fragrance. Eloquence, an extended knowledge of the truth, outward devotion, rare talents, if mingled with sacred, humble love, will become as fragrant as the opened box of ointment. But gifts alone, ability alone, the choicest endowments alone, cannot take the place of love [1 Corinthians 13:1-3 quoted] (MS 22, 1897).

12-15, 19. Multitudes Acclaim Christ.—The dignitaries of the temple are dumb with astonishment. Where now is the boasted power of priests and rulers over the people! The authorities had announced that whoever should acknowledge Jesus to be the Christ was to be put out of the synagogue and deprived of its sacred privileges. Yet here are the enthusiastic multitude shouting loud hosannas to the Son of David, and recounting the titles given Him by the prophets. As well might the priests and rulers attempt to deprive the earth of the shining face of the sun, as to shut from the world the beams of glory from the Sun of

Righteousness. In spite of all opposition, the kingdom of Christ was confessed by the people.

When the priests and rulers recovered their voices, they murmured among themselves, “Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after Him.” But they soon shook off the paralyzing effect of the strange exhibition which they had witnessed, and tried to intimidate the crowd by threatening to complain of them to the civil authorities as raising an insurrection (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:14, 15).

32 (ch. 1:29; 3:14, 15; see EGW on Galatians 6:14). No Rest for Some.—Never before was there such a general knowledge of Jesus as when He hung upon the cross. He was lifted up from the earth, to draw all to Him. Into the hearts of many who beheld that crucifixion scene, and who heard Christ’s words, was the light of truth to shine. With John they would proclaim, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” There were those who never rested until, searching the Scriptures and comparing passage with

passage, they saw the meaning of Christ's mission. They saw that free forgiveness was provided by Him whose tender mercy embraced the whole world. They read the prophecies regarding Christ, and the promises so free and full, pointing to a fountain opened for Judah and Jerusalem (MS 45, 1897).

Study All in Light From Cross.—The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light which streams from the cross of Calvary, and in connection with the wondrous, central truth of the Saviour's atonement. Those who study the Redeemer's wonderful sacrifice grow in grace and knowledge.

I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption—the Son of God uplifted on the cross of Calvary. This is to be the theme of every

discourse. Christ declares, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (MS 70, 1901).

The Cross Planted Between Earth and Heaven.—When Christ came to this world, He found that Satan had everything as he wanted it. The adversary of God and man thought that he was indeed the prince of the earth, but Jesus laid hold of the world to take it out of the power of Satan. He came to redeem it from the curse of sin and the penalty of transgression, that the transgressor might be forgiven. He planted the cross between earth and heaven, and between divinity and humanity; and as the Father beheld the cross, He was satisfied. He said, “It is enough, the offering is complete.” God and man may be reconciled. Those who have lived in rebellion against God, may become reconciled, if as they see the cross, they become repentant, and accept the great propitiation that Christ has made for their sins. In the cross they see that “mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (The Signs of the Times, September 30, 1889).

(Galatians 6:14.) The Cross a Center in the World.—The cross stands alone, a great center in the world. It does not find friends, but it makes them. It creates its own agencies. Christ proposes that men shall become laborers together with God. He makes human beings His instrumentalities for drawing all men unto Himself. A divine agency is sufficient only through its operation on human hearts with its transforming power, making men colaborers with God (The Review and Herald, September 29, 1891).

39, 40. See EGW on Luke 7:29, 30.

45. See EGW on Acts 1:11.

Chapter 13

2 (ch. 15:1-8; see EGW on Luke 22:3-5). Judas a Dry Sapling.—Judas ... did not become transformed, and converted into a living branch through connection with the True Vine. This dry sapling adhered not to the Vine until it grew into a

fruitful, living branch. He revealed that he was the graft that did not bear fruit—the graft that did not, fiber by fiber and vein by vein, become knit with the Vine, and partake of its life.

The dry, disconnected sapling can become one with the parent vine stock only by being made a partaker of the life and nourishment of the living vine, by being grafted into the vine, by being brought into the closest relationship possible. Fiber by fiber, vein by vein, the twig holds fast to the life-giving vine, until the life of the vine becomes the life of the branch, and it produces fruit like that of the vine (The Review and Herald, November 16, 1897).

10, 11. A Test of Heart-cleansing.—Christ gave His disciples to understand that the washing of their feet did not cleanse away their sin, but that the cleansing of their heart was tested in this humble service. If the heart was cleansed, this act was all that was essential to reveal the fact. He had washed the feet of Judas; but He said, “Ye are not all clean.” Judas brought a traitor’s heart to this

scene, and Christ revealed to all that He knew him to be the betrayer of his Lord, and that the washing of his feet was not an ordinance to cleanse the soul from its moral defilement. ...

Jesus would give convincing proof that He understood perfectly the character of Judas, and that He had not withheld His ministry even from him whom He knew to be working to betray Him into the hands of His enemies. And we have, in His example, the lesson that the ordinance of feet-washing is not to be deferred because there are some professed believers who are not cleansed from their sins. Christ knew the heart of Judas, yet He washed his feet. Infinite love could do no more to bring Judas to repentance, and save him from taking this fatal step. If this service of his Master, in humbling Himself to wash the feet of the worst sinner, did not break his heart, what more could be done? It was the last act of love that Jesus could evidence in behalf of Judas. Infinite love could not compel Judas to repent, confess his sin, and be saved. Every opportunity was granted him. Nothing was left undone that could be done to save

him from the snare of Satan (The Review and Herald, June 14, 1898).

13-17. A Dedication to Service.—The ordinance of feet washing is an ordinance of service. This is the lesson the Lord would have all learn and practice. When this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into holy relationship with each other, to help and bless each other.

That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set us an example of humility. He would not leave this great subject in man's charge. Of so much consequence did He regard it that He Himself, One equal with God, washed the feet of His disciples [John 13:13-17 quoted].

This ceremony means much to us. God would have us take the whole scene, not only the single act of outward cleansing. This lesson does not merely refer to the one act. It is to reveal the great

truth that Christ is an example of what we through His grace are to be in our intercourse with each other. It shows that the entire life should be one of humble, faithful ministry.... The ordinance of feet washing most forcibly illustrates the necessity of true humility. While the disciples were contending for the highest place, in the promised kingdom, Christ girded Himself, and performed the office of a servant by washing the feet of those who called Him Lord. He, the pure, spotless Lamb of God, was presenting Himself as a sin-offering; and as He now ate the Passover with His disciples, He put an end to the sacrifices which for four thousand years had been offered. In the place of the national festival which the Jewish people had observed, He instituted a memorial service, in the ceremony of feet washing, and the sacramental supper, to be observed by His followers through all time and in every country. These should ever repeat Christ's act, that all may see that true service called for unselfish ministry (MS 43, 1897).

**14, 15 (Matthew 23:8; 1 Corinthians 11:28).
Humility an Active Principle.**—Humility is an

active principle growing out of a thorough consciousness of God's great love, and will always show itself by the way in which it works. By taking part in the ordinance of feet washing we show that we are willing to perform this act of humility. We are doing the very thing Christ did, but this is not to be talked of as an act of humiliation. It is an act which symbolizes the condition of the mind and heart.

“All ye are brethren.” As brethren we are identified with Christ and with one another. As brethren we are identical with Christ, and through His grace identical with one another. And as we wash the feet of Christ's followers, it is as though we were indeed touching the Son of God. We do this act because Christ told us to do it, and Christ Himself is among us. His Holy Spirit does the work of uniting our hearts. To become one with Christ requires self-denial and self-sacrifice at every step.

The performance of the ordinance of humility calls for self-examination. The noble principles of

the soul are strengthened on every such occasion. Christ lives in us, and this draws heart to heart. We are led to love as brethren, to be kind, tender, courteous in daily service, having hearts that can feel another's woe (Letter 210, 1899).

(1 Corinthians 11:23-25.) To Feel the Pulse of Conscience.—In this ordinance, Christ discharged His disciples from the cares and burdens of the ancient Jewish obligations in rites and ceremonies. These no longer possessed any virtue; for type was meeting antitype in Himself, the authority and foundation of all Jewish ordinances that pointed to Him as the great and only efficacious offering for the sins of the world. He gave this simple ordinance that it might be a special season when He Himself would always be present, to lead all participating in it to feel the pulse of their own conscience, to awaken them to an understanding of the lessons symbolized, to revive their memory, to convict of sin, and to receive their penitential repentance. He would teach them that brother is not to exalt himself above brother, that the dangers of disunion and

strife shall be seen and appreciated; for the health and holy activity of the soul are involved.

This ordinance does not speak so largely to man's intellectual capacity as to his heart. His moral and spiritual nature needs it. If His disciples had not needed this, it would not have been left for them as Christ's last established ordinance in connection with, and including, the last supper. It was Christ's desire to leave to His disciples an ordinance that would do for them the very thing they needed—that would serve to disentangle them from the rites and ceremonies which they had hitherto engaged in as essential, and which the reception of the gospel made no longer of any force. To continue these rites would be an insult to Jehovah. Eating of the body, and drinking of the blood, of Christ, not merely at the sacramental service, but daily partaking of the bread of life to satisfy the soul's hunger, would be in receiving His Word and doing His will (The Review and Herald, June 14, 1898).

34 (see EGW on 1 John 3:16-18). A New

Conception of Love.—Why was this called “a new commandment”? The disciples had not loved one another as Christ had loved them. They had not yet seen the fullness of the love that He was to reveal in man’s behalf. They were yet to see Him dying on the cross for their sins. Through His life and death they were to receive a new conception of love. The command to “love one another” was to gain a new meaning in the light of His self-sacrifice. In the light shining from the cross of Calvary they were to read the meaning of the words, “As I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (The Review and Herald, June 30, 1910).

To Reveal Especially Tender Love.—[John 13:34, 35 quoted.] Why should this commandment be new to the disciples? The words, “As I have loved you” were yet to be fulfilled by the offering He was about to make for the sins of the world. As Christ had loved them, the disciples were to love one another. They were to show forth the love abiding in their hearts for men, women, and children, by doing all in their power for their salvation. But they were to reveal a specially tender

love for all of the same faith (MS 160, 1898).

(Ch. 15:12; James 3:17.) Love Is a Permanent Power.—Jesus says, “Love one another, as I have loved you.” Love is not simply an impulse, a transitory emotion, dependent upon circumstances; it is a living principle, a permanent power. The soul is fed by the streams of pure love that flow from the heart of Christ, as a well-spring that never fails. O, how is the heart quickened, how are its motives ennobled, its affections deepened, by this communion! Under the education and discipline of the Holy Spirit, the children of God love one another, truly, sincerely, unaffectedly—“without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” And this because the heart is in love with Jesus. Our affection for one another springs from our common relation to God. We are one family, we love one another as He loved us. When compared with this true, sanctified, disciplined affection, the shallow courtesy of the world, the meaningless expressions of effusive friendship, are as chaff to the wheat (Letter 63, 1896).

A Practical, Working Love.—To love as Christ loved means to manifest unselfishness at all times and in all places, by kind words and pleasant looks. These cost those who give them nothing, but they leave behind a fragrance that surrounds the soul. Their effect can never be estimated. Not only are they a blessing to the receiver, but to the giver; for they react upon him. Genuine love is a precious attribute of heavenly origin, which increases in fragrance in proportion as it is dispensed to others....

Christ's love is deep and earnest, flowing like an irrepressible stream to all who will accept it. There is no selfishness in His love. If this heaven-born love is an abiding principle in the heart, it will make itself known, not only to those we hold most dear in sacred relationship, but to all with whom we come in contact. It will lead us to bestow little acts of attention, to make concessions, to perform deeds of kindness, to speak tender, true, encouraging words. It will lead us to sympathize with those whose hearts hunger for sympathy (MS 17, 1899).

Love One Another.—Selfishness and pride hinder the pure love that unites us in spirit with Jesus Christ. If this love is truly cultivated, finite will blend with finite, and all will center in the Infinite. Humanity will unite with humanity, and all will be bound up with the heart of Infinite Love. Sanctified love for one another is sacred. In this great work Christian love for one another—far higher, more constant, more courteous, more unselfish, than has been seen—preserves Christian tenderness, Christian benevolence, and politeness, and enfolds the human brotherhood in the embrace of God, acknowledging the dignity with which God has invested the rights of man. This dignity Christians must ever cultivate for the honor and glory of God....

The only begotten Son of God recognized the nobility of humanity by taking humanity upon Himself, and dying in behalf of humanity, testifying throughout all ages that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but

have everlasting life” (Letter 10, 1897).

A Fatal Deception.—True sanctification unites believers to Christ and to one another in the bonds of tender sympathy. This union causes to flow continually into the heart rich currents of Christlike love, which flows forth again in love for one another.

The qualities which it is essential for all to possess are those which marked the completeness of Christ’s character—His love, His patience, His unselfishness, and His goodness. These attributes are gained by doing kindly actions with a kindly heart....

It is the greatest and most fatal deception to suppose that a man can have faith unto life eternal, without possessing Christlike love for his brethren. He who loves God and his neighbor is filled with light and love. God is in him and all around him. Christians love those around them as precious souls for whom Christ has died. There is no such thing as a loveless Christian; for “God is love,” and “hereby

we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”....

“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.” This is the fruit that is to be given back to God (MS 133, 1899).

Poor Chance for Satan.—The powers of darkness stand a poor chance against believers who love one another as Christ has loved them, who refuse to create alienation and strife, who stand together, who are kind, courteous, and tender-hearted, cherishing the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. We must have the Spirit of Christ, or we are none of His (MS 103, 1902).

A Golden Chain.—The love of Christ is a golden chain that binds finite, human beings who believe in Jesus Christ to the Infinite God. The love that the Lord has for His children passeth knowledge. No science can define or explain it. No human wisdom can fathom it. The more we feel the

influence of this love, the more meek and humble shall we be (Letter 43, 1896).

34, 35. The Disciples' Credentials.—[John 13:34, 35 quoted.] How broad, how full is this love. The new part of that commandment the disciples did not understand. They were to love one another as Christ had loved them. These were their credentials that Christ was formed within, the hope of glory. After the sufferings of Christ, after His crucifixion and resurrection and proclamation over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, “I am the resurrection and the life,” after His words to the five hundred who assembled to see Him in Galilee, and after His ascension to heaven, the disciples had some idea of what the love of God comprehended, and of the love they were to exercise one toward another. When the Holy Spirit rested on them on the day of Pentecost, that love was revealed (MS 82, 1898).

36-38. See EGW on Matthew 26:31-35.

Chapter 14

2, 3. See EGW on Acts 1:11.

6. See EGW on Romans 8:34.

8-10. God Cannot Be Seen in External Form.—[John 14:8-10 quoted.] Philip's doubt was answered with words of reproof. He wished Christ to reveal the Father in bodily form; but in Christ God had already revealed Himself. Is it possible, Christ said, that after walking with Me, hearing My words, seeing the miracle of feeding the five thousand, of healing the sick of the dread disease leprosy, of bringing the dead to life, of raising Lazarus, who was a prey to death, whose body had indeed seen corruption, you do not know Me? Is it possible that you do not discern the Father in the works that He does by Me?....

Christ emphatically impressed upon them the fact that they could see the Father by faith alone. God cannot be seen in external form by any human being. Christ alone can represent the Father to

humanity. This representation the disciples had been privileged to behold for over three years.

As Christ was speaking these words, the glory of God was shining in His countenance, and all present felt a sacred awe as they listened with rapt attention to His words. They felt their hearts more decidedly drawn to Him, and as they were drawn to Christ in greater love, they were drawn to one another. They felt that heaven was very near them, that the words to which they listened were a message to them from the heavenly Father (MS 41, 1897).

9-11. The Divine Authority of Jesus.—The world's Redeemer was equal with God. His authority was as the authority of God. He declared that He had no existence separate from the Father. The authority by which He spoke, and wrought miracles, was expressly His own, yet He assures us that He and the Father are one....

As Legislator, Jesus exercised the authority of God; His commands and decisions were supported

by the Sovereignty of the eternal throne. The glory of the Father was revealed in the Son; Christ made manifest the character of the Father. He was so perfectly connected with God, so completely embraced in His encircling light, that he who had seen the Son, had seen the Father. His voice was as the voice of God (The Review and Herald, January 7, 1890).

11. Preparation for the Storm of Temptation.—“Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.” Their faith might safely rest upon the evidence given by Christ’s works, works that no man had ever done or ever could do. They could reason that humanity alone could not do these wonderful works. Christ was seeking to lead them up from their low state of faith to the experience that they might have received by seeing what He had done in giving a higher education, and in imparting a knowledge of what He was, God in human flesh. How earnestly and perseveringly our compassionate Saviour sought to prepare His followers for the storm of temptation that was soon

to beat about them. He would have had them hid with Him in God (MS 41, 1897).

15 (see EGW on Exodus 20:1-17; Romans 3:31). Obedience Possible in Our Humanity.—

We are not to serve God as if we were not human, but we are to serve Him in the nature we have, that has been redeemed by the Son of God; through the righteousness of Christ we shall stand before God pardoned, and as though we had never sinned. We will never gain strength in considering what we might do if we were angels. We are to turn in faith to Jesus Christ, and show our love to God through obedience to His commands (MS 1, 1892).

21. God Loves the Obedient as His Own Son.—The believer may bear the testimony in his life and character that God loves the human agent who obeys His commands as He loves His Son. How amazing is this statement—almost beyond the comprehension of the finite mind (Letter 11a, 1894)!

26. See EGW on Romans 2:4.

30 (See EGW on John 1:1-3, 14). Christ's Purity Annoyed Satan.—Amid impurity, Christ maintained His purity. Satan could not stain or corrupt it. His character revealed a perfect hatred for sin. It was His holiness that stirred against Him all the passion of a profligate world; for by His perfect life He threw upon the world a perpetual reproach, and made manifest the contrast between transgression and the pure, spotless righteousness of One that knew no sin. This heavenly purity annoyed the apostate foe as nothing else could do, and he followed Christ day by day, using in his work the people that claimed to have superior purity and knowledge of God, putting into their hearts a spirit of hatred against Christ, and tempting His disciples to betray and forsake Him (The Signs of the Times, May 10, 1899).

Chapter 15

1, 2. Fruit-bearing Testifies to Abiding.—“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh

away.”

“In me.” This does not mean that those who are really in Christ do not bear any fruit. God has purchased us through Christ, that He might be a propitiation for our sins. We are within the bounds of His mercy; for in mercy His arm encircles the whole human race. Since Christ has paid the price for all the service that we should give Him, we are His servants by purchase. Although we are in Christ Jesus by His covenant of promise, yet if we stand in a position of perfect indifference, without acknowledging Him as our Saviour, we bear no fruit. If by failing to be a partaker of His divine nature we bear no fruit, we are taken away. Worldly influences take us away from Christ, and our portion is the same as that of the unfruitful branch—“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.”

“Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” Our fruit-bearing testifies whether we are really abiding in Christ....

We are Christ's property. "Ye are not your own," "ye are bought with a price." Are we in Him by living faith? If we do not bear any fruit, the powers of darkness take possession of our minds, our affections, our service, and we are of the world, though we profess to be children of God. This is neither a safe nor a pleasant position, because we lose all the beauty and the glory and the satisfaction that it is our privilege to have. By abiding in Christ, we may have His sweetness, His fragrance, His light. Christ is the Light of the world. He shines in our hearts. His light in our hearts shines forth from our faces. By beholding the beauty and the glory of Christ, we become changed into the same image (MS 85, 1901).

1-5. Identity With Christ Needed.—The branches in the True Vine are the believers who are brought into oneness by connection with the Vine.

The connection of the branches with one another and with the Vine constitutes them a unity, but this does not mean uniformity in everything.

Unity in diversity is a principle that pervades the whole creation. While there is an individuality and variety in nature, there is a oneness in their diversity; for all things receive their usefulness and beauty from the same Source. The great Master Artist writes His name on all His created works, from the loftiest cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop upon the wall. They all declare His handiwork, from the lofty mountain and the grand ocean to the tiniest shell upon the seashore.

The branches of the vine cannot blend into each other; they are individually separate; yet every branch must be in fellowship with every other if they are united in the same parent stock. They all draw nourishment from the same source; they drink in the same life-giving properties. So each branch of the True Vine is separate and distinct, yet all are bound together in the parent stock. There can be no division. They are all linked together by His will to bear fruit wherever they can find place and opportunity. But in order to do this, the worker must hide self. He must not give expression to his own mind and will. He is to express the mind and

will of Christ. The human family are dependent upon God for life and breath and sustenance. God has designed the web, and all are individual threads to compose the pattern. The Creator is one, and He reveals Himself as the great Reservoir of all that is essential for each separate life.

Christian unity consists in the branches being in the same parent stock, the vitalizing power of the center supporting the grafts that have united to the Vine. In thoughts and desires, in words and actions, there must be an identity with Christ, a constant partaking of His spiritual life. Faith must increase by exercise. All who live near to God will have a realization of what Jesus is to them and they to Jesus. As communion with God is making its impress upon the soul, and shining out in the countenance as an illuminating light, the steadfast principles of Christ's holy character will be reflected in humanity (The Review and Herald, November 9, 1897).

1-8. See EGW on ch. 13:2.

4. Detachment as Well as Attachment.—A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first, and last, and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a relation of utter dependence to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment, as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome, if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is, they try to attach themselves to Christ without detaching themselves from these cherished idols....

Believers become one in Christ; but one branch cannot be sustained by another. The nourishment

must be obtained through vital connection with the Vine. We must feel our utter dependence on Christ. We must live by faith in the Son of God. That is the meaning of the injunction, "Abide in me." The life we live in the flesh is not to the will of men, not to please our Lord's enemies, but to serve and honor Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us. A mere assent to this union, while the affections are not detached from the world, its pleasures and its dissipations, only emboldens the heart in disobedience (The Signs of the Times, November 29, 1910).

God Makes No Compromise.—Until the heart is surrendered unconditionally to God, the human agent is not abiding in the True Vine, and cannot flourish in the Vine, and bear rich clusters of fruit. God will not make the slightest compromise with sin. If He could have done this, Christ need not have come to our world to suffer and die. No conversion is genuine which does not change both the character and the conduct of those who accept the truth. The truth works by love, and purifieth the soul (Letter 31a, 1894).

4, 5. See EGW on Matthew 11:29.

5 (See EGW on 2 Corinthians 4:3-6). The Circulation of Life.—Christ alone can help us and give us the victory. Christ must be all in all to us, He must dwell in the heart, His life must circulate through us as the blood circulates through the veins. His spirit must be a vitalizing power that will cause us to influence others to become Christlike and holy (Letter 43, 1895).

8. A Day by Day Experience.—[John 15:8 quoted] What is it to bear fruit? It is not all comprised in coming to meeting once a week, and bearing our testimony in prayer or social meeting. We are to be found day by day abiding in the Vine, and bringing forth fruit, with patience, at our home, in our business; and in every relation in life manifesting the Spirit of Christ. There are many who act as though they thought an occasional connection with Christ was all that was necessary, and that they can be accounted living branches because at times they make confession of Christ.

But this is a fallacy. The branch is to be grafted into the Vine, and to abide there, uniting itself to the Vine fiber by fiber, drawing its daily supply of sap and nourishment from the root and fatness of the Vine, until it becomes one with the parent stock. The sap that nourishes the Vine must nourish the branch and this will be evident in the life of him who is abiding in Christ; for the joy of Christ will be fulfilled in him who walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Our professions are worthless unless we abide in Christ; for we cannot be living branches unless the vital qualities of the Vine abound in us. In the genuine Christian the characteristics of his Master will appear, and when we reflect the graces of Christ in our lives and characters, the Father loves us as He loves His Son. When this condition is fulfilled in those who profess to believe the present truth, we shall see a prosperous church; for its members will not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and they will be flourishing branches of the living Vine (The Signs of the Times, April 18, 1892).

10. See EGW on Matthew 24:23, 24.

11 (Acts 2:28). Light Brings Gladness.—When the light of heaven shines upon the human agent, his countenance will express the joy of the Lord within. It is the absence of Christ from the soul that makes people sad and of a doubtful mind. It is the want of Christ that makes the countenance sad, and their life is a pilgrimage of sighs. Rejoicing is the very keynote of the Word of God for all who receive Him. Why? Because they have the Light of life. Light brings gladness and joy, and that joy is expressed in the life and the character (MS 96, 1898).

12. See EGW on ch. 13:34.

22 (ch. 5:40; Luke 12:48). No Provision for Willful Blindness.—[John 15:22 quoted.]... Those who have an opportunity to hear the truth, and yet take no pains to hear or understand it, thinking that if they do not hear, they will not be accountable, will be judged guilty before God the same as if

they had heard and rejected. There will be no excuse for those who choose to go in error when they might understand what is truth. In His sufferings and death Jesus has made atonement for all sins of ignorance, but there is no provision made for willful blindness....

We shall not be held accountable for the light that has not reached our perception, but for that which we have resisted and refused. A man could not apprehend the truth which had never been presented to him, and therefore could not be condemned for light he had never had. But if he had opportunity to hear the message, and to become acquainted with the truth, and yet refused to improve his opportunity, he will be among the number of whom Christ said, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Those who deliberately place themselves where they will not have an opportunity of hearing the truth, will be reckoned among those who have heard the truth, and persistently resisted its evidences (The Review and Herald, April 25, 1893).

Light That Has Shone, Will Condemn.—

None will be condemned for not heeding light and knowledge that they never had, and they could not obtain. But many refuse to obey the truth that is presented to them by Christ's ambassadors, because they wish to conform to the world's standard; and the truth that has reached their understanding, the light that has shone in the soul, will condemn them in the judgment (The Review and Herald, November 25, 1884).

Judged According to Light.—Men will not be judged for light they have never had. But those who have kept Sunday, whose attention has been called to this error, but who would not open their eyes to behold wondrous things out of the law, will be judged according to the light that has come to them (The Review and Herald, September 13, 1898).

26, 27. See EGW on Acts 1:8.

Chapter 16

24. See EGW on Acts 1:11.

Chapter 17

Illustration of Jesus' Intercession in Heavenly Sanctuary.—This chapter contains the intercessory prayer offered by Christ to His Father just before His trial and crucifixion. This prayer is a lesson regarding the intercession that the Saviour would carry on within the veil, when His great sacrifice in behalf of men, the offering of Himself, should have been completed. Our Mediator gave His disciples this illustration of His ministration in the heavenly sanctuary in behalf of all who will come to Him in meekness and humility, emptied of all selfishness, and believing in His power to save (MS 29, 1906).

1-6. The Prayer Before Gethsemane.—[John 17:1-6 quoted.] ... This was Christ's last prayer with His disciples. It was offered just before He went into the Garden of Gethsemane, where He

was to be betrayed and taken. When He reached Gethsemane, He fell prostrate upon the ground, in an agony of distress. What caused His agony? The weight of the sins of the whole world was resting upon His soul. As we study this prayer, let us remember that it was just before this experience and just before His betrayal and trial, that these words were uttered (MS 52, 1904).

2, 3. Relation of Father and Son.—The seventeenth chapter of John speaks plainly regarding the personality of God and of Christ, and of their relation to each other. “Father, the hour is come,” Christ said: “glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.” [John 17:23, 3, 5-11 quoted.] Here is personality, and individuality (MS 124, 1903).

3 (see EGW on ch. 1:4; Romans 11:33). To Know Christ Is to Practice His Words.—[John 17:3 quoted.] These words mean much. It is only by knowing Christ that we can know God. The Sent of God calls upon all to listen to these words. They are the words of God, and all should give

heed to them; for by them they will be judged. To know Christ savingly is to be vitalized by spiritual knowledge, to practice His words. Without this, all else is valueless (The Signs of the Times, January 27, 1898).

4-10. Glorified in Those Who Believe.—In the intercessory prayer of Jesus with His Father, He claimed that He had fulfilled the conditions which made it obligatory upon the Father to fulfill His part of the contract made in heaven, with regard to fallen man. He prayed: “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. [That is, He had wrought out a righteous character on earth as an example for men to follow.] And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” In this prayer He further goes on to state what is comprehended by the work which He has accomplished, and which has given Him all those who believe on His name. He values this recompense so highly that He forgets the anguish it has cost Him to redeem fallen man. He declares Himself glorified in those who believe on Him.

The church, in His name, is to carry to glorious perfection the work which He has commenced; and when that church shall be finally ransomed in the Paradise of God, He will look upon the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Through all eternity the ransomed host will be His chief glory (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:260, 261).

5. Let the Veil Be Removed.—[John 17:1-5 quoted.] Christ is not praying for the manifestation of the glory of human nature; for that human nature never had an existence in His pre-existence. He is praying to His Father in regard to a glory possessed in His oneness with God. His prayer is that of a mediator; the favor He entreats in the manifestation of that divine glory which was possessed by Him when He was one with God. Let the veil be removed, He says, and let My glory shine forth—the glory which I had with Thee before the world was (The Signs of the Times, May 10, 1899).

5, 24 (Hebrews 1:6; 1 John 2:1; see EGW on John 20:16, 17; Hebrews 3:1-3). Public Reinstatement of Christ in Heaven.—The prayer

of Christ was answered. He was glorified with the glory which He had with His Father before the world was. But amid this glory, Christ does not lose sight of His toiling, struggling ones upon earth. He has a request to make of His Father. He waves back the heavenly host until He is in the direct presence of Jehovah, and then He presents His petition in behalf of His chosen ones.

“Father,” He says, “I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am.” And then the Father declares, “Let all the angels of God worship him.” The heavenly host prostrate themselves before Him, and raise their song of triumph and joy. Glory encircles the King of heaven, and was beheld by all the heavenly intelligences. No words can describe the scene which took place as the Son of God was publicly reinstated in the place of honor and glory which He voluntarily left when He became a man.

And today Christ, glorified, and yet our brother, is our Advocate in the courts of heaven (The Signs of the Times, May 10, 1899).

6. A Great Honor.—What a glorious commendation—“They have kept thy word.” To have these words said of us would be a great honor. But too often self comes in; self strives for the mastery (MS 52, 1904).

17. Self-satisfaction Is Not Sanctification.—“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” A pleasant, self-satisfied feeling is not an evidence of sanctification. A faithful record is kept of all the acts of the children of men. Nothing can be concealed from the eye of the High and Holy One, who inhabiteth eternity. Some make Christ ashamed by their course of devising, planning, scheming. God does not approve of their conduct; for the Lord Jesus is not honored by their spirit and their works. They forget the words of the apostle: “We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men” (MS 159, 1903).

Adam’s Test Brought to All.—The law of God is the one great standard that will measure every man’s character in the day of God. The

prayer of Christ was, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” Therefore the sanctification of the Spirit of God upon the heart, leads men to walk in the way of God’s commandments. The very test that God brought upon Adam in Eden, will be brought upon every member of the human family. Obedience to God was required of Adam, and we stand in the same position that he did to have a second trial, to see whether we will listen to the voice of Satan and disobey God, or to the Word of God and obey (The Review and Herald, June 10, 1890).

(1 Thessalonians 4:3; 2 Timothy 3:16.) The Textbook of Sanctification.—The Bible is the standard by which to test the claims of all who profess sanctification. Jesus prayed that His disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and He says, “Thy word is truth;” while the psalmist declares, “Thy law is the truth.” All whom God is leading will manifest a high regard for the Scriptures in which His voice is heard. The Bible will be to them “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that

the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” “Ye shall know them by their fruits.” We need no other evidence in order to judge of men’s sanctification; if they are fearful lest they shall not obey the whole will of God, if they are listening diligently to His voice, trusting in His wisdom, and making His Word the man of their counsel, then, while they make no boasts of superior goodness, we may be sure that they are seeking to attain to perfection of Christian character. But if the claimants of holiness even intimate that they are no longer required to search the Scriptures, we need not hesitate to pronounce their sanctification spurious. They are leaning to their own understanding, instead of conforming to the will of God (The Review and Herald, October 5, 1886).

Obey God’s Requirements.—The truth as it is in Jesus is obedience to every precept of Jehovah. It is heart work. Bible sanctification is not the spurious sanctification of today, which will not search the Scriptures, but trusts to good feelings and impulses rather than to the seeking for truth as

for hidden treasure. Bible sanctification is to know the requirements of God and to obey them. There is a pure and holy heaven in store for those who keep God's commandments. It is worth lifelong, persevering, untiring effort. Satan is on your right hand and on your left; he is before and behind; he has a dish of fables cooked up for every soul who is not cherishing the truth as it is in Jesus. The destroyer is upon you to palsy your every effort. But there is a crown of life to be won, a life that measures with the life of God (MS 58, 1897).

The truth if received is capable of constant expansion and new developments. It will increase in brightness as we behold it, and grow in height and depth as we aspire to grasp it. Thus it will elevate us to the standard of perfection, and give us faith and trust in God as our strength for the work before us (MS 153, 1898).

(Hebrews 4:12.) No Soft Tread.—The truth is the truth. It is not to be wrapped up in beautiful adornings, that the outside appearance may be admired. The teacher is to make the truth clear and

forcible to the understanding and to the conscience. The word is a two-edged sword, that cuts both ways. It does not tread as with soft, slippered feet.

There are many cases where men who have defended Christianity against skeptics have afterward lost their own souls in the mazes of skepticism. They caught the malaria, and died spiritually. They had strong arguments for the truth, and much outside evidence, but they did not have an abiding faith in Christ. O, there are thousands upon thousands of professed Christians who never study the Bible! Study the sacred Word prayerfully, for your own soul's benefit. When you hear the word of the living preacher, if he has a living connection with God, you will find that the Spirit and the word agree.

The Old and New Testaments are linked together by the golden clasp of God. We need to become familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures. The unchangeableness of God should be clearly seen; the similarity of His dealings with His people of the past dispensation and of the

present, should be studied. ...

By the work of the Holy Spirit the truth is riveted in the mind and printed in the heart of the diligent, God-fearing student. And not only is he blessed by this kind of labor; the souls to whom he communicates truth, and for whom he must one day give an account, are also greatly blessed. Those who make God their counselor reap the most precious harvest as they gather the golden grains of truth from His Word; for the heavenly Instructor is close by their side. He who obtains his qualification for the ministry in this way will be entitled to the blessing promised to him who turns many to righteousness (The Review and Herald, April 20, 1897).

**20, 21 (Matthew 25:14, 15; Mark 13:34).
Unity in Diversity.**— [John 17:20, 21 quoted.]
What kind of unity is spoken of in these words?—
Unity in diversity. Our minds do not all run in the same channel, and we have not all been given the same work. God has given to every man his work according to his several ability. There are different

kinds of work to be done, and workers of varied capabilities are needed. If our hearts are humble, if we have learned in the school of Christ to be meek and lowly, we may all press together in the narrow path marked out for us (MS 52, 1904).

20-23. No Destruction of Personality.— Christ is one with the Father, but Christ and God are two distinct personages. Read the prayer of Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John, and you will find this point clearly brought out. How earnestly the Saviour prayed that His disciples might be one with Him as He is one with the Father. But the unity that is to exist between Christ and His followers does not destroy the personality of either. They are to be one with Him as He is one with the Father (The Review and Herald, June 1, 1905).

[John 17:20-23 quoted.] What a wonderful statement! The unity that exists between Christ and His disciples does not destroy the personality of either. In mind, in purpose, in character, they are one, but not in person. By partaking of the Spirit of

God, conforming to the law of God, man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ brings His disciples into a living union with Himself and with the Father. Through the working of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind, man is made complete in Christ Jesus. Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin (MS 111, 1903).

24 (see EGW on ch. 20:16, 17). According to Covenant Promise.— O, how the divine Head longed to have His church with Him! They had fellowship with Him in His suffering and humiliation, and it is His highest joy to have them with Him to be partakers of His glory. Christ claims the privilege of having His church with Him. “I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.” To have them with Him is according to covenant promise and agreement with His Father (The Review and Herald, October 17, 1893).

Chapter 18

13. See EGW on Matthew 26:3.

13, 14. See EGW on Matthew 26:57.

14. See EGW on ch. 11:50, 51.

20, 21. Two Ways of Working.—[John 18:20, 21 quoted.] Jesus would contrast His manner of work with that of His accusers. This midnight seizure by a mob, this cruel mockery and abuse before He was even accused or condemned, was their manner, not His. His work was open to all. He had nothing in His doctrines that He concealed. Thus He rebuked their position, and unveiled the hypocrisy of the Sadducees (MS 51, 1897).

37. Christ Spoke Truth With the Freshness of a New Revelation.—Truth never languished on His lips, never suffered in His hands for want of perfect obedience to its requirements. “To this end was I born,” Christ declared, “and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness

unto the truth.” And the mighty principles of truth fell from His lips with the freshness of a new revelation. The truth was spoken by Him with an earnestness proportionate to its infinite importance and to the momentous results depending on its success (MS 49, 1898).

39, 40. See EGW on Matthew 27:15-26.

Chapter 19

10. Pilate Responsible.—[John 19:10 quoted.] “I have power.” By saying this, Pilate showed that he made himself responsible for the condemnation of Christ, for the cruel scourging, and for the insults offered Him before any wrong was proved against Him. Pilate had been chosen and appointed to administer justice, but he dared not do it. Had he exercised the power that he claimed, and that his position gave him, had he protected Christ, he would not have been accountable for His death. Christ would have been crucified, but Pilate would not have been held guilty (The Review and Herald, January 23, 1900).

14, 15. See EGW on Matthew 27:22, 23.

15. Last Hope Gone.—What was Christ’s grief to see the Jews fixing their own destiny beyond redemption! He alone could comprehend the significance of their rejection, betrayal, and condemnation of the Son of God. His last hope for the Jewish nation was gone. Nothing could avert her doom. By the representatives of the nation God was denied as their Ruler. By worlds unfallen, by the whole heavenly universe, the blasphemous utterance was heard, “We have no king but Caesar.” The God of heaven heard their choice. He had given them opportunity to repent, and they would not. Forty years afterward Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Roman power ruled over the people. Then they had no deliverer. They had no king but Caesar. Henceforth the Jewish nation, as a nation, was as a branch severed from the vine—a dead, fruitless branch, to be gathered up and burned—from land to land throughout the world, from century to century, dead—dead in trespasses and sins—without a Saviour (The Youth’s

Instructor, February 1, 1900)!

15, 16. See EGW on Matthew 27:25, 26.

16. Reactions to Jesus' Condemnation.—Jesus, the Son of God, was delivered to the people to be crucified. With shouts of triumph they led the Saviour away toward Calvary. The news of His condemnation had spread through all Jerusalem, striking terror and anguish to thousands of hearts, but bringing a malicious joy to many who had been reproved by His teachings (Undated MS 127).

18. See EGW on Matthew 27:38.

19. See EGW on Matthew 27:37.

25-27. John and Mary Returned.—Christ, bearing the sin of the world, seemed to be deserted; but He was not wholly left alone. John stood close by the cross. Mary had fainted in her anguish, and John had taken her to his house away from the harrowing scene. But he saw that the end was near, and he brought her again to the cross (MS 45,

1897)

30 (see EGW on Matthew 27:45, 46, 50). The Compact Was Fully Consummated.—When Christ spoke these words, He addressed His Father. Christ was not alone in making this great sacrifice. It was the fulfillment of the covenant made between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the earth was laid. With clasped hands they entered into the solemn pledge that Christ would become the substitute and surety for the human race if they were overcome by Satan's sophistry. The compact was now being fully consummated. The climax was reached. Christ had the consciousness that He had fulfilled to the letter the pledge He had made. In death He was more than conqueror. The redemption price has been paid (MS 111, 1897).

Last Tie of Sympathy Severed.—When Christ cried out, "It is finished," all heaven triumphed. The controversy between Christ and Satan in regard to the execution of the plan of salvation was ended. The spirit of Satan and his works had taken

deep root in the affections of the children of men. For Satan to have come into power would have been death to the world. The implacable hatred he felt toward the Son of God was revealed in his manner of treating Him while He was in the world. Christ's betrayal, trial, and crucifixion were all planned by the fallen foe. His hatred, carried out in the death of the Son of God, placed Satan where his true diabolical character was revealed to all created intelligences that had not fallen through sin.

The holy angels were horror-stricken that one who had been of their number could fall so far as to be capable of such cruelty. Every sentiment of sympathy or pity which they had ever felt for Satan in his exile, was quenched in their hearts. That his envy should be exercised in such a revenge upon an innocent person was enough to strip him of his assumed robe of celestial light, and to reveal the hideous deformity beneath; but to manifest such malignity toward the divine Son of God, who had, with unprecedented self-denial, and love for the creatures formed in His image, come from heaven

and assumed their fallen nature, was such a heinous crime against Heaven that it caused the angels to shudder with horror, and severed forever the last tie of sympathy existing between Satan and the heavenly world (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:183, 184).

(Matthew 27:51.) Satan Fell Like Lightning.—When Christ cried, “It is finished,” God’s unseen hand rent the strong fabric composing the veil of the temple from top to bottom. The way into the holiest of all was made manifest. God bowed His head satisfied. Now His justice and mercy could blend. He could be just, and yet the justifier of all who should believe on Christ. He looked upon the victim expiring on the cross, and said, “It is finished. The human race shall have another trial.” The redemption price was paid, and Satan fell like lightning from heaven (MS 111, 1897).

38, 39. See EGW on Matthew 27:38.

Chapter 20

16, 17 (ch. 17:24; Isaiah 13:12; Matthew 28:18; Hebrews 1:6). The Contract Ratified.— [John 20:16, 17 quoted.] Jesus refused to receive the homage of His people until He knew that His sacrifice had been accepted by the Father, and until He had received the assurance from God Himself that His atonement for the sins of His people had been full and ample, that through His blood they might gain eternal life. Jesus immediately ascended to heaven and presented Himself before the throne of God, showing the marks of shame and cruelty upon His brow, His hands and feet. But he refused to receive the coronet of glory, and the royal robe, and He also refused the adoration of the angels as He had refused the homage of Mary, until the Father signified that His offering was accepted.

He also had a request to prefer concerning His chosen ones upon earth. He wished to have the relation clearly defined that His redeemed should hereafter sustain to heaven, and to His Father. His church must be justified and accepted before He

could accept heavenly honor. He declared it to be His will that where He was, there His church should be; if He was to have glory, His people must share it with Him. They who suffer with Him on earth must finally reign with Him in His kingdom. In the most explicit manner Christ pleaded for His church, identifying His interest with theirs, and advocating, with love and constancy stronger than death, their rights and titles gained through Him.

God's answer to this appeal goes forth in the proclamation: "Let all the angels of God worship him." Every angelic commander obeys the royal mandate, and Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain; and that lives again a triumphant conqueror! echoes and re-echoes through all heaven. The innumerable company of angels prostrate themselves before the Redeemer. The request of Christ is granted; the church is justified through Him, its representative and head. Here the Father ratifies the contract with His Son, that He will be reconciled to repentant and obedient men, and take them into divine favor through the merits of Christ.

Christ guarantees that He will make a man “more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.” All power in heaven and on earth is now given to the Prince of life; yet He does not for a moment forget His poor disciples in a sinful world, but prepares to return to them, that He may impart to them His power and glory. Thus did the Redeemer of mankind, by the sacrifice of Himself, connect earth with heaven, and finite man with the infinite God (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:202, 203).

17 (John 10:18). All of Christ Remained in Tomb.—Jesus said to Mary, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” When He closed His eyes in death upon the cross, the soul of Christ did not go at once to heaven, as many believe, or how could His words be true—“I am not yet ascended to my Father”? The spirit of Jesus slept in the tomb with His body, and did not wing its way to heaven, there to maintain a separate existence, and to look down upon the mourning disciples embalming the body from which it had taken flight. All that comprised the life and intelligence of Jesus remained with His body in the

sepulcher; and when He came forth it was as a whole being; He did not have to summon His spirit from heaven. He had power to lay down His life and to take it up again (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:203, 204).

21, 22. A Foretaste of Pentecost.—The act of Christ in breathing upon His disciples the Holy Ghost, and in imparting His peace to them, was as a few drops before the plentiful shower to be given on the day of Pentecost. Jesus impressed this fact upon His disciples, that as they should proceed in the work intrusted to them, they would the more fully comprehend the nature of that work, and the manner in which the kingdom of Christ was to be set up on earth. They were appointed to be witnesses for the Saviour; they were to testify what they had seen and heard of His resurrection; they were to repeat the gracious words which proceeded from His lips. They were acquainted with His holy character; He was as an angel standing in the sun, yet casting no shadow. It was the sacred work of the apostles to present the spotless character of Christ to men, as the standard for their lives. The

disciples had been so intimately associated with this Pattern of holiness that they were in some degree assimilated to Him in character, and were specially fitted to make known to the world His precepts and example (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:243, 244).

23 (Matthew 16:18, 19; 18:18). Man Cannot Remove One Stain of Sin.—Christ gave no ecclesiastical right to forgive sin, nor to sell indulgences, that men may sin without incurring the displeasure of God, nor did He give His servants liberty to accept a gift or bribe for cloaking sin, that it may escape merited censure. Jesus charged His disciples to preach the remission of sin in His name among all nations; but they themselves were not empowered to remove one stain of sin from the children of Adam.... Whoever would attract the people to himself as one in whom is invested power to forgive sins, incurs the wrath of God, for he turns souls away from the heavenly Pardoner to a weak and erring mortal (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:245, 246).

24-29. Tenderness Won Thomas.—Jesus, in His treatment of Thomas, gave His followers a lesson regarding the manner in which they should treat those who have doubts upon religious truth, and who make those doubts prominent. He did not overwhelm Thomas with words of reproach, nor did He enter into a controversy with him; but, with marked condescension and tenderness, He revealed Himself unto the doubting one. Thomas had taken a most unreasonable position, in dictating the only conditions of his faith; but Jesus, by His generous love and consideration, broke down all the barriers he had raised. Persistent controversy will seldom weaken unbelief, but rather put it upon self-defense, where it will find new support and excuse. Jesus, revealed in His love and mercy as the crucified Saviour, will bring from many once unwilling lips the acknowledgment of Thomas, “My Lord, and my God” (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:222).

Chapter 21

15-17. Peter Learned to Teach.—There was

Peter, who denied his Lord. After he had fallen and been converted, Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” Before Peter’s feet slipped, he had not the spirit of meekness required to feed the lambs; but after he became sensible of his own weakness, he knew just how to teach the erring and fallen; he could come close to their side in tender sympathy, and could help them (Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 121).

(Luke 22:31, 32.) Genuine Restoration Reaches the Roots.—Peter never forgot the painful scene of his humiliation. He did not forget his denial of Christ, and think that, after all, it was not a very great sin. All was painfully real to the erring disciple. His sorrow for his sin was as intense as had been his denial. After his conversion, the old assertions were not made in the old spirit and manner....

Three times after His resurrection, Christ tested Peter. “Simon, son of Jonas,” He said, “lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord;

thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

This heart-searching question was necessary in the case of Peter, and it is necessary in our case. The work of restoration can never be thorough unless the roots of evil are reached. Again and again the shoots have been clipped, while the root of bitterness has been left to spring up and defile many; but the very depth of the hidden evil must be reached, the moral senses must be judged, and judged again, in the light of the divine presence. The daily life will testify whether or not the work is genuine.

When, the third time, Christ said to Peter, “Lovest thou me?” the probe reached the soul center. Self-judged, Peter fell upon the Rock, saying, “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.”

This is the work before the every soul who has dishonored God, and grieved the heart of Christ, by a denial of truth and righteousness. If the tempted soul endures the trying process, and self does not awake to life to feel hurt and abused under the test, that probing knife reveals that the soul is indeed dead to self, but alive unto God.

Some assert that if a soul stumbles and falls, he can never regain his position; but the case before us contradicts this. Before his denial Christ said to Peter, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” In committing to his stewardship the souls for whom He had given His life, Christ gave to Peter the strongest evidence of His confidence in his restoration. And he was commissioned to feed not only the sheep, but the lambs—a broader and more delicate work than had hitherto been appointed him. Not only was he to hold forth the word of life to others, but he was to be a shepherd of the flock (The Youth’s Instructor, December 22, 1898).

18, 19 (Matthew 19:28; 25:31; Romans 8:17;

1 Peter 4:13). A Transformed Peter.—[John 21:18-22 quoted.] Peter was now humble enough to understand the words of Christ, and without further questioning, the once restless, boastful, self-confident disciple became subdued and contrite. He followed his Lord indeed—the Lord he had denied. The thought that Christ had not denied and rejected him was to Peter a light and comfort and blessing. He felt that he could be crucified from choice, but it must be with his head downward. And he who was so close a partaker of Christ's sufferings will also be a partaker of His glory when He shall "sit upon the throne of his glory" (The Youth's Instructor, December 22, 1898).

Chapter 44

Acts

Book of Acts, Instruction for Today.—The whole of the book of Acts should receive careful study. It is full of precious instruction; it records experiences in evangelistic work, the teachings of which we need in our work today. This is wonderful history; it deals with the highest education, which the students in our schools are to receive (Letter 100, 1909).

Chapter 1

1-5 (Luke 1:1-4). Authorship of Book of Acts.—Luke, the writer of the book of Acts, and Theophilus, to whom it is addressed, had been pleasantly associated. From Luke, Theophilus had received much instruction and great light. Luke had been Theophilus' teacher, and he still felt a responsibility to direct and instruct him, and to sustain and protect him in his work.

At that time it was customary for a writer to send his manuscript to someone for examination and criticism. Luke chose Theophilus, as a man in whom he had confidence, to perform this important work. He first directs the attention of Theophilus to the record of Christ's life as given in the book of Luke, which had also been addressed by the same writer to Theophilus. [Acts 1:1-5 quoted.] ... The teachings of Christ were to be preserved in manuscripts and books (MS 40, 1903).

7, 8. Preach the Simple Gospel, Not Startling Speculations.—The disciples were anxious to know the exact time for the revelation of the kingdom of God, but Jesus tells them that they may not know the times and the seasons; for the Father has not revealed them. To understand when the kingdom of God should be restored, was not the thing of most importance for them to know. They were to be found following the Master, praying, waiting, watching, and working. They were to be representatives to the world of the character of Christ. That which was essential for a successful Christian experience in the days of the disciples, is

essential in our day. “And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” And after the Holy Ghost was come upon them, what were they to do? “And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

This is the work in which we also are to be engaged. Instead of living in expectation of some special season of excitement, we are wisely to improve present opportunities, doing that which must be done in order that souls may be saved. Instead of exhausting the powers of our mind in speculations in regard to the times and seasons which the Lord has placed in His own power, and withheld from men, we are to yield ourselves to the control of the Holy Spirit, to do present duties, to give the bread of life, unadulterated with human opinions, to souls who are perishing for the truth.

Satan is ever ready to fill the mind with

theories and calculations that will divert men from the present truth, and disqualify them for the giving of the third angel's message to the world. It has ever been thus; for our Saviour often had to speak reprovably to those who indulged in speculations and were ever inquiring into those things which the Lord had not revealed. Jesus had come to earth to impart important truth to men, and He wished to impress their minds with the necessity of receiving and obeying His precepts and instructions, of doing their present duty, and His communications were of an order that imparted knowledge for their immediate and daily use.

Jesus said: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." All that was done and said had this one object in view—to rivet truth in their minds that they might attain unto everlasting life. Jesus did not come to astonish men with some great announcement of some special time when some great event would occur, but He came to instruct and save the lost. He did not come to arouse and gratify curiosity; for He knew that this

would but increase the appetite for the curious and the marvelous. It was His aim to impart knowledge whereby men might increase in spiritual strength and advance in the way of obedience and true holiness. He gave only such instruction as could be appropriated to the needs of their daily life, only such truth as could be given to others for the same appropriation. He did not make new revelations to men, but opened to their understanding truths that had long been obscured or misplaced through the false teaching of the priests and teachers. Jesus replaced the gems of divine truth in their proper setting, in the order in which they had been given to patriarchs and prophets. And after giving them this precious instruction. He promised to give them the Holy Spirit whereby all things that He had said unto them should be brought to their remembrance.

We are in continual danger of getting above the simplicity of the gospel. There is an intense desire on the part of many to startle the world with something original, that shall lift the people into a state of spiritual ecstasy, and change the present order of experience. There is certainly great need

of a change in the present order of experience; for the sacredness of present truth is not realized as it should be, but the change we need is a change of heart, and can only be obtained by seeking God individually for His blessing, by pleading with Him for His power, by fervently praying that His grace may come upon us, and that our characters may be transformed. This is the change we need today, and for the attainment of this experience we should exercise persevering energy and manifest heartfelt earnestness. We should ask with true sincerity, What shall I do to be saved? We should know just what steps we are taking heavenward.

Christ gave to His disciples truths whose breadth and depth and value they little appreciated, or even comprehended, and the same condition exists among the people of God today. We too have failed to take in the greatness, to perceive the beauty of the truth which God has entrusted to us today. Should we advance in spiritual knowledge, we would see the truth developing and expanding in lines of which we have little dreamed, but it will never develop in any line that will lead us to

imagine that we may know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. Again and again have I been warned in regard to time-setting. There will never again be a message for the people of God that will be based on time. We are not to know the definite time either for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or for the coming of Christ (The Review and Herald, March 22, 1892).

8 (John 15:26, 27). A Gift Unexcelled.—Christ determined that when He ascended from this earth, He would bestow a gift on those who had believed on Him, and those who should believe on Him. What gift could He bestow rich enough to signalize and grace His ascension to the mediatorial throne? It must be worthy of His greatness and His royalty. He determined to give His representative, the third person of the Godhead. This gift could not be excelled. He would give all gifts in one, and therefore the divine Spirit, that converting, enlightening, and sanctifying power, would be His donation. ...

Christ longed to be in a position where He could accomplish the most important work by few and simple means. The plan of redemption is comprehensive; but its parts are few, and each part depends on the others, while all work together with the utmost simplicity and in entire harmony. Christ is represented by the Holy Spirit; and when this Spirit is appreciated, when those controlled by the Spirit communicate to others the energy with which they are imbued, an invisible chord is touched which electrifies the whole. Would that we could all understand how boundless are the divine resources (The Southern Work, November 28, 1905).

The Holy Spirit Gives Divine Authority.— Jesus says, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me.” It is the union of the Holy Spirit and the testimony of the living witness that is to warn the world. The worker for God is the agent through which the heavenly communication is given, and the Holy Spirit gives divine authority to the word of truth (The Review and Herald, April 4,

1893).

8, 9. See EGW on ch. 2:1-4.

9 (Psalm 24:7-10; 47:5, 6; Psalm 68:17, 18; Ephesians 4:8). Christ Ascended as King.—[Psalm 47:5, 6; 68:17, 18 quoted.] Christ came to earth as God in the guise of humanity. He ascended to heaven as the King of saints. His ascension was worthy of His exalted character. He went as one mighty in battle, a conqueror, leading captivity captive. He was attended by the heavenly host, amid shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song....

Only for a few moments could the disciples hear the angels' song as their Lord ascended, His hands outstretched in blessing. They heard not the greeting He received. All heaven united in His reception. His entrance was not begged. All heaven was honored by His presence. ...

The seal of heaven has been fixed to Christ's atonement (MS 134, 1897).

9-11 (Luke 24:50, 51). Full Glory of Ascension Veiled.—The most precious fact to the disciples in the ascension of Jesus was that He went from them into heaven in the tangible form of their divine Teacher....

The disciples not only saw the Lord ascend, but they had the testimony of the angels that He had gone to occupy His Father's throne in heaven. The last remembrance that the disciples were to have of their Lord was as the sympathizing Friend, the glorified Redeemer. Moses veiled his face to hide the glory of the law which was reflected upon it, and the glory of Christ's ascension was veiled from human sight. The brightness of the heavenly escort and the opening of the glorious gates of God to welcome Him were not to be discerned by mortal eyes.

Had the track of Christ to heaven been revealed to the disciples in all its inexpressible glory, they could not have endured the sight. Had they beheld the myriads of angels, and heard the bursts of

triumph from the battlements of heaven, as the everlasting doors were lifted up, the contrast between that glory and their own lives in a world of trial, would have been so great that they would hardly have been able to again take up the burden of their earthly lives, prepared to execute with courage and faithfulness the commission given them by the Saviour. Even the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, which was sent to them, would not have been properly appreciated, nor would it have strengthened their hearts sufficiently to bear reproach, contumely, imprisonment, and death if need be.

Their senses were not to become so infatuated with the glories of heaven that they would lose sight of the character of Christ on earth, which they were to copy in themselves. They were to keep distinctly before their minds the beauty and majesty of His life, the perfect harmony of all His attributes, and the mysterious union of the divine and human in His nature. It was better that the earthly acquaintance of the disciples with their Saviour should end in the solemn, quiet, and

sublime manner in which it did. His visible ascent from the world was in harmony with the meekness and quiet of His life (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:254, 255).

11. Holy Humanity Taken to Heaven.—Christ ascended to heaven, bearing a sanctified, holy humanity. He took this humanity with Him into the heavenly courts, and through the eternal ages He will bear it, as the One who has redeemed every human being in the city of God (The Review and Herald, March 9, 1905).

(John 12:45; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3.) A Personal Saviour.—Christ came as a personal Saviour to the world. He represented a personal God. He ascended on high as a personal Saviour, and will come again as He ascended to heaven—a personal Saviour (MS 86, 1898).

(Matthew 28:20; 14:2, 3; John 16:24; Hebrews 9:24.) A New View of Heaven.—What a source of joy to the disciples to know that they had such a Friend in heaven to plead in their behalf!

Through the visible ascension of Christ all their views and contemplation of heaven are changed. Their minds had formerly dwelt upon it as a region of unlimited space, tenanted by spirits without substance. Now heaven was connected with the thought of Jesus, whom they had loved and revered above all others, with whom they had conversed and journeyed, whom they had handled, even in His resurrected body, who had spoken hope and comfort to their hearts, and who, while the words were upon His lips, had been taken up before their eyes, the tones of His voice coming back to them as the cloudy chariot of angels received Him: “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

Heaven could no longer appear to them as an indefinite, incomprehensible space, filled with intangible spirits. They now looked upon it as their future home, where mansions were being prepared for them by their loving Redeemer. Prayer was clothed with a new interest, since it was a communion with their Saviour. With new and thrilling emotions and a firm confidence that their

prayer would be answered, they gathered in the upper chamber to offer their petitions and to claim the promise of the Saviour, who had said, “Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” They prayed in the name of Jesus.

They had a gospel to preach—Christ in human form, a man of sorrows; Christ in humiliation, taken by wicked hands and crucified; Christ resurrected, and ascended to heaven, into the presence of God, to be man’s Advocate; Christ to come again with power and great glory in the clouds of heaven (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:262, 263).

14. Faith of Jesus’ Brothers Established.—
[Acts 1:9-14 quoted.] “And with his brethren.” These had lost much because of their unbelief. They had been among the number who doubted when Jesus appeared in Galilee. But they now firmly believed that Jesus was the Son of God, the promised Messiah. Their faith was established (Letter 115, 1904).

26 (Joshua 7:16-18). No Faith in Casting Lots.—Let none be led from the sound, sensible principles that God has laid down for the guidance of His people, to depend for direction on any such device as the tossing up of a coin. Such a course is well pleasing to the enemy of souls; for he works to control the coin, and through its agency works out his plans. Let none be so easily deceived as to place confidence in any such tests. Let none belittle their experience by resorting to cheap devices for direction in important matters connected with the work of God.

The Lord works in no haphazard way. Seek Him most earnestly in prayer. He will impress the mind, and will give tongue and utterance. The people of God are to be educated not to trust in human inventions and uncertain tests as a means of learning God's will concerning them. Satan and his agencies are always ready to step into any opening to be found that will lead souls away from the pure principles of the Word of God. The people who are led and taught of God will give no place to devisings for which there is not a "Thus saith the

Lord” (SpT, Ser. B, No. 17, p. 28).

I have no faith in casting lots. We have in the Bible a plain “Thus saith the Lord” in regard to all church duties.... Read your Bibles with much prayer. Do not try to humble others, but humble yourselves before God, and deal gently with one another. To cast lots for the officers of the church is not in God’s order (Letter 37, 1900).

Chapter 2

Read and Present Acts 2.—Let us read and receive and present to others the second chapter of the book of Acts. We need a deeper piety and the sincere meekness of the Great Teacher. I am instructed ... that the whole book of Acts is our lesson book. All of us need to humble our own individual hearts, and be converted daily. (Letter 32, 1910).

1-4 (ch. 1:8, 9; Ephesians 4:8). Christ’s Promise Fulfilled.—The time had now come. The Spirit had been waiting for the crucifixion,

resurrection, and ascension of Christ. For ten days the disciples offered their petitions for the outpouring of the Spirit, and Christ in heaven added His intercession. This was the occasion of His ascension and inauguration, a jubilee in heaven. He had ascended on high, leading captivity captive, and He now claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it out upon His disciples (The Southern Work, November 28, 1905).

Heaven's Reservoir of Power not Locked.—
[Acts 2:1-4 quoted.] God is willing to give us a similar blessing, when we seek for it as earnestly.

The Lord did not lock the reservoir of heaven after pouring His Spirit upon the early disciples. We also may receive of the fullness of His blessing. Heaven is full of the treasures of His grace, and those who come to God in faith may claim all that He has promised. If we do not have His power, it is because of our spiritual lethargy, our indifference, our indolence. Let us come out of this formality and deadness (The Review and Herald, June 4, 1889).

(Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:23, 28, 29; Zechariah 10:1; Revelation 18:1.) Pentecost Repeated With Greater Power.—It is with an earnest longing that I look forward to the time when the events of the day of Pentecost shall be repeated with even greater power than on that occasion. John says, “I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.” Then, as at the Pentecostal season, the people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue.

God can breathe new life into every soul that sincerely desires to serve Him, and can touch the lips with a live coal from off the altar, and cause them to become eloquent with His praise. Thousands of voices will be imbued with the power to speak forth the wonderful truths of God’s Word. The stammering tongue will be unloosed, and the timid will be made strong to bear courageous testimony to the truth. May the Lord help His people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain such a close

connection with Him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out (The Review and Herald, July 20, 1886).

1-4, 14, 41 (Ephesians 4:30). A Harvest From Christ's Sowing.—In the work that was accomplished on the day of Pentecost, we may see what can be done by the exercise of faith. Those who believed in Christ were sealed by the Holy Spirit. As the disciples were assembled together, “there came a sound... as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.” And Peter stood up among them and spoke with mighty power. Among those who listened to him were devout Jews, who were sincere in their belief. But the power that accompanied the words of the speaker convinced them that Christ was indeed the Messiah. What a mighty work was accomplished! Three thousand were converted in one day.

The seed had been sown by the greatest Teacher the world had ever known. For three and a

half years the Son of God had sojourned in the land of Judea, proclaiming the message of the gospel of truth and working with mighty signs and wonders. The seed had been sown, and after His ascension the great ingathering took place. More were converted by one sermon on the day of Pentecost than were converted during all the years of Christ's ministry. So mightily will God work when men give themselves to the control of the Spirit (MS 85, 1903).

1-12 (ch. 4:13). Second Edition of Christ's Teaching.—After the disciples had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the priests and rulers marveled at the words which they spake, for they knew them as unlearned and ignorant men. But they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus

Their teaching was a second edition of the teachings of Christ, the utterance of simple, grand truths that flashed light into darkened minds, and converted thousands in a day. The disciples began to understand that Christ was their Advocate in the

heavenly courts, and that He was glorified. They could speak because the Holy Spirit gave them utterance (MS 32, 1900).

17, 18. See EGW on Joel 2:28, 29.

Chapter 3

17. No Excuse for Willful Ignorance.—“I wot that through ignorance ye did it,” said Peter; but this ignorance did not excuse the action; for they had had great light granted unto them. The statement is made that had they known that He was the Prince of life, they would not have crucified Him. But why did they not know?—because they chose not to know. They had no interest to search and study, and their ignorance proved their eternal ruin. They had had the strongest evidence on which to base their faith, and they were under obligation to God to accept the evidence He had given them. Their unbelief made them guilty of the blood of the only begotten Son of the infinite God (MS 9, 1898).

Chapter 4

12. See EGW on 1 Timothy 2:5.

13. See EGW on ch. 2:1-12.

Chapter 5

1-11. Sacredness of Vows and Pledges.—The people need to be impressed with the sacredness of their vows and pledges to the cause of God. Such pledges are not generally held to be as obligatory as a promissory note from man to man. But is a promise less sacred and binding because it is made to God? Because it lacks some technical terms, and cannot be enforced by law, will the Christian disregard the obligation to which he has given his word? No legal note or bond is more obligatory than a pledge made to the cause of God (The Review and Herald, May 23, 1893).

29. What Does God Say?—We are not to inquire, What is the practice of men? or, What is the custom of the world? We are not to ask, How

shall I act in order to have the approval of men? or, What will the world tolerate? The question of intense interest to every soul is, What hath God said? We are to read His Word and obey it, not swerving one jot or tittle from its requirements, but acting irrespective of human traditions and jurisdiction (The Review and Herald, October 1, 1895).

31 (Romans 2:4). Repentance the Gift of Christ.—[Acts 5:31 quoted.] Repentance is as much the gift of Christ as is forgiveness, and it cannot be found in the heart where Jesus has not been at work. We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ. Christ draws the sinner by the exhibition of His love upon the cross, and this softens the heart, impresses the mind, and inspires contrition and repentance in the soul (The Review and Herald, April 1, 1890).

Chapter 6

1-7. Responsibilities in God's Work to Be

Shared.—The Lord here gives us an example of the care that should be exercised when choosing men for His service. In this case, one man was not made the only burden bearer of great responsibilities. Seven men were chosen, and they were to be closely united in their work (MS 91, 1899).

Chapter 7

22. See EGW on Exodus 2:11.

Chapter 8

4. See EGW on ch. 18:2.

9-24 (2 Peter 1:14, 15). Paul and Peter Martyred in Rome.—The apostles Paul and Peter were for many years widely separated in their labors, it being the work of Paul to carry the gospel to the Gentiles, while Peter labored especially for the Jews. But in the providence of God, both were to bear witness for Christ in the world's metropolis, and upon its soil both were to shed their blood as

the seed of a vast harvest of saints and martyrs.

About the time of Paul's second arrest, Peter also was apprehended and thrust into prison. He had made himself especially obnoxious to the authorities by his zeal and success in exposing the deceptions and defeating the plots of Simon Magus the sorcerer, who had followed him to Rome to oppose and hinder the work of the gospel. Nero was a believer in magic, and had patronized Simon. He was therefore greatly incensed against the apostle, and was thus prompted to order his arrest (*Sketches from the Life of Paul*, 328).

27. An Example of Obedience.—When God pointed out to Philip his work, the disciple did not say, “The Lord does not mean that.” No; “he arose and went.” He had learned the lesson of conformity to God's will. He realized that every soul is precious in the sight of God, and that angels are sent to bring those who are seeking for light into touch with those who can help them.

Today as then angels are waiting to lead men to

their fellow men.... In the experience of Philip and the Ethiopian is presented the work to which the Lord calls His people (The Review and Herald, March 2, 1911).

Chapter 9

1, 2. The New Faith Flourished in Damascus.—In Damascus the new faith seemed to have acquired fresh life and energy. The work of suppression must be begun there, and Saul was selected for this work (The Youth's Instructor, November 15, 1900).

(Chs. 22:4; 26:11.) Saul Deluded and Deceived.—Saul had an abundance of energy and zeal to work out an erroneous faith in persecuting the saints of God, confining them in prisons and putting them to death. Although his hand did not do the work of murder, yet he had a voice in the decisions and zealously sustained them. He prepared the way, and gave up the believers of the gospel into hands that took their lives. In reference to his zeal Paul himself says, I was “exceedingly

mad against them.” “I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.”

“Yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,” Saul went, not to the lower, ignorant class, but to the highest religionists in the world, the men who acted a part in putting Christ to death, the men who possessed the spirit and sentiment of Caiaphas and his confederacy. These great men, thought Saul, if they had religious, determined helpers, could certainly put down this little handful of fanatical men. So to the high priest Saul went, “and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.” Christ permitted this, and many, very many lost their lives for their belief in Him.

Paul honestly thought that he was persecuting a weak, ignorant, fanatical sect. He did not realize that he himself was the one deluded and deceived, and following ignorantly under the banner of the

prince of darkness (MS 142, 1897).

1-4 (ch. 26:9; 1 Corinthians 15:9). Saul's Unbelief Honest, but Not Excusable.—The mind that resists the truth will see everything in a perverted light. It will be fastened in the sure toils of the enemy, and view things in the light of the enemy.

Saul of Tarsus was an example of this. He had no moral right to be an unbeliever. But he had chosen to accept the opinions of men rather than the counsel of God. He had the prophecies pointing to the Messiah, but the sayings of the rabbis, the words of men, were preferred. In his own wisdom, Saul knew not God nor Jesus Christ, whom He had sent. Afterward in repeating his experience, he declared that he thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Saul was honest in his unbelief. His was no pretension, and Jesus arrested him in his career and showed him on whose side he was working. The persecutor accepted the words of Christ, and was converted from infidelity to faith in Christ.

Saul did not treat with indifference the unbelief which had led him to follow in Satan's track, and cause the suffering and death of the most precious of earth—those of whom the world was not worthy. He did not plead that his error of judgment was excusable. Long after his conversion he spoke of himself as the chief of sinners. "For I am the least of the apostles," he said, "that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." He did not make one excuse for his cruel course in following faithfully the impression of a conscience that was false (MS 9, 1898).

3-6. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.

3-9. Made Blind That He Might See.—What a humiliation it was to Paul to know that all the time he was using his powers against the truth, thinking he was doing God's service, he was persecuting Christ. When the Saviour revealed Himself to Paul in the bright beams of His glory, he was filled with abhorrence for his work and for

himself. The power of Christ's glory might have destroyed him, but Paul was a prisoner of hope. He was made physically blind by the glory of the presence of Him whom he had blasphemed, but it was that he might have spiritual sight, that he might be awakened from the lethargy that had stupefied and deadened his perceptions. His conscience, aroused, now worked with self-accusing energy. The zeal of his work, his earnest resistance of the light shining upon him through God's messengers, now brought condemnation upon his soul, and he was filled with bitter remorse. He no longer saw himself as righteous, but condemned by the law in thought, in spirit, and in deeds. He saw himself a sinner, utterly lost, without the Saviour he had been persecuting. In the days and nights of his blindness he had time for reflection, and he cast himself all helpless and hopeless upon Christ, the only one who could pardon him and clothe him with righteousness (MS 23, 1899).

6. Divine and Human Cooperation Necessary.—Always the Lord gives the human

agent his work. Here is the divine and the human cooperation. There is man working in obedience to divine light given. If Saul had said, Lord, I am not at all inclined to follow your specified directions to work out my own salvation, then should the Lord have let ten times the light shine upon Saul, it would have been useless. It is man's work to cooperate with the divine. And it is the very hardest, sternest conflict which comes with the purpose and hour of great resolve and decision of the human to incline the will and way to God's will and God's way.... The character will determine the nature of the resolve and the action. The doing is not in accordance with the feeling or the inclination, but with the known will of our Father which is in heaven. Follow and obey the leadings of the Holy Spirit (Letter 135, 1898).

8, 9 (2 Corinthians 12:7-9; Galatians 6:17).
“The Marks of the Lord Jesus.”—He [Paul] was ever to carry about with him in the body the marks of Christ's glory, in his eyes, which had been blinded by the heavenly light (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 34).

18, 19. Paul's Baptism.—Paul was baptized by Ananias in the river of Damascus. He was then strengthened by food, and immediately began to preach Jesus to the believers in the city, the very ones whom he had set out from Jerusalem with the purpose of destroying (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 32).

25-27 (Galatians 1:17, 18). Two Grand Characters Meet.—The gates of the city were vigilantly guarded, day and night, to cut off his escape. The anxiety of the disciples drew them to God in prayer; there was little sleeping among them, as they were busy in devising ways and means for the escape of the chosen apostle. Finally they conceived a plan by which he was let down from a window and lowered over the wall in a basket at night. In this humiliating manner Paul made his escape from Damascus.

He now proceeded to Jerusalem, wishing to become acquainted with the apostles there, and especially with Peter. He was very anxious to meet

the Galilean fishermen who had lived and prayed and conversed with Christ upon earth....

He attempted to join himself to his brethren, the disciples; but great was his grief and disappointment when he found that they would not receive him as one of their number. They remembered his former persecutions, and suspected him of acting a part to deceive and destroy them. True, they had heard of his wonderful conversion, but as he had immediately retired into Arabia, and they had heard nothing definite of him further, they had not credited the rumor of his great change.

Barnabas, who had liberally contributed of his means to sustain the cause of Christ and to relieve the necessities of the poor, had been acquainted with Paul when he opposed the believers. He now came forward and renewed that acquaintance, heard the testimony of Paul in regard to his miraculous conversion, and his experience from that time. He fully believed and received Paul, took him by the hand, and led him into the presence of

the apostles. He related his experience which he had just heard—that Jesus had personally appeared to Paul while on his way to Damascus; that He had talked with him; that Paul had recovered his sight in answer to the prayers of Ananias, and had afterward maintained in the synagogue of the city that Jesus was the Son of God.

The apostles no longer hesitated; they could not withstand God. Peter and James, who at that time were the only apostles in Jerusalem, gave the right hand of fellowship to the once-fierce persecutor of their faith; and he was now as much beloved and respected as he had formerly been feared and avoided. Here the two grand characters of the new faith met—Peter, one of the chosen companions of Christ while He was upon earth; and Paul, a Pharisee, who, since the ascension of Jesus, had met Him face to face, and had talked with Him, and had also seen Him in vision, and the nature of His work in heaven (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 34-36).

Chapter 10

Heaven Is Near to the Seeker of Souls.—In the tenth chapter of Acts we have still another instance of the ministration of heavenly angels, resulting in the conversion of Cornelius and his company. Let these chapters [8-10] be read, and receive special attention. In them we see that heaven is much nearer to the Christian who is engaged in the work of soulsaving than many suppose. We should learn through them also the lesson of God's regard for every human being, and that each should treat his fellow man as one of the Lord's instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His work in the earth (MS 17, 1908).

1-4 (Philippians 4:18). Prayer and Almsgiving as Sweet Incense.—[Acts 10:1-4 quoted.] It is a wonderful favor for any man in this life to be commended of God as was Cornelius. And what was the ground of this approval?—"Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

Neither prayer nor almsgiving has any virtue in itself to recommend the sinner to God; the grace of Christ, through His atoning sacrifice, can alone renew the heart and make our service acceptable to God. This grace had moved upon the heart of Cornelius. The Spirit of Christ had spoken to his soul; Jesus had drawn him, and he had yielded to the drawing. His prayers and alms were not urged or extorted from him; they were not a price he was seeking to pay in order to secure heaven; but they were the fruit of love and gratitude to God.

Such prayer from a sincere heart ascends as incense before the Lord; and offerings to His cause and gifts to the needy and suffering are a sacrifice well pleasing to Him. Thus the gifts of the Philippian brethren who ministered to the needs of the apostle Paul while a prisoner at Rome, are said to be “an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.”

Prayer and almsgiving are closely linked together—the expression of love to God and to our fellow men. They are the out-working of the two

great principles of the divine law, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength”; and, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Thus while our gifts cannot recommend us to God or earn His favor, they are an evidence that we have received the grace of Christ. They are a test of the sincerity of our profession of love (The Review and Herald, May 9, 1893).

1-6 (Hebrews 1:14). Ministering Angels Note Each Individual.—That same Holy Watcher who says, I know Abraham, knew Cornelius also, and sent His angel with a message to the man who had received and improved all the light God had given him. The angel said, “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter.” Then the specific directions are given, “He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.” Thus the angel of the Lord works to bring Cornelius in connection with the human agent through whom he might receive greater light.

Study the whole chapter carefully and see the simplicity of the whole transaction. Then consider that the Lord knows every one of us by name, and just where we live, and the spirit we possess, and every act of our life. The ministering angels are passing through the churches, noting our faithfulness in our individual line of duty (Letter 20a, 1893).

Earnest Seekers Not Left in Darkness.—

Here we are given positive evidence that the Lord does not leave in darkness those who follow all the light given them, but sends His angels to communicate with them. Cornelius was living in accordance with the instruction given in the Old Testament Scriptures, and the Lord sent a messenger to tell him what to do.

God could have given Cornelius all the instruction he needed by the angel, but this was not His plan. His purpose was to place Cornelius in connection with those who had been receiving knowledge from on high, whose work it was to impart this knowledge to those seeking for light.

Thus God always deals with His people....

Cornelius obeyed the instruction given. He united with the church, and became a useful and influential laborer together with God (MS 67, 1900).

God Uses His Appointed Agencies.—[Acts 10:1-4 quoted.] The angel did not give him the light that he might have given him, but directed him to take a course whereby he might come into connection with one who could tell him precious truth.... [Acts 10:5, 6 quoted.]

Cornelius implicitly obeyed the instruction, and the same angel went to Peter, and gave him his instructions. This chapter [Acts 10] has much precious counsel in it for us, and we should study it with humble attention. When the Lord has His appointed agencies whereby He gives help to souls, and men disrespect these agencies, and refuse to receive help from them, and decide that they will be directly taught of God, the Lord does not gratify their desire. The man who takes such a position is

in danger of taking up with the voices of strangers, and of being led into false paths. Both Cornelius and Peter were instructed what they were to do, and they obeyed the angel's word. Cornelius gathered his household together to hear the message of light from Peter. If he had said, I will not be taught of any man, the angel of God would have left him to himself; but this was not his attitude (The Review and Herald, October 10, 1893).

Many Today Like Cornelius.—There are many today who are in the same position as Cornelius. They are living up to the light they have received, and God speaks to them, as He spoke to Cornelius, and brings them by His appointed agencies to the place where they will receive the truth into good and honest hearts. God reveals Himself to those who are striving to form characters that He can approve. The prayers of those who fear Him, who recognize their obligations to Him, are heard and answered. The Lord takes special notice of those who walk in the light that He has given them, who testify by their

deeds that they are trying to honor God. Through a Peter He will present the pearl of great price, and through a Cornelius and his family many souls will be brought to the light (The Review and Herald, August 8, 1899).

By the wonderful works of God, Cornelius was led to bring his energetic, faithful life into connection with the disciples of Christ. Thus shall it be in the last days. Many will prize the wisdom of God above any earthly advantage, and will obey the Word of God as the supreme standard. These will be led to great light. These will come to the knowledge of the truth, and will seek to get this light of truth before those of their acquaintance who like themselves are anxious for the truth. Thus they become conscientious light bearers to the world. Themselves constrained by the love of God, they will constrain others, and will improve every opportunity to invite and urge others to come and see the beauty of the truth, and to give their abilities to advance the work of God (MS 97, 1898).

Some who are numbered among merchants and princes will take their position to obey the truth. God's eye has been upon such as they have acted according to the light they have had, maintaining their integrity. Cornelius ... maintained his religious experience, strictly walking in accordance with the light he had received. God had His eye upon him, and He sent His angel with a message to him. The heavenly messenger passed by the self-righteous ones, came to Cornelius, and called him by name (MS 97, 1898).

Much is said concerning our duty to the neglected poor. Should not some attention be given to the neglected rich? Many look upon this class as hopeless, and they do little to open the eyes of those who, blinded and dazed by the glitter of earthly glory, have lost eternity out of their reckoning. Thousands of wealthy men have gone to the grave unwarned. But indifferent as they may appear, many among the rich are soul burdened....

Riches and worldly honor cannot satisfy the soul. Many among the rich are longing for some

divine assurance, some spiritual hope. Many long for something that will bring to an end the monotony of their aimless life. Many in official life feel their need of something which they have not. Few among them go to church, for they feel that they receive little benefit. The teaching they hear does not touch the heart. Shall we make no special appeal to them?

God calls for earnest, humble workers, who will carry the gospel to the higher classes. It is by no casual, accidental touch that the wealthy, world-loving souls can be drawn to Christ. Decided personal effort must be put forth by men and women imbued with the missionary spirit, those who will not fail nor be discouraged (The Review and Herald, April 6, 1911).

Chapter 12

6. Peter Ready to Yield Up His Life.—The apostle was not intimidated by the situation. Since his reinstatement after his denial of Christ, he had unflinchingly braved danger, and had shown a

noble courage and boldness in preaching a crucified, risen, and ascended Saviour. As he lay in his cell he called to mind the words that Christ had spoken to him: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.” Peter believed that the time had come for him to yield up his life for Christ’s sake (The Review and Herald, April 27, 1911).

Chapter 14

17. See EGW on Romans 1:20, 21.

Chapter 15

1, 5 (Romans 2:24-29; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 2:14-17; Titus 1:9-11). Circumcision of No Value After the Cross.—[Titus 1:9-11, 13, 14 quoted.] There were those in Paul’s day who were constantly dwelling upon circumcision, and they could bring plenty of

proof from the Bible to show its obligation on the Jews; but this teaching was of no consequence at this time; for Christ had died upon Calvary's cross, and circumcision in the flesh could not be of any further value.

The typical service and the ceremonies connected with it were abolished at the cross. The great antitypical Lamb of God had become an offering for guilty man, and the shadow ceased in the substance. Paul was seeking to bring the minds of men to the great truth for the time; but these who claimed to be followers of Jesus were wholly absorbed in teaching the tradition of the Jews, and the obligation of circumcision (The Review and Herald, May 29, 1888).

4-29. See EGW on Galatians 2:1-10.

11 (Galatians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 10:4). Only One Gospel.—There is no such contrast as is often claimed to exist between the Old and the New Testament, the law of God and the gospel of Christ, the requirements of the Jewish and those of the

Christian dispensation. Every soul saved in the former dispensation was saved by Christ as verily as we are saved by Him today. Patriarchs and prophets were Christians. The gospel promise was given to the first pair in Eden, when they had by transgression separated themselves from God. The gospel was preached to Abraham. The Hebrews all drank of that spiritual Rock, which was Christ (The Signs of the Times, September 14, 1882).

(Exodus 13:21, 22; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4; 1 Timothy 2:5.) Christ's Blood Avails for Us as for Israel.—Shrouded in the pillar of cloud, the world's Redeemer held communion with Israel. Let us not say, then, that they had not Christ. When the people thirsted in the wilderness, and gave themselves up to murmuring and complaint, Christ was to them what He is to us—a Saviour full of tender compassion, the Mediator between them and God. After we have done our part to cleanse the soul temple from the defilement of sin, Christ's blood avails for us, as it did for ancient Israel (The Youth's Instructor, July 18, 1901).

Chapter 16

1-3. See EGW on 2 Timothy 3:14, 15.

14 (2 Corinthians 8:12). Light for Those Who Are Willing.—God’s Spirit can only enlighten the understanding of those who are willing to be enlightened. We read that God opened the ears of Lydia, so that she attended to the message spoken by Paul. To declare the whole counsel of God and all that was essential for Lydia to receive—this was the part Paul was to act in her conversion; and then the God of all grace exercised His power, leading the soul in the right way. God and the human agent cooperated, and the work was wholly successful (Letter 150, 1900).

Chapter 17

22-29. See EGW on Romans 1:20-25.

22-34. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.

28 (John 5:17; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews

1:3; see EGW on Genesis 2:7). God Constantly at Work in Nature.—God is perpetually at work in nature. She is His servant, directed as He pleases. Nature in her work testifies of the intelligent presence and active agency of a Being who moves in all His works according to His will. It is not by an original power inherent in nature that year by year the earth produces its bounties and the world keeps up its continual march around the sun. The hand of infinite power is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God's power momentarily exercised that keeps it in position in its rotations. The God of heaven is constantly at work. It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears and every flower blooms. It is not as the result of a mechanism, that, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. Every breath, every throb of the heart, is the continual evidence of the power of an ever-present God. It is God that maketh the sun to rise in the heavens. He openeth the windows of heaven and giveth rain. He maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains. "He giveth snow like

wool: and scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.” “When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, ... he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.” Although the Lord has ceased His work in creating, He is constantly employed in upholding and using as His servants the things which He has made. Said Christ, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (MS 4, 1882).

34 (1 Corinthians 2:1-4). Simplicity of the Gospel vs. Learning of the World.—At the close of his labors he [Paul] looked for the results of his work. Out of the large assembly that had listened to his eloquent words, only three had been converted to the faith. He then decided that from that time he would maintain the simplicity of the gospel. He was convinced that the learning of the world was powerless to move the hearts of men, but that the gospel was the power of God to salvation (The Review and Herald, August 3, 1911).

Chapter 18

1-3 (2 Corinthians 10:1, 7, 8; see EGW on Acts 20:17-35). The Apostles Counseled Over Methods of Labor.—When Paul came to Corinth, he solicited work from Aquila. The apostles counseled and prayed together, and decided that they would preach the gospel as it should be preached, in disinterested love for the souls who were perishing for lack of knowledge. Paul would work at tentmaking, and teach his fellow laborers to work with their hands, so that in any emergency they could support themselves. Some of his ministering brethren presented such a course as inconsistent, saying that by so doing they would lose their influence as ministers of the gospel. The tenth chapter of Second Corinthians records the difficulties Paul had to contend with, and his vindication of his course. God had placed special honor upon Paul. He had given him his credentials, and had laid upon him weighty responsibility. And the apostle writes, “I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you,”—because he

humbled himself to do mechanical work—“but being absent am bold toward you” [2 Corinthians 10:7, 8 quoted] (RH March 6, 1900).

(Ch. 20:33, 34; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8.) Paul Resorted to His Trade.—Paul ... abode with them [Aquila and Priscilla]; and having in his youth learned their trade of making tents, which were much used in that warm climate, he worked at this business for his own support....

Paul was highly educated, and was admired for his genius and eloquence. He was chosen by his countrymen as a member of the Sanhedrim, and was a rabbi of distinguished ability; yet his education had not been considered complete until he had served an apprenticeship at some useful trade. He rejoiced that he was able to support himself by manual labor, and frequently declared that his own hands had ministered to his necessities. While in a city of strangers, he would not be chargeable to anyone. When his means had been expended to advance the cause of Christ, he

resorted to his trade in order to gain a livelihood (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 99, 100).

Although feeble in health, he [Paul] labored during the day in serving the cause of Christ, and then toiled a large part of the night, and frequently all night, that he might provide for his own and others' necessities (The Youth's Instructor, February 27, 1902).

A Skilled Workman.—Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, learned the trade of tentmaking. There were higher and lower branches of tentmaking. Paul learned the higher branches, and he could also work at the common branches when circumstances required. Tentmaking did not bring returns so quickly as some other occupations, and at times it was only by the strictest economy that Paul could supply his necessities (The Review and Herald, March 6, 1900).

An Educator.—Paul was an educator. He preached the gospel with his voice, and in his intelligent labor he preached it with his hands. He

educated others in the same way in which he had been educated by one who was regarded as the wisest of human teachers. As Paul worked quickly and skillfully with his hands, he related to his fellow workers the specifications Christ had given Moses in regard to the building of the tabernacle. He showed them that the skill and wisdom and genius brought into that work were given by God to be used to His glory. He taught them that supreme honor is to be given to God (The Review and Herald, March 6, 1900).

2 (ch. 8:4; Romans 1:7, 8). Opposition Did Not Silence Gospel.—After the ascension of Christ, the apostles went everywhere preaching the Word. They bore witness to Christ's work as a teacher and healer. Their testimony in Jerusalem, in Rome, and in other places was positive and powerful. The Jews, who refused to receive the truth, could but acknowledge that a powerful influence attended Christ's followers, because the Holy Spirit accompanied them. This created greater opposition; but notwithstanding the opposition, twenty years after the crucifixion of Christ there

was a live, earnest church in Rome. This church was strong and zealous, and the Lord worked for it.

The envy and rage of the Jews against the Christians knew no bounds, and the unbelieving residents were constantly stirred up. They made complaints that the Christian Jews were disorderly, and dangerous to the public good. Constantly they were setting in motion something that would stir up strife. This caused the Christians to be banished from Rome. Among those banished, were Aquila and Priscilla, who went to Corinth, and there established a business as manufacturers of tents (The Review and Herald, March 6, 1900).

24-26. Learned Apollos Instructed by Humble Tentmakers.—Apollos ... had received the highest Grecian culture, and was a scholar and an orator Aquila and Priscilla listened to him, and saw that his teachings were defective. He had not a thorough knowledge of the mission of Christ, His resurrection and ascension, and of the work of His Spirit, the Comforter which He sent down to remain with His people during His absence. They

accordingly sent for Apollos, and the educated orator received instruction from them with grateful surprise and joy. Through their teachings he obtained a clearer understanding of the Scriptures, and became one of the ablest defenders of the Christian church. Thus a thorough scholar and brilliant orator learned the way of the Lord more perfectly from the teachings of a Christian man and woman whose humble employment was that of tentmaking (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 119).

Chapter 19

11, 12, 17 (Luke 8:46). Miracles No Encouragement to Blind Superstition.—As Paul was brought in direct contact with the idolatrous inhabitants of Ephesus, the power of God was strikingly displayed through him. The apostles were not always able to work miracles at will. The Lord granted His servants this special power as the progress of His cause or the honor of His name required. Like Moses and Aaron at the court of Pharaoh, the apostle had now to maintain the truth against the lying wonders of the magicians; hence

the miracles he wrought were of a different character from those which he had heretofore performed. As the hem of Christ's garment had communicated healing power to her who sought relief by the touch of faith, so on this occasion, garments were made the means of cure to all that believed; "diseases departed from them, and evil spirits went out of them." Yet these miracles gave no encouragement to blind superstition. When Jesus felt the touch of the suffering woman, He exclaimed, "Virtue is gone out of me." So the Scripture declares that the Lord wrought miracles by the hand of Paul, and that the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified, and not the name of Paul (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 135).

19. Value of the Books Sacrificed.—When the books had been consumed, they proceeded to reckon up the value of the sacrifice. It was estimated at fifty thousand pieces of silver, equal to about ten thousand dollars (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 137).

33. See EGW on 2 Timothy 4:13, 14.

Chapter 20

17-35 (ch. 18:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8). An All-round Minister.—His [Paul's] toil-worn hands, as he presented them before the people, bore testimony that he was not chargeable to any man for his support. They detracted nothing, he deemed, from the force of his pathetic appeals, sensible, intelligent, and eloquent beyond those of any other man who had acted a part in the Christian ministry.

In Acts 20:17-35 we see outlined the character of a Christian minister who faithfully performed his duty. He was an all-round minister. We do not think it is obligatory on all ministers to do in all respects as Paul did. Yet we say to all that Paul was a Christian gentleman of the highest type. His example shows that mechanical toil does not necessarily lessen the influence of anyone, that working with the hands in any honorable employment should not make a man coarse and rough and discourteous (The Youth's Instructor,

January 31, 1901).

30 (2 Timothy 4:3, 4; 2 Peter 2:1). Strangle Unstable Theories.—From the light given me of the Lord, men will arise speaking perverse things. Yea, already they have been working and speaking things which God has never revealed, bringing sacred truth upon a level with common things. Issues have been and will continue to be made of men's conceited fallacies, not of truth. The devisings of men's minds will invent tests that are no tests at all, that when the true test shall be made prominent, it shall be considered on a par with the man-made tests that have been of no value. We may expect that everything will be brought in and mingled with sound doctrine, but by clear, spiritual discernment, by the heavenly anointing, we must distinguish the sacred from the common which is being brought in to confuse faith and sound judgment and demerit the great, grand, testing truth for this time....

Never, never was there a time when the truth will suffer more from being misrepresented,

belittled, demerited through the perverse disputings of men than in these last days. Men have brought themselves in with their heterogeneous mass of heresies which they represent as oracles for the people. The people are charmed with some strange, new thing, and are not wise in experience to discern the character of ideas that men may frame up as something. But to call it something of great consequence and tie it to the oracles of God does not make it truth. Oh, how this rebukes the low standard of piety in the churches. Men who want to present something original will conjure up things new and strange, and without consideration will step forward on these unstable theories that have been woven together as a precious theory. And present it as a life and death question....

We have the truth, the solid truth in the Word of God, and all these speculations and theories would better be strangled in the cradle rather than nourished and brought to prominence. We are to hear the voice of God from His revealed Word, the sure word of prophecy. Those who will magnify themselves and seek to do some wonderful thing

would better come to a sound mind (Letter 136a, 1898).

**(Psalm 119:126, 127; 1 Timothy 4:1.)
Traitors to Truth Become Her Worst Persecutors.**—Much so-called Christianity passes for genuine, faithful soundness, but it is because those who profess it have no persecution to endure for the truth's sake. When the day comes when the law of God is made void, and the church is sifted by the fiery trials that are to try all that live upon the earth, a great proportion of those who are supposed to be genuine will give heed to seducing spirits, and will turn traitors and betray sacred trusts. They will prove our very worst persecutors. "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them;" and many will give heed to seducing spirits.

Those who have lived on the flesh and blood of the Son of God—His Holy Word—will be strengthened, rooted, and grounded in the faith. They will see increased evidence why they should prize and obey the Word of God. With David, they

will say, “They have made void thy law. Therefore love I thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.” While others count them dross, they will arise to defend the faith. All who study their convenience, their pleasure, their enjoyment, will not stand in their trial (The Review and Herald, June 8, 1897).

33, 34. See EGW on ch. 18:1-3.

Chapter 21

20-26 (Galatians 2:11, 12). Paul’s Advisers Not Infallible.—This concession was not in harmony with his teachings nor with the firm integrity of his character. His advisers were not infallible. Though some of these men wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, yet when not under its direct influence they sometimes erred. It will be remembered that on one occasion Paul withstood Peter to the face because he was acting a double part (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 214).

39 (ch. 22:3, 25-28). Paul’s Background.—

His [Paul's] father was a man of reputation. He was a Cilician, but still a Roman citizen; for Paul declares that he was freeborn. Others obtained this freedom with a great sum, but Paul was freeborn. Paul had been educated by the most learned teachers of the age. He had been taught by Gamaliel. Paul was a rabbi and a statesman. He was a member of the Sanhedrim (MS 95, 1899).

Chapter 22

3, 4. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.

3, 25-28. See EGW on ch. 21:39.

4. See EGW on ch. 9:1, 2.

5-16 (ch. 26:9-16). Paul Never Forgot His Remarkable Conversion.—The apostle could never forget his conversion from a persecutor of all who believe on Christ, to a believer in Him. What a bearing this conversion had on all his afterlife! What an encouragement it was as he worked on the side of Him whom he once ridiculed and despised.

He could never forget the assurance conveyed to him in the first part of his ministry. He could speak intelligently because he had an experience, a personal knowledge, of the Lord Jesus Christ. He had a living, abiding faith, for he cultivated a sense of the presence of Christ in all his works. He received strength in prayer, and as a faithful soldier of Christ he ever looked to his Captain for orders. No amount of obstacles piled up before him, could cause him to regard the work as an impossibility, for he realized that “all things are possible to them that believe” (MS 114, 1897).

In every place where the apostle Paul was called to go after his conversion, he gave a vivid presentation of the ministration of heavenly angels in his conversion (MS 29, 1900).

Chapter 23

3. An Inspired Denunciation.—Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, Paul uttered a prophetic denunciation similar to that which Christ had uttered in rebuking the hypocrisy of the Jews.

The judgment pronounced by the apostle was terribly fulfilled when the iniquitous and hypocritical high priest was murdered by assassins in the Jewish war (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 222).

20-23. Lysias Feared for His Own Safety.—

Lysias gladly improved this opportunity to get Paul off his hands. ... A short time previous, a Roman knight of far higher rank than Lysias himself, had been violently taken and dragged by the maddened Jews around the walls of Jerusalem and finally beheaded, because he received a bribe from the Samaritans. Upon the suspicion of similar crimes, other high officials had been imprisoned and disgraced. Should Paul be murdered, the chief captain might be charged with having been bribed to connive at his death. There was now sufficient reason to send him away secretly, and thus get rid of an embarrassing responsibility (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 227).

Chapter 24

2, 3. Felix Base and Contemptible.—Tertullus here descended to barefaced falsehood. The character of Felix was base and contemptible. ...

An example of the unbridled licentiousness that stained his character is seen in his alliance with Drusilla, which was consummated about this time. Through the deceptive arts of Simon Magus, a Cyprian sorcerer, Felix had induced this princess to leave her husband and to become his wife. Drusilla was young and beautiful, and, moreover, a Jewess. She was devotedly attached to her husband, who had made a great sacrifice to obtain her hand. There was little indeed to induce her to forgo her strongest prejudices and to bring upon herself the abhorrence of her nation for the sake of forming an adulterous connection with a cruel and elderly profligate. Yet the satanic devices of the conjurer and the betrayer succeeded, and Felix accomplished his purpose (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 235, 236).

22. Felix Not Deceived Regarding Paul.—

Felix himself had so long resided at Caesarea—where the Christian religion had been known for many years—that he had a better knowledge of that religion than the Jews supposed, and he was not deceived by their representations (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 239).

27. Strife in Caesarea; Felix Removed.—

Toward the close of this time there arose a fearful strife among the population of Caesarea. There had been frequent disputes, which had become a settled feud, between the Jews and the Greeks, concerning their respective rights and privileges in the city. All the splendor of Caesarea, its temples, its palaces, and its amphitheater, were due to the ambition of the first Herod. Even the harbor, to which Caesarea owed all its prosperity and importance, had been constructed by him at an immense outlay of money and labor. The Jewish inhabitants were numerous and wealthy, and they claimed the city as theirs, because their king had done so much for it. The Greeks, with equal persistency, maintained their right to the precedence.

Near the close of the two years, these dissensions led to a fierce combat in the market place, resulting in the defeat of the Greeks. Felix, who sided with the Gentile faction, came with his troops and ordered the Jews to disperse. The command was not instantly obeyed by the victorious party, and he ordered his soldiers to fall upon them. Glad of an opportunity to indulge their hatred of the Jews, they executed the order in the most merciless manner, and many were put to death. As if this were not enough, Felix, whose animosity toward the Jews had increased every year, now gave his soldiers liberty to rob the houses of the wealthy.

These daring acts of injustice and cruelty could not pass unnoticed. The Jews made a formal complaint against Felix, and he was summoned to Rome to answer their charges. He well knew that his course of extortion and oppression had given them abundant ground for complaint, but he still hoped to conciliate them. Hence, though he had a sincere respect for Paul, he decided to gratify their

malice by leaving him a prisoner. But all his efforts were in vain; though he escaped banishment or death, he was removed from office, and deprived of the greater part of his ill-gotten wealth. Drusilla, the partner of his guilt, afterward perished, with their only son, in the eruption of Vesuvius. His own days were ended in disgrace and obscurity (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 245, 246).

Chapter 26

9. See EGW on ch. 9:1-4.

9-16. See EGW on ch. 22:5-16.

11. See EGW on ch. 9:1, 2.

26-28. What Were Agrippa's Thoughts?— Did the mind of Agrippa at these words revert to the past history of his family, and their fruitless efforts against Him whom Paul was preaching? Did he think of his great-grandfather Herod, and the massacre of the innocent children of Bethlehem? of his great-uncle Antipas, and the murder of John the

Baptist? of his own father, Agrippa I, and the martyrdom of the apostle James? Did he see in the disasters which speedily befell these kings an evidence of the displeasure of God in consequence of their crimes against His servants? Did the pomp and display of that day remind Agrippa of the time when his own father, a monarch more powerful than he, stood in that same city, attired in glittering robes, while the people shouted that he was a god? Had he forgotten how, even before the admiring shouts had died away, vengeance, swift and terrible, had befallen the vainglorious king? Something of all this flitted across Agrippa's memory; but his vanity was flattered by the brilliant scene before him, and pride and self-importance banished all nobler thoughts (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 255, 256).

Chapter 28

1, 2. A Praise Service on a Stormy Morning.—When the roll was called, not one was missing. Nearly three hundred souls—sailors, soldiers, passengers, and prisoners—stood that

stormy November morning upon the shore of the island of Melita. And there were some that joined with Paul and his brethren in giving thanks to God, who had preserved their lives and brought them safe to land through the perils of the great deep (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 270).

Chapter 45

Romans

Chapter 1

1. The Beginning of Paul's Apostleship.—

Paul regarded the occasion of his formal ordination as marking the beginning of a new and important epoch in his lifework. It was from the time of this solemn ceremony, when, just before he was to depart on his first missionary journey, he was “separated unto the gospel of God,” that he afterward dated the beginning of his apostleship in the Christian church (The Review and Herald, May 11, 1911).

7, 8 (see EGW on Acts 18:2). A Strong Church in Rome.—Notwithstanding the opposition, twenty years after the crucifixion of Christ there was a live, earnest church in Rome. This church was strong and zealous, and the Lord worked for it (The Review and Herald, March 6, 1900).

14 (Matthew 28:19, 20). Debtor Through Accepting Christ.—In what sense was Paul debtor both to the Jew and to the Greek? To him had been given the commission, as it is given to every disciple of Christ, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” In accepting Christ, Paul accepted this commission. He realized that upon him rested the obligation of laboring for all classes of men—for Jew and Gentile, learned and unlearned, for those occupying high positions and for those in the most lowly walks of life (Letter 262, 1903).

17. A Growing Understanding of Faith.—The righteousness of Christ is revealed from faith to faith; that is, from your present faith to an increased understanding of that faith which works by love and purifies the soul (The Review and Herald, September 18, 1908).

20. See EGW on ch. 12:1, 2.

20, 21 (Acts 14:17). Nature Acts as a Silent Preacher.—The material world is under God's control. The laws that govern all nature are obeyed by nature. Everything speaks and acts the will of the Creator. The clouds, the rain, the dew, the sunshine, the showers, the wind, the storm, all are under the supervision of God, and yield implicit obedience to him who employs them. The tiny spear of grass bursts its way through the earth, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. The Lord uses these, His obedient servants, to do His will. The fruit is first seen in the bud, enclosing the future pear, peach, or apple, and the Lord develops these in their proper season, because they do not resist His working. They do not oppose the order of His arrangements. His works, as seen in the natural world, are not one half comprehended or appreciated. These silent preachers will teach human beings their lessons, if they will only be attentive hearers (Letter 131, 1897).

20-25 (Psalm 19:1-3; Acts 17:22-29; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3). Nature's Revelation Imperfect.—The most difficult and humiliating lesson that man has to learn is his own inefficiency in depending upon human wisdom, and the sure failure of his own efforts to read nature correctly. Sin has obscured his vision, and of himself he cannot interpret nature without placing it above God. He cannot discern in it God, or Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. He is in the same position as were the Athenians, who erected their altars for the worship of nature. Standing in the midst of Mars' Hill, Paul presented before the people of Athens the majesty of the living God in contrast with their idolatrous worship. [Acts 17:22-29 quoted.]

Those who have a true knowledge of God will not become so infatuated with the laws of matter or the operations of nature as to overlook, or refuse to acknowledge, the continual working of God in nature. Nature is not God, nor was it ever God. The voice of nature testifies of God, but nature is not

God. As His created work, it simply bears a testimony to God's power. Deity is the author of nature. The natural world has, in itself, no power but that which God supplies.

There is a personal God, the Father; there is a personal Christ, the Son. [Hebrews 1:1, 2: Psalm 19:1-3 quoted.] ...

The ancient philosophers prided themselves on their superior knowledge. Let us read the inspired apostle's understanding of the matter. "Professing themselves to be wise," he says, "they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.... Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator." In its human wisdom the world cannot know God. Its wise men gather an imperfect knowledge of God from His created works, and then in their foolishness they exalt nature and the laws of nature above nature's God. Those who have not a knowledge of God through an

acceptance of the revelation He has made of Himself in Christ, will obtain only an imperfect knowledge of Him in nature; and this knowledge, so far from bringing the whole being into conformity to His will, will make men idolaters. Professing themselves to be wise, they will become fools.

Those who think they can obtain a knowledge of God aside from His Representative, whom the Word declares is “the express image of his person,” will need to become fools in their own estimation before they can be wise. It is impossible to gain a perfect knowledge of God from nature alone; for nature itself is imperfect. In its imperfection it cannot represent God, it cannot reveal the character of God in its moral perfection. But Christ came as a personal Saviour to the world. He represented a personal God. As a personal Saviour, He ascended on high; and He will come again as He ascended to heaven—a personal Saviour. He is the express image of the Father’s person. “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (The Review and Herald, November 8, 1898).

Chapter 2

4 (Acts 5:31). Repentance the First Fruits of the Spirit's Working.—Repentance for sin is the first fruits of the working of the Holy Spirit in the life. It is the only process by which infinite purity reflects the image of Christ in His redeemed subjects. In Christ all fullness dwells. Science that is not in harmony with Him is of no value. He teaches us to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. This knowledge is the highest science that any man can reach (MS 28, 1905).

(John 14:26.) The Spirit Presents Truths of the Old and New Testaments.—In bringing men to repentance, it is not the office work of the Holy Spirit to reveal new truths, but to present to the mind and urge upon the conscience the precious lessons which Christ has given in the Old and New Testaments (MS 32, 1900).

6. See EGW on Galatians 6:7, 8.

24-29. See EGW on Acts 15:1, 5.

Chapter 3

19 (Matthew 27:21; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Jude 15; Revelation 20:12, 13). The Tattered Shreds of Human Reasoning.—The whole world stands condemned before the great moral standard of righteousness. In the great day of judgment every soul that has lived on the earth will receive sentence in accordance as to whether his deeds have been good or evil in the light of the law of God. Every mouth will be stopped as the cross with its dying Victim shall be presented, and its real bearing shall be seen by every mind that has been sin blinded and corrupted. Sinners will stand condemned before the cross, with its mysterious Victim bowing beneath the infinite burden of human transgression. How quickly will be swept away every subterfuge, every lying excuse! Human apostasy will appear in its heinous character. Men will see what their choice has been. They will then understand that they have chosen Barabbas instead

of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

The mystery of the incarnation and the crucifixion will be plainly discerned; for it will be presented before the mind's eye, and every condemned soul will read what has been the character of his rejection of truth. All will understand that they have erred from the truth by receiving the misinterpretations and bewitching lies of Satan instead of "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." They read the announcement, "Thou, O man, hast chosen to stand under the banner of the great rebel, Satan, and in so doing thou hast destroyed thyself." Whatever may have been the endowment of talent, whatever may have been the supposed wisdom, the rejecter of truth has then no ability to turn unto God. The door is shut, as was the door of the ark in Noah's day.

The great men of earth will then understand that they have surrendered mind and heart to ensnaring philosophy which pleased the carnal heart. Hope and grace and every inducement had been held out by One who loved them, and gave

His life for them, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, but they refused the love of God. Their lofty opinions, their human reasonings, were extolled; they declared themselves sufficient in themselves to understand divine mysteries, and they thought their own powers of discrimination were strong enough to discern truth for themselves. They fell an easy prey to Satan's subtlety, for he presented before them specious errors in human philosophy, which has an infatuation for human minds. They turned from the Source of all wisdom, and worshiped intellect. The message and the messengers of God were criticized and discarded as beneath their human, lofty ideas. The invitations of mercy were made a jest, and they denied the divinity of Jesus Christ and derided the idea of His pre-existence before He assumed human nature. But the tattered shreds of human reasoning will be found to be only as ropes of sand in the great day of God (The Signs of the Times, March 7, 1895).

Wicked Will Feel Agony of Cross.—Those who reject the mercy so freely proffered, will yet

be made to know the worth of that which they have despised. They will feel the agony which Christ endured upon the cross to purchase redemption for all who would receive it. And they will then realize what they have lost—eternal life and the immortal inheritance (The Review and Herald, September 4, 1883).

(Matthew 7:23; 27:40, 42; Romans 14:11; 15; Revelation 1:7; 6:15-17.) Indescribable Confusion of the Wicked.—When sinners are compelled to look upon Him who clothed His divinity with humanity, and who still wears this garb, their confusion is indescribable. The scales fall from their eyes, and they see that which before they would not see. They realize what they might have been had they received Christ, and improved the opportunities granted them. They see the law which they have spurned, exalted even as God's throne is exalted. They see God Himself giving reverence to His law.

What a scene that will be! No pen can describe it! The accumulated guilt of the world will be laid

bare, and the voice of the Judge will be heard saying to the wicked, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

Then those who pierced Christ will remember how they slighted His love and abused His compassion; how they chose in His stead Barabbas, a robber and murderer; how they crowned the Saviour with thorns, and caused Him to be scourged and crucified; how, in the agony of His death on the cross, they taunted Him, saying, “Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.” “He saved others; himself he cannot save.” They will seem to hear again His voice of entreaty. Every tone of solicitude will vibrate as distinctly in their ears as when the Saviour spoke to them. Every act of insult and mockery done to Christ will be as fresh in their memory as when the satanic deeds were done.

They will call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. “The wrath of the Lamb”—One who ever

showed Himself full of tenderness, patience, and long-suffering, who, having given Himself up as the sacrificial offering, was led as a lamb to the slaughter, to save sinners from the doom now falling upon them because they would not allow Him to take away their guilt (The Review and Herald, June 18, 1901).

19-28 (Galatians 2:16, 17; 3:10-13, 24). No Saving Properties in the Law.—I would call on all who would win heaven, to take warning. Do not devote your precious probationary time to sewing together fig leaves to cover the nakedness which is the result of sin. As you look into the Lord's great moral looking glass, His holy law, His standard of character, do not for a moment suppose that it can cleanse you. There are no saving properties in the law. It cannot pardon the transgressor. The penalty must be exacted. The Lord does not save sinners by abolishing His law, the foundation of His government in heaven and in earth. The punishment has been endured by the sinner's substitute. Not that God is cruel and merciless, and Christ so merciful that He died on Calvary's cross

to abolish a law so arbitrary that it needed to be extinguished, crucified between two thieves. The throne of God must not bear one stain of crime, one taint of sin. In the councils of heaven, before the world was created, the Father and the Son covenanted together that if man proved disloyal to God, Christ, one with the Father, would take the place of the transgressor, and suffer the penalty of justice that must fall upon him (MS 145, 1897).

(Ch. 5:1.) “This Is Justification by Faith.”—As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ’s atonement in his behalf, and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, his sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. Every believing soul is to conform his will entirely to God’s will, and keep in a state of repentance and contrition, exercising faith in the atoning merits of the Redeemer and advancing from strength to strength, from glory to glory.

Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Through faith, the believer passes from the

position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: “This is My child. I relieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy—eternal life—because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son.” Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ’s righteousness, stands faultless before God.

The sinner may err, but he is not cast off without mercy. His only hope, however, is repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Father’s prerogative to forgive our transgressions and sins, because Christ has taken upon Himself our guilt and relieved us, imputing to us His own righteousness. His sacrifice satisfies fully the demands of justice.

Justification is the opposite of condemnation. God's boundless mercy is exercised toward those who are wholly undeserving. He forgives transgressions and sins for the sake of Jesus, who has become the propitiation for our sins. Through faith in Christ, the guilty transgressor is brought into favor with God and into the strong hope of life eternal (MS 21, 1891).

A Sign to the World.—Justification by faith in Christ will be made manifest in transformation of character. This is the sign to the world of the truth of the doctrines we profess. The daily evidence that we are a living church is seen in the fact that we are practicing the Word. A living testimony goes forth to the world in consistent Christian action.

It declares to a world apostatized that there is a people who believe that our safety is in clinging to the Bible. This testimony is in unmistakable distinction from that of the great apostate church, which adopts human wisdom and authority in place of the wisdom and authority of God (Letter 83, 1896).

20. See EGW on 1 John 3:4.

20-31 (Galatians 6:14; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 7:25; Revelation 22:17). With Humble Hearts Survey the Atonement.—Let no one take the limited, narrow position that any of the works of man can help in the least possible way to liquidate the debt of his transgression. This is a fatal deception. If you would understand it, you must cease haggling over your pet ideas, and with humble hearts survey the atonement.

This matter is so dimly comprehended that thousands upon thousands claiming to be sons of God are children of the wicked one, because they will depend on their own works. God always demanded good works, the law demands it, but because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus' righteousness alone can avail. Christ is able to save to the uttermost because He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation, “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” No sin can be committed by man for which satisfaction has not been met on Calvary. Thus the cross, in earnest appeals, continually proffers to the sinner a thorough expiation (MS 50, 1900).

24-26 (see EGW on ch. 5:11). The Father Abundantly Satisfied.—The atonement that has been made for us by Christ is wholly and abundantly satisfactory to the Father. God can be just, and yet the justifier of those who believe (MS 28, 1905).

(Ch. 5:1.) Justification Means Complete Pardon.—[Romans 3:24-26 quoted.] Here the truth is laid out in plain lines. This mercy and goodness is wholly undeserved. The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on his part. Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is

no more to doubt God's forgiving grace.

There is nothing in faith that makes it our saviour. Faith cannot remove our guilt. Christ is the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe. The justification comes through the merits of Jesus Christ. He has paid the price for the sinner's redemption. Yet it is only through faith in His blood that Jesus can justify the believer.

The sinner cannot depend upon his own good works as a means of justification. He must come to the point where he will renounce all his sin, and embrace one degree of light after another as it shines upon his pathway. He simply grasps by faith the free and ample provision made in the blood of Christ. He believes the promises of God, which through Christ are made unto him sanctification and righteousness and redemption. And if he follows Jesus, he will walk humbly in the light, rejoicing in the light and diffusing that light to others. Being justified by faith, he carries cheerfulness with him in his obedience in all his life. Peace with God is the result of what Christ is

to him. The souls who are in subordination to God, who honor Him, and are doers of His Word, will receive divine enlightenment. In the precious Word of God there is purity and loftiness as well as beauty that, unless assisted by God, the highest powers of man cannot attain to (The Signs of the Times, May 19, 1898).

(Psalm 18:35; 85:10; Psalm 89:14; Revelation 4:3; see EGW on John 3:16.) The Mingling of Judgment and Mercy.—As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of the sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. It is not justice alone that is to be maintained; for this would eclipse the glory of the rainbow of promise above the throne; man could see only the penalty of the law. Were there no justice, no penalty, there would be no stability to the government of God.

It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation full and complete. It is the blending of the two that leads us, as we view the

world's Redeemer and the law of Jehovah, to exclaim, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." We know that the gospel is a perfect and complete system, revealing the immutability of the law of God. It inspires the heart with hope, and with love for God. Mercy invites us to enter through the gates into the city of God, and justice is sacrificed to accord to every obedient soul full privileges as a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King.

If we were defective in character, we could not pass the gates that mercy has opened to the obedient; for justice stands at the entrance, and demands holiness, purity, in all who would see God. Were justice extinct, and were it possible for divine mercy to open the gates to the whole race, irrespective of character, there would be a worse condition of disaffection and rebellion in heaven than before Satan was expelled. The peace, happiness, and harmony of heaven would be broken up. The change from earth to heaven will not change men's characters; the happiness of the redeemed in heaven results from the characters

formed in this life, after the image of Christ. The saints in heaven will first have been saints on earth.

The salvation that Christ made such a sacrifice to gain for man, is that which is alone of value, that which saves from sin—the cause of all the misery and woe in our world. Mercy extended to the sinner is constantly drawing him to Jesus. If he responds, coming in penitence with confession, in faith laying hold of the hope set before him in the gospel, God will not despise the broken and contrite heart. Thus the law of God is not weakened, but the power of sin is broken, and the scepter of mercy is extended to the penitent sinner (Letter 1f, 1890).

24-28 (see EGW on Galatians 2:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:3). Speculations About Righteousness by Faith.—Many commit the error of trying to define minutely the fine points of distinction between justification and sanctification. Into the definitions of these two terms they often bring their own ideas and speculations. Why try to be more minute than is Inspiration on the vital

question of righteousness by faith? Why try to work out every minute point, as if the salvation of the soul depended upon all having exactly your understanding of this matter? All cannot see in the same line of vision (MS 21, 1891).

25. See EGW on ch. 7:12.

27. See EGW on Ephesians 2:8, 9.

28. See EGW on ch. 4:3, 4.

31 (ch. 6:15; 1 Samuel 15:22; Revelation 22:14; see EGW on 2 Corinthians 3:7-18; Ephesians 2:14-16; Revelation 2:6). God's Standard Has Not Changed.—The gospel of good news was not to be interpreted as allowing men to live in continued rebellion against God by transgressing His just and holy law. Why cannot those who claim to understand the Scriptures, see that God's requirement under grace is just the same He made in Eden—perfect obedience to His law. In the judgment, God will ask those who profess to be Christians, Why did you claim to believe in My

Son, and continue to transgress My law? Who required this at your hands—to trample upon My rules of righteousness? “Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” The gospel of the New Testament is not the Old Testament standard lowered to meet the sinner and save him in his sins. God requires of all His subjects obedience, entire obedience to all His commandments. He demands now as ever perfect righteousness as the only title to heaven. Christ is our hope and our refuge. His righteousness is imputed only to the obedient. Let us accept it through faith, that the Father shall find in us no sin. But those who have trampled on the holy law will have no right to claim that righteousness. O that we might view the immensity of the plan of salvation as obedient children to all God’s requirements, believing that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ, our atoning sacrifice (The Review and Herald, September 21, 1886)!

(1 John 2:4.) Faith Manifested by Works of Obedience.—God requires at this time just what He required of the holy pair in Eden, perfect

obedience to His requirements. His law remains the same in all ages. The great standard of righteousness presented in the Old Testament is not lowered in the New. It is not the work of the gospel to weaken the claims of God's holy law, but to bring men up where they can keep its precepts.

The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. "Believe, believe," is their cry; "only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do." While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God. Faith is manifested by works. And the apostle John declares, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar" (The Review and Herald, October 5, 1886).

Disconnect the Law and the Gospel?—The enemy has ever labored to disconnect the law and the gospel. They go hand in hand (MS 11, 1893).

We honor both the Father and the Son when we talk about the law. The Father gave us the law, and

the Son died to magnify it and make it honorable (MS 5, 1885).

It is impossible for us to exalt the law of Jehovah unless we take hold of the righteousness of Jesus Christ (MS 5, 1889).

The law of Jehovah is the tree, the gospel is the fragrant blossoms and fruit which it bears (Letter 119, 1897).

Chapter 4

3-5 (chs. 3:28; 5:1; Ephesians 2:8). Faith Lays Hold of Christ's Righteousness.—Faith is the condition upon which God has seen fit to promise pardon to sinners; not that there is any virtue in faith whereby salvation is merited, but because faith can lay hold of the merits of Christ, the remedy provided for sin. Faith can present Christ's perfect obedience instead of the sinner's transgression and defection. When the sinner believes that Christ is his personal Saviour, then according to His unfailing promises, God pardons

his sin and justifies him freely. The repentant soul realizes that his justification comes because Christ, as his substitute and surety, has died for him, is his atonement and righteousness.

“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner’s account. Christ’s righteousness is accepted in place of man’s failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness (The Review and Herald, November 4, 1890).

Chapter 5

1 (chs 3:19-28; 4:3-5; Galatians 2:16; Hebrews 11:1; see EGW on Galatians 5:6). Faith the Means, Not the End.—Faith is not the ground of our salvation, but it is the great blessing—the eye that sees, the ear that hears, the feet that run, the hand that grasps. It is the means, not the end. If Christ gave His life to save sinners, why shall I not take that blessing? My faith grasps it, and thus my faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen. Thus resting and believing, I have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ (Letter 329a, 1905).

(2 Corinthians 5:7.) Faith and Feeling Distinct.—Faith and feeling are as distinct as the east is from the west. Faith is not dependent on feeling. We must earnestly cry to God in faith, feeling or no feeling, and then live our prayers. Our assurance and evidence is God's word, and after we have asked we must believe without doubting. I praise Thee, O God, I praise Thee. Thou hast not

failed me in the performance of Thy word. Thou has revealed Thyself unto me, and I am Thine to do Thy will (Letter 7, 1892).

Simplicity and Power of Faith.—Faith is simple in its operation and powerful in its results. Many professed Christians, who have a knowledge of the sacred Word, and believe its truth, fail in the childlike trust that is essential to the religion of Jesus. They do not reach out with that peculiar touch that brings the virtue of healing to the soul (Redemption: The Miracles of Christ, page 97).

11 (ch. 3:24-26). A Divine Remedy for Sin.—The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters (Letter 406, 1906).

12-19 (Matthew 4:1-11; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15).

Strength in Cooperating With God.—[Romans 5:12, 18, 19 quoted.] The apostle contrasts the disobedience of Adam and the full, entire obedience of Christ. Think of what Christ's obedience means to us! It means that in His strength we too may obey. Christ was a human being. He served His heavenly Father with all the strength of His human nature. He has a twofold nature, at once human and divine. He is both God and man.

Christ came to this world to show us what God can do and what we can do in cooperation with God. In human flesh He went into the wilderness to be tempted by the enemy. He knows what it is to hunger and thirst. He knows the weakness and the infirmities of the flesh. He was tempted in all points like as we are tempted.

Our ransom has been paid by our Saviour. No one need be enslaved by Satan. Christ stands before us as our divine example, our all-powerful Helper. We have been bought with a price that it is impossible to compute. Who can measure the

goodness and mercy of redeeming love (MS 76, 1903)?

Christ a Free Moral Agent.—The second Adam was a free moral agent, held responsible for His conduct. Surrounded by intensely subtle and misleading influences, He was much less favorably situated than was the first Adam to lead a sinless life. Yet in the midst of sinners He resisted every temptation to sin, and maintained His innocence. He was ever sinless (The Southern Work, September 29, 1903).

Man on Vantage Ground With God.—As related to the first Adam, men receive from him nothing but guilt and the sentence of death. But Christ steps in and passes over the ground where Adam fell, enduring every test in man's behalf. He redeems Adam's disgraceful failure and fall by coming forth from the trial untarnished. This places man on vantage ground with God. It places him where, through accepting Christ as his Saviour, he becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Thus he becomes connected with God and Christ (Letter 68,

1899).

Chapter 6

**1-4 (Matthew 28:19; 2 Peter 1:2, 5-7).
Baptism a Mutual Pledge.**—In baptism we are given to the Lord as a vessel to be used. Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Self is by profession dead to a life of sin. The waters cover the candidate, and in the presence of the whole heavenly universe the mutual pledge is made. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, man is laid in his watery grave, buried with Christ in baptism, and raised from the water to live the new life of loyalty to God. The three great powers in heaven are witnesses; they are invisible but present.

In the first chapter of Second Peter is presented the progressive work in the Christian life. The whole chapter is a lesson of deep importance. If man, in acquiring the Christian graces, works on the plan of addition, God has pledged Himself to work in his behalf upon the plan of multiplication.

“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” The work is laid out before every soul that has acknowledged his faith in Jesus Christ by baptism, and has become a receiver of the pledge from the three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (MS 57, 1900).

Faithfulness to Our Baptismal Vows.—Faithfulness to our baptismal vows gives the heart preparation needful for saving souls (The Review and Herald, May 26, 1904).

(2 Corinthians 6:17, 18; 7:1; Colossians 3:1.)
Imprint of God Received by Baptism.—Christ made baptism the entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Those who receive the ordinance of baptism thereby make a public declaration that they have renounced the world, and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.

Those who do this are to make all worldly considerations secondary to their new relations. Publicly they have declared that they will no longer live in pride and self-indulgence. Christ enjoins those who receive this ordinance to remember that they are bound by a solemn covenant to live to the Lord. They are to use for Him all their entrusted capabilities, never losing the realization that they bear God's sign of obedience to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, that they are subjects of Christ's kingdom, partakers of the divine nature. They are to surrender all they have and are to God, employing all their gifts to His name's glory.

Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have accepted the invitation, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "Having therefore these promises,

dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”

Let those who received the imprint of God by baptism heed these words, remembering that upon them the Lord has placed His signature, declaring them to be His sons and daughters.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, powers infinite and omniscient, receive those who truly enter into covenant relation with God. They are present at every baptism, to receive the candidates who have renounced the world and have received Christ into the soul temple. These candidates have entered into the family of God, and their names are inscribed in the Lamb’s book of life (MS 27 1/2, 1900).

A Door of Communication With Heaven.—
At our baptism we pledged ourselves to break all connection with Satan and his agencies, and to put

heart and mind and soul into the work of extending the kingdom of God. All heaven is working for this object. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are pledged to cooperate with sanctified human instrumentalities. If we are true to our vow, there is opened to us a door of communication with heaven—a door that no human hand or satanic agency can close (The Review and Herald, May 17, 1906).

Many Buried Alive.—The new birth is a rare experience in this age of the world. This is the reason why there are so many perplexities in the churches. Many, so many, who assume the name of Christ are unsanctified and unholy. They have been baptized, but they were buried alive. Self did not die, and therefore they did not rise to newness of life in Christ (MS 148, 1897).

(2 Corinthians 6:17.) Baptism Not Graduation.—Every opportunity, every advantage, every privilege, has been given to us to gain a rich Christian experience; but we do not learn everything all at once. There must be a

growth. Many, having learned a little in school, think they are ready to graduate. They think they know about all that is worth knowing. We are not to think that as soon as we are baptized we are ready to graduate from the school of Christ. When we have accepted Christ, and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit have pledged ourselves to serve God, the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit—the three dignitaries and powers of heaven—pledge themselves that every facility shall be given to us if we carry out our baptismal vows to “come out from among them, and be ... separate, ... and touch not the unclean thing.” When we are true to our vows, He says, “I will receive you” (MS 85, 1901).

3, 4. See EGW on Deuteronomy 26:18.

3-5. See EGW on Mark 16:1, 2.

15. See EGW on ch. 3:31.

19, 22 (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:7; Hebrews 12:14). Wholeness to God—Holiness is

wholeness to God. The soul is surrendered to God. The will, and even the thoughts, are brought into subjection to the will of Christ. The love of Jesus fills the soul, and is constantly going out in a clear, refreshing stream, to make glad the hearts of others (MS 33, 1911).

23. A Voice Heard in Heaven.—Transgression placed the whole world in jeopardy, under the death sentence. But in heaven there was heard a voice saying, “I have found a ransom” (Letter 22, 1900).

Chapter 7

7. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 3:7-18.

7-9 (Philippians 3:5, 6; James 1:23-25). Paul’s Marvelous Change.—Paul says that “as touching the law”—as far as outward acts were concerned—he was “blameless”, but when the spiritual character of the law was discerned, when he looked into the holy mirror, he saw himself a sinner. Judged by a human standard, he had

abstained from sin, but when he looked into the depths of God's law, and saw himself as God saw him, he bowed in humiliation, and confessed his guilt. He did not go away from the mirror and forget what manner of man he was, but he exercised genuine repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. He was washed, he was cleansed. He says, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

Sin then appeared in its true hideousness, and his self-esteem was gone. He became humble. He no longer ascribed goodness and merit to himself. He ceased to think more highly of himself than he ought, and he ascribed all the glory to God. He was no longer ambitious for greatness. He ceased to want to avenge himself, and was no longer sensitive to reproach, neglect, or contempt. He no longer sought earthly alliance, station, or honor. He

did not pull others down to uplift himself. He became gentle, condescending, meek and lowly of heart, because he had learned his lesson in the school of Christ. He talked of Jesus and His matchless love, and grew more and more into His image. He bent his whole energy to win souls to Christ. When trial came upon him because of his unselfish labor for souls, he bowed in prayer, and his love for them increased. His life was hid with Christ in God, and he loved Jesus with all the ardor of his nature. Every church was dear to him; every church member was a person of interest to him; for he looked upon every soul as the purchase of the blood of Christ (The Review and Herald, July 22, 1890).

9. God's Law Did Not Die.—The apostle Paul, in relating his experience, presents an important truth concerning the work to be wrought in conversion. He says, "I was alive without the law once"—he felt no condemnation; "but when the commandment came," when the law of God was urged upon his conscience, "sin revived, and I died." Then he saw himself a sinner, condemned

by the divine law. Mark, it was Paul, and not the law, that died (The Spirit of Prophecy 4:297).

12 (ch. 3:25; Ephesians 1:7). The Law Holds Its Dignity.—Through the plan of salvation the law holds its dignity in condemning the sinner, and the sinner can be saved through the propitiation of Christ for our sins, “in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” The law is not changed in any particular to meet man in his fallen condition. It remains what it ever has been—holy, just, and good (The Review and Herald, May 23, 1899).

Chapter 8

11 (Matthew 26:39; Luke 22:42, 43; see EGW on 1 Corinthians 15:20, 40-52). A Cup of Blessing.—“But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” O how precious are these words to every bereaved soul! Christ is our Guide and Comforter, who comforts

us in all our tribulations. When He gives us a bitter draught to drink, He also holds a cup of blessing to our lips. He fills the heart with submission, with joy and peace in believing, and enables us to say submissively, Not my will, but Thy will, O Lord, be done (Letter 65a, 1894).

13. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

15-21 (1 Timothy 1:9, 10; 1:22-25; see EGW on 2 Corinthians 3:6-9). Not Obedient, but Transgressors, Under Bondage.—Paul in his Epistle to Timothy describes the very men who are under the bondage of the law. They are the transgressors of the law. He names them lawless, disobedient, sinners, unholy, profane, murderers, adulterers, liars, and all who depart from sound doctrine. 1 Timothy 1:9, 10.

The law of God is the mirror to show man the defects in his character. But it is not pleasant to those who take pleasure in unrighteousness to see their moral deformity. They do not prize this faithful mirror, because it reveals to them their

sins. Therefore, instead of instituting a war against their carnal minds, they war against the true and faithful mirror, given them by Jehovah for the very purpose that they may not be deceived, but that they may have revealed to them the defects in their character.

Should the discovery of these defects lead them to hate the mirror, or to hate themselves? Should they put away the mirror which discovers these defects? No; the sins which they cherish, which the faithful mirror shows them as existing in their characters, will close before them the portals of heaven, unless they are put away, and they become perfect before God (The Review and Herald, March 8, 1870).

(Galatians 4:24-31; 5:1.) Obedience Not Bondage.—No one who believes in Jesus Christ is under bondage to the law of God; for His law is a law of life, not of death, to those who obey its precepts. All who comprehend the spirituality of the law, all who realize its power as a detector of sin, are in just as helpless a condition as is Satan

himself, unless they accept the atonement provided for them in the remedial sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is our atonement—at-one-ment with God.

Through faith in Christ obedience to every principle of the law is made possible (MS 122, 1901).

(Galatians 3:6-9.) The Bondage of Legal Religion.—The spirit of bondage is engendered by seeking to live in accordance with legal religion, through striving to fulfill the claims of the law in our own strength. There is hope for us only as we come under the Abrahamic covenant, which is the covenant of grace by faith in Christ Jesus. The gospel preached to Abraham, through which he had hope, was the same gospel that is preached to us today, through which we have hope. Abraham looked unto Jesus, who is also the Author and the Finisher of our faith (The Youth's Instructor, September 22, 1892).

17 (Galatians 4:7). Privileges for God's Obedient Children.—God loves His obedient

children. He has a kingdom prepared, not for disloyal subjects, but for His children whom He has tested and tried in a world marred and corrupted by sin. As obedient children, we have the privilege of relationship with God. “If children,” He says, “then heirs” to an immortal inheritance.... Christ and His people are one (Letter 119, 1897).

18. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.

22. See EGW on Genesis 3:17, 18.

26. See EGW on Matthew 3:13-17.

26, 34 (Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 7:24-28; 8:1, 2; Hebrews 9:24; 1 John 2:1; Revelation 8:3, 4; see EGW on Acts 1:11; Hebrews 7:25). Intercession of Christ and His Spirit.—Christ Jesus is represented as continually standing at the altar, momentarily offering up the sacrifice for the sins of the world. He is a minister of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. The typical shadows of the Jewish tabernacle no longer possess any virtue. A daily and yearly

typical atonement is no longer to be made, but the atoning sacrifice through a mediator is essential because of the constant commission of sin. Jesus is officiating in the presence of God, offering up His shed blood, as it had been a lamb slain. Jesus presents the oblation offered for every offense and every shortcoming of the sinner.

Christ, our Mediator, and the Holy Spirit are constantly interceding in man's behalf, but the Spirit pleads not for us as does Christ who presents His blood, shed from the foundation of the world; the Spirit works upon our hearts, drawing out prayers and penitence, praise and thanksgiving. The gratitude which flows from our lips is the result of the Spirit striking the cords of the soul in holy memories, awakening the music of the heart.

The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary; but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend

not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor who is at God's right hand presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned.

O, that all may see that everything in obedience, in penitence, in praise and thanksgiving must be placed upon the glowing fire of the righteousness of Christ. The fragrance of this righteousness ascends like a cloud around the mercy seat (MS 50, 1900).

**29 (2 Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 3:10).
Moral Image of God Restored Through**

Christ.—Though the moral image of God was almost obliterated by the sin of Adam, through the merits and power of Jesus it may be renewed. Man may stand with the moral image of God in his character; for Jesus will give it to him. Unless the moral image of God is seen in man, he can never enter the city of God as a conqueror (The Review and Herald, June 10, 1890).

29, 30. See EGW on Ephesians 1:4, 5, 11.

34 (Hebrews 7:25; 2:1; see EGW on Matthew 28:18). Kept by Christ's Intercessions.—Everyone who will break from the slavery and service of Satan, and will stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel will be kept by Christ's intercessions. Christ, as our Mediator, at the right hand of the Father, ever keeps us in view, for it is as necessary that He should keep us by His intercessions as that He should redeem us with His blood. If He lets go His hold of us for one moment, Satan stands ready to destroy. Those purchased by His blood, He now keeps by His intercession (MS 73, 1893).

(Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 7:25-27; 9:23-26; Hebrews 13:15; Revelation 8:3, 4.) Constant Need of Christ's Intercession.—Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. In the service of the Jewish priesthood we are continually reminded of the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. All who come to Christ today are to remember that His merit is the incense that mingles with the prayers of those who repent of their sins and receive pardon and mercy and grace. Our need of Christ's intercession is constant. Day by day, morning and evening, the humble heart needs to offer up prayers to which will be returned answers of grace and peace and joy. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifice God is well pleased" (MS 14, 1901).

(John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:11-14.) Clothed With His Priestly Vestments.—Christ is the connecting link between God and

man. He has promised His personal intercession by employing His name. He places the whole virtue of His righteousness on the side of the suppliant. Christ pleads for man, and man, in need of divine help, pleads for himself in the presence of God, using the power of the influence of the One who gave His life for the world. As we acknowledge before God our appreciation of Christ's merits, fragrance is given to our intercessions. Oh, who can value this great mercy and love! As we approach God through the virtue of Christ's merits, we are clothed with His priestly vestments. He places us close by His side, encircling us with His human arm, while with His divine arm He grasps the throne of the Infinite. He puts His merits, as sweet incense, in a censer in our hands, in order to encourage our petitions. He promises to hear and answer our supplications.

Yes, Christ has become the medium of prayer between man and God. He also has become the medium of blessing between God and man. He has combined divinity and humanity. Men are to be co-laborers with God in the salvation of their own

souls, and then make earnest, persevering, untiring efforts to save those who are ready to perish (Letter 22, 1898).

Chapter 9

5. See EGW on John 1:1-3.

Chapter 10

5. See EGW on Deuteronomy 6:6-9.

Chapter 11

Jews Not to Be Ignored.—The work for the Jews, as outlined in the eleventh chapter of Romans, is a work that is to be treated with special wisdom. It is a work that must not be ignored. The wisdom of God must come to our people. In all wisdom and righteousness we must clear the King's highway. The Jews are to be given every opportunity of coming to the light (Letter 96, 1910).

4-6 (Ephesians 1:4, 5, 11; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:10). Complying With Conditions of Election.—If we comply with the conditions the Lord has made, we shall secure our election to salvation. Perfect obedience to His commandments is the evidence that we love God, and are not hardened in sin.

Christ has a church in every age. There are in the church those who are not made any better by their connection with it. They themselves break the terms of their election. Obedience to the commandments of God gives us a right to the privileges of His church (MS 166, 1898).

5 (John 15:4). The Only Election in the Bible.—[John 15:4 quoted.] Now here are the most precious jewels of truth for every individual soul of us. Here is the only election in the Bible, and you can prove yourself elected of Christ by being faithful; you can prove yourself the chosen of Christ by abiding in the vine (MS 43, 1894).

33 (Job 11:7; 1 Corinthians 2:7-14; see EGW

on Job 38; 1 Corinthians 13:12). A Boundary Where Man's Resources Cease.—It is the duty and privilege of all to use reason as far as man's finite faculties can go; but there is a boundary where man's resources must cease. There are many things that can never be reasoned out by the strongest intellect or discerned by the most penetrating mind. Philosophy cannot determine the ways and works of God; the human mind cannot measure infinity.

Jehovah is the fountain of all wisdom, of all truth, of all knowledge. There are high attainments that man can reach in this life through the wisdom that God imparts; but there is an infinity beyond that will be the study and the joy of the saints throughout eternal ages. Man can now only linger upon the borders of that vast expanse, and let imagination take its flight. Finite man cannot fathom the deep things of God; for spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The human mind cannot comprehend the wisdom and power of God (The Review and Herald, December 29, 1896).

(John 17:3.) Avoiding Guesswork in the Quest for God.—Human talent and human conjecture have tried by searching to find out God. But guesswork has proved itself to be guesswork. Man cannot by searching find out God. This problem has not been given to human beings. All that man needs to know and can know of God has been revealed in His Word and in the life of His Son, the great Teacher.

Let men remember that they have a Ruler in the heavens, a God who will not be trifled with. He who puts his reason to the stretch in an effort to exalt himself and to delineate God, will find that he might far better have stood as a humble suppliant before God, confessing himself to be only an erring human being.

God cannot be understood by men. His ways and works are past finding out. In regard to the revelations that He has made of Himself in His Word, we may talk, but other than this, let us say of Him, Thou art God, and Thy ways are past finding out.

There is a knowledge of God and of Christ which all who are saved must have. “This is life eternal,” Christ said, “that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

The question for us to study is, What is truth—the truth for this time, which is to be cherished, loved, honored, and obeyed? The devotees of science have been defeated and disheartened in their effort to find out God. What they need to inquire is, What is truth (MS 124, 1903)?

Chapter 12

A Sermon Written for Our Instruction.—A study of the twelfth chapter of Romans would be of profit to us. It is a sermon by the apostle Paul, written for our instruction (MS 50, 1903).

1. See EGW on Exodus 20:1-17.

1, 2 (ch. 1:20; Psalm 19:1-4). God’s Works

Are His Teachers.—[Romans 12:1, 2 quoted.] What does God accomplish, and what does He demand of us individually in the work of saving ourselves? God works in us by the light of His truth, which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. The Scriptures refer to the works of God as they are revealed in our world, as so many teachers whose voices have gone out through the whole earth, proclaiming the attributes of God. The mind must see the truth, and the will bend to its claims, when it is presented to us based upon scriptural evidence (MS 49, 1898).

2 (1 Corinthians 4:9; Philippians 2:12, 13). Good Fruits the Proof.—Man, fallen man, may be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that he can “prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” How does he prove this? By the Holy Spirit taking possession of his mind, spirit, heart, and character. Where does the proving come in? “We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.” A real work is wrought by the Holy Spirit upon the human character, and its fruits are seen.

Just as a good tree will bear good fruit, so will the tree that is actually planted in the Lord's garden produce good fruit unto eternal life. Besetting sins are overcome; evil thoughts are not allowed in the mind; evil habits are purged from the soul temple. The tendencies which have been biased in a wrong direction are turned in a right direction. Wrong dispositions and feelings are changed, new principles of action supplied, and there is a new standard of character. Holy tempers and sanctified emotions are now the fruit borne upon the Christian tree. An entire transformation has taken place. This is the work to be wrought.

We see by experience that in our own human strength, resolutions and purposes are of no avail. Must we, then, give up our determined efforts? No; although our experience testifies that we cannot possibly do this work ourselves, help has been laid upon One who is mighty to do it for us. But the only way we can secure the help of God is to put ourselves wholly in His hands, and trust Him to work for us. As we lay hold of Him by faith, He

does the work. The believer can only trust. As God works, we can work, trusting in Him and doing His will (MS 1a, 1890).

3. Seeds of Self-glory Produce a Sure Harvest.—[Romans 12:3, 10, 9 quoted.] ... The forms of unbelief are varied, for Satan watches every opportunity to crowd in some of his attributes. There is in the natural heart a tendency to be exalted or puffed up if success attends the efforts put forth. But self-exaltation can find no place in the work of God. Whatever your intelligence, however earnestly and zealously you may labor, unless you put away your own tendencies to pride, and submit to be guided by the Spirit of God, you will be on losing ground.

Spiritual death in the soul is evidenced by spiritual pride and a crippled experience; those who have such an experience seldom make straight paths for their feet. If pride is nourished, the very qualities of the mind which grace, if received, would make a blessing, become contaminated. The very victories which would have been a savor of

life unto life, if the glory had been given to God, become tarnished by self-glory. These may seem to be little things, unworthy of notice, but the seed thus scattered brings forth a sure harvest. It is these little sins, so common that they are often unnoticed, that Satan uses in his service (MS 47, 1896).

(Hebrews 11:1.) Faith Is God's Gift.—Faith earns nothing for us; it is the gift of God, which we may receive and cherish by making Christ our personal Saviour. We may refuse the gift, and talk doubts, and become unhappy by cherishing unbelief. But this will grow into an impassable barrier, shutting us away from the Spirit of God and closing our hearts to His light and His love (The Signs of the Times, May 19, 1898).

11. See EGW on Mark 12:30.

12. See EGW on Nehemiah 2:4.

17 (2 Corinthians 8:21; 1 Peter 2:12). The Honest Are His Jewels Forever.—Truthfulness

and frankness should be ever cherished by all who claim to be followers of Christ. God and the right should be the motto. Deal honestly and righteously in this present evil world. Some will be honest when they see that honesty will not endanger their worldly interests, but all who act from this principle will have their names blotted out of the book of life.

Strict honesty must be cultivated. We can go through the world but once; we cannot come back to rectify any mistakes; therefore every move made should be with godly fear and careful consideration. Honesty and policy will not harmonize; either policy will be subdued, and truth and honesty hold the lines of control, or policy will take the lines, and honesty cease to direct. Both cannot act together; they can never be in agreement. When God makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be His chosen ones, His treasures. Angels are preparing crowns for such, and light from the throne of God will be reflected in its splendor from these star-gemmed diadems (The Review and Herald, December 29,

1896).

19 (Psalm 119:126; Luke 18:1-7; Revelation 6:9). Protector and Avenger.—When the defiance of God’s law is almost universal, when His people are pressed in affliction by their fellow men, God will interpose. Then will the voice be heard from the graves of martyrs, represented by the souls that John saw slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, which they held—then the prayer will ascend from every true child of God: “It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law.”

The fervent prayers of His people will be answered; for God loves to have His people seek Him with all the heart, and depend upon Him as their deliverer. He will be sought unto to do these things for His people, and He will arise as their protector and avenger. “Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him” (The Review and Herald, December 21, 1897)?

Chapter 13

1. God, the Ruler of All Nations.—Who, then, is to be regarded as the Ruler of the nations?—The Lord God Omnipotent. All kings, all rulers, all nations, are His, under His rule and government (MS 119, 1903).

1-7. Rulers Are God's Servants.—One of the most deplorable things upon the earth is the fact that there are passionate governors and unjust judges. They forget that they are under the authority of the great Governor, the all-wise God, and that He is above every ruler, prince, governor, or king.

Rulers are God's servants, and they are to serve their time as His apprentices. It is for their good that they faithfully follow the plain "Thus saith the Lord," keeping the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. They are to exercise their powers without partiality and without hypocrisy, refusing to be bought or sold, scorning all bribes, and standing in moral independence and dignity before

God. They are not to connive at one act of dishonesty or injustice. They are not to do a base, unjust action themselves, nor to sustain others in acts of oppression. Wise rulers will not permit the people to be oppressed because of the envy and jealousy of those who disregard the law of God.... All need to keep eternity in view, and not to act in such a way that God cannot ratify their judgment in the courts of heaven (The Review and Herald, October 1, 1895).

14. No Doubtful Piety Among True Believers.—Sincere Christians have no doubtful piety. They have put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have made no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. They are constantly looking to Jesus for His orders, as a servant looks to His master, or as a maid looks to her mistress. Wheresoever God's providence may lead, they stand ready to go. They take no glory to themselves. They do not call anything they have—learning, talents, property—their own, but regard themselves as only stewards of the manifold grace of Christ, and servants to the church for Christ's sake. These are messengers of

the Lord, a light amid the darkness. Their hearts throb in unison with the great heart of Christ (MS 1a, 1890).

Chapter 14

10. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 5:10.

11. See EGW on ch. 3:19.

Chapter 16

25 (Ephesians 3:9-11; Colossians 1:26, 27; see EGW on 2 Corinthians 12:1-4). The Eternal Purposes of God.—God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world. He did not make His purposes to fit circumstances, but He allowed matters to develop and work out. He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but He knew that such a condition would exist. The plan that should be carried out upon the defection of any of the high intelligences of heaven—this is the secret, the mystery which has been hid from ages. And an

offering was prepared in the eternal purposes to do the very work which God has done for fallen humanity (The Signs of the Times, March 25, 1897).

(Genesis 3:15, Ephesians 3:9-11; Colossians 1:26, 27; see EGW on Jeremiah 23:28.) The Mystery Hid for Eternal Ages.—The incarnation of Christ is a mystery. The union of divinity with humanity is a mystery indeed, hidden with God, “even the mystery which hath been hid from ages.” It was kept in eternal silence by Jehovah, and was first revealed in Eden, by the prophecy that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, and that he should bruise His heel.

To present to the world this mystery that God kept in silence for eternal ages before the world was created, before man was created, was the part that Christ was to act in the work He entered upon when He came to this earth. And this wonderful mystery, the incarnation of Christ and the atonement that He made, must be declared to every son and daughter of Adam.... His sufferings

perfectly fulfilled the claims of the law of God
(The Signs of the Times, January 30, 1912).

**(1 Timothy 3:16.) Mystery of All
Mysteries.**—The incarnation of Christ is the
mystery of all mysteries (Letter 276, 1904).

Chapter 46

1 Corinthians

Chapters 1-3

Lessons for Every Church.—The third chapter of First Corinthians should be read with careful and prayerful consideration by every church member. The first and second chapters of this epistle prepare the way for the third, and in this are lessons for every church in our world. The cause of their difficulties is plainly revealed (MS 74, 1899).

Chapter 1

1. See EGW on ch. 9:13-18.

1-8. Guard the Church Against Deception.—The instruction in this epistle is addressed to the church of God at Corinth, and directed to be sent to every place where there were companies of saints who had faith in Jesus Christ. As members of the

church of Christ, they are said to be “sanctified in Christ Jesus,” and “called to be saints.” By baptism they pledged themselves to a ministry of good works in seeking to save others who knew not the truth.

The church at Corinth was largely made up of Gentiles. Paul had labored earnestly among them, and had brought them to a knowledge of the truth. But after Paul had left them, false teachers had arisen, who had questioned the apostleship and ministry of Paul. They spoke contemptuously of him, and tried to make comparisons between themselves and him that would belittle him in the eyes of the church.

Paul did not seek to exalt himself. But when falsehoods threatened to destroy the effects of his ministry, faithfulness to his mission made it necessary for him to honor God by vindicating his character and magnifying his office. He claims to have a divine mission—that he is “called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God.”

Paul had been called to his work by the Prince of life. While Paul had been engaged in the work of cruelly persecuting the followers of Christ, the Saviour had appeared to him and called him to be an apostle to the Gentiles. As an apostle of our Lord, he felt a sacred responsibility for the welfare of the church in Corinth. Under his administration they had not only received but they had taught the truth to others. They had been so enriched as to come behind in no gift. They had been brought into near and dear relation to Christ.

Paul could not, by silence, allow himself to be driven from the field by false teachers—teachers who would introduce false sentiments and theories that might lead honest souls away from the truth. The churches must be guarded, and warned against deception. Christ gave Himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. His church must be kept free from all false doctrine (MS 46, 1905).

10. Unity in Diversity.—The strength of God's

people lies in their union with Him through His only-begotten Son, and their union with one another. There are no two leaves of a tree precisely alike; neither do all minds run in the same direction. But while this is so, there may be unity in diversity. Christ is our root, and all who are grafted into this root will bear the fruit which Christ bore. They will reveal the fragrance of His character in the talent of speech, in the cultivation of hospitality, of kindness, of Christian courtesy and heavenly politeness.

Look at the flowers in a carpet, and notice the different colored threads. All are not pink, all are not green, all are not blue. A variety of colors are woven together to perfect the pattern. So it is in the design of God. He has a purpose in placing us where we must learn to live as individuals. We are not all fitted to do the same kind of work, but each man's work is designed by God to help make up His plan (The Review and Herald, July 4, 1899).

10-13. See EGW on Galatians 5:1, 2.

13. Christ the Uniting Stone.—Paul asks, “Is Christ divided?” Have we not one spiritual Head? Christ has been the uniting stone, the chief cornerstone, in all ages. The patriarchs, the Levitical priesthood, and Christians of today, all have their center in Him. He is all and in all (The Review and Herald, January 3, 1899).

21. See EGW on Romans 1:20-25.

25-29. God Measures Not by Man’s Standard.—Because of the pride and ambition of the children of men, God has chosen to perform His mighty works by the most simple and humble means. It is not the men whom the world honors as great, talented, or brilliant, that God selects. He chooses those who will work in meekness and simplicity, acknowledging Him as their leader and their source of strength. He would have us make Him our protector and our guide in all the duties and affairs of life. ...

The Majesty of heaven works by whom He will. His providence sometimes selects the

humblest instruments to do the greatest work, for His power is revealed through the weakness of men. We have our standard of reckoning, and by it we pronounce one thing great, and another small; but God estimates not according to the standard of men; He does not graduate His scale by theirs. We are not to suppose that what is great to us must be great to God, and what is small to us must be small to Him (The Signs of the Times, July 14, 1881).

Chapter 2

1-3. Be Afraid of Self.—The apostle Paul could meet eloquence with eloquence, logic with logic; he could intelligently enter into all controversies. But was he satisfied with this worldly knowledge? He writes: “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”

Here is a very important lesson. We need to

understand our whereabouts. We need to understand that the highest education ever given to mortals develops a spirit of humility, for it reveals how much more there is yet to learn.

The more you learn, the more you will see the necessity of putting your whole mind and interest into learning for Christ's sake. Why are you learning? Are you acquiring knowledge so as to become intelligent in the truth? If that is your object, be assured that you will hide self in Jesus Christ.

“And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.” Paul was a very great teacher; yet he felt that without the Spirit of God working with him, all the education he might obtain would be of little account. We need to have this same experience; we need to be afraid of ourselves. We need individually to sit at the feet of Jesus, and listen to His words of instruction (MS 84, 1901).

1-4. See EGW on Acts 17:34.

1-5 (Acts 9:3-6; 22:3, 4). Instruction for the Church Today.—[1 Corinthians 2:1-5 quoted.] Paul was not an unlearned man, but the preaching of Christ was a new gospel to him. It was a work entirely different from that he had engaged in when he hunted the believers from place to place and persecuted them even “unto the death.” But Christ had revealed Himself to Paul in a remarkable manner at his conversion. At the gate of Damascus the vision of the Crucified One changed the whole current of his life. The persecutor became a disciple, the teacher a learner.

From that time Paul was a truly converted man. God gave him a special work to do for the cause of Christianity. His instruction in his letters to the churches of his day is instruction for the church of God to the end of time (Letter 332, 1907).

Eloquence in Simplicity.—[1 Corinthians 2:1-5 quoted.] Paul did not come to the churches as an orator or as a scientific philosopher. He did not seek merely to please the ear by flowery words and

phrases. In eloquent simplicity he proclaimed the things that had been revealed to him. He was able to speak with power and authority, for he frequently received instruction from God in vision [1 Corinthians 1:6-10 quoted] (MS 46, 1905).

(Acts 17:22-34.) Spiritual Power Not in Human Wisdom.—[1 Corinthians 2:1-9 quoted.] The apostle Paul had all the privileges of a Roman citizen. He was not behind in the Hebrew education, for he had learned at the feet of Gamaliel; but all this did not enable him to reach the highest standard. With all this scientific and literary education, he was, until Christ was revealed to him, in as complete darkness as are many at this time. Paul became fully conscious that to know Jesus Christ by an experimental knowledge was for his present and eternal good. He saw the necessity of reaching a high standard.

It had been Paul's custom to adopt an oratorical style in his preaching. He was a man fitted to speak before kings, before the great and learned men of Athens, and his intellectual acquirements were

often of value to him in preparing the way for the gospel. He tried to do this in Athens, meeting eloquence with eloquence, philosophy with philosophy, and logic with logic; but he failed to meet with the success he had hoped for. His aftersight led him to understand that there was something needed above human wisdom. God taught him that something above the world's wisdom must come to him. He must receive his power from a higher source. In order to convict and convert sinners, the Spirit of God must come into his work and sanctify every spiritual development. He must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God (The Review and Herald, July 18, 1899).

2 (Galatians 6:14). The One Central Truth of the Scriptures.—There is one great central truth to be kept ever before the mind in the searching of the Scriptures—Christ and Him crucified. Every other truth is invested with influence and power corresponding to its relation to this theme. It is only in the light of the cross that we can discern the exalted character of the law of God. The soul

palsied by sin can be endowed with life only through the work wrought out upon the cross by the Author of our salvation (MS 31, 1890).

4 (ch. 4:9). Faithful Preachers a Spectacle to the World.—Our work for this time is not to be done by enticing words of man's wisdom, such as were used by heathen orators to gain applause. Speak in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with the power which God alone can impart. The testing truths for this time are to be proclaimed by men whose lips have been touched with a live coal from off God's altar. Such preaching will be a decided contrast to the preaching usually heard. Faithful, God-sent messengers are a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men, not because they place themselves in high positions, but because they show that they are strengthened and helped by the Spirit (MS 165, 1899).

7-14. See EGW on Romans 11:33.

9 (Ephesians 1:17, 18). Educating the Imagination.—You need to dwell upon the

assurances of God's Word, to hold them before the mind's eye. Point by point, day by day, repeat the lessons there given, over and over, until you learn the bearing and import of them. We see a little today, and by meditation and prayer, more tomorrow. And thus little by little we take in the gracious promises until we can almost comprehend their full significance.

Oh, how much we lose by not educating the imagination to dwell upon divine things, rather than upon the earthly! We may give fullest scope to the imagination, and yet, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Fresh wonders will be revealed to the mind the more closely we apply it to divine things. We lose much by not talking more of Jesus and of heaven, the saints' inheritance. The more we contemplate heavenly things, the more new delights we shall see, and the more will our hearts be brimful of thanks to our beneficent Creator (Letter 4, 1885).

14. Truth Versus Worldly Wisdom.—

Precious jewels of truth, that are of the highest value to the meek and lowly ones who believe in Christ, are as foolishness to him who is wise in the world's estimation. But truth, eternal truth, is ever present with the true believer. The Spirit is the appointed instructor of such a soul, his guide, his continual strength and righteousness (MS 29, 1899).

16. The Law an Expression of God's Idea.—

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings punishment

upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.

The law is an expression of God's idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin (Letter 96, 1896).

Chapter 3

1, 2 (Hebrews 5:9-12). Why Many Fail in Character Building.—[Hebrews 5:9-12 quoted.] Paul could not speak to the Jewish converts as plainly as he desired regarding the mystery of godliness. Because of their spiritual weakness, their lack of perception, he could not utter the truth, which, could they have heard aright, with

intelligent comprehension, would have been to them a savor of life unto life.

The fault was not with their instructors, but with themselves. They were dull of understanding. Abundant advantages had been given them. They could have increased in understanding regarding Christ, His work, His power to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. But they had not pressed onward and upward, improving their opportunity to learn more and still more of the Saviour. Because they had not received in faith the truths imparted to them, their memory was weak. They could not retain in their minds the truths essential to success in character-building.

The apostle calls their attention to their fault in this respect, which had become their spiritual infirmity. Their misconceptions gave them an indistinct view of Christ's power to make His people a praise in the earth (The Review and Herald, June 16, 1903).

1-3. Spiritual Dwarfs.—Paul longed to speak

to the church in Corinth of spiritual things. But to his sorrow he found it in great weakness. The church members could not even bear to hear the truth concerning themselves. [1 Corinthians 3:1, 2 quoted.] The Spiritual growth of this people was so dwarfed that a plain “Thus saith the Lord” was an offense to them. Paul knew that by giving them the truth he would be ranked as an accuser and faultfinder (MS 74, 1899).

2. Living on a Low Level.—[1 Corinthians 3:1-3 quoted.] Those addressed in these words had not been feeding on Christ, and therefore they were not advanced in spiritual knowledge. Paul said, “I have fed you with milk”—the plainest, most simple truths, suitable for converts young in the faith; “not with meat”—the solid, nourishing, spiritual food suited to those who have made progress in a knowledge of divine things. They were living on a low level, dwelling on the surface truths which call for no thought, no deep research (MS 70, 1901).

4-9. Ministers Not to Be Idolized.—There can be no stronger evidence in churches that the truths

of the Bible have not sanctified the receivers than their attachment to some favorite minister, and their unwillingness to accept and be profited by the labors of some other teacher who is sent to them in the providence of God. The Lord sends help to His church as they need, not as they choose; for short-sighted mortals cannot discern what is for their best good. It is seldom that one minister has all the qualifications necessary to perfect any one church in all the requirements of Christianity; therefore God sends other ministers to follow him, one after another, each one possessing some qualifications in which the others were deficient.

The church should gratefully accept these servants of Christ, even as they would accept their Master Himself. They should seek to derive all the benefit possible from the instruction which ministers may give them from the Word of God. But the ministers themselves are not to be idolized; there should be no religious pets and favorites among the people; it is the truths they bring which are to be accepted, and appreciated in the meekness of humility (Redemption: The Teachings of Paul,

pages 74, 75).

5, 6. The Lord Our Efficiency.—The Lord desires us to distinguish between the means and the instrument. [1 Corinthians 3:5, 6 quoted.] The human agent is only the instrument; it is to the Lord he owes his efficiency. He must cooperate with divine power (Letter 150, 1900).

9 (2 Corinthians 10:4; see EGW on Genesis 2:7; Romans 12:2). God Provides the Weapons.—“We are laborers together with God.” He provides us with all the facilities, all the spiritual weapons necessary for the pulling down of Satan’s strongholds. Present the truth as it is in Jesus. Let the tones of your voice express the love of God. Lead, but never drive. Approach the most obstinate in a spirit of kindness and affection. Dip your words into the oil of grace, and let them flow forth from your lips in love (Letter 105, 1893).

Divine Culture Will Be Given.—The Lord will give divine culture to those who are laborers together with Him. To be a laborer together with

God means to strive and wrestle to grow up into Christ's likeness. It is Satan who makes it necessary for us to strive. Those who will keep the eye fixed upon the life of the Lord Jesus will gain an abundant entrance into His spiritual temple (Letter 5, 1900.)

Feeble Plants Receive Special Care.—“Ye are God's husbandry.” As one takes pleasure in the cultivation of a garden, so the Lord takes pleasure in His believing sons and daughters. A garden demands constant labor. The weeds must be removed; new plants must be set out; branches that are making too rapid a development must be pruned back. So the Lord works for His garden, the plants of the Lord. He cannot take pleasure in any development that does not reveal the graces of the character of Christ. The blood of Christ has made men and women God's precious charge. Then how careful each one should be not to manifest too much freedom in pulling up the plants the Lord has placed in His garden. Some plants are so feeble that they have hardly any life in them, and for these the Lord has a special care (MS 39, 1896).

Learning the Trade of Character Building.—“Ye are God’s building.” You are representatives of the great Master Worker. God forbid that we should neglect to learn the trade of character building. The course to be pursued in this work is not according to the ideas of the world; the fashioning is not similar to the fashioning of the world. Those who enter the work of God without hiding self in Christ will soon disconnect themselves from the Master’s building (MS 165, 1899).

Let Christ Direct.—In your work of character building be sure that Christ is your director. It makes a great difference whether you are laborers together with God or whether you are laborers together against God; whether it is your highest ambition to magnify God or to magnify yourself and your plans. Christ declares, “Without me ye can do nothing”—nothing that will be approved by God. Study your motives carefully, and make sure that you are not working in your own wisdom, apart from Christ (MS 102, 1903).

A Temple Honored by God and Man.—With pure, noble, upright deeds every man is to build. The result of his work will be a symmetrical structure, a fair temple honored by God and men (MS 153, 1903).

9-15. Each Man Has His Post of Duty.—We should carefully weigh the matters relative to the work we take up. Will this work be a blessing to souls? God has not given us work merely to keep us busy, but for His name's glory. Many are busily engaged gathering wood, hay, stubble. But this will all be consumed, leaving nothing to prepare souls for that great day when every work is to be tried by fire. Many will find that the work that has occupied their time and attention has perished with the using, and that they themselves have barely been saved, as by fire.

Such a result as this is not after God's order. By God's appointment each man has his post of duty. The careful, prayerful inquiry is to be made, What duty is assigned us individually, as men and

women under accountability to God? And whether our labor be wholly limited to spiritual things, or whether it is temporal and spiritual combined, we are to faithfully discharge our work. Things secular and things sacred must be combined, but spiritual things are not to be hidden by secular matters.

Christ requires the service of the whole being, the physical, mental, and moral powers combined. These are to be enlisted in God's service. Man is to remember that God has the ownership of all, and that his pursuits are invested with a sacredness that they did not possess before he enlisted in the army of the Lord. Every action is to be a consecrated action, for it occupies God's entrusted talent of time. Holiness unto the Lord is inscribed on all the actions of such a one, because his whole being is brought under subjection to God.

No business is to be undertaken, even in ordinary life, if it is corrupting in its influence upon the senses. We are in the Lord's training school, and He has His own appointed means whereby we may be brought into His service, so that His name

may be glorified by the work we do in this world. Many are troubled because they are not working directly for the advancement of God's kingdom. But the humblest work must not be ignored. If it is honest work, it is a blessing, and may lead to the higher parts of the work. Those who do this work need not accuse themselves of uselessness in the great household of God. This is not necessary, for theirs is a work that someone must do (MS 49, 1898).

11. The Living Foundation Stone.—God will not accept the most splendid service, or the most brilliant talent, unless it is laid upon, and connected with, the living foundation stone; for this alone gives true value to the ability possessed, and makes it a living service to God. We may look back through centuries, and see the living stones gleaming like jets of light through the rubbish of moral darkness, errors, and superstition. These precious jewels shine with continually increasing luster, not alone for time, but for eternity (Redemption: The Teachings of Paul, page 80).

11-13 (see EGW on Psalm 144:12). Gold of Faith Imperishable.—It makes every difference what material is used in the character building. The long-expected day of God will soon test every man's work. "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." As fire reveals the difference between gold, silver, and precious stones, and wood, hay, and stubble, so the day of judgment will test characters, showing the difference between characters formed after Christ's likeness and characters formed after the likeness of the selfish heart. All selfishness, all false religion, will then appear as it is. The worthless material will be consumed; but the gold of true, simple, humble faith will never lose its value. It can never be consumed; for it is imperishable. One hour of transgression will be seen to be a great loss, while the fear of the Lord will be seen to be the beginning of wisdom. The pleasure of self-indulgence will perish as stubble, while the gold of steadfast principle, maintained at any cost, will endure forever (The Review and Herald, December 11, 1900).

13. See EGW on Jeremiah 23:28; Revelation 20:12, 13.

16-23. See EGW on 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Chapter 4

9 (see EGW on ch. 2:4; Romans 12:2). Every Victory a Gem in the Crown of Life.—The Christian is a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. Singular?—Yes; he has a most singular, peculiar character, because his life is worked out after the divine similitude.

The inhabitants of unfallen worlds and of the heavenly universe are watching with an intense interest the conflict between good and evil. They rejoice as Satan's subtleties, one after another, are discerned and met with "It is written," as Christ met them in His conflict with the wily foe. Every victory gained is a gem in the crown of life. In the day of victory all the universe of heaven triumphs. The harps of the angels send forth the most precious music, accompanying the melody of the

voice (Letter 5, 1900).

Chapter 6

19, 20. God Claims the Heart's Throne.—God has bought us, and He claims a throne in each heart. Our minds and bodies must be subordinated to Him, and the natural habits and appetites must be made subservient to the higher wants of the soul. But we can place no dependence upon ourselves in this work. We cannot with safety follow our own guidance. The Holy Spirit must renew and sanctify us. In God's service there must be no halfway work. (SpT, Series A, No. 7, p. 39).

20. See EGW on Exodus 16; 3; 2 Peter 1:10.

Chapter 9

13-18 (ch. 1:1). Working for Souls, Not for Money.—Paul did not vacillate. He was established and grounded in the faith. But as far as possible he sought to make himself one with those for whom he labored.

As a gospel minister, it was Paul's privilege to claim a support from those for whom he labored. But though he became the servant of all, yet he worked with his hands to support himself, that none might find occasion to charge him with selfishness. He did not receive wages for his labor, though as a minister of the gospel this was his right. Thus he made it evident that he was working for souls, not for money.

“What is my reward then?” he asks. “Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.”

Paul did not depend upon man for his ordination. He had received from the Lord his commission and ordination. He regarded his ministerial labor as a privilege. To him it was not a duty performed in return for money. He labored for the souls of men. “For though I preach the gospel,” he said, “I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me: yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not

the gospel!” He studied constantly how to make his testimony of the greatest effect. He sought the approval of God.

Would that today men might be found with faith to do as Paul did, men who would preach the gospel, not looking to men for their reward, but willing to receive their reward in souls (MS 74, 1903).

20-23. Paul’s Manner of Labor.—[1 Corinthians 9:20-23 quoted.] We know that the apostle did not sacrifice one jot of principle. He did not allow himself to be led away by the sophistry and maxims of men. He was not to coincide with the suppositions and assurances of men who were teaching for doctrine the commandments of men; because iniquity and transgression were in the ascendancy and advancing, he did not allow his love to wax cold. All zeal and earnestness are to be retained; but at the same time some features of our faith, if expressed, would, by the elements with which you have to deal, arouse prejudice at once.

Paul could be as zealous as any of the most zealous, in his allegiance to the law of God, and show that he was perfectly familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures. He could dwell upon the types and shadows that typified Christ; he could exalt Christ, and tell all about Christ and His special work in behalf of humanity, and what a field he had to explore. He could advance most precious light upon the prophecies, that they had not seen; and yet he would not offend them. Thus the foundation was laid nicely, that when the time came that their spirits softened, he could say in the language of John, Behold in Jesus Christ, who was made flesh, and dwelt among us, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.

To the Gentiles, he preached Christ as their only hope of salvation, but did not at first have anything to say upon the law. But after their hearts were warmed with the presentation of Christ as the gift of God to our world, and what was comprehended in the work of the Redeemer in the costly sacrifice to manifest the love of God to man, in the most eloquent simplicity he showed that love

for all mankind—Jew and Gentile—that they might be saved by surrendering their hearts to Him. Thus when, melted and subdued, they gave themselves to the Lord, he presented the law of God as the test of their obedience. This was the manner of his working—adapting his methods to win souls. Had he been abrupt and unskillful in handling the Word, he would not have reached either Jew or Gentile.

He led the Gentiles along to view the stupendous truths of the love of God, who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us; and how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? The question was asked why such an immense sacrifice was required, and then he went back to the types, and down through the Old Testament Scripture, revealing Christ in the law, and they were converted to Christ and to the law (SpT, Series A, No. 6, pp. 54, 55).

24-27 (1 Peter 2:11). A Contest in Which All May Win.—[1 Corinthians 9:24-27 quoted.] This glorious contest is before us. The apostle seeks to inspire us to enter into a noble emulation, a

competition in which will be seen no selfishness, unfairness, or underhanded work. We are to use every spiritual nerve and muscle in the contest for the crown of life. No one who does his best will fail in this contest.

All who seek for the prize are to place themselves under strict discipline. “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.” Those who enter into a contest of physical strength for a corruptible prize realize the necessity of rigid abstinence from every indulgence that would weaken the physical powers. They eat simple food at regular hours.

How much more should those who enter for the gospel race, restrain themselves from the unlawful indulgence of appetite and “abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” They must be temperate at all times. The same restraint that gives them the power to obtain the victory at one time will, if practiced constantly, give them a great advantage in the race for the crown of life (MS 74, 1903).

(Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5.) Under Discipline to God.—[1 Corinthians 9:24-27 quoted.] Thus Paul presents the conditions which God imposes upon every soul who enlists in His service. The apostle fears for himself, lest he shall fail of bearing the examination test, and be found wanting, and he places himself under severe training. So the Christian today needs to keep strict guard over his appetite. He needs to subject himself to severe training, that he may not run uncertainly or at random, without seeing his standard and striving to reach it. He must obey the laws of God. The physical, mental, and moral powers must be kept in the most perfect condition if he would obtain the approval of God. “I keep under my body,” the apostle says. This means literally to beat back its desires and impulses and passions by severe discipline, even as did those competing for an earthly prize (MS 93, 1899).

27 (see EGW on 2 Corinthians 12:1-4). Paul on Guard.—[1 Corinthians 9:26, 27 quoted.] Paul was ever on the watch lest evil propensities should

get the better of him. He guarded well his appetites and passions and evil propensities (Letter 27, 1906).

Chapter 10

4. See EGW on Acts 15:11.

12. See EGW on 1 Kings 11:1-4; Matthew 26:31-35.

Chapter 11

18-34 (Matthew 26:26-29). The Lord's Supper Perverted.—The Corinthians were departing widely from the simplicity of the faith and the harmony of the church. They continued to assemble for worship, but with hearts that were estranged from one another. They had perverted the true meaning of the Lord's Supper, patterning in a great degree after idolatrous feasts. They came together to celebrate the sufferings and death of Christ, but turned the occasion into a period of feasting and selfish enjoyment.

It had become customary, before partaking of the communion, to unite in a social meal. Families professing the faith brought their own food to the place of meeting, and ate it without courteously waiting for the others to be ready. The holy institution of the Lord's Supper was, for the wealthy, turned into a gluttonous feast; while the poor were made to blush when their meager fare was brought in contrast with the costly viands of their rich brethren.

Paul rebukes the Corinthians for making the house of God a place of feasting and revelry, like a company of idolaters: "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not?" The public religious feasts of the Greeks had been conducted in this way, and it was by following the counsels of false teachers that the Christians had been led to imitate their example. These teachers had begun by assuring them that it was not wrong to attend idolatrous feasts, and had finally introduced similar practices into the Christian church.

Paul proceeded to give the order and object of the Lord's Supper, and then warned his brethren against perverting this sacred ordinance (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 170, 171).

23-26 (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19, 20). The Only Correct Representation.—The broken bread and pure juice of the grape are to represent the broken body and spilled blood of the Son of God. Bread that is leavened must not come on the communion table; unleavened bread is the only correct representation of the Lord's Supper. Nothing fermented is to be used. Only the pure fruit of the vine and the unleavened bread are to be used (The Review and Herald, June 7, 1898).

25. See EGW on Matthew 26:28.

26 (see EGW on Mark 16:1, 2). Frequency of the Lord's Supper.—The salvation of men depends upon a continual application to their hearts of the cleansing blood of Christ. Therefore, the

Lord's Supper was not to be observed only occasionally or yearly, but more frequently than the annual passover. This solemn ordinance commemorates a far greater event than the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. That deliverance was typical of the great atonement which Christ made by the sacrifice of His own life for the final deliverance of His people (Spiritual Gifts 3:228).

28. See EGW on John 13:14, 15.

Chapter 12

4-6, 12 (Ephesians 4:4-13). Each Member to Work in His Appointed Place.—[1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 12 quoted.] The vine has many branches, but though all the branches are different, they do not quarrel. In diversity there is unity. All the branches obtain their nourishment from one source. This is an illustration of the unity that is to exist among Christ's followers. In their different lines of work they all have but one Head. The same Spirit, in different ways, works through them. There is

harmonious action, though the gifts differ. Study this chapter. You will see from it that the man who is truly united with Christ will never act as though he were a complete whole in himself....

The perfection of the church depends not on each member being fashioned exactly alike. God calls for each one to take his proper place, to stand in his lot to do his appointed work according to the ability which has been given him (Letter 19, 1901).

Two Chapters to Be Memorized.—The 12th and 13th chapters of 1st Corinthians should be committed to memory, written in the mind and heart. Through His servant Paul, the Lord has placed before us these subjects for our consideration, and those who have the privilege of being brought together in church capacity will be united, understandingly and intelligently. The figure of the members which compose the body represents the church of God and the relation its members should sustain to one another (MS 82, 1898).

27. See EGW on Hebrews 8:1, 2.

Chapter 13

Read This Chapter Every Day.—The Lord desires me to call the attention of His people to the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Read this chapter every day, and from it obtain comfort and strength. Learn from it the value that God places on sanctified, heaven-born love, and let the lesson that it teaches come home to your hearts. Learn that Christlike love is of heavenly birth, and that without it all other qualifications are worthless (The Review and Herald, July 21, 1904).

An Expression of Obedience.—In the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians the apostle Paul defines true Christlike love.... This chapter is an expression of the obedience of all who love God and keep His commandments. It is brought into action in the life of every true believer (Letter 156, 1900).

1. God Holds the Balances.—It is not the

ready speaker, the sharp intellect, that counts with God. It is the earnest purpose, the deep piety, the love of truth, the fear of God, that has a telling influence. A testimony from the heart, coming from lips in which is no guile, full of faith and humble trust, though given by a stammering tongue, is accounted of God as precious as gold; while the smart speech, the eloquent oratory, of the one to whom is entrusted large talents, but who is wanting in truthfulness, in steadfast purpose, in purity, in unselfishness, are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. He may say witty things, he may relate amusing anecdotes, he may play upon the feelings; but the spirit of Jesus is not in it. All these things may please unsanctified hearts, but God holds in His hands the balances that weigh the words, the spirit, the sincerity, the devotion, and He pronounces it altogether lighter than vanity (Letter 38, 1890).

5. See EGW on Proverbs 16:32.

12 (Romans 11:33; Ephesians 2:7; Revelation 7:16, 17; 22:4; see EGW on 1

Corinthians 15:20, 42-52). Mysteries to Be Unfolded in Heaven.—But many mysteries yet remain unrevealed. How much that is acknowledged to be truth is mysterious and unexplainable to the human mind! How dark seem the dispensations of Providence! What necessity there is for implicit faith and trust in God’s moral government! We are ready to say with Paul, “How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”

We are not now sufficiently advanced in spiritual attainments to comprehend the mysteries of God. But when we shall compose the family of heaven, these mysteries will be unfolded before us. Of the members of that family John writes: “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” “And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.”

Then much will be revealed in explanation of matters upon which God now keeps silence because we have not gathered up and appreciated that which has been made known of the eternal mysteries. The ways of Providence will be made clear; the mysteries of grace through Christ will be unfolded. That which the mind cannot now grasp, which is hard to be understood, will be explained. We shall see order in that which has seemed unexplainable; wisdom in everything withheld; goodness and gracious mercy in everything imparted. Truth will be unfolded to the mind, free from obscurity, in a single line, and its brightness will be enduring. The heart will be made to sing for joy. Controversies will be forever ended, and all difficulties will be solved (The Signs of the Times, January 30, 1912).

13. Love, the Most Valued Attribute.—The attribute that Christ appreciates most in man is charity (love) out of a pure heart. This is the fruit borne upon the Christian tree (MS 16, 1892).

A Plant of Heavenly Origin.—Love is a plant

of heavenly origin, and if we would have it flourish in our hearts, we must cultivate it daily. Mildness, gentleness, long-suffering, not being easily provoked, bearing all things, enduring all things—these are the fruits upon the precious tree of love (The Review and Herald, June 5, 1888).

Chapter 15

6. Sacred Facts Immortalized.—After His resurrection, Christ did not show Himself to any save His followers, but testimony in regard to His resurrection was not wanting. It came from various sources, from the five hundred who assembled in Galilee to see their risen Lord. This testimony could not be quenched. The sacred facts of Christ's resurrection were immortalized (MS 115, 1897).

Countenance as the Face of God.—After His resurrection, Christ met with His disciples in Galilee. At the time appointed, about five hundred disciples were assembled on the mountainside. Suddenly Jesus stood among them. No one could tell whence or how He came. Many who were

present had never before seen Him; but in His hands and feet they beheld the marks of the crucifixion; His countenance was as the face of God, and when they saw Him they worshiped Him (Letter 115, 1904).

9. See EGW on Acts 9:1-4.

20 (Leviticus 23:10, 11). Christ the Antitypical Wave-Sheaf.—It was to the glory of God that the Prince of life should be the first fruits, the antitype of the typical wavesheaf. “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” ...

Christ was the first fruits of them that slept. This very scene, the resurrection of Christ from the dead, was observed in type by the Jews at one of their sacred feasts.... They came up to the Temple when the first fruits had been gathered in, and held a feast of thanksgiving. The first fruits of the harvest crop were sacredly dedicated to the Lord. That crop was not to be appropriated for the benefit

of man. The first ripe fruit was dedicated as a thank offering to God. He was acknowledged as the Lord of the harvest. When the first heads of grain ripened in the field, they were carefully gathered, and when the people went up to Jerusalem, they were presented to the Lord, waving the ripened sheaf before Him as a thank offering. After this ceremony the sickle could be put to the wheat, and it could be gathered into sheaves (MS 115, 1897).

20, 42-52 (ch. 13:12; Romans 8:11). A Sample of the Final Resurrection.—The resurrection of Jesus was a sample of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The risen body of the Saviour, His deportment, the accents of His speech, were all familiar to His followers. In like manner will those who sleep in Jesus rise again. We shall know our friends even as the disciples knew Jesus. Though they may have been deformed, diseased, or disfigured in this mortal life, yet in their resurrected and glorified body their individual identity will be perfectly preserved, and we shall recognize, in the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, the lineaments

of those we love (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:219).

22, 45 (Romans 5:12-19; see EGW on John 1:1-3, 14; Revelation 1:8). Sinner Given a Second Trial.—As representative of the fallen race, Christ passed over the same ground on which Adam stumbled and fell. By a life of perfect obedience to God's law, Christ redeemed man from the penalty of Adam's disgraceful fall. Man has violated God's law. Only for those who return to their allegiance to God, only for those who obey the law that they have violated, will the blood of Christ avail. Christ will never become a party to sin. Bearing the penalty of the law, He gives the sinner another chance, a second trial. He opens a way whereby the sinner can be reinstated in God's favor. Christ bears the penalty of man's past transgressions, and by imparting to man His righteousness, makes it possible for man to keep God's holy law (MS 126, 1901).

(Revelation 1:8; 22:13.) The Alpha and Omega.—When the students of prophecy shall set their hearts to know the truths of Revelation, they

will realize what an importance is attached to this search. Christ Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the Genesis of the Old Testament, and the Revelation of the New. Both meet together in Christ. Adam and God are reconciled by the obedience of the second Adam, who accomplished the work of overcoming the temptations of Satan and redeeming Adam's disgraceful failure and fall.

The two Adams will meet in Paradise and embrace each other, while the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, and all who have refused the opportunities and privileges given to them at such infinite cost, and have not returned to their loyalty, will be shut out of Paradise (MS 33, 1897).

42-52 (ch. 13:12). Personality Preserved in a New Body.—Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time

will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him.

Paul illustrates this subject by the kernel of grain sown in the field. The planted kernel decays, but there comes forth a new kernel. The natural substance in the grain that decays is never raised as before, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him. A much finer material will compose the human body, for it is a new creation, a new birth. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body (MS 76, 1900).

51-55 (Isaiah 65:17; Matthew 25:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Revelation 5:12; 21:4). The Finishing Touch of Immortality.—We have

a living, risen Saviour. He burst the fetters of the tomb after He had lain there three days, and in triumph. He proclaimed over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, "I am the resurrection and the life." And He is coming. Are we getting ready for Him? Are we ready so that if we shall fall asleep, we can do so with hope in Jesus Christ? Are you laboring for the salvation of your brothers and sisters? The Life-giver is soon to come. The Life-giver is coming to break the fetters of the tomb. He is to bring forth the captives and proclaim, "I am the resurrection and the life." There stands the risen host. The last thought was of death and its pangs. The last thoughts they had were of the grave and the tomb, but now they proclaim, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The pangs of death were the last things they felt. "O death, where is thy sting?" The last thing they acknowledged was the pangs of death. When they awake the pain is all gone....

Here they stand, and the finishing touch of immortality is put upon them, and they go up to meet their Lord in the air. The gates of the city of

God swing back upon their hinges, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. There are the columns of angels on either side, and the ransomed of God walk in through the cherubims and seraphims. Christ bids them welcome and puts upon them His benediction. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." What is that joy? He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied.

That is what we labor for. Here is one, who in the night season we pleaded with God on his behalf. There is one that we talked with on his dying bed, and he hung his helpless soul upon Jesus. Here is one who was a poor drunkard. We tried to get his eyes fixed upon Him who is mighty to save and we told him that Christ could give him the victory. There are the crowns of immortal glory upon their heads, and then the redeemed cast their glittering crowns at the feet of Jesus; and then the angelic choir strikes the note of victory, and the angels in the two columns take up the song, and the redeemed host join as though they had been singing the song on the earth, and they have been.

Oh, what music! There is not an inharmonious note. Every voice proclaims, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.” He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied. Do you think anyone there will take time to tell of his trials and terrible difficulties? “The former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (MS 18, 1894).

Chapter 47

2 Corinthians

Chapter 2

4. Paul a Friend of the Erring.—The apostle Paul found it necessary to reprove wrong in the church, but he did not lose his self-control in reproving error. He anxiously explains the reason of his action. How carefully he wrought so as to leave the impression that he was a friend of the erring! He made them understand that it cost him pain to give them pain. He left the impression upon their minds that his interest was identified with theirs [2 Corinthians 2:4 quoted] (Letter 16a, 1895).

11 (Ephesians 6:12; see EGW on 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; 13:5). Give Satan No Advantage.—In the conflict with satanic agencies there are decisive moments that determine the victory either on the side of God or on the side of the prince of this world. If those engaged in the

warfare are not wide awake, earnest, vigilant, praying for wisdom, watching unto prayer, ... Satan comes off victor, when he might have been vanquished by the armies of the Lord.... God's faithful sentinels are to give the evil powers no advantage....

We have unseen foes to meet, evil men are agents for the powers of darkness to work through, and without spiritual discernment the soul will be ignorant of Satan's devices, and be ensnared and stumble and fall. He who would overcome must hold fast to Christ. He must not look back, but keep the eye ever upward. Mount up by the Mediator, keeping hold of the Mediator, reaching upward to one line of work after another, making no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

There is no such thing as our entering the heavenly portals through indulgence and folly, amusement, selfishness, but only by constant watchfulness and unceasing prayer. Spiritual vigilance on our part individually is the price of safety. Swerve not to Satan's side a single inch, lest

he gain advantage over you (Letter 47, 1893).

14-17. The Boldness of a Sanctified Conscience.—[2 Corinthians 2:14-17 quoted.] These words of Paul do not denote a spiritual pride, but a deep knowledge of Christ. As one of God's messengers sent to confirm the truth of the Word, he knew what was truth; and with the boldness of a sanctified conscience he gloried in that knowledge. He knew that he was called of God to preach the gospel with all the assurance which his confidence in the message gave him. He was called to be God's ambassador to the people, and he preached the gospel as one who was called (MS 43, 1907).

Chapter 3

6-9 (Romans 8:15-21; see EGW on Hebrews 8:6, 7). The Law Ordained to Life.—The law of God, spoken in awful grandeur from Sinai, is the utterance of condemnation to the sinner. It is the province of the law to condemn, but there is in it no power to pardon or to redeem. It is ordained to life; those who walk in harmony with its precepts

will receive the reward of obedience. But it brings bondage and death to those who remain under its condemnation. (The Review and Herald, April 22, 1902).

7. See EGW on Exodus 34:29.

7-11 (Galatians 3:19; Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 9:9-12; 10:1-7). A Twofold System of Law.—God's people, whom He calls His peculiar treasure, were privileged with a two-fold system of law; the moral and the ceremonial. The one, pointing back to creation to keep in remembrance the living God who made the world, whose claims are binding upon all men in every dispensation, and which will exist through all time and eternity. The other, given because of man's transgression of the moral law, the obedience to which consisted in sacrifices and offerings pointing to the future redemption. Each is clear and distinct from the other.

From the creation the moral law was an essential part of God's divine plan, and was as

unchangeable as Himself. The ceremonial law was to answer a particular purpose in Christ's plan for the salvation of the race. The typical system of sacrifices and offerings was established that through these services the sinner might discern the great offering, Christ. But the Jews were so blinded by pride and sin that but few of them could see farther than the death of beasts as an atonement for sin; and when Christ, whom these offerings prefigured, came, they could not discern Him. The ceremonial law was glorious; it was the provision made by Jesus Christ in counsel with His Father, to aid in the salvation of the race. The whole arrangement of the typical system was founded on Christ. Adam saw Christ prefigured in the innocent beast suffering the penalty of his transgression of Jehovah's law (The Review and Herald, May 6, 1875).

Two Laws Bear Stamp of Divinity.—Paul desires his brethren to see that the great glory of a sin-pardoning Saviour gave significance to the entire Jewish economy. He desired them to see also that when Christ came to the world, and died as

man's sacrifice, type met antitype.

After Christ died on the cross as a sin offering the ceremonial law could have no force. Yet it was connected with the moral law, and was glorious. The whole bore the stamp of divinity, and expressed the holiness, justice, and righteousness of God. And if the ministration of the dispensation to be done away was glorious, how much more must the reality be glorious, when Christ was revealed, giving His life-giving, sanctifying, Spirit to all who believe (The Review and Herald, April 22, 1902)?

The Ministration of Death.—The holy law of God is both brief and comprehensive; for it is easily understood and remembered; and yet it is an expression of the will of God. Its comprehensiveness is summed up in the following words: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” “This do, and thou shalt live.” “Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my

judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.”...

If the transgressor is to be treated according to the letter of this covenant, then there is no hope for the fallen race; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. The fallen race of Adam can behold nothing else in the letter of this covenant than the ministration of death; and death will be the reward of everyone who is seeking vainly to fashion a righteousness of his own that will fulfill the claims of the law. By His word God has bound Himself to execute the penalty of the law on all transgressors. Again and again men commit sin, and yet they do not seem to believe that they must suffer the penalty for breaking the law (*The Signs of the Times*, September 5, 1892).

(Hebrews 8:5.) Ceremonies of Jewish Law Prophetic.—The gospel of Christ reflects glory upon the Jewish age. It sheds light upon the whole Jewish economy, and gives significance to the ceremonial law. The tabernacle, or temple, of God on earth was a pattern of the original in heaven. All

the ceremonies of the Jewish law were prophetic, typical of mysteries in the plan of redemption.

The rites and ceremonies of the law were given by Christ Himself, who, enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, was the leader of the hosts of Israel; and this law should be treated with great respect, for it is sacred. Even after it was no longer to be observed, Paul presented it before the Jews in its true position and value, showing its place in the plan of redemption and its relation to the work of Christ; and the great apostle pronounces this law glorious, worthy of its divine Originator. That which was to be done away was glorious, but it was not the law instituted by God for the government of His family in heaven and on earth; for as long as the heavens shall remain, so long shall the law of the Lord endure (The Signs of the Times, July 29, 1886).

(Revelation 22:14.) Glory Gives Way to Greater Glory.—There is no discord between the Old Testament and the New. In the Old Testament we find the gospel of a coming Saviour; in the New

Testament we have the gospel of a Saviour revealed as the prophecies had foretold. While the Old Testament is constantly pointing forward to the true offering, the New Testament shows that the Saviour prefigured by the typical offerings has come. The dim glory of the Jewish age has been succeeded by the brighter, clearer glory of the Christian age. But not once has Christ stated that His coming destroyed the claims of God's law. On the contrary, in the very last message to His church, by way of Patmos, He pronounces a benediction upon those who keep His Father's law: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (The Signs of the Times, July 29, 1886).

7-17. The Moral Law Glorified by Christ.—

The types and shadows of the sacrificial service, with the prophecies, gave the Israelites a veiled, indistinct view of the mercy and grace to be brought to the world by the revelation of Christ. To Moses was unfolded the significance of the types and shadows pointing to Christ. He saw to the end

of that which was to be done away when, at the death of Christ, type met antitype. He saw that only through Christ can man keep the moral law. By transgression of this law man brought sin into the world, and with sin came death. Christ became the propitiation for man's sin. He proffered His perfection of character in the place of man's sinfulness. He took upon Himself the curse of disobedience. The sacrifices and offerings pointed forward to the sacrifice He was to make. The slain lamb typified the Lamb that was to take away the sin of the world.

It was seeing the object of that which was to be done away, seeing Christ as revealed in the law, that illumined the face of Moses. The ministration of the law, written and engraved in stone, was a ministration of death. Without Christ, the transgressor was left under its curse, with no hope of pardon. The ministration had of itself no glory, but the promised Saviour, revealed in the types and shadows of the ceremonial law, made the moral law glorious (The Review and Herald, April 22, 1902).

7-18 (Romans 3:31; 7:7; Galatians 3:13). Christ's Glory Revealed in His Law.—Christ bore the curse of the law, suffering its penalty, carrying to completion the plan whereby man was to be placed where he could keep God's law, and be accepted through the merits of the Redeemer; and by His sacrifice glory was shed upon the law. Then the glory of that which is not to be done away—God's law of ten commandments, His standard of righteousness—was plainly seen by all who saw to the end of that which was done away.

“We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Christ is the sinner's advocate. Those who accept His gospel behold Him with open face. They see the relation of His mission to the law, and they acknowledge God's wisdom and glory as revealed by the Saviour. The glory of Christ is revealed in the law, which is a transcript of His character, and His transforming efficacy is felt upon the soul until men become changed to His

likeness. They are made partakers of the divine nature, and grow more and more like their Saviour, advancing step by step in conformity to the will of God, till they reach perfection.

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

12-15 (see EGW on Exodus 34:29-33). The Veil of Unbelief.—[2 Corinthians 3:12-15 quoted.] The Jews refused to accept Christ as the Messiah, and they cannot see that their ceremonies are meaningless, that the sacrifices and offerings have

lost their significance. The veil drawn by themselves in stubborn unbelief is still before their minds. It would be removed if they would accept Christ, the righteousness of the law.

Many in the Christian world also have a veil before their eyes and heart. They do not see to the end of that which was done away. They do not see that it was only the ceremonial law which was abrogated at the death of Christ. They claim that the moral law was nailed to the cross. Heavy is the veil that darkens their understanding. The hearts of many are at war with God. They are not subject to His law. Only as they shall come into harmony with the rule of His government can Christ be of any avail to them. They may talk of Christ as their Saviour; but He will finally say to them, I know you not. You have not exercised genuine repentance toward God for the transgression of His holy law, and you cannot have genuine faith in Me, for it was My mission to exalt God's law....

The moral law was never a type or a shadow. It existed before man's creation, and will endure as

long as God's throne remains. God could not change or alter one precept of His law in order to save man; for the law is the foundation of His government. It is unchangeable, unalterable, infinite, and eternal. In order for man to be saved, and for the honor of the law to be maintained, it was necessary for the Son of God to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin. He who knew no sin became sin for us. He died for us on Calvary. His death shows the wonderful love of God for man, and the immutability of His law (The Review and Herald, April 22, 1902).

14, 16. Christ's Death Lifts the Veil.—The death of Jesus Christ for the redemption of man lifts the veil and reflects a flood of light back hundreds of years, upon the whole institution of the Jewish system of religion. Without the death of Christ all this system was meaningless. The Jews reject Christ, and therefore their whole system of religion is to them indefinite, unexplainable, and uncertain. They attach as much importance to shadowy ceremonies of types which have met their antitype as they do to the law of the ten

commandments, which was not a shadow, but a reality as enduring as the throne of Jehovah. The death of Christ elevates the Jewish system of types and ordinances, showing that they were of divine appointment, and for the purpose of keeping faith alive in the hearts of His people (The Review and Herald, May 6, 1875).

18 (Hebrews 12:2; see EGW on Psalm 19:14; Romans 8:29; Ephesians 4:20-24; Colossians 3:10; Revelation 7:4-17). The Matchless Charms of Jesus.—Look to Christ, behold the attractive loveliness of His character, and by beholding you will become changed into His likeness. The mist that intervenes between Christ and the soul will be rolled back as we by faith look past the hellish shadow of Satan and see God's glory in His law, and the righteousness of Christ.

Satan is seeking to veil Jesus from our sight, to eclipse His light; for when we get even a glimpse of His glory, we are attracted to Him. Sin hides from our view the matchless charms of Jesus; prejudice, selfishness, self-righteousness, and

passion blind our eyes, so that we do not discern the Saviour. Oh, if we would by faith draw nigh to God, He would reveal to us His glory, which is His character, and the praise of God would flow forth from human hearts and be sounded by human voices. Then we would forever cease to give glory to Satan by sinning against God and talking doubt and unbelief. We should no longer stumble along, grumbling and mourning, and covering the altar of God with our tears (MS 16, 1890).

(Genesis 5:24; Ephesians 4:13, 15). Too Near the Lowlands of Earth.—It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, which Jesus said He would send into the world, that changes our character into the image of Christ; and when this is accomplished, we reflect, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. That is, the character of the one who thus beholds Christ is so like His, that one looking at him sees Christ's own character shining out as from a mirror. Imperceptibly to ourselves we are changed day by day from our own ways and will into the ways and will of Christ, into the loveliness of His character. Thus we grow up into Christ, and unconsciously

reflect His image.

Professed Christians keep altogether too near the lowlands of earth. Their eyes are trained to see only commonplace things, and their minds dwell upon the things their eyes behold. Their religious experience is often shallow and unsatisfying, and their words are light and valueless. How can such reflect the image of Christ? How can they send forth the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness into all the dark places of the earth? To be a Christian is to be Christlike.

Enoch kept the Lord ever before him, and the Inspired Word says that he “walked with God.” He made Christ his constant companion. He was in the world, and performed his duties to the world; but he was ever under the influence of Jesus. He reflected Christ’s character, exhibiting the same qualities of goodness, mercy, tender compassion, sympathy, forbearance, meekness, humility, and love. His association with Christ day by day transformed him into the image of Him with whom he was so intimately connected. Day by day he was

growing away from his own way into Christ's way, the heavenly, the divine, in his thoughts and feelings. He was constantly inquiring, Is this the way of the Lord? His was a constant growth, and he had fellowship with the Father and the Son. This is genuine sanctification (The Review and Herald, April 28, 1891).

Behold Christ by Studying His Life.—[2 Corinthians 3:18 quoted.] Beholding Christ means studying His life as given in His Word. We are to dig for truth as for hidden treasure. We are to fix our eyes upon Christ. When we take Him as our personal Saviour, this gives us boldness to approach the throne of grace. By beholding we become changed, morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character. By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him. The image of Christ is cherished, and it captivates the whole being (MS 148, 1897).

Striving to Become Christlike.—Beholding Christ for the purpose of becoming like Him, the

seeker after truth sees the perfection of the principles of God's law, and he becomes dissatisfied with everything but perfection. Hiding his life in the life of Christ, he sees that the holiness of the divine law is revealed in the character of Christ, and more and more earnestly he strives to be like Him. A warfare may be expected at any time, for the tempter sees that he is losing one of his subjects. A battle must be fought with the attributes which Satan has been strengthening for his own use. The human agent sees what he has to contend with—a strange power opposed to the idea of attaining the perfection that Christ holds out. But with Christ there is saving power that will gain for him victory in the conflict. The Saviour will strengthen and help him as he comes pleading for grace and efficiency (MS 89, 1903).

Clearing the Moral Atmosphere.—When Christ is loved more than self, the Saviour's beautiful image is reflected in the believer....

Until self is laid upon the altar of sacrifice,

Christ will not be reflected in the character. When self is buried, and Christ occupies the throne of the heart, there will be a revelation of principles that will clear the moral atmosphere surrounding the soul (Letter 108, 1899).

Human Peculiarities Will Disappear.—The Holy Spirit has been prevented from coming in to mold and fashion heart and mind, because men suppose that they understand best how to form their own characters. And they think that they may safely form their characters after their own model. But there is only one model after which human character is to be formed—the character of Christ. Those who behold the Saviour are changed from glory to greater glory. When men will consent to submit to Christ's will, to be partakers of the divine nature, their crooked, human peculiarities will disappear. When they decide that they will retain their own peculiarities and disagreeable traits of character, Satan takes them and places his yoke on them, using them to do his service. He uses their talents for selfish purposes, causing them to set an example so disagreeable, so un-Christlike, that they

become a reproach to the cause of God (MS 102, 1903).

(Song of Solomon 5:10, 16; Hebrews 12:2.)
Approaching the Perfect Pattern.—As one becomes acquainted with the history of the Redeemer, he discovers in himself serious defects; his unlikeness to Christ is so great that he sees the necessity for radical changes in his life. Still he studies with a desire to become like his great Exemplar. He catches the looks, the spirit, of his beloved Master. By beholding, by “looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith,” he becomes changed into the same image.

It is not by looking away from Him that we imitate the life of Jesus, but by talking of Him, by dwelling upon His perfections, by seeking to refine the taste and elevate the character, by trying—through faith and love, and by earnest, persevering effort—to approach the perfect Pattern. By having a knowledge of Christ—His words, His habits, and His lessons of instruction—we borrow the virtues of the character we have so closely studied, and

become imbued with the spirit we have so much admired. Jesus becomes to us “the chiefest among ten thousand,” the One “altogether lovely” (The Review and Herald, March 15, 1887).

Christ Will Draw His Image on the Soul.—When the soul is brought into close relationship with the great Author of light and truth, impressions are made upon it revealing its true position before God. Then self will die, pride will be laid low, and Christ will draw His own image in deeper lines upon the soul (MS 1a, 1890).

Chapter 4

3-6 (ch. 2:11; 15:3). Satan’s Bewitching Power.—Justice demands that sin be not merely pardoned, but the death penalty must be executed. God, in the gift of His only-begotten Son, met both these requirements. By dying in man’s stead, Christ exhausted the penalty and provided a pardon.

Man through sin has been severed from the life of God. His soul is palsied through the

machinations of Satan, the author of sin. Of himself he is incapable of sensing sin, incapable of appreciating and appropriating the divine nature. Were it brought within his reach there is nothing in it that his natural heart would desire it. The bewitching power of Satan is upon him. All the ingenious subterfuges the devil can suggest are presented to his mind to prevent every good impulse. Every faculty and power given him of God has been used as a weapon against the divine Benefactor. So, although He loves him, God cannot safely impart to him the gifts and blessings He desires to bestow.

But God will not be defeated by Satan. He sent His Son into the world, that through His taking the human form and nature, humanity and divinity combined in Him would elevate man in the scale of moral value with God.

There is no other way for man's salvation. "Without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." Through Christ, and Christ alone, the springs of life can vitalize man's nature, transform his tastes,

and set his affections flowing toward heaven. Through the union of the divine with the human nature, Christ could enlighten the understanding and infuse His life-giving properties through the soul dead in trespasses and sins (MS 50, 1900).

17, 18 (Romans 8:18; 1 Peter 1:6, 7; see EGW on 2 Corinthians 12:4). Trials God's Workmen.—[2 Corinthians 4:17, 18 quoted.] If Paul, troubled on every side, perplexed, persecuted, could call his trials light afflictions, of what has the Christian of today to complain? How trifling are our trials in comparison with Paul's many afflictions! They are not worthy to be compared with the eternal weight of glory awaiting the overcomer. They are God's workmen, ordained for the perfection of character. However great the deprivation and suffering of the Christian, however dark and inscrutable may seem the way of Providence, he is to rejoice in the Lord, knowing that all is working for his good (The Review and Herald, May 6, 1902).

I have been shown that in the future we shall

see how closely all our trials were connected with our salvation, and how these light afflictions worked out for us “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (Letter 5, 1880).

The Eternal Weight of Glory.—The years of self-denial, of privation, of trial, affliction, and persecution that Paul endured, he called a moment. The things of the present time were not considered worth mentioning when compared with the eternal weight of glory that awaited them when the warfare should be over. These very afflictions were God’s workmen, ordained for the perfection of Christian character. Whatever may be the circumstances of the Christian, however dark and mysterious may be the ways of Providence, however great his deprivation and suffering, he may look away from them all to the unseen and the eternal. He has the blessed assurance that all things are working for his good....

The Holy Spirit irradiated the soul of Paul with light from heaven, and he was assured that he had an interest in the purchased possession reserved for

the faithful. Paul's language was strong. He was not able to find words of sufficient force to express the excellency of that glory, honor, and immortality which believers would receive when Christ should come. Compared with the scene upon which his mind's eye was dwelling, all temporal afflictions were but momentary, light afflictions, unworthy of thought. Viewed in the light of the cross, the things of this life were vanity and emptiness. The glory that attracted him was substantial, weighty, durable, beyond the power of language to describe.

Yet Paul comes as near to expressing it as he can, that the imagination may grasp the reality as far as is possible to finite minds. It was a weight of glory, a fullness of God, knowledge that was measureless. It was an eternal weight of glory. And yet Paul feels that his language is tame. It falls short of expressing the reality. He reaches out for words more expressive. The boldest figures of speech would fall far short of the truth. He seeks the broadest terms which human language can supply, that the imagination may grasp in some degree the superlative excellency of the glory to be

given the final overcomer.

Holiness, dignity, honor, and felicity in the presence of God are things now unseen except by the eye of faith. But the things which are seen, worldly honor, worldly pleasure, riches, and glory, are eclipsed by the excellency, the beauty, and resplendent glory of the things now unseen. The things of this world are temporal, enduring only for a time, while the things which are not seen are eternal, enduring through endless ages. To secure this infinite treasure is to gain everything and lose nothing (MS 58, 1900).

18 (Colossians 3:2; Hebrews 11:27; see EGW on 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18). Seeing Him Who Is Invisible.—Our minds take the level of the things on which our thoughts dwell, and if we think upon earthly things, we shall fail to take the impress of that which is heavenly. We would be greatly benefited by contemplating the mercy, goodness, and love of God; but we sustain great loss by dwelling upon those things which are earthly and temporal. We allow sorrow and care and perplexity

to attract our minds to earth, and we magnify a molehill into a mountain....

Temporal things are not to engage our whole attention, or engross our minds until our thoughts are entirely of the earth and the earthly. We are to train, discipline, and educate the mind so that we may think in a heavenly channel, that we may dwell on things unseen and eternal, which will be discerned by spiritual vision. It is by seeing Him who is invisible that we may obtain strength of mind and vigor of spirit (The Signs of the Times, January 9, 1893).

Chapter 5

7. See EGW on Romans 5:1.

10 (John 5:22; Romans 14:10; see EGW on Romans 3:19). Christ the Judge.—God designed that the Prince of sufferers in humanity should be judge of the whole world. He who submitted to be arraigned before an earthly tribunal, He who came from the heavenly courts to save man from eternal

death, He whom men despised, rejected, and upon whom they heaped all the contempt of which human beings inspired by Satan are capable, He who suffered the ignominious death of the cross— He alone was to pronounce the sentence of reward or of punishment (MS 39, 1898).

11 (Psalm 119:53; Hebrews 4:1). A Proper Fear of God.—[Hebrews 4:1 quoted.] The Lord would have His people trust in Him and abide in His love, but that does not mean that we shall have no fear or misgivings. Some seem to think that if a man has a wholesome fear of the judgments of God, it is a proof that he is destitute of faith; but this is not so.

A proper fear of God, in believing His threatenings, works the peaceable fruits of righteousness, by causing the trembling soul to flee to Jesus. Many ought to have this spirit today, and turn to the Lord with humble contrition, for the Lord has not given so many terrible threatenings, pronounced so severe judgments in His Word, simply to have them recorded, but He means what

He says. One says, “Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law,” Paul says, “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” (The Review and Herald, October 21, 1890).

14 (John 13:34; 1 John 4:7, 8). Love the Decision of a Sanctified Will.—The love of Christ in the heart is what is needed. Self is in need of being crucified. When self is submerged in Christ, true love springs forth spontaneously. It is not an emotion or an impulse, but a decision of a sanctified will. It consists not in feeling, but in the transformation of the whole heart, soul, and character, which is dead to self and alive unto God. Our Lord and Saviour asks us to give ourselves to Him. Surrendering self to God is all He requires, giving ourselves to Him to be employed as He sees fit. Until we come to this point of surrender, we shall not work happily, usefully, or successfully anywhere (Letter 97, 1898).

17 (John 1:12, 13; 3:5-8). Grace Not Inherited.—The old nature, born of blood and the

will of the flesh, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The old ways, the hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up; for grace is not inherited. The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit, have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ. When men who claim to be Christians retain all their natural defects of character and disposition, in what does their position differ from that of the worldling? They do not appreciate the truth as a sanctifier, a refiner. They have not been born again (The Review and Herald, April 12, 1892).

(1 John 2:6; Revelation 3:14-17.) Pure Religion an Imitation of Christ.—Pure religion is an imitation of Christ. A religion that is built on self-confidence and selfishness is worthless. The true Christian is a follower of Christ. This following means walking in the light. The heart must be opened to receive the heavenly guest. As long as the heart is closed against His entrance,

there can be in it no abiding peace. No sunshine can flood the chambers of the soul temple, breaking through the mist and cloud.

God makes no compromise with sin. A genuine conversion changes hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong. The religion of God is a firm fabric, composed of innumerable threads, and woven together with tact and skill. Only the wisdom which comes from God can make this fabric complete. There are a great many kinds of cloth which at first have a fine appearance, but they cannot endure the test. They wash out. The colors are not fast. Under the heat of summer they fade away and are lost. The cloth cannot endure rough handling.

So it is with the religion of many. When the warp and woof of character will not stand the test of trial, the material of which it is composed is worthless. The efforts made to patch the old with a new piece do not better the condition of things; for the old, flimsy material breaks away from the new, leaving the rent much larger than before. Patching

will not do. The only way is to discard the old garment altogether, and procure one entirely new.

Christ's plan is the only safe one. He declares, "Behold, I make all things new." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Christ gives man no encouragement to think that He will accept a patchwork character, made up mostly of self, with a little of Christ. This is the condition of the Laodicean church. At first there seems to be some of self and some of Christ. But soon it is all of self and none of Christ. The root of selfishness is revealed. It continues to grow, striking its roots deeper and deeper, till its branches are covered with objectionable fruit. Christ looks with pitying tenderness on all who have combination characters. Those with such a character have a connection with Christ so frail that it is utterly worthless (Letter 105, 1893).

Patchwork Character Not Acceptable.—[2 Corinthians 5:17 quoted.] The patchwork religion is not of the least value with God. He requires the whole heart. No part of it is to be reserved for the

development of hereditary or cultivated tendencies to evil. To be harsh, to be severe, too self-important, selfish, to look out for one's own selfish interest and yet be zealous that others shall deal unselfishly is a religion which is an abomination to God. Many have just such an experience daily, but it is a misrepresentation of the character of Christ (Letter 31a, 1894).

19 (John 1:18). Satan Sees in Christ a Manifestation of God's Character.—There stood in the world One who was a perfect representative of the Father, One whose character and practices refuted Satan's misrepresentation of God. Satan had charged upon God the attribute he himself possessed. Now in Christ he saw God revealed in His true character—a compassionate, merciful Father, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Him in repentance, and have eternal life (The Signs of the Times, June 9, 1898).

20. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 3:9.

21. See EGW on John 1:14.

Chapter 6

14-18 (see EGW on Judges 2:2). Out of the World, Into God's Family.—Those who come out of the world in spirit and in all practice may regard themselves as sons and daughters of God. They may believe His Word as a child believes every word of his parents. Every promise is sure to him that believes. Those who unite with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who show by their lives that they are no longer following the course they followed before they united with these divine instrumentalities, will receive the wisdom from above. They will not depend on human wisdom. In order to deal righteously with the world, as members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King, Christians must feel their need of a power which comes only from the heavenly agencies who have pledged themselves to work in their behalf.

After we have formed a union with the great threefold power, we shall regard our duty toward

the members of God's family with a much more sacred awe than we have ever done before. This is a phase of religious reform that very few appreciate. Those who seek to answer the prayer, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," will seek by living pure, sanctified lives to show to the world how the will of God is done in heaven (MS 11, 1901).

17 (see EGW on Isaiah 8:12). The Sifting Instrument.—The world is the instrument that sifts the church and tests the genuineness of its members. The world holds out inducements that, when accepted, place the believer where his life is not in harmony with his profession....

If you go forward toward heaven, the world will rub hard against you. At every step you will have to urge your way against Satan and his evil angels, and against all who transgress God's law. Earthly authorities will interpose. You will meet tribulations, bruising of the spirit, hard speeches, ridicule, persecutions. Men will require your conformity to laws and customs that would render

you disloyal to God. Here is where God's people find the cross in the way to life (MS 3, 1885).

17, 18 (Colossians 3:2; see EGW on Proverbs 1:10; Romans 6:1-4). Sever Every Earthly Tendril.—Many professed Christians are well represented by the vine that is trailing upon the ground and entwining its tendrils about the roots and rubbish that lie in its path. To all such the message comes, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” There are conditions to meet if we would be blessed and honored by God. We are to separate from the world, and refuse to touch those things that will separate our affections from God. God has the first and highest claims upon His people. Set your affections upon Him and upon heavenly things. Your tendrils must be severed from everything earthly.

You are exhorted to touch not the unclean

thing; for in touching this, you will yourself become unclean. It is impossible for you to unite with those who are corrupt, and still remain pure. “What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?” God and Christ and the heavenly host would have man know that if he unites with the corrupt, he will become corrupt. Ample provision has been made that we may be raised from the lowlands of earth, and have our affections fastened upon God and upon heavenly things (The Review and Herald, January 2, 1900).

Chapter 8

1-8. Example of Others an Inducement to Giving.—When a people have an earnest longing to help where help is needed in advancing the cause of God in any line, the Lord will impart to these consecrated, unselfish ones a heart to give gladly, as if it was a privilege. God moved on these Macedonians in their deep poverty to bestow liberally that their example might be recorded, thus

leading others to exercise the same beneficence.

Encouraged by this movement, which showed the special working of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of the believers, Paul requested Titus to visit the Corinthian church and finish the collection which they had proposed and had already begun. He was anxious that they should perform that which they had promised through the grace of God working upon their hearts.

Lest they should be outstripped in liberality by the comparatively poor Macedonian churches, Paul not only writes to them, but sends Titus to attend to the collection. The apostle greatly desired to see in the believers symmetry of Christian character. He desired them to give evidence of their love and prove the sincerity of their faith. As disciples in full belief of the truth, he longed to see in them a lively sense of their obligation and accountability to God for the gospel. He desired that it should work in them as the power of God, and that they should bear testimony to its work by yielding fruit to the honor of God. As Christians under the

control of God they were with all diligence to discharge every duty....

Paul laid no command upon the Corinthian brethren. But he set before them the necessity of the church at Jerusalem, and showed what others had given who had fewer advantages and less ability than had the Corinthians. He presented the example of others, to induce them to give (MS 12, 1900).

6. Ministers to Teach Liberality.—There is a lesson also in this chapter to those who are working in the cause of God. Paul says, “We desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also”—that is, make you to abound in the grace of liberality. A responsibility rests upon the ministers of Christ to educate the churches to be liberal. Even the poor are to have a part in presenting their offerings to God. They are to be sharers of the grace of Christ in denying self to help those whose need is more pressing than their own. Why should the poor saints be denied the blessing of giving to aid those who are still

poorer than themselves (MS 28, 1894)?

9. Christ's Poverty a Part of His Great Sacrifice.—The apostle called upon them to consider the example of Christ. The Commander of heaven gave Himself to a life of humiliation and poverty that He might stand side by side with the fallen race, to restore the moral image of God in man. The Lord Jesus was willing to become poor, that through His humiliation and His death on the cross He might pay the ransom for us.

Whether rich or poor, we must never forget that the poverty of Christ was a part of His legacy in humanity. It was not alone His betrayal in the garden or His agony upon the cross that constituted the atonement. The humiliation of which His poverty formed a part was included in His great sacrifice. The whole series of sorrows which compassed humanity Christ bore upon His divine soul (MS 12, 1900).

(Matthew 11:28; Philippians 2:5-8.) Why Christ Came as a Poor Man.—When the plan of

redemption was laid, it was decided that Christ should not appear in accordance with His divine character; for then He could not associate with the distressed and the suffering. He must come as a poor man. He could have appeared in accordance with His exalted station in the heavenly courts; but no, He must reach to the very lowest depths of human suffering and poverty, that His voice might be heard by the burdened and disappointed, that to the weary, sinsick soul He might reveal Himself as the Restorer, the desire of all nations, the Rest-giver. And to those who are longing for rest and peace today just as truly as to those who listened to His words in Judea, He is saying, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (MS 14, 1897).

Christ’s Poverty Paul’s Mighty Argument.—

Here was the apostle’s mighty argument. It is not the commandment of Paul, but of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Son of God had left His heavenly home, with its riches and honor and glory, and clothed His divinity with humanity—not to live in the palaces of kings, without care or labor, and to

be supplied with all the conveniences which human nature naturally craves. In the councils of heaven He had chosen to stand in the ranks of the poor and oppressed, to take His part with the humble workers, and learn the trade of His earthly parent, which was that of a carpenter, a builder. He came to the world to be a reconstructor of character, and He brought into all His work of building the perfection which He desired to bring into the characters He was transforming by His divine power.

Paul presents his pattern, his ideal. Christ had given Himself to a life of poverty that they might become rich in heavenly treasure. He would refresh their memories in regard to the sacrifice made in their behalf. Christ was commander in the heavenly courts, yet He took the lowest place in this world. He was rich, yet for our sakes, He became poor. It was not spiritual riches that He left behind; He was always abounding in the gifts of the Spirit. But He was of poor parentage. The world never saw its Lord wealthy (MS 98, 1899).

Rich in Attainments.—Christ, the Majesty of heaven, became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. Not rich merely in endowments, but rich in attainments.

These are the riches that Christ earnestly longs that His followers shall possess. As the true seeker after the truth reads the Word, and opens his mind to receive the Word, he longs after truth with his whole heart. The love, the pity, the tenderness, the courtesy, the Christian politeness, which will be the elements in the heavenly mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for those that love Him, take possession of his soul. His purpose is steadfast. He is determined to stand on the side of righteousness. Truth has found its way into the heart, and is planted there by the Holy Spirit, who is the truth. When truth takes hold of the heart, the man gives sure evidence of this by becoming a steward of the grace of Christ (MS 7, 1898).

12. See EGW on Acts 16:14.

16-18, 23. Titus Journeys to Corinth.—Paul's

testimony was accepted as of great weight, because of the many revelations he had received. He knew better than did many others of the necessities of various places. But Paul was unwilling to take personal charge of the raising of this contribution. He had been largely instrumental in causing it to be raised, but, lest any should find occasion to speak evil, Titus and his companions made the journey to Corinth; for there was no safe way of transporting money at that time (MS 101, 1906).

16-22. Paul Commends Titus to the Corinthians.—Titus has been so successful in raising gifts among the churches in Macedonia that Paul desired him to visit Corinth and continue in the same work. Another brother, “whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches,” and still another “whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things,” were sent to accompany Titus. Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthians commending to them these brethren who had so willingly undertaken such a difficult task. In this letter he reminded them of an effort that had been put forth a year previous to raise a contribution at Corinth

(MS 101, 1906).

21. See EGW on Romans 12:17.

Chapters 8, 9

Let not selfish motives lead you to withhold the funds that are needed in unworked fields. When we are tempted to withhold that which is needed in foreign fields, let us study the eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians, and learn to emulate the liberal spirit which made the Macedonians willing to give “beyond their power” to the cause that called for their assistance (MS 11, 1908).

Chapter 9

2. A Thousand Torches Kindled.—Those who occupy positions of influence and responsibility in the church should be foremost in the work of God. If they move reluctantly, others will not move at all. But their zeal will provoke very many. When their light burns brightly, a

thousand torches will be kindled at the flame (The Southern Work, April 5, 1904).

6 (1 Timothy 6:19; Hebrews 11:26). How Bright the Crown?—The reward, the glories of heaven, bestowed upon the overcomers, will be proportionate to the degree in which they have represented the character of Christ to the world. “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.” Thank God that it is our privilege to sow on earth the seed that will be harvested in eternity. The crown of life will be bright or dim, will glitter with many stars, or be lighted by few gems, in accordance with our own course of action.

Day by day we may be laying up a good foundation against the time to come. By self-denial, by the exercise of the missionary spirit, by crowding all the good works possible into our life, by seeking so to represent Christ in character that we shall win many souls to the truth, we shall have respect unto the recompense of reward. It rests with us to walk in the light, to make the most of every opportunity and privilege, to grow in grace and in

the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so we shall work the works of Christ, and ensure for ourselves treasure in the heavens (The Review and Herald, January 29, 1895).

7. Giving Grudgingly Mocks God.—It were better not to give at all than to give grudgingly; for if we impart of our means when we have not the spirit to give freely, we mock God. Let us bear in mind that we are dealing with One upon whom we depend for every blessing, One who reads every thought of the heart, every purpose of the mind (The Review and Herald, May 15, 1900). Chapter 10

1, 7, 8. See EGW on Acts 18:1-3.

4. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 3:9.

5 (Colossians 3:10). Every Faculty to Reflect the Divine Mind.—It was a wonderful thing for God to create man, to make mind. The glory of God is to be revealed in the creation of man in God's image and in his redemption. One soul is of

more value than a world. God created man that every faculty might be the faculty of the divine mind. The Lord Jesus Christ is the author of our being, and He is also the author of our redemption, and everyone who will enter the kingdom of God will develop a character that is the counterpart of the character of God. None can dwell with God in the holy heaven but those who bear His likeness. Those who are to be redeemed are to be overcomers; they are to be elevated, pure, one with Christ (Letter 55, 1895).

God the Author of Every Noble Thought.—Will men and women consider how God regards the creatures He has made? He formed man's mind. We do not think one noble thought that does not come from Him. He knows all the mysterious workings of the human mind, for did He not make it? God sees that sin has debased and degraded man, but He looks upon him with pity and compassion; for He sees that Satan has him in his power (MS 56, 1889).

The Power of Intellect.—Intellect ennobled,

purified, heaven directed, is the universal power to build up the kingdom of God. Intellect perverted, has exactly the opposite influence; it is a corrupting of the human power given in trust to be multiplied in earnest labor for good. It deceives and destroys. God has given sufficient endowments to make men capable and wise to carry forward, and strongly and graciously to represent, the Lord's wonderful works to all those who love Him and obey His commandments (MS 63, 1900).

Yielded to Whom?—Satan cannot touch the mind or intellect unless we yield it to him (MS 17, 1893). The devil will use your mind if you give it to him (MS 2, 1893).

Chapter 11

Judging Not Man's Prerogative.—The 11th chapter of 2 Corinthians contains much instruction. It reveals to us that men who are liable to view matters after human eyesight may make very grave mistakes if they engage in a work that God has not

appointed, but condemned. That work is to criticize, to climb upon the judgment seat, and pronounce sentence. How much better would it be for the spiritual advancement of such to look well to their own shortcomings and defects of character through watchful examination of their own hearts, to try to remove from them the beam of faultfinding, of evil surmising, of evil speaking, of bearing false witness, of hatred, and accusing of the brethren (MS 142, 1897).

14 (Matthew 24:24; 10:4; see EGW on Ephesians 6:10-12). Meeting Satan's Crowning Deception.—Satan came as an angel of light in the wilderness of temptation to deceive Christ; and he does not come to man in a hideous form, as he is sometimes represented, but as an angel of light. He will come personating Jesus Christ, working mighty miracles; and men will fall down and worship him as Jesus Christ. We shall be commanded to worship this being, whom the world will glorify as Christ. What shall we do?—Tell them that Christ has warned us against just such a foe, who is man's worst enemy, yet who claims to

be God; and that when Christ shall make His appearance, it will be with power and great glory, accompanied by ten thousand times ten thousand angels and thousands of thousands; and that when He shall come, we shall know His voice (The Review and Herald, December 18, 1888).

(Matthew 7:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12.) An Unfailing Test.—Satan has come down in these last days to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. His satanic majesty works miracles in the sight of false prophets, in the sight of men, claiming that he is indeed Christ Himself. Satan gives his power to those who are aiding him in his deceptions; therefore those who claim to have the great power of God can only be discerned by the great detector, the law of Jehovah. The Lord tells us if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. The sheep's clothing seems so real, so genuine, that the wolf can be discerned only as we go to God's great moral standard and there find that they are transgressors of the law of Jehovah (The Review and Herald, August 25, 1885).

Preparing for the Final Act.—This world is a theater. The actors, the inhabitants of the world, are preparing to act their part in the last great drama. God is lost sight of. There is no unity of purpose, except as parties of men confederate to gain their ends. God is looking on. His purposes in regard to His rebellious subjects will be fulfilled. The world has not been given into the hands of men, though God is permitting the elements of confusion and disorder to bear sway for a season. A power from beneath is working to bring about the last great scenes in the drama—Satan coming as Christ, and working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are binding themselves together in secret societies. Those who are yielding to the passion for confederation are working out the plans of the enemy. The cause will be followed by the effect (Letter 141, 1902).

(Ephesians 6:10-12.) Constant Vigilance Demanded.—[Ephesians 6:10-12 quoted.] Every one who has enlisted under the bloodstained banner of Christ has entered upon a warfare that demands

constant vigilance. Satan is determined to keep up the warfare to the end. Coming as an angel of light, claiming to be the Christ, he will deceive the world. But his triumph will be short. No storm or tempest can move those whose feet are planted on the principles of eternal truth. They will be able to stand in this time of almost universal apostasy (MS 74, 1903).

14, 15. See EGW on Matthew 7:21-23.

23-30. Paul's Indomitable Courage.—Gain courage from the experience of the apostle Paul. He had many trials. He was an unwearied worker, and traveled constantly, sometimes through inhospitable regions, sometimes on the water, in storm and tempest. Far harder than ours was his lot, for traveling then had not the conveniences that it has now. But Paul allowed nothing to hinder him from his work (Letter 107, 1904).

Chapter 12

1 (Philippians 3:8). Paul Taught by the Holy

Spirit.—The apostle Paul, who had received many revelations from the Lord, met difficulties from various sources, and amid all his conflicts and discouragements he did not lose his trust and confidence in God. Under the special tuition of the Holy Spirit, his judgment was purified, refined, elevated, sanctified. The devisings of human beings and of the enemy against him were to him a means of discipline and education, and he declares that thus he gained most excellent knowledge, because he made the Lord Jesus his dependence. “Yea doubtless,” he declares, “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.” How greatly this gospel enriches the garden of the soul, enabling it to produce most precious fruit (Letter 127, 1903)!

1-4. Paul’s Preaching With Power.—Through Paul God has given many wonderful lessons for our instruction. In his visions Paul saw many things not lawful for a man to utter. But many other things which he saw in the heavenly courts were woven into his teachings. The truth flashed from his lips as a sharp, two-edged sword. The impressions

made upon his mind by the Holy Spirit were strong and vivid, and they were presented to the people in a way that no one else could present them. Paul spoke in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power (Letter 105, 1901).

(1 Corinthians 9:27.) Paul Remained Humble.—The apostle Paul was highly honored of God, being taken in holy vision to the third heaven, where he looked upon scenes whose glories might not be revealed to mortals. Yet all this did not lead him to boastfulness or self-confidence. He realized the importance of constant watchfulness and self-denial, and plainly declares, “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (The Review and Herald, May 3, 1881).

(Philippians 3:12; 1 Timothy 1:15.)—Paul had a very humble opinion of his own advancement in the Christian life. He says, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.” He speaks of himself as the chief of

sinners. Yet Paul had been highly honored of the Lord. He had been taken, in holy vision, to the third heaven, and had there received revelations of divine glory which he could not be permitted to make known (The Signs of the Times, January 11, 1883).

(Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:8, 9; Colossians 1:26.) Hidden Mysteries Revealed.—Mysteries which had been hidden for ages were revealed to him [Paul], and as much as he could bear of the workings of God, and of His dealings with human minds, was made known. The Lord told Paul that he must preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. Light was to be given to the Gentiles. This is a mystery which had been hidden for ages (The Signs of the Times, January 30, 1912).

4 (ch. 4:17, 18). Glories of Heaven Indescribable.—Paul had a view of heaven, and in discoursing on the glories there, the very best thing he could do was to not try to describe them. He tells us that eye had not seen nor ear heard, neither

hath it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him. So you may put your imagination to the stretch, you may try to the very best of your abilities to take in and consider the eternal weight of glory, and yet your finite senses, faint and weary with the effort, cannot grasp it, for there is an infinity beyond. It takes all of eternity to unfold the glories and bring out the precious treasures of the Word of God (MS 13, 1888).

7-9 (see EGW on Acts 9:8, 9). Paul's Affliction Not Removed.—Paul had a bodily affliction; his eyesight was bad. He thought that by earnest prayer the difficulty might be removed. But the Lord had His own purpose, and He said to Paul, Speak to Me no more of this matter. My grace is sufficient. It will enable you to bear the infirmity (Letter 207, 1899).

Painful Impediments in Paul's Work.—A deep sadness still rested upon the mind and heart of Paul because of his apprehensions concerning the Corinthian church. While at Philippi he

commenced his second epistle to them, for they hung as a heavy weight upon his soul. The depression of spirits from which the apostle suffered was, however, attributable in a great degree to bodily infirmities, which made him very restless when not engaged in active service. But when working for the salvation of souls, he rose superior to physical debility. He felt that the disease under which he suffered was a terrible impediment to him in his great work, and repeatedly besought the Lord to relieve him. God did not see fit to answer his prayers in this respect, though He gave him assurance that divine grace should be sufficient for him (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 175, 176).

Chapter 13

5 (ch. 2:11). Satan's Little Wedges.—Those who have no time to give attention to their own souls, to examine themselves daily whether they be in the love of God, and place themselves in the channel of light, will have time to give to the suggestions of Satan, and the working out of his

plans.

Satan will insinuate himself by little wedges, that widen as they make a place for themselves. The specious devices of Satan will be brought into the special work of God at this time (MS 16, 1890).

Chapter 48

Galatians

Chapter 1

6, 7. Trouble in Galatia.—In almost every church there were some members who were Jews by birth. To these converts the Jewish teachers found ready access, and through them gained a foothold in the churches. It was impossible, by scriptural arguments, to overthrow the doctrines taught by Paul; hence they resorted to the most unscrupulous measures to counteract his influence and weaken his authority. They declared that he had not been a disciple of Jesus, and had received no commission from Him; yet he had presumed to teach doctrines directly opposed to those held by Peter, James, and the other apostles. Thus the emissaries of Judaism succeeded in alienating many of the Christian converts from their teacher in the gospel. Having gained this point, they induced them to return to the observance of the ceremonial law as essential to salvation. Faith in

Christ, and obedience to the law of ten commandments, were regarded as of minor importance. Division, heresy, and sensualism were rapidly gaining ground among the believers in Galatia.

Paul's soul was stirred as he saw the evils that threatened speedily to destroy these churches. He immediately wrote to the Galatians, exposing their false theories, and with great severity rebuking those who had departed from the faith (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 188, 189).

17, 18. See EGW on Acts 9:25-27.

Chapter 2

1-10 (Acts 15:4-29). The Wisdom of Paul.—Paul ... describes the visit which he made to Jerusalem to secure a settlement of the very questions which are now agitating the churches of Galatia, as to whether the Gentiles should submit to circumcision and keep the ceremonial law. This was the only instance in which he had deferred to

the judgment of the other apostles as superior to his own. He had first sought a private interview, in which he set the matter in all its bearings before the leading apostles, Peter, James, and John. With far-seeing wisdom, he concluded that if these men could be led to take a right position, everything would be gained. Had he first presented the question before the whole council, there would have been a division of sentiment. The strong prejudice already excited because he had not enforced circumcision on the Gentiles, would have led many to take a stand against him. Thus the object of his visit would have been defeated, and his usefulness greatly hindered. But the three leading apostles, against whom no such prejudice existed, having themselves been won to the true position, brought the matter before the council, and won from all a concurrence in the decision to leave the Gentiles free from the obligations of the ceremonial law (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 192, 193).

11, 12 (James 1:8; see EGW on Acts 21:20-26). When Strong Men Waver.—Even the best of

men, if left to themselves, will make grave blunders. The more responsibilities placed upon the human agent, the higher his position to dictate and control, the more mischief he is sure to do in perverting minds and hearts if he does not carefully follow the way of the Lord. At Antioch Peter failed in the principles of integrity. Paul had to withstand his subverting influence face to face. This is recorded that others may profit by it, and that the lesson may be a solemn warning to the men in high places, that they may not fail in integrity, but keep close to principle.

After all the failures of Peter, after his fall and restoration, his long course of service, his intimate acquaintance with Christ, his knowledge of Christ's pure, straightforward practice of principle; after all the instruction he had received, all the gifts and knowledge and great influence in preaching and teaching the Word, is it not strange that he should dissemble and evade the principles of the gospel, for fear of man, or in order to gain his esteem? Is it not strange that he should waver, and be two-sided in his position? May God give every

man a sense of his own personal helplessness to steer his own vessel straight and safely into the harbor. The grace of Christ is essential every day. His matchless grace alone can save our feet from falling (MS 122, 1897).

16 (ch. 3:10-13, 24; Romans 3:19-28; 5:1). No Room for Self-sufficiency.—We are justified by faith. The soul who understands the meaning of these words will never be self-sufficient. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves. The Holy Spirit is our efficiency in the work of character building, in forming characters after the divine similitude. When we think ourselves capable of molding our own experience, we make a great mistake. We can never of ourselves obtain the victory over temptation. But those who have genuine faith in Christ will be worked by the Holy Spirit. The soul in whose heart faith abides will grow into a beautiful temple for the Lord. He is directed by the grace of Christ. Just in proportion as he depends on the Holy Spirit's teaching he will grow (MS 8, 1900).

20 (Philippians 1:21; Colossians 3:3; see EGW on Revelation 3:1). The Greatest Work in the World.—Everything good in men and women is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit teaches us to reveal righteousness in our lives. The greatest work that can be done in our world is to glorify God by living the character of Christ. God will make perfect only those who will die to self. Those who are willing to do this can say, “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (MS 16, 1900).

Chapter 3

6-9. See EGW on Romans 8:15.

8. See EGW on Genesis 12:2, 3; Acts 15:11.

10-13. See EGW on Galatians 2:16; Romans 3:19-28.

13. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 3:7-18; Hebrews 13:11-13.

19. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 3:7-11.

24 (ch. 2:16; Romans 3:19-28). The Law Points to Christ.—The law has no power to pardon the transgressor, but it points him to Christ Jesus, who says to him, I will take your sin and bear it Myself, if you will accept Me as your substitute and surety. Return to your allegiance, and I will impute to you My righteousness (The Review and Herald, May 7, 1901).

Which Law Is the Schoolmaster?—I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments.

Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. The death of Abel was in consequence of Cain's refusing to accept God's plan in the school of obedience, to be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, typified by the sacrificial offerings pointing to Christ. Cain refused the shedding of blood, which symbolized the blood of Christ to be shed

for the world. This whole ceremony was prepared by God, and Christ became the foundation of the whole system. This is the beginning of its work as the schoolmaster to bring sinful human agents to a consideration of Christ.

All who did service in connection with the sanctuary were being educated constantly in regard to the intervention of Christ in behalf of the human race. This service was designed to create in every heart a love for the law of God, which is the law of His kingdom. The sacrificial offering was to be an object lesson of the love of God revealed in Christ—in the suffering, dying victim, who took upon Himself the sin of which man was guilty, the innocent being made sin for us.

In the contemplation of this great theme of salvation, we see Christ's work. Not only the promised gift of the Spirit, but also the nature and character of this sacrifice and intervention, is a subject which should create in our hearts elevated, sacred, high ideas of the law of God, which holds its claims upon every human agency. The violation

of that law in the small act of eating of the forbidden fruit, brought upon man and upon the earth the consequence of disobedience to the holy law of God. The nature of the intervention should ever make man afraid to do the smallest action in disobedience to God's requirement.

There should be a clear understanding of that which constitutes sin, and we should avoid the least approach to step over the boundaries from obedience to disobedience.

God would have every member of His creation understand the great work of the infinite Son of God in giving His life for the salvation of the world. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not."

When he sees in Christ the embodiment of infinite and disinterested love and benevolence, there is awakened in the heart of the sinner a thankful disposition to follow where Christ is

drawing (MS 87, 1900).

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

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.

The law is an expression of God's idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin (MS 23a, 1896).

The Relation of the Two Laws.—It is not so essential to understand the precise particulars in regard to the relation of the two laws. It is of far greater consequence that we know whether we are transgressing the law of God, whether we stand in obedience or disobedience before the holy precepts (Letter 165, 1901).

24-26 (ch. 6:14; 1 John 3:4). Christ the Only Remedy.—When the mind is drawn to the cross of Calvary, Christ by imperfect sight is discerned on the shameful cross. Why did He die? In consequence of sin. What is sin? The transgression of the law. Then the eyes are open to see the character of sin. The law is broken but cannot pardon the transgressor. It is our schoolmaster, condemning to punishment. Where is the remedy? The law drives us to Christ, who was hanged upon the cross that He might be able to impart His righteousness to fallen, sinful man and thus present men to His Father in His righteous character (MS 50, 1900).

Chapter 4

7. See EGW on Romans 8:17.

24-31. See EGW on Romans 8:15-21.

Chapter 5

1. See EGW on Romans 8:15-21.

1, 2 (1 Corinthians 1:10-13). The Controversy Over Circumcision.—Factions also were beginning to rise through the influence of Judaizing teachers, who urged that the converts to Christianity should observe the ceremonial law in the matter of circumcision. They still maintained that the original Israel were the exalted and privileged children of Abraham, and were entitled to all the promises made to him. They sincerely thought that in taking this medium ground between Jew and Christian, they would succeed in removing the odium which attached to Christianity, and would gather in large numbers of the Jews.

They vindicated their position, which was in opposition to that of Paul, by showing that the course of the apostle, in receiving the Gentiles into the church without circumcision, prevented more Jews from accepting the faith than there were accessions from the Gentiles. Thus they excused

their opposition to the results of the calm deliberations of God's acknowledged servants. They refused to admit that the work of Christ embraced the whole world. They claimed that He was the Saviour of the Hebrews alone; therefore they maintained that the Gentiles should receive circumcision before being admitted to the privileges of the church of Christ.

After the decision of the council at Jerusalem concerning this question, many were still of this opinion, but did not then push their opposition any farther. The council had, on that occasion, decided that the converts from the Jewish church might observe the ordinances of the Mosaic law if they chose, while those ordinances should not be made obligatory upon converts from the Gentiles. The opposing class now took advantage of this, to urge a distinction between the observers of the ceremonial law and those who did not observe it, holding that the latter were farther from God than the former.

Paul's indignation was stirred. His voice was

raised in stern rebuke: "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." The party maintaining that Christianity was valueless without circumcision arrayed themselves against the apostle, and he had to meet them in every church which he founded or visited: in Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. God urged him out to the great work of preaching Christ, and Him crucified; circumcision or uncircumcision was nothing. The Judaizing party looked upon Paul as an apostate, bent upon breaking down the partition wall which God had established between the Israelites and the world. They visited every church which he had organized, creating divisions. Holding that the end would justify the means, they circulated false charges against the apostle, and endeavored to bring him into disrepute. As Paul, in visiting the churches, followed after these zealous and unscrupulous opposers, he met many who viewed him with distrust, and some who even despised his labors.

These divisions in regard to the ceremonial law, and the relative merits of the different

ministers teaching the doctrine of Christ, caused the apostle much anxiety and hard labor [1 Corinthians 1:10-13 quoted] (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 121, 122).

6 (Philippians 2:12; 1 Timothy 6:12; Titus 2:14; James 2:14-20; 1 Peter 1:22; Revelation 2:2; see EGW on Titus 1:9-11). Bible Religion Means Constant Work.—Genuine faith always works by love. When you look to Calvary it is not to quiet your soul in the non-performance of duty, not to compose yourself to sleep, but to create faith in Jesus, faith that will work, purifying the soul from the slime of selfishness. When we lay hold of Christ by faith, our work has just begun. Every man has corrupt and sinful habits that must be overcome by vigorous warfare. Every soul is required to fight the fight of faith. If one is a follower of Christ, he cannot be sharp in deal, he cannot be hardhearted, devoid of sympathy. He cannot be coarse in his speech. He cannot be full of pomposity and self-esteem. He cannot be overbearing, nor can he use harsh words, and censure and condemn.

The labor of love springs from the work of faith. Bible religion means constant work. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” We are to be zealous of good works; be careful to maintain good works. And the true Witness says, “I know thy works.”

While it is true that our busy activities will not in themselves ensure salvation, it is also true that faith which unites us to Christ will stir the soul to activity (MS 16, 1890).

17 (Ephesians 6:12). Stern Conflicts in the Christian Life.—The life of the Christian is not all smooth. He has stern conflicts to meet. Severe temptations assail him. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” The nearer we come to the close of this earth’s history, the more delusive and ensnaring will be the attacks

of the enemy. His attacks will grow fiercer and more frequent. Those who resist light and truth will become more hardened and unimpressible, and more bitter against those who love God and keep His commandments (MS 33, 1911).

22, 23 (Ephesians 5:9). The Indwelling of the Spirit.—The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (MS 41, 1897).

Chapter 6

1, 2 (Hebrews 12:12, 13). Working in the Spirit of Meekness.—[Galatians 6:1 quoted.] The restoring is to be done, not in a proud, officious, masterly manner, but in the spirit of meekness. Do not cast your brother aside, saying. He has disappointed me, and I shall not try to help him

[Galatians 6:2 quoted] (MS 117a, 1901).

7. See EGW on Exodus 4:21; 20:16.

**7, 8 (Romans 2:6; see EGW on Judges 16).
The Harvest of Resistance.**—The Spirit of God keeps evil under the control of conscience. When man exalts himself above the influence of the Spirit, he reaps a harvest of iniquity. Over such a man the Spirit has less and less influence to restrain him from sowing seeds of disobedience. Warnings have less and less power over him. He gradually loses his fear of God. He sows to the flesh; he will reap corruption. The harvest of the seed that he himself has sown, is ripening. He has a contempt for God's holy commandments. His heart of flesh becomes a heart of stone. Resistance to truth confirms him in iniquity. It is because men sowed seeds of evil, that lawlessness, crime, and violence prevailed in the antediluvian world.

All should be intelligent in regard to the agency by which the soul is destroyed. It is not because of any decree that God has sent out against man. He

does not make man spiritually blind. God gives sufficient light and evidence to enable man to distinguish truth from error. But He does not force man to receive truth. He leaves him free to choose the good or to choose the evil. If man resists evidence that is sufficient to guide his judgment in the right direction, and chooses evil once, he will do this more readily the second time. The third time he will still more eagerly withdraw himself from God and choose to stand on the side of Satan. And in this course he will continue until he is confirmed in evil, and believes the lie he has cherished as truth. His resistance has produced its harvest (MS 126, 1901).

(Revelation 3:21.) A Life and Death Question.—[Galatians 6:7, 8 quoted.] Wonderful truth! This is a two-edged sword which cuts both ways. This life and death question is before the whole human race. The choice we make in this life will be our choice through all eternity. We shall receive either eternal life or eternal death. There is no middle ground, no second probation. We are called upon to overcome in this life as Christ

overcame. Heaven has provided us with abundant opportunities and privileges, so that we may overcome as Christ overcame, and sit down with Him on His throne. But in order to be overcomers, there must be in our lives no petting of fleshly inclinations. All selfishness must be cut out by the roots (Letter 156, 1900).

14 (see EGW on ch. 3:24-26; John 3:14-17; 12:32; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Revelation 12:10). The Cross the Source of Power.—We behold in the cross of Christ our efficiency, our inexhaustible source of power (Letter 129, 1898).

The Guarantee of Success.—Behold in the cross of Christ the only sure guarantee for individual excellence and success. And the more the heart is wrapped up in Christ, the more secure is the treasure in the eternal world (Letter 129, 1897).

(Philippians 1:21.) Paul a Living Example for Every Christian.—Paul was a living example of what every true Christian should be. He lived for

God's glory. His words come sounding down the line to our time: "For to me to live is Christ." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He who was once a persecutor of Christ in the person of His saints now holds up before the world the cross of Christ. Paul's heart burned with a love for souls, and he gave all his energies for the conversion of men. There never lived a more self-denying, earnest, persevering worker. His life was Christ; he worked the works of Christ.

All the blessings he received were prized as so many advantages to be used in blessing others (The Review and Herald, May 29, 1900).

(Isaiah 45:21, 22; Matthew 16:24; John 1:29.) Look and Live.—Hanging upon the cross Christ was the gospel. Now we have a message, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." Will not our church members keep their eyes fixed on a crucified and risen Saviour, in whom their hopes of eternal life are

centered? This is our message, our argument, our doctrine, our warning to the impenitent, our encouragement for the sorrowing, the hope for every believer. If we can awaken an interest in men's minds that will cause them to fix their eyes on Christ, we may step aside, and ask them only to continue to fix their eyes upon the Lamb of God. They thus receive their lesson. Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. He whose eyes are fixed on Jesus will leave all. He will die to selfishness. He will believe in all the Word of God, which is so gloriously and wonderfully exalted in Christ.

As the sinner sees Jesus as He is, an all compassionate Saviour, hope and assurance take possession of his soul. The helpless soul is cast without any reservation upon Jesus. None can bear away from the vision of Christ Jesus crucified a lingering doubt. Unbelief is gone (MS 49, 1898).

(Psalm 85:10; see EGW on James 2:13.) The Cross of Christ Moves the World.—The cross of Calvary challenges, and will finally vanquish every

earthly and hellish power. In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction; for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection. Yea, more, it was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror.

Those who in the strength of Christ overcome the great enemy of God and man, will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above angels who have never fallen.

Christ declares, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." If the cross does not find an influence in its favor, it creates an influence. Through generation succeeding generation, the truth for this time is revealed as present truth. Christ on the cross was the medium whereby mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. This is the means that is to move the world (MS 56, 1899).

17. See EGW on Acts 9:8, 9.

Chapter 49

Ephesians

Chapter 1

Precious Instruction for All.—The whole of this first chapter of Ephesians contains precious instruction for every soul (MS 110, 1903).

1. See EGW on Revelation 2:1-5.

3-6 (John 1:12; Colossians 1:26, 27; 2:2, 3, 10). The Gospel Is True Science.—[Ephesians 1:3-6 quoted.] These divine heights the true believer may reach. All who will may see the mystery of godliness. But it is only through a correct understanding of Christ's mission and work that the possibility of being complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, is brought within our reach. His long human arm embraces the human family; His divine arm grasps the throne of the Infinite, that man may have the benefit of the infinite sacrifice made in his behalf. And to as

many as receive Him, He gives the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

There are many who are too exalted in their own opinion to receive this mystery. There is a science that the Most High would have these great men understand; but they cannot see the Truth, the Life, the Light of the world. Human science is not divine enlightenment. Divine science is the demonstration of the Spirit of God, inspiring implicit faith in Him. The men of the world suppose this faith to be beneath the notice of their great and intelligent minds, something too low to give attention to; but here they make a great mistake. It is altogether too high for their human intelligence to reach.

The gospel message is far from being opposed to true knowledge and intellectual attainments. It is itself true science, true intellectual knowledge. True wisdom is infinitely above the comprehension of the worldly wise. The hidden wisdom, which is Christ formed within, the hope of glory, is a

wisdom high as heaven. The deep principles of godliness are sublime and eternal. A Christian experience alone can help us to understand this problem, and obtain the treasures of knowledge which have been hidden in the counsels of God, but are now made known to all who have a vital connection with Christ. All who will may know of the doctrine (The Review and Herald, July 18, 1899).

4. See EGW on 2 Peter 1:10.

4, 5, 11 (Romans 8:29, 30; 1 Peter 1:2). God's Predestination.—The Father sets His love upon His elect people who live in the midst of men. These are the people whom Christ has redeemed by the price of His own blood; and because they respond to the drawing of Christ, through the sovereign mercy of God, they are elected to be saved as His obedient children. Upon them is manifested the free grace of God, the love wherewith He hath loved them. Everyone who will humble himself as a little child, who will receive and obey the Word of God with a child's

simplicity, will be among the elect of God....

[Ephesians 1:2-11 quoted.]

In the council of heaven, provision was made that men, though transgressors, should not perish in their disobedience, but, through faith in Christ as their substitute and surety, might become the elect of God, predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. God wills that all men should be saved; for ample provision has been made, in giving His only-begotten Son to pay man's ransom. Those who perish will perish because they refuse to be adopted as children of God through Christ Jesus (The Signs of the Times, January 2, 1893).

Eternal Covenant Given to Abraham.—
[Ephesians 1:3-5 quoted.] Before the foundations of the earth were laid the covenant was made that all who were obedient, all who should through the abundant grace provided become holy in character and without blame before God by appropriating that grace, should be children of God. This

covenant, made from eternity, was given to Abraham nineteen hundred years before Christ came. With what interest and what intensity did Christ in humanity study the human race to see if they would avail themselves of the provision offered (MS 9, 1896).

(Ezekiel 18:20-24; 33:12-16; Romans 11:4-6; 1:2; 2 Peter 1:10; 2:15-21.) No Unconditional Election.—[2 Peter 1:2-10 quoted.] Here is the condition of the only saving election in the Word of God. We are to become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. We are to add grace to grace, and the promise is, “If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

There is no such thing in the Word of God as unconditional election—once in grace, always in grace. In the second chapter of Second Peter the subject is made plain and distinct. After a history of some who followed an evil course, the

explanation is given: “which have forsaken the right way, ... following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.” ... [2 Peter 2:15-20 quoted.] Here is a class of whom the apostle warns, “For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.” ...

There is truth to be received if souls are saved. The keeping of the commandments of God is life eternal to the receiver. But the Scriptures make it plain that those who once knew the way of life and rejoiced in the truth are in danger of falling through apostasy, and being lost. Therefore there is need of a decided, daily conversion to God.

All who seek to sustain the doctrine of election, once in grace, always in grace, do this against a plain, “Thus saith the Lord.” ... [Ezekiel 18:21; 33:13 quoted.]

Those who have been truly converted have

been buried with Christ in the likeness of His death, and raised from the watery grave in the likeness of His resurrection, to walk in newness of life. By faithful obedience to the truth they are to make their calling and election sure (MS 57, 1900).

6 (ch. 2:7; see EGW on Matthew 3:16, 17; Luke 17:10; Ephesians 1:20, 21; Hebrews 4:15, 16; 9:24). Exalting Christ's Character.—The most gifted men on the earth could all find abundant employment, from now until the judgment, for all their God-given powers, in exalting the character of Christ. But they would still fail to present Him as He is. The mysteries of redemption, embracing Christ's divine-human character, His incarnation, His atonement for sin, could employ the pens and the highest mental powers of the wisest men from now until Christ shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven in power and great glory. But though these men should seek with all their power to give a representation of Christ and His work, the representation would fall far short of the reality....

The theme of redemption will employ the minds and tongues of the redeemed through everlasting ages. The reflection of the glory of God will shine forth forever and ever from the Saviour's face (Letter 280, 1904).

7. See EGW on ch. 4:7; Romans 7:12.

13. See EGW on Ezekiel 9:2-4.

15, 16. See EGW on Revelation 2:1-5.

17, 18. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 2:9.

18. See EGW on Zechariah 9:16.

20, 21. (verse 6; Hebrews 1:3). Accepted in the Beloved.—The Father gave all honor to His Son, seating Him at His right hand, far above all principalities and powers. He expressed His great joy and delight in receiving the crucified One, and crowning Him with glory and honor.

And all the favors He has shown to His Son in

His acceptance of the great atonement, are shown to His people. Those who have united their interests in love with Christ are accepted in the Beloved. They suffered with Christ in His deepest humiliation, and His glorification is of great interest to them, because they are accepted in Him. God loves them as He loves His Son. Christ, Emmanuel, stands between God and the believer, revealing the glory of God to His chosen ones, and covering their defects and transgressions with the garments of His own spotless righteousness (MS 128, 1897).

Chapter 2

1-6. See EGW on 2 Peter 1:4.

4-6. Quickening Power of Christ.—
[Ephesians 2:4-6 quoted.] As God raised Christ from the dead, that He might bring life and immortality to light through the gospel, and thus save His people from their sins, so Christ has raised fallen human beings from spiritual death, quickening them with His life, filling their hearts

with hope and joy (MS 89, 1903).

5, 6. See EGW on Revelation 5:6.

**7 (see EGW on ch. 1:6; 1 Corinthians 13:12).
A Theme for Study in Eternity.**—It will take the whole of eternity for man to understand the plan of redemption. It will open to him line upon line; here a little and there a little (MS 21, 1895).

7, 8. See EGW on ch. 4:7.

8. See EGW on Genesis 12:2, 3; Romans 4:3-5; 1 Peter 1:22.

8, 9 (Romans 3:27; see EGW on Luke 17:10; Romans 3:20-31). Boasting Out of Place.— [Ephesians 2:8, 9 quoted.] Human beings are in continual danger of boasting, of exalting self. Thus they reveal their weakness.... The great change that is seen in the life of a sinner after his conversion is not brought about through any human goodness; therefore all human boasting is entirely out of place (MS 36, 1904).

14, 15. See EGW on Matthew 27:51.

14-16 (Colossians 2:14-17; see EGW on Acts 15:1, 5). Ceremonies End at the Cross.—The ceremonies connected with the services of the temple, prefiguring Christ in types and shadows, were taken away at the time of the crucifixion, because on the cross type met antitype in the death of the true and perfect offering, the Lamb of God (MS 72, 1901).

(Romans 3:31.) Christ, Not the Law, Crucified.—The law of the ten commandments lives and will live through the eternal ages. The need for the service of sacrifices and offerings ceased when type met antitype in the death of Christ. In Him the shadow reached the substance. The Lamb of God was the complete and perfect offering.

The law of God will maintain its exalted character as long as the throne of Jehovah endures. This law is the expression of God's character....

Types and shadows, offerings and sacrifices had no virtue after Christ's death on the cross; but God's law was not crucified with Christ. Had it been, Satan would have gained all that he attempted to gain in heaven. For this attempt he was expelled from the heavenly courts. He fell, taking with him the angels he had deceived. And today he is deceiving human beings in regard to the law of God (MS 167, 1898).

(1 John 3:4.) An Infamous Lie of Satan.— God did not make the infinite sacrifice of giving His only-begotten Son to our world, to secure for man the privilege of breaking the commandments of God in this life and in the future eternal life. This is an infamous lie originated by Satan, which must be made to appear in its false, deceitful character. This law that Satan so much desires to have regarded null and void, is the great moral standard of righteousness. Any violation of it is an act of transgression against God, and will be visited with the penalty of the divine law. To all the inhabitants of the world who make void the law of Jehovah, and continue to live in transgression,

death must surely come (MS 72, 1901).

**18 (chs. 1:6; 3:12; Hebrews 4:15, 16; 9:14).
The Merits of Christ's Name.**—We have access to God through the merits of the name of Christ, and God invites us to bring to Him our trials and temptations; for He understands them all. He would not have us pour out our woes to human ears. Through the blood of Christ we may come to the throne of grace, and find grace to help in time of need. We may come with assurance, saying, “My acceptance is in the Beloved.” “For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.” As an earthly parent encourages his child to come to him at all times, so the Lord encourages us to lay before Him our wants and perplexities, our gratitude and love. Every promise is sure. Jesus is our Surety and Mediator, and has placed at our command every resource, that we may have a perfect character. The blood of Christ in ever-abiding efficacy is our only hope; for through His merits alone we have pardon and peace. When the efficiency of the blood of

Christ becomes a reality to the soul through faith in Christ, the believer will let his light shine forth in good works, in bringing forth fruits unto righteousness (The Youth's Instructor, September 22, 1892).

19-21 (1 Peter 2:4, 5). Lusterless Stones Without Value.—When I meditate upon this fountain of living power from which we may freely draw, I mourn that so many are losing the delight they might have in considering His goodness. To be sons and daughters of God, growing into an holy temple to the Lord, “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;” “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone”—this is our privilege.

How amazed is heaven at the present condition of the church that could be so much to the world if every stone were in its proper place, a living stone to emit light! A stone that does not shine is worthless. That which constitutes the value of our

churches is not dead, lusterless stones, but living stones, stones that catch the bright beams from the Chief Cornerstone, even the Sun of Righteousness—the bright glory in which are combined the beams of mercy and truth that have met together, of righteousness and peace that have kissed each other (Letter 15, 1892).

19-22. See EGW on 1 Kings 6:7.

Chapter 3

8, 9. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 12:1-4.

9. See EGW on Philippians 2:5-8.

9-11. See EGW on Romans 16:25.

12. See EGW on Hebrews 4:15, 16.

15. See EGW on Genesis 1:26.

17-19. See EGW on 1 John 3:1.

Chapter 4

A Lesson to Learn and Practice.—I point you to the words of the apostle Paul in the fourth chapter of Ephesians. This whole chapter is a lesson that God desires us to learn and practice (MS 55, 1903).

The Means of Unity Explained.—In the fourth chapter of Ephesians the plan of God is so plainly and simply revealed that all His children may lay hold upon the truth. Here the means which He has appointed to keep unity in His church, that its members may reveal to the world a healthy religious experience, is plainly declared (MS 67, 1907).

4-13. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 12.

7 (chs. 1:7; 2:7, 8; Romans 3:24; Titus 2:11).
What Is Grace?—The Lord saw our fallen condition; He saw our need of grace, and because He loved our souls, He has given us grace and peace. Grace means favor to one who is

undeserving, to one who is lost. The fact that we are sinners, instead of shutting us away from the mercy and love of God, makes the exercise of His love to us a positive necessity in order that we may be saved (The Signs of the Times, June 5, 1893).

8. See EGW on Acts 1:9.

13. See EGW on Proverbs 4:23; Philippians 1:21.

13, 15. See EGW on v. 30; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Revelation 18:1.

15. See EGW on 2 Peter 3:18.

20-24 (Hebrews 12:14; see EGW on 1 Thessalonians 4:3). The Secret of Holiness.—No man receives holiness as a birthright, or as a gift from any other human being. Holiness is the gift of God through Christ. Those who receive the Saviour become sons of God. They are His spiritual children, born again, renewed in righteousness and true holiness. Their minds are changed. With

clearer vision they behold eternal realities. They are adopted into God's family, and they become conformed to His likeness, changed by His Spirit from glory to glory. From cherishing supreme love for self, they come to cherish supreme love for God and for Christ....

Accepting Christ as a personal Saviour, and following His example of self-denial—this is the secret of holiness (The Signs of the Times, December 17, 1902).

(2 Corinthians 3:18.) Grace Essential Every Day and Hour.—The sanctification of the soul is accomplished through steadfastly beholding Him [Christ] by faith as the only-begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth. The power of truth is to transform heart and character. Its effect is not like a dash of color here and there upon the canvas; the whole character is to be transformed, the image of Christ is to be revealed in words and actions. A new nature is imparted. Man is renewed after the image of Christ in righteousness and true holiness.... The grace of Christ is essential every

day, every hour. Unless it is with us continually, the inconsistencies of the natural heart will appear and the life will present a divided service. The character is to be full of grace and truth. Wherever the religion of Christ works, it will brighten and sweeten every detail of life with more than an earthly joy and a higher than earthly peace (Letter 2a, 1892).

29. No Corrupt Communication.—We are counseled to let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth; but a corrupt communication is not simply something that is vile and vulgar. It is any communication that will eclipse from the mind the view of Christ, that will blot from the soul true sympathy and love. It is a communication in which the love of Christ is not expressed, but rather sentiments of an un-Christlike character (Letter 43, 1895).

30 (Colossians 2:10; Revelation 7:2, 3; 14:1-4; see EGW on Ezekiel 9:2-4; Acts 2:1-4, 14, 41). Reaching the Mark of Perfection.—The mighty power of the Holy Spirit works an entire

transformation in the character of the human agent, making him a new creature in Christ Jesus. When a man is filled with the Spirit, the more severely he is tested and tried, the more clearly he proves that he is a representative of Christ. The peace that dwells in the soul is seen on the countenance. The words and actions express the love of the Saviour. There is no striving for the highest place. Self is renounced. The name of Jesus is written on all that is said and done.

We may talk of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, but unless we prepare ourselves for its reception, of what avail are our works? Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for His fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us—the perfection of His character? When the Lord's people reach this mark, they will be sealed in their foreheads. Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare, "It is finished" (The Review and Herald, June 10, 1902).

32. Kind Words Never Lost.—It should be our aim to bring all the pleasantness possible into our lives, and to do all the kindness possible to those around us. Kind words are never lost. Jesus records them as if spoken to Himself. Sow the seeds of kindness, of love, and of tenderness, and they will blossom and bear fruit (MS 33, 1911).
Chapter 5

2 (see EGW on Romans 8:26, 34; Revelation 8:3, 4). The Acceptable Offering.—The offering that is made to God without a spirit of reverence and gratitude, He does not accept. It is the humble, grateful, reverential heart that makes the offering as a sweet-smelling savor, acceptable to God. The children of Israel might have given all their substance, but given in a spirit of self-sufficiency or Pharisaism, as though God were indebted to them for their favors, their offerings would have been unaccepted, and utterly contemned by Him. It is our privilege, by diligently trading on our Lord's goods, to increase our store, so that we may impart to those who have fallen into distress. Thus we become the Lord's right hand to work out His

benevolent purposes (MS 67, 1907).

2, 27. Christ's Life an Oblation to God.—“Christ also hath loved us,” writes Paul, “and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.” This is the oblation of a life-gift in our behalf, that we may be all that He desires us to be—representatives of Him, expressing the fragrance of His character, His own pure thoughts, His divine attributes as manifested in His sanctified human life, in order that others may behold Him in His human form, and, comprehending God's wonderful design, be led to desire to be like Christ—pure, undefiled, wholly acceptable to God, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing (MS 159, 1903).

9. See EGW on Galatians 5:22, 23.

23-25. See EGW on Revelation 19:7-9.

25 (John 1:4; Revelation 2:1; 21:23). Only One Source of Light.—Christ “loved the church, and gave himself for it.” It is the purchase of His

blood. The divine Son of God is seen walking amid the seven golden candlesticks. Jesus Himself supplies the oil to these burning lamps. He it is that kindles the flame. “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”

No candlestick, no church, shines of itself. From Christ emanates all its light. The church in heaven today is only the complement of the church on earth; but it is higher, grander—perfect. The same divine illumination is to continue through eternal ages. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the light thereof. No church can have light if it fails to diffuse the glory it receives from the throne of God (MS 1a, 1890).

25-27 (Malachi 3:17). The Case Which Contains His Jewels.—The church of Christ is very precious in His sight. It is the case which contains His jewels, the fold which encloses His flock (MS 115, 1899).

27 (John 14:15). Reaching the Condition of Sinlessness.—Those only who through faith in

Christ obey all of God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts (MS 122, 1901).

Chapter 6

4 (Colossians 3:20, 21). More Powerful Than Sermons.—Parents, God desires you to make your family a sample of the family in heaven. Guard your children. Be kind and tender with them. Father, mother, and children are to be joined together with the golden links of love. One well-ordered, well-disciplined family is a greater power in demonstrating the efficiency of Christianity than all the sermons in the world. When fathers and mothers realize how their children copy them, they will watch carefully every word and gesture (MS 31, 1901).

10-12 (see EGW on 2 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 12:17). Battling With Unseen Powers.—[Ephesians 6:10-18 quoted.] In the

Word of God are represented two contending parties that influence and control human agencies in our world. Constantly these parties are working with every human being. Those who are under God's control and who are influenced by the heavenly angels, will be able to discern the crafty workings of the unseen powers of darkness. Those who desire to be in harmony with the heavenly agencies should be intensely in earnest to do God's will. They must give no place whatever to Satan and his angels.

But unless we are constantly on guard, we shall be overcome by the enemy. Although a solemn revelation of God's will concerning us has been revealed to all, yet a knowledge of His will does not set aside the necessity of offering earnest supplications to Him for help, and of diligently seeking to cooperate with Him in answering the prayers offered. He accomplishes His purposes through human instrumentalities (MS 95, 1903).

11. Complete Armor Essential.—God wants every one to stand with the whole armor on, ready

for the great review (MS 63, 1908).

11-17. The Breastplate of Righteousness.—

We must put on every piece of the armor, and then stand firm. The Lord has honored us by choosing us as His soldiers. Let us fight bravely for Him, maintaining the right in every transaction. Rectitude in all things is essential to the welfare of the soul. As you strive for the victory over your own inclinations, He will help you by His Holy Spirit to be circumspect in every action, that you may give no occasion for the enemy to speak evil of the truth. Put on as your breastplate that divinely protected righteousness which it is the privilege of all to wear. This will protect your spiritual life (The Youth's Instructor, September 12, 1901).

Angels Near to Protect Us.—If we have on the heavenly armor, we shall find that the assaults of the enemy will not have power over us. Angels of God will be round about us to protect us (The Review and Herald, May 25, 1905).

12 (Ezekiel 28:17; Revelation 12:7-9; see

EGW on Psalm 17:13; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Galatians 5:17; Revelation 16:13-16). A Battle Against Principalities and Powers.—Could human beings know the number of the evil angels, could they know their devices and their activity, there would be far less pride and frivolity. Satan is the prince of demons. The evil angels over whom he rules do his bidding. Through them he multiplies his agencies throughout the world. He instigates all the evil that exists in our world.

But though the principalities and powers of darkness are both many in number and unceasing in activity, yet the Christian should never feel hopeless or discouraged. He may not hope to escape temptation through any lack of satanic efficiency. He who sent a legion to torture one human being cannot be repulsed by human wisdom or power alone.

Speaking of Satan, the Lord declares that he abode not in the truth. Once he was beautiful, radiant in light. But God's Word declares of him, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty."

Satan instigated others to rebel, and after they were cast out of heaven he bound them together in a confederacy to do all the evil possible to man, as the only means of striking God. Excluded from heaven, he resolved to be avenged by injuring the workmanship of God. Around the standard of rebellion that he planted, evil workers of all generations have rallied. Evil angels have united with evil men in a warfare against Christ's kingdom.

Satan's aim had been to reproduce his own character in human beings. No sooner was man created than Satan resolved to efface in him the image of God, and to place his stamp where God's should be. And he has succeeded in instilling into the heart of man the spirit of envy, of hatred, of ambition. In this world he has set up a kingdom of darkness, of which he, the leader in guilt, is prince. He desired to usurp the throne of God. Failing in this, he has worked in darkness, in crookedness, in deception, to usurp his place in the hearts of men. He has set up his throne between God and man, to

appropriate the adoration that belongs to God alone (MS 33, 1911).

(Hebrews 1:14.) Under Whose Control?—I want you to consider what kind of a position we should be left in if we had not the ministry of holy angels.... “We wrestle not against flesh and blood.” We meet the opposition of men, but there is someone behind that opposition. It is the prince of the powers of darkness with his evil angels that are constantly at work, and we want to consider, all of us, that our warfare is “against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world.”

Who is it that is ruling the world today, and who is it that have chosen to stand under the banner of the prince of darkness? Why, it is nearly the whole world at large. All the world that have not accepted Jesus Christ have chosen for their leader the prince of darkness; and just as soon as they stand under his banner, they have connection with evil angels. Either the evil angels or the angels of God are controlling the minds of men. Our

minds are given to the control of God, or to the control of the powers of darkness; and it will be well for us to inquire where we are standing today—whether under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel, or under the black banner of the powers of darkness.

We must make every preparation in our power in order to resist the enemy of souls. Every provision has been made; everything in God's plan has been arranged so that man should not be left to his own impulses, to his own finite powers, to carry on the warfare against the powers of darkness in his own finite strength; because he would certainly fail if he were thus left to himself (MS 1, 1890).

(Psalm 34:7.) Faithful Sentinels on Guard.—There are good and evil angels. Satan is ever on the alert to deceive and mislead. He is using every enchantment to allure men into the broad road of disobedience. He is working to confuse the senses with erroneous sentiments, and remove the landmarks by placing his false inscription on the signposts which God has established to point the

right way. It is because these evil agencies are striving to eclipse every ray of light from the soul that heavenly beings are appointed to do their work of ministry, to guide, guard, and control those who shall be heirs of salvation. None need despair because of the inherited tendencies to evil, but when the Spirit of God convicts of sin, the wrongdoer must repent and confess and forsake the evil. Faithful sentinels are on guard to direct souls in right paths (MS 8, 1900).

Constant Warfare of the Angels.—If the curtain could be rolled back, and each one could discern the constant activities of the heavenly family to preserve the inhabitants of the earth from Satan's seductive wiles, lest in their careless attitude they should be led astray through satanic strategy, they would lose a large degree of their self-confidence and self-assurance. They would see that the armies of heaven are in continual warfare with satanic agencies, to obtain victories in behalf of those who do not sense their danger, and who are passing on in unconscious indifference (MS 32, 1900).

16. See EGW on Colossians 3:3.

Chapter 50

Philippians

Chapter 1

21 (Galatians 2:20; see EGW comment on Galatians 6:14; Revelation 3:1). What Is a Christian?—When the apostle Paul, through the revelation of Christ, was converted from a persecutor to a Christian, he declared that he was as one born out of due time. Henceforward Christ was all and in all to him. “For to me to live is Christ,” he declared. This is the most perfect interpretation in a few words, in all the Scriptures, of what it means to be a Christian. This is the whole truth of the gospel. Paul understood what many seem unable to comprehend. How intensely in earnest he was! His words show that his mind was centered in Christ, that his whole life was bound up with his Lord. Christ was the author, the support, and the source of his life (The Review and Herald, October 19, 1897).

(2 Corinthians 11:26, 27; Ephesians 4:13.) Paul's Moral Stature—Paul attained to the full moral stature of a man in Christ Jesus. By what a process was his soul developed! His life was a continual scene of hardship, conflict, and toil [2 Corinthians 11:26, 27 quoted] (Letter 5, 1880).

Chapter 2

5 (John 8:12; see EGW comment on Titus 2:10). Light for the Humble—“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” If you strive in all humility to understand what is the mind of Christ, you will not be left in darkness. Jesus says, “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (The Youth's Instructor, October 13, 1892).

5-8 (John 1:1-3, 14; Hebrews 2:14-18; see EGW comment on Mark 16:6; Luke 22:44; 10:17, 18; Romans 5:12-19; 2 Corinthians 8:9; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 3:1-3). The Humble Circumstances of Christ's Life—After Christ had condescended to leave His high command, step

down from an infinite height and assume humanity, He could have taken upon Him any condition of humanity He might choose. But greatness and rank were nothing to Him, and He selected the lowest and most humble walk of life. The place of His birth was Bethlehem, and on one side His parentage was poor, but God, the owner of the world, was His Father.

No trace of luxury, ease, selfish gratification, or indulgence was brought into His life, which was a continual round of self-denial and self-sacrifice. In accordance with His humble birth, He had apparently no greatness or riches, in order that the humblest believer need not say Christ never knew the stress of pinching poverty. Had He possessed the semblance of outward show, of riches, of grandeur, the poorest class of humanity would have shunned His society; therefore He chose the lowly condition of the far greater number of the people (Manuscript 9, 1896).

Faith Not to Rest on Evidences of Sight—
Before Christ left heaven and came into the world

to die, He was taller than any of the angels. He was majestic and lovely. But when His ministry commenced, He was but little taller than the common size of men then living upon the earth. Had He come among men with His noble, heavenly form, His outward appearance would have attracted the minds of the people to Himself, and He would have been received without the exercise of faith....

The faith of men in Christ as the Messiah was not to rest on the evidences of sight, and they believe on Him because of His personal attractions, but because of the excellence of character found in Him, which never had been found, neither could be, in another (The Spirit of Prophecy 2:39).

(Colossians 2:9; Ephesians 3:9; 1 Peter 1:11, 12.) The Mystery Into Which Angels Desire to Look—In Christ dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead. But the only way in which He could reach men was to veil His glory by a garb of humanity. The angels beheld the hiding of His glory, that divinity might touch humanity. Christ ever retained the utmost hatred for sin, but He

loved the purchase of His blood. He suffered in the place of sinful men, taking them into union with Himself.

This is the mystery into which angels desire to look. They desire to know how Christ could live and work in a fallen world, how He could mingle with sinful humanity. It was a mystery to them that He who hated sin with intense hatred felt the most tender, compassionate sympathy for the beings that committed sin (The Signs of the Times, January 20, 1898).

(Colossians 1:26, 27.) An Unexplainable Blending—Christ could have done nothing during His earthly ministry in saving fallen man if the divine had not been blended with the human. The limited capacity of man cannot define this wonderful mystery—the blending of the two natures, the divine and the human. It can never be explained. Man must wonder and be silent. And yet man is privileged to be a partaker of the divine nature, and in this way he can to some degree enter into the mystery (Letter 5, 1889).

The Most Marvelous Thing in Earth or Heaven—When we want a deep problem to study, let us fix our minds on the most marvelous thing that ever took place in earth or heaven—the incarnation of the Son of God. God gave His Son to die for sinful human beings a death of ignominy and shame. He who was Commander in the heavenly courts laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and clothing His divinity with humanity, came to this world to stand at the head of the human race as the pattern-man. He humbled Himself to suffer with the race, to be afflicted in all their afflictions.

The whole world was His, but so completely did He empty Himself that during His ministry He declared, “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” [Hebrews 2:14-18 quoted] (Manuscript 76, 1903).

Christ Above All Law—The Son of God came voluntarily to accomplish the work of atonement.

There was no obligatory yoke upon Him; for He was independent and above all law.

The angels, as God's intelligent messengers, were under the yoke of obligation; no personal sacrifice of theirs could atone for fallen man. Christ alone was free from the claims of the law to undertake the redemption of the sinful race. He had power to lay down His life and to take it up again. "Being in the form of God," He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (The Southern Work, September 4, 1906).

(Exodus 3:5.) Christ's Humanity a Golden Chain—To redeem man, Christ became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden linked chain which binds our souls to Christ and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man, and He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man. And He was God in the flesh.

When we approach the subject of Christ's

divinity clothed with the garb of humanity, we may appropriately heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” We must come to the study of this subject with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, and will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth (Manuscript 67, 1898).

6 (John 1:1-3, 14; see EGW comment on John 1:1-3; Revelation 12:10). Equality Between Christ and the Father—Christ’s position with His Father is one of equality. This enabled Him to become a sin-offering for transgressors. He was fully sufficient to magnify the law and make it honorable (Manuscript 48, 1893).

7. See EGW comment on Matthew 26:42.

7, 8. See EGW comment on Hebrews 2:17.

9. See EGW comment on Matthew 27:21, 22,

29.

10, 11. See EGW comment on Romans 3:19.

12. See EGW comment on Galatians 5:6.

12, 13. See EGW comment on Romans 12:2; 2 Peter 1:5-11.

Chapter 3

5, 6. See EGW comment on Romans 7:7-9.

8 (John 17:3; Colossians 1:19; see EGW comment on Revelation 3:1). The Highest Science—In Christ all fullness dwells. He teaches us to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. This knowledge is the highest science that any man can reach. It is the sum of all true science. “This is life eternal,” Christ declared, “that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (Manuscript 125, 1907).

8-10. Paul's Estimate of God's Grace— [Philippians 3:8, 9 quoted.] The righteousness that before he [Paul] had thought worth so much was now worthless in his sight. His own righteousness was unrighteousness. The deep longing of his soul was, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."

He would know for himself the power of the Saviour's grace. He trusted in His power to save even him, who had persecuted the church of Christ. In his estimation no treasure could equal the value of the gift of the knowledge of Christ (Manuscript 89, 1903).

9. See EGW comment on Colossians 2:10.

12. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 12:1-4; 2 Peter 3:18.

12-15. See EGW comment on Revelation 3:18-21.

13. This One Thing I Do—Paul’s calling demanded from him service of varied kinds—working with his hands to earn his living, traveling from place to place, establishing churches, writing letters to the churches already established. Yet in the midst of these varied labors, he declared, “This one thing I do.”

One thing he kept steadfastly before him in all his work—to be faithful to Christ, who, when he was blaspheming His name and using every means in his power to make others blaspheme it, had revealed Himself to him. The one great purpose of his life was to serve and honor Him whose name had once filled him with contempt. His one desire was to win souls to the Saviour. Jew and Gentile might oppose and persecute him, but nothing could turn him from his purpose (Letter 107, 1904).

Chapter 4

8. See EGW comment on Psalm 19:14.

18. See EGW comment on Acts 10:1-4.

Chapter 51

Colossians

Chapter 1

Instruction of Highest Value—The manifestation of real goodness is the bearing of fruit in good works. This bears the endorsement of heaven. Read the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Colossians. The instruction it contains is of the highest value. The religion of Christ makes all who possess it truly benevolent. It countenances no littleness, no mean transactions. True Christians have a nobility which allows none of the cheap, covetous actions that are a disgrace to the doer of them (Letter 58, 1900).

What Our Churches Should Be—The first and second chapters of Colossians have been presented to me as an expression of what our churches in every part of the world should be (Letter 161, 1903).

9-11. God's Will May Be Known—[Colossians 1:9-11 quoted.] How complete this prayer is! There is no limit to the blessings that it is our privilege to receive. We may be “filled with the knowledge of his will.” The Holy Ghost would never have inspired Paul to offer this prayer in behalf of his brethren, if it had not been possible for them to receive an answer from God in accordance with the request. Since this is so, we know that God's will is manifested to His people as they need a clearer understanding of His will (Letter 179, 1902).

15 (Hebrews 1:3; see EGW comment on Acts 1:11). The Perfect Photograph of God—We have only one perfect photograph of God, and this is Jesus Christ (Manuscript 70, 1899).

15-17. See EGW comment on John 1:1-3.

17. See EGW comment on Acts 17:28.

19. See EGW comment on Philippians 3:8.

20. See EGW comment on John 3:14-17.

26. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 12:1-4.

26, 27. See EGW comment on John 1:1-3, 14; Romans 16:25; Ephesians 1:3-6; Philippians 2:5-8; 1 Timothy 3:16; Revelation 22:14.

Chapter 2

2, 3. See EGW comment on Ephesians 1:3-6.

8 (1 Timothy 4:1; 6:20; 2 Timothy 2:14-18, 23-26; see EGW comment on 1 John 2:18).
Nature Exalted Above Nature's God—No man can ever truly excel in knowledge and influence unless he is connected with the God of wisdom and power.... All the philosophies of human nature have led to confusion and shame when God has not been recognized as all in all....

The most profound intellects of the world, when not enlightened by God's Word, become bewildered and lost while trying to investigate the

matters of science and revelation. The Creator and His works are beyond finite comprehension, and men conclude that because they cannot explain the works and ways of God from natural causes, the Bible history is not reliable. Many are so intent upon excluding God from the exercise of sovereign will and power in the established order of the universe, that they demean man, the noblest of His creatures. The theories and speculations of philosophy would make us believe that man has come by slow degrees, not merely from a savage state, but from the very lowest form of the brute creation. They destroy man's dignity because they will not admit God's miraculous power.

God has illuminated human intellects, and poured a flood of light on the world through discoveries in art and science. But those who view these from a merely human standpoint will most assuredly come to wrong conclusions. The thorns of error, skepticism, and infidelity are disguised by being covered with the garments of philosophy and science. Satan has devised this ingenious manner of winning souls away from the living God, away

from the truth and religion. He exalts nature above nature's Creator (Manuscript 4, 1882).

Beware of Human Sophistries—The natural stubbornness of the human heart resists the light of truth. Its natural pride of opinion leads to independence of judgment and a clinging to human ideas and philosophy. There is with some a constant danger of becoming unsettled in the faith by the desire for originality. They wish to find some new and strange truth to present, to have a new message to bring to the people; but such a desire is a snare of the enemy to captivate the mind and lead away from the truth.

In our experience we shall see one and another start up with new theories in regard to what is truth, and, irrespective of what the influence of the advocacy of such theories may be on the mind of the hearers, they will launch out into the work of advocating their ideas, even though these teachings may be in opposition to the belief that has called out Seventh-day Adventists from the world, and made them what they are. The Lord would have

those who understand the reasons for their faith rest in their belief of that which they have been convinced is truth, and not be turned from the faith by the presentation of human sophistries.... [Colossians 2:8 quoted] (RH August 19, 1909).

Falsehood Mingled With Truth—As we near the end of time, falsehood will be so mingled with truth, that only those who have the guidance of the Holy Spirit will be able to distinguish truth from error. We need to make every effort to keep the way of the Lord. We must in no case turn from His guidance to put our trust in man. The Lord's angels are appointed to keep strict watch over those who put their faith in the Lord, and these angels are to be our special help in every time of need. Every day we are to come to the Lord with full assurance of faith, and to look to Him for wisdom.... Those who are guided by the Word of the Lord will discern with certainty between falsehood and truth, between sin and righteousness (Manuscript 43, 1907).

9 (1 Peter 1:18, 19; see EGW comment on

Matthew 27:45, 46; Mark 16:6; John 1:1-3, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15). **Sufferings of Deity**—“In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Men need to understand that Deity suffered and sank under the agonies of Calvary. Yet Jesus Christ whom God gave for the ransom of the world purchased the church with His own blood. The Majesty of heaven was made to suffer at the hands of religious zealots, who claimed to be the most enlightened people upon the face of the earth (Manuscript 153, 1898).

(Hebrews 1:3.) A Perfect Specimen of Sinless Humanity—In Christ is gathered all the glory of the Father. In Him is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of His person. The glory of the attributes of God are expressed in His character. The gospel is glorious because it is made up of His righteousness. It is Christ unfolded, and Christ is the gospel embodied. Every page of the New Testament Scriptures shines with His light. Every text is a diamond, touched and irradiated by the divine rays.

We are not to praise the gospel, but praise Christ. We are not to worship the gospel, but the Lord of the gospel. Christ is a perfect representation of God on the one hand, and a perfect specimen of sinless humanity on the other hand. Thus He has combined divinity and humanity (Manuscript 44, 1898).

9, 10 (John 1:16; Hebrews 4:15). Dwelling Upon Christ's Character—In Christ dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. This is why, although He was tempted in all points like as we are, He stood before the world, from His first entrance into it, untainted by corruption, though surrounded by it. Are we not also to become partakers of that fullness, and is it not thus, and thus only, that we can overcome as He overcame?

We lose much by not dwelling constantly upon the character of Christ (Manuscript 16, 1890).

10 (Zechariah 3:1-5; Philippians 3:9; see EGW comment on Matthew 22:37-39; Hebrews

2:17; 9:24). The Robe of Christ's Perfection—Through His sacrifice, human beings may reach the high ideal set before them, and hear at last the words, “Ye are complete in him,” not having your own righteousness, but the righteousness that He wrought out for you. Your imperfection is no longer seen; for you are clothed with the robe of Christ's perfection (Manuscript 125, 1902).

14. See EGW comment on Matthew 27:51.

14-17. See EGW comment on Acts 15:1, 5; Ephesians 2:14-16.

Chapter 3

1. See EGW comment on Romans 6:1-4.

2. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 4:18.

3 (see EGW comment on Galatians 2:20).
Rising Above the Fog of Doubt—The soul that loves God, rises above the fog of doubt; he gains a bright, broad, deep, living experience, and becomes

mEEK and Christlike. His soul is committed to God, hid with Christ in God. He will be able to stand the test of neglect, of abuse and contempt, because his Saviour has suffered all this. He will not become fretful and discouraged when difficulties press him, because Jesus did not fail or become discouraged. Every true Christian will be strong, not in the strength and merit of his good works, but in the righteousness of Christ, which through faith is imputed unto him. It is a great thing to be mEEK and lowly in heart, to be pure and undefiled, as was the Prince of heaven when He walked among men (The Review and Herald, December 3, 1889).

(Ephesians 6:16.) Shielded From the Darts of the Enemy—When self is hid in Jesus, we are shielded from the darts of the enemy (Letter 16a, 1895).

5. See EGW comment on 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

8. See EGW comment on Hebrews 12:1.

10. See EGW comment on Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 10:5; Hebrews 1:3.

20, 21. See EGW comment on Ephesians 6:4.

23. See EGW comment on Mark 12:30.

Chapter 4

6 (Titus 2:8). Powers of Speech Sanctified—As you arose from the watery grave at the time of your baptism, you professed to be dead, and declared that your life was changed—hid with Christ in God. You claimed to be dead to sin, and cleansed from your hereditary and cultivated traits of evil. In going forward in the rite of baptism, you pledged yourselves before God to remain dead to sin. Your mouth was to remain a sanctified mouth, your tongue a converted tongue. You were to speak of God's goodness, and to praise His holy name. Thus you were to be a great help and blessing to the church (Manuscript 95, 1906).

12, 13. See EGW comment on Revelation 3:15-

22.

Chapter 52

1 Thessalonians

Chapter 2

9. See EGW comment on Acts 18:1-3; 20:17-35.

Chapter 3

13. See EGW comment on Romans 6:19, 22.

Chapter 4

3 (1 Thessalonians 5:23; see EGW comment on John 17:17; Romans 6:19, 22; Ephesians 4:20-24; 2 Peter 3:18). The Fellowship of the Human and Divine—Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the fulfillment of the covenant God has made with those who bind themselves up with Him, to stand with Him, His Son, and His Spirit in holy fellowship. Have you been born again? Have you

become a new being in Christ Jesus? Then cooperate with the three great powers of heaven who are working in your behalf (Manuscript 11, 1901).

Evidences of Sanctification—True sanctification will be evidenced by a conscientious regard for all the commandments of God, by a careful improvement of every talent, by a circumspect conversation, by revealing in every act the meekness of Christ (The Review and Herald, October 5, 1886).

(1 John 2:3, 4.) The True Sign of Sanctification—Those who dishonor God by transgressing His law may talk sanctification, but it is of that value, and just as acceptable, as was the offering of Cain. Obedience to all the commandments of God is the only true sign of sanctification. Disobedience is the sign of disloyalty and apostasy (Manuscript 41, 1897).

(Romans 3:24-28.) Holiness Within the Reach of All—God has chosen men from eternity

to be holy. “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” God’s law tolerates no sin, but demands perfect obedience. The echo of God’s voice comes to us, ever saying. Holier, holier still. And ever our answer is to be, Yes, Lord, holier still. Holiness is within the reach of all who reach for it by faith, not because of their good works, but because of Christ’s merits. Divine power is provided for every soul struggling for the victory over sin and Satan.

Justification means the saving of a soul from perdition, that he may obtain sanctification, and through sanctification, the life of heaven. Justification means that the conscience, purged from dead works, is placed where it can receive the blessings of sanctification (Manuscript 113, 1902).

Sanctification and Communion—
Sanctification means habitual communion with God (The Review and Herald, March 15, 1906).

7. See EGW comment on Romans 6:19, 22.

13, 14. Errors Regarding Christ's Coming—

There was still another reason for Paul's communication to these brethren. Some who were newly brought into the faith had fallen into errors in regard to those who had died since their conversion. They had hoped that all would witness the second coming of Christ; but they were in great sorrow as one after another of the believers fell under the power of death, making it impossible for them to behold that desirable event—the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven.

Some, who had fallen into the error that Christ was to come in their day, imbibed the fanatical idea that it was praiseworthy to show their faith by giving up all business, and resigning themselves to idle waiting for the great event which they thought was near (*Sketches from the Life of Paul*, 110).

16 (see EGW comment on Matthew 28:2-4).

The Last Trump—When Christ comes to gather to Himself those who have been faithful, the last trump will sound, and the whole earth, from the summits of the loftiest mountains to the lowest

recesses of the deepest mines, will hear. The righteous dead will hear the sound of the last trump, and will come forth from their graves, to be clothed with immortality, and to meet their Lord (SpT Series B, No. 2, p. 24).

16, 17. See EGW comment on Isaiah 26:19; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55; Revelation 1:7.

Chapter 5

17. See EGW comment on Proverbs 4:23.

19-21. See EGW comment on 1 John 4:1.

23 (1 Thessalonians 4:3; John 17:17). The Whole Man to Be Sanctified—The truth must sanctify the whole man—his mind, his thoughts, his heart, his strength. His vital powers will not be consumed upon his own lustful practices. These must be overcome, or they will overcome him (Letter 108, 1898).

Clearing Away the Miasma of Sin—

Sanctification—how many understand its full meaning? The mind is befogged by sensual malaria. The thoughts need purifying. What might not men and women have been had they realized that the treatment of the body has everything to do with the vigor and purity of mind and heart.

The true Christian obtains an experience which brings holiness. He is without a spot of guilt upon the conscience, or a taint of corruption upon the soul. The spirituality of the law of God, with its limiting principles, is brought into his life. The light of truth irradiates his understanding. A glow of perfect love for the Redeemer clears away the miasma which has interposed between his soul and God. The will of God has become his will, pure, elevated, refined, and sanctified. His countenance reveals the light of heaven. His body is a fit temple for the Holy Spirit. Holiness adorns his character. God can commune with him; for soul and body are in harmony with God (Letter 139, 1898).

His by Creation and Redemption—God would have us realize that He has a right to mind,

soul, body, and spirit—to all that we possess. We are His by creation and by redemption. As our Creator, He claims our entire service. As our Redeemer, He has a claim of love as well as of right—of love without a parallel. This claim we should realize every moment of our existence. Before believers and unbelievers we must constantly recognize our dependence upon God. Our bodies, our souls, our lives, are His, not only because they are His free gift, but because He constantly supplies us with His benefits, and gives us strength to use our faculties. By returning to Him His own, by willingly laboring for Him, we show that we recognize our dependence upon Him (The Review and Herald, November 24, 1896).

Jesus asks us to consecrate ourselves to Him. He has placed signal honor upon the human race; for He says, “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” Shall we not, then, give to Christ that which He has died to redeem? If you will do this, He will quicken your conscience, renew your heart, sanctify your affections, purify

your thoughts, and set all your powers at work for Him. Every motive and every thought will be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ.

Those who are sons of God will represent Christ in character. Their works will be perfumed by the infinite tenderness, compassion, love, and purity of the Son of God. And the more completely mind and body are yielded to the Holy Spirit, the greater will be the fragrance of our offering to Him (The Review and Herald, November 24, 1896).

Chapter 53

2 Thessalonians

Chapter 2

1-4 (see EGW comment on 1 John 2:18). The Man of Sin and the Second Advent—In the days of the apostle Paul, the Thessalonian brethren were laboring under the erroneous impression that the Lord would return in their day, and Paul wrote to correct this false impression, stating what events must transpire before the advent could take place. He declared: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

The man of sin was to arise, and do his work of exaltation and blasphemy, before the brethren could look for the coming of Christ. That great

event was to be preceded by a falling away. There would be revealed a form of Antichrist, and the leaven of apostasy was to work with increasing power to the end of time (The Review and Herald, July 31, 1888).

3, 4 (Matthew 5:17, 18; see EGW comment on 1 Timothy 2:5; Revelation 13:11-17; 14:8, 9-12; Revelation 18:1-5). The Representative of Satan—There is one pointed out in prophecy as the man of sin. He is the representative of Satan. Taking the suggestions of Satan concerning the law of God, which is as un-changeable as His throne, this man of sin comes in and represents to the world that he has changed that law, and that the first day of the week instead of the seventh is now the Sabbath. Professing infallibility, he claims the right to change the law of God to suit his own purposes. By so doing, he exalts himself above God, and leaves the world to infer that God is fallible. If it were indeed true that God had made a rule of government that needed to be changed, it would certainly show fallibility.

But Christ declared that not one jot or tittle of the law should fail until heaven and earth should pass away. The very work that He came to do was to exalt that law, and show to the created worlds and to heaven that God is just, and that His law need not be changed. But here is Satan's right-hand man ready to carry on the work that Satan commenced in heaven, that of trying to amend the law of God. And the Christian world has sanctioned his efforts by adopting this child of the Papacy—the Sunday institution. They have nourished it, and will continue to nourish it, until Protestantism shall give the hand of fellowship to the Roman power.

Then there will be a law against the Sabbath of God's creation, and then it is that God will do His "strange work" in the earth. He has borne long with the perversity of the race; He has tried to win them to Himself. But the time will come when they shall have filled their measure of iniquity; and then it is that God will work. This time is almost reached. God keeps a record with the nations: the figures are swelling against them in the books of heaven; and

when it shall have become a law that the transgression of the first day of the week shall be met with punishment, then their cup will be full (The Review and Herald, March 9, 1886).

The Man of Sin and the Rival Sabbath—The man of sin has exalted himself against God, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself to be God. He has trampled underfoot God's great memorial of creation, established to commemorate His work; and in its stead he has presented to the world a common working day. This day he has set up as a rival Sabbath, to be observed and honored. Thus the world has been turned against God; for the Lord declares that He has sanctified the day of His rest.

But though every member of the human family should accept this child of the Papacy, in no case would this invalidate the holy Sabbath of Jehovah. Those who accept the false sabbath exalt the man of sin, and assail the government of God. But the man of sin cannot annul what God has declared shall stand fast forever. The work now to be done

in our world is to exalt the law of the Lord, and call the attention of the people to it. The time has come when the truth is to be proclaimed against falsehood and error (The Review and Herald, July 26, 1898).

God's Estimate of the Papal Power—By their treatment of His Word the popes have exalted themselves above the God of heaven. This is the reason that in prophecy the papal power is specified as the “man of sin.” Satan is the originator of sin. The power that he causes to alter any one of God's holy precepts, is the man of sin. Under Satan's special direction the papal power has done this very work.

Although those standing at the head of the Papacy claim to have great love for God, He looks upon them as haters of Him. They have turned the truth of God into a lie. Tampering with God's commandments and placing in their stead human traditions, is the work of Satan, and will divorce the religious world from God; for He declares, “I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the

iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.” God will fulfill this word (Manuscript 126, 1901).

7-12 (see EGW comment on Matthew 7:21-23; Revelation 14:9-12; 17:1-5). Satan’s Miracles “Right in your Sight.”—The time is coming when Satan will work miracles right in your sight, claiming that he is Christ; and if your feet are not firmly established upon the truth of God, then you will be led away from your foundation. The only safety for you is to search for truth as for hid treasures. Dig for the truth as you would for treasures in the earth, and present the word of God, the Bible, before your Heavenly Father and say, Enlighten me; teach me what is truth.... You should store the mind with the word of God; for you may be separated, and placed where you will not have the privilege of meeting with the children of God (The Review and Herald, April 3, 1888).

(2 Corinthians 11:14; James 5:13-16; Revelation 13:13, 14.) Miracle-working

Deceptions of Satan—None need be deceived. The law of God is as sacred as His throne, and by it every man who cometh into the world is to be judged. There is no other standard by which to test character. “If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Now, shall the case be decided according to the Word of God, or shall man’s pretensions be credited?

Says Christ, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” If those through whom cures are performed, are disposed, on account of these manifestations, to excuse their neglect of the law of God and continue in disobedience, though they have power to any and every extent, it does not follow that they have the great power of God. On the contrary, it is the miracle-working power of the great deceiver. He is a transgressor of the moral law, and employs every device that he can master to blind men to its true character. We are warned that in the last days he will work with signs and lying wonders. And he will continue these wonders until the close of probation, that he may point to them as evidence that he is an angel of light and not of darkness (The

Review and Herald, November 17, 1885).

(Hebrews 12:26, 27; Revelation 12:11; 14:5.)
Ordeal of the Sifting Time—Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths.... The remnant that purify their souls by obeying the truth gather strength from the trying process, exhibiting the beauty of holiness amid the surrounding apostasy (Letter 55, 1886).

Chapter 3

8. See EGW comment on Acts 18:1-3; 20:17-35.

10. Complete Dedication of Paul—If any man will not work, neither shall he eat, applies to the spiritual, religious life as well as to earthly, temporal things.

Paul not only endured the taxation of the physical powers in common labor without one feeling of either belittling or degrading himself, and without discontent; but he bore the burden while at the same time exerting the activities of his mind to advance and attain in spiritual knowledge. He taught, and he practiced the lessons he taught. He had repeated visions from God, and from the light given he knew every man must be a worker with brain and muscle and sinew. This faithful disciple of Christ, and apostle of Jesus Christ, was dedicated without reserve to the service of God (Letter 2, 1889).

10, 14, 15 (Romans 12:11). Idleness a Sin—The apostle in his day considered idleness a sin, and those who indulge this evil today disgrace their profession. They will criticize the faithful worker, and bring reproach upon the gospel of Christ.

Those who would believe, they turn from the way of truth and righteousness.

We should be warned not to associate with those who by their course of action lay a stumbling block in the way of others. “If any man obey not our word by this epistle,” the apostle says, “note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.” If he refuses the admonition of the Lord’s servants, and follows his own will and judgment under the inspiration of his leader, Satan, he will bring ruin upon himself, and must bear his own sin.

The custom of supporting men and women in idleness by private gifts or church money encourages them in sinful habits, and this course should be conscientiously avoided. Every man, woman, and child should be educated to do practical, useful work. All should learn some trade. It may be tentmaking, or it may be business in other lines; but all should be educated to use the members of their body to some purpose, and God

is ready and willing to increase the adaptability of all who will educate themselves to industrious habits.

If a man in good physical health has property, and has no need of entering into employment for his own support, he should labor to acquire means that he may advance the cause and work of God. He is to be “not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.” God will bless all who will guard their influence in regard to others in this respect (Manuscript 93, 1899).

Chapter 54

1 Timothy

Chapter 1

9, 10. See EGW comment on Romans 8:15-21.

15. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 12:1-4.

19, 20. The Enemies of Paul—These men had departed from the faith of the gospel, and furthermore had done despite to the Spirit of grace by attributing to the power of Satan the wonderful revelations made to Paul. Having rejected the truth, they were filled with hatred against it, and sought to destroy its faithful advocate (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 305).

Chapter 2

5 (John 1:1-3, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14-18; see EGW comment on Acts

15:11). Acting in God's Stead—Adam and Eve were given a probation in which to return to their allegiance; and in this plan of benevolence all their posterity were embraced. After the Fall, Christ became Adam's instructor. He acted in God's stead toward humanity, saving the race from immediate death. He took upon Him the work of mediator between God and man. In the fullness of time He was to be revealed in human form. He was to take His position at the head of humanity by taking the nature but not the sinfulness of man (The Signs of the Times, May 29, 1901).

(Acts 4:12; Hebrews 7:25; 9:22; 1 John 1:7-9.) Faith in the Blood of Christ—God is approached through Jesus Christ, the Mediator, the only way through which He forgives sins. God cannot forgive sins at the expense of His justice, His holiness, and His truth. But He does forgive sins and that fully. There are no sins He will not forgive in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the sinner's only hope, and if he rests here in sincere faith, he is sure of pardon and that full and free. There is only one channel and that is

accessible to all, and through that channel a rich and abundant forgiveness awaits the penitent, contrite soul and the darkest sins are forgiven.

These lessons were taught to the chosen people of God thousands of years ago, and repeated in various symbols and figures, that the work of truth might be riveted in every heart, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. The great lesson embodied in the sacrifice of every bleeding victim, impressed in every ceremony, inculcated by God Himself, was that through the blood of Christ alone is forgiveness of sins; yet how many carry the galling yoke and how few feel the force of this truth and act upon it personally, and derive the blessings they might receive through a perfect faith in the blood of the Lamb of God....

Justice demanded the sufferings of man; but Christ rendered the sufferings of a God. He needed no atonement of suffering for Himself; all His sufferings were for us; all His merits and holiness were open to fallen man, presented as a gift (Letter 12, 1892).

(Matthew 11:27; John 14:9; 17:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4; Hebrews 8:1; 9:11-14, 24; Hebrews 13:12; 1 John 2:1.) Christ the One True Mediator—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. Our present position therefore is like that of the Israelites, standing in the outer court, waiting and looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.... Type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. The great High Priest has made the only sacrifice that will be of any value.

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. No prince or monarch dare venture within the holy enclosure.

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. Christ has declared, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." He will save to the uttermost all who come to Him in faith. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. This makes of no avail the offering of mass, one of the falsehoods of Romanism.

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. They are only human. One day they will

see that their deceptive doctrines have led to crimes of every stripe and type, to adultery, robbery, falsehood. They are responsible for many terrible wrongs which men have perpetrated upon their fellow men.

For all this the Judge of the whole earth will call them to account at His bar. The case of every soul that has been imprisoned, every human being that has been tortured, has been noted. The recording angel has sustained the martyrs who would not worship idols, or allow their minds and consciences to become the instruments of men who were instigated by Satan to perform wicked deeds. These things are done under the rule of the man of sin, who has placed himself as God, sitting in the temple of God, and taking upon himself the prerogatives of God, that he may carry out his own schemes.

The mightiest human being, whatever may be his claim, is not infinite. He cannot understand infinity. Christ plainly stated, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father." A teacher was once

endeavor- ing to present the exaltation of God, when a voice was heard, saying, “We cannot as yet understand who He is.” The teacher nobly replied, “Were I able fully to set forth God, I should either be a God myself, or God Himself would cease to be God.”

“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me”—not through confessionals or priests or popes, but through Me, your Saviour. “Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” This is the absolute Godhead. The mightiest created intellect cannot comprehend Him; words from the most eloquent tongue fail to describe Him. Silence is eloquence.

Christ represented His Father to the world, and He represents before God the chosen ones in whom He has restored the moral image of God. They are His heritage. To them He says, “He that hath seen

me hath seen the Father.” “No man knoweth ... the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” No priest, no religionist, can reveal the Father to any son or daughter of Adam.

Men have only one Advocate, one Intercessor, who is able to pardon transgression. Shall not our hearts swell with gratitude to Him who gave Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins? Think deeply upon the love the Father has manifested in our behalf, the love that He has expressed for us. We cannot measure this love. Measurement there is none. We can only point to Calvary, to the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. It is an infinite sacrifice. Can we comprehend and measure infinity? ...

[John 17:19-21, 24-26 quoted.]

Here we see the great Intercessor presenting His petition to His Father. No middle man comes between the sinner and Christ. No dead prophet, no buried saint is seen. Christ Himself is our Advocate. All that the Father is to His Son, He is to

those whom His Son in His humanity represented. In every line of His work Christ acted as a representative of the Father. He lived as our substitute and surety. He labored as He would have His followers labor, unselfishly appreciating the value of every human being for whom He suffered and died (Manuscript 128, 1897).

Twice a Representative—Christ is the representative of God to man and the representative of man to God. He came to this world as man's substitute and surety, and He is fully able to save all who repent and return to their allegiance. Because of His righteousness, He is able to place man on vantage ground. Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us. He gave His precious, innocent life to save guilty human beings from eternal ruin, that through faith in Him they might stand guiltless before the throne of God (Manuscript 29, 1899).

(John 10:30.) Why Only One Mediator—Jesus alone could give security to God; for He was equal to God. He alone could be a mediator

between God and man; for He possessed divinity and humanity (The Review and Herald, April 3, 1894).

(Romans 8:34.) A Golden Chain Fastened to God's Throne—The intercession of Christ is as a golden chain fastened to the throne of God. He has turned the merit of His sacrifice into prayer. Jesus prays, and by prayer succeeds (Manuscript 8, 1892).

7 (Isaiah 52:8). The Truth as It Is in Jesus—If we teach the truth according to our own ways, we shall see that there will not always be perfect harmony as there should be. But if we teach the truth as it is in Jesus, we shall teach it in the spirit of the true Educator; and we will not have various opinions, and cling to our own ideas with tenacity, but we will see eye to eye. And while we thus teach, believing that Jesus will help us to present the truth as it is in Him, then we may expect His help, and we will have it (The Review and Herald, May 10, 1887).

9, 10. See EGW comment on Numbers 15:38, 39; 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

Chapter 3

1-13 (John 10:11-15). Carefulness in Selecting Church Leaders—May the Lord impress upon the minds and hearts of all connected with the sacred work of God, the importance of ascertaining whether those who are to minister as deacons and elders are suitable men to be entrusted with the flock of God. Jesus calls Himself the “Good Shepherd.” He does this in contrast with those who occupy positions of trust in connection with the church, but who have no right to these places, because they put a wrong mold upon the work. What is natural will appear.

Compare the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for His sheep, with those who are filled with self-esteem, puffed up, dictatorial, loving to rule in the church. The prophets have specified Christ’s attributes. They foretold Him as a gentle Shepherd, who would carry the lambs in His bosom. There

are others pointed out by prophecy, who have accepted the position of leaders and religious instructors, whom the Word of God rebukes for their neglect, in their ignorance, to do the work which they should have been doing in their places of responsibility (Manuscript 176, 1898).

16 (Colossians 1:26, 27; Romans 16:25; see EGW comment on John 1:1-3, 14; 2 Timothy 3:16). Beyond the Ken of Man—Great is the mystery of godliness. There are mysteries in the life of Christ that are to be believed, even though they cannot be explained. The finite mind cannot fathom the mystery of godliness (Letter 65, 1905).

(1 Peter 1:11, 12.) The Incarnation a Painful Process—The work of redemption is called a mystery, and it is indeed the mystery by which everlasting righteousness is brought to all who believe. The race in consequence of sin was at enmity with God. Christ, at an infinite cost, by a painful process, mysterious to angels as well as to men, assumed humanity. Hiding His divinity, laying aside His glory, He was born a babe in

Bethlehem. In human flesh He lived the law of God, that He might condemn sin in the flesh, and bear witness to heavenly intelligences that the law was ordained to life and to ensure the happiness, peace, and eternal good of all who obey. But the same infinite sacrifice that is life to those who believe is a testimony of condemnation to the disobedient, speaking death and not life (Manuscript 29, 1899).

Chapter 4

1. See EGW comment on Colossians 2:8; 1 John 4:1.

8. See EGW comment on Proverbs 3:17.

12 (2 Timothy 3:14, 15). The Humble Dependence of Timothy—In the history of Timothy are found precious lessons. He was a mere lad when chosen by God as a teacher; but so fixed were his principles by a correct education that he was fitted for this important position. He bore his responsibilities with Christlike meekness. He was

faithful, steadfast, and true, and Paul selected him to be his companion in labor and travel. Lest Timothy should meet with slights because of his youthfulness, Paul wrote to him, “Let no man despise thy youth.” He could safely do this, because Timothy was not self-sufficient, but continually sought guidance.

There are many youth who move from impulse rather than from judgment. But Timothy inquired at every step, “Is this the way of the Lord?” He had no specially brilliant talents, but he consecrated all his abilities to the service of God, and this made his work valuable. The Lord found in him a mind that He could mold and fashion for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

God will use the youth today as He used Timothy, if they will submit to His guidance. It is your privilege to be God’s missionaries. He calls upon you to work for your companions. Seek out those you know to be in danger, and in the love of Christ try to help them. How are they to know the Savior unless they see His virtues in His followers

(The Youth's Instructor, February 13, 1902)?

13-16 (2 Timothy 2:1-3, 7, 15). Intellectual Power Not Enough—[1 Timothy 4:13-16 quoted.] The charge given to Timothy should be heeded in every household, and become an educating power in every family and in every school.... [2 Timothy 2:1-3, 7, 15 quoted.] ...

The highest aim of our youth should not be to strain after something novel. There was none of this in the mind and work of Timothy. They should bear in mind that, in the hands of the enemy of all good, knowledge alone may be a power to destroy them. It was a very intellectual being, one who occupied a high position among the angelic throng, that finally became a rebel; and many a mind of superior intellectual attainments is now being led captive by his power (The Youth's Instructor, May 5, 1898).

16. "Take Heed Unto Thyself."—"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." Thyself needs the first attention. First give yourself to the Lord

for sanctification to His service. A godly example will tell more for the truth than the greatest eloquence unaccompanied by a well-ordered life. Trim the lamp of the soul, and replenish it with the oil of the Spirit. Seek from Christ that grace, that clearness of comprehension, which will enable you to do successful work. Learn from Him what it means to labor for those for whom He gave His life. The most talented worker can do little unless Christ is formed within, the hope and strength of the life (The Review and Herald, August 19, 1902).

Chapter 5

13. See EGW comment on Exodus 31:1-6.

24, 25 (Revelation 20:12, 13). The Disposal of Sin—Some men's sins are open beforehand, confessed in penitence, and forsaken, and they go beforehand to judgment. Pardon is written over against the names of these men. But other men's sins follow after, and are not put away by repentance and confession, and these sins will stand registered against them in the books of

heaven (Manuscript 1a, 1890).

Chapter 6

10. See EGW comment on Matthew 26:14-16.

12 (see EGW comment on Galatians 5:6). Precious Promises—“Lay hold on eternal life.” Come to Jesus in faith. Ask, and ye shall receive. The forgiveness of sins is promised to him who repents, justification to him who believes, and the crown of life to him who is faithful unto death (Letter 33, 1895).

19. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 9:6.

20 (Colossians 2:8; see EGW comment on 1 John 2:18). Science and Religion Shed Light on Each Other—God is the foundation of everything. All true science is in harmony with His works; all true education leads to obedience to His government. Science opens new wonders to our view; she soars high and explores new depths; but she brings nothing from her research that conflicts

with divine revelation. Ignorance may seek to support false views of God by appeals to science; but the book of nature and the written Word do not disagree; each sheds light on the other. Rightly understood, they make us acquainted with God and His character by teaching us something of the wise and beneficent laws through which He works (The Signs of the Times, March 20, 1884).

Sophistry of False Science—We need to guard continually against the sophistry in regard to geology and other branches of science falsely so-called, which have not one semblance of truth. The theories of great men need to be carefully sifted of the slightest trace of infidel suggestions. One tiny seed sown by teachers in our schools, if received by the students, will raise a harvest of unbelief. The Lord has given all the brilliancy of intellect that man possesses, and it should be devoted to His service (The Signs of the Times, March 1, 1898).

Chapter 55

2 Timothy

Chapter 1

1, 2 (2 Timothy 4:6-9). Paul's Second Letter to Timothy—This letter was written to Timotheus, the first bishop of the church at Ephesus, after Paul had been brought before Nero the second time to witness with his life to the faith he held. In placing on record this account of his trials through men who turned from the faith, Paul speaks words which should encourage our hearts as we pass over the same ground (The Signs of the Times, July 18, 1907).

Affection Between Paul and Timothy—The apostle's speech had gained him many friends, and he was visited by persons of rank, who accounted his blessing of greater value than the favor of the emperor of the world. But there was one friend for whose sympathy and companionship he longed in those last trying days. That friend was Timothy, to

whom he had committed the care of the church at Ephesus, and who had therefore been left behind when Paul made his last journey to Rome.

The affection between Paul and Timothy began with Timothy's conversion; and the tie had strengthened as they had shared the hopes, the perils, and the toils of missionary life, till they seemed to be as one. The disparity in their ages and the difference in their characters made their love for each other more earnest. The ardent, zealous, indomitable spirit of Paul found repose and comfort in the mild, yielding, retiring disposition of Timothy. The faithful ministration and tender love of this tried companion had brightened many a dark hour in the apostle's life. All that Melancthon was to Luther, all that a son could be to a loved and honored father, the youthful Timothy was to the tried and lonely Paul (The Youth's Instructor, July 10, 1902).

9. See EGW comment on Luke 17:10; Ephesians 2:8, 9.

10. See EGW comment on Hebrews 2:14.

12. A Healthful Religious Experience—“I know whom I have believed.” He [Paul] does not live under a cloud of doubt, groping his way in the mist and darkness of uncertainty, complaining of hardship and trials. A voice of gladness, strong with hope and courage, sounds all along the line down to our time. Paul had a healthful religious experience. The love of Christ was his grand theme, and the constraining power that governed him (*The Signs of the Times*, September 8, 1885).

Chapter 2

1-3, 7, 15. See EGW comment on 1 Timothy 4:13-16.

1-4. See EGW comment on 2 Timothy 4:1-7.

14. Contentions With a Purpose—[2 Timothy 2:11-14 quoted.] What does that mean? It means that there may be contentions over words and over ideas, but they should be to some purpose, they

should be to break down the stubbornness and the opposition that is in human hearts in order that their spirits may be softened and subdued, so that when the seeds of truth are dropped into the soil of the heart, they may take root there (Manuscript 13, 1888).

14-16 (2 Timothy 2:23-26; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Colossians 2:8; see EGW comment on Revelation 14:1-4; 18:1). Cease All Idle Speculation—[2 Timothy 2:14 quoted.] This is a warning appropriate for this time. Then comes a charge which will often need to be given: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Learn to take the truths that have been revealed, and to handle them in such a way that they will be food for the flock of God.

We shall meet those who allow their minds to wander into idle speculations about things of which nothing is said in the Word of God. God has spoken in the plainest language upon every subject that affects the salvation of the soul. But He desires

us to avoid all day-dreaming, and He says, Go work today in My vineyard. The night cometh wherein no man can work. Cease all idle curiosity; watch, and work, and pray. Study the truths that have been revealed. Christ desires to break up all vacant reveries, and He points us to the fields ripe for the harvest. Unless we work earnestly, eternity will overwhelm us with its burden of responsibility (The Review and Herald, February 5, 1901).

16-18 (Colossians 2:8). Grasping at the Shadows—We have encouragement in the Scriptures that if we walk humbly before God, we shall receive instruction. But we are warned against undue curiosity. “Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness,” leading into paths of supposition and imagination, with which we have nothing to do. These are vain, unessential theories of human creation, which keep the mind dwelling upon nothingness. They have in them nothing sure or substantial. Of those who advance these theories, Paul says: “Their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred,

saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.”

In the days of the apostles the most foolish heresies were presented as truth. History has been and will be repeated. There will always be those who, though apparently conscientious, will grasp at the shadow, preferring it to the substance. They take error in the place of truth, because error is clothed with a new garment, which they think covers something wonderful. But let the covering be removed, and nothingness appears (The Review and Herald, February 5, 1901).

20 (Matthew 13:47, 48). Both Good and Bad in the Church—[2 Timothy 2:19, 20 quoted.] The “great house” represents the church. In the church will be found the vile as well as the precious. The net cast into the sea gathers both good and bad (The Review and Herald, February 5, 1901).

21. Empty Vessels Needed—What kind of vessels are meet for the Master’s use?—Empty vessels. When we empty the soul of every

defilement, we are ready for use (The Review and Herald, February 28, 1899).

Purification an Individual Work—“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.” He is not to accept theories that, if received, would corrupt. He is to purify himself from all unrighteous sentiments, which, if received, would lead away from the sure Word of God to unstable human devisings, degradation, and corruption. He is to resist the working of the enemy through vessels of dishonor. By searching the Scriptures with much prayer, he will find a path to follow, not the path of man, but a path that leads to heaven.

The work of purification is an individual work. No one can do this work for another. “If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use.” The Spirit of God will work through sanctified human agencies, leading them to work aright. Ability and grace will be provided. Men

will be filled with an earnest desire to preach the truths of the gospel, firmly, decidedly, and in a clear manner (The Review and Herald, February 5, 1901).

23-26 (2 Timothy 2:14-18; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Colossians 2:8; Revelation 7:3, 4; see EGW comment on Revelation 3:1-3; 14:14). No Place for Prying Curiosity—There are some things which we need to guard. Letters will come asking questions in regard to the sealing of the people of God, who will be sealed, how many, and other prying questions. I think we must tell them to read and speak of the things that are plainly revealed. We have encouragement in the Word that if we walk humbly with God, we shall receive instruction. But prying curiosity is not to be encouraged.

To the second chapter of second Timothy we may refer those who are desirous of originating some new and strange thing, which is the product of the human imagination, and as much below the grand and noble sentiments of Holy Writ as the

common is below the sacred. We may answer foolish questions by saying, Wait, and we shall all know what is essential for us to know. Our salvation does not depend on side issues (Letter 58, 1900).

Chapter 3

14, 15 (Acts 16:1-3). Timothy's Childhood Training—Timothy's mother and grandmother were united in their efforts to train him for God. What was his lesson book?—the Bible. Paul, his father in the gospel, declares, "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures." The faith of the mother and grandmother in the oracles of God was a constant illustration to Timothy of the blessing of doing God's will.

When Timothy was little more than a boy, Paul took him with him as his companion in labor. Those who had taught Timothy in his childhood were rewarded by seeing the son of their care linked in close fellowship with the great apostle (Manuscript 117a, 1901).

(1 Timothy 4:12.) Influence and Piety of Timothy—Paul loved Timothy because Timothy loved God. His intelligent knowledge of experimental piety and of the truth gave him distinction and influence. The piety and influence of his home life was not of a cheap order, but pure, sensible, and uncorrupted by false sentiments. The moral influence of his home was substantial, not fitful, not impulsive, not changeable. The Word of God was the rule which guided Timothy. He received his instruction line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Impressions of the highest possible order were kept before his mind. His home instructors cooperated with God in educating this young man to bear the burdens that were to come upon him at an early age....

We see the advantage that Timothy had in a correct example of piety and true godliness. Religion was the atmosphere of his home. The manifest spiritual power of the piety in the home kept him pure in speech, and free from all

corrupting sentiments. From a child Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures. He had the benefit of the Old Testament Scripture, and the manuscript of part of the New, the teachings and lessons of Christ (Letter 33, 1897).

16 (1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; see EGW comment on John 17:17). Beyond Finite Comprehension—There are some that may think they are fully capable with their finite judgment to take the Word of God, and to state what are the words of inspiration, and what are not the words of inspiration. I want to warn you off that ground, my brethren in the ministry. “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” There is no finite man that lives, I care not who he is or whatever is his position, that God has authorized to pick and choose in His Word.

It is true that the apostle has said that there are some things that are hard to be understood in the Scriptures. So there are. And if it were not that there are subjects that are difficult and hard to be

understood, well might the skeptic who now pleads that God has given a revelation that cannot be understood—well might he, I say—have something else to plead. God’s infinity is so much higher than we are, that it is impossible for man to comprehend the mystery of godliness.

Angels of God looked with amazement upon Christ, who took upon Himself the form of man and humbly united His divinity with humanity in order that He might minister to fallen man. It is a marvel among the heavenly angels. God has told us that He did do it, and we are to accept the Word of God just as it reads.

And although we may try to reason in regard to our Creator, how long He has had existence, where evil first entered into our world, and all these things, we may reason about them until we fall down faint and exhausted with the research when there is yet an infinity beyond. We cannot grasp it, so what man is there that dares to take that Bible and say this part is inspired and that part is not inspired? I would have both my arms taken off at

my shoulders before I would ever make the statement or set my judgment upon the Word of God as to what is inspired and what is not inspired.

How would finite man know anything about that matter? He is to take the Word of God as it reads, and then to appreciate it as it is, and to bring it into the life and to weave it into the character. There is everything plainly revealed in God's Word which concerns the salvation of men, and if we will take that Word and comprehend it to the very best of our ability, God will help us in its comprehension.

Human minds without the special assistance of the Spirit of God will see many things in the Bible very difficult to be understood, because they lack a divine enlightenment. It is not that men should come to the Word of God by setting up their own way, or their own will or their own ideas, but it is to come with a meek and humble and holy spirit.

Never attempt to search the Scriptures unless you are ready to listen, unless you are ready to be a

learner, unless you are ready to listen to the Word of God as though His voice were speaking directly to you from the living oracles. Never let mortal man sit in judgment upon the Word of God or pass sentence as to how much of this is inspired and how much is not inspired, and that this is more inspired than some other portions. God warns him off that ground. God has not given him any such work to do (Manuscript 13, 1888).

(Exodus 3:5.) God's Word Not to Be Dissected—It takes all of eternity to unfold the glories and bring out the precious treasures of the Word of God. Do not let any living man come to you and begin to dissect God's Word, telling what is revelation, what is inspiration and what is not, without a rebuke. Tell all such they simply do not know. They simply are not able to comprehend the things of the mystery of God. What we want is to inspire faith. We want no one to say, "This I will reject, and this will I receive," but we want to have implicit faith in the Bible as a whole and as it is.

We call on you to take your Bible, but do not

put a sacrilegious hand upon it, and say, “That is not inspired,” simply because somebody else has said so. Not a jot or tittle is ever to be taken from that Word. Hands off, brethren! Do not touch the ark. Do not lay your hand upon it, but let God move. It is with His own power, and He will work in such a manner that He will compass our salvation. We want God to have some room to work. We do not want man’s ideas to bind Him about.

I know something of the glory of the future life. Once a sister wrote to me and asked if I would not tell her something about the city of our God, further than we have in the Word. She asked me if I could not draw something of its plans. I wrote her that I would have to say to her, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” “No,” said I, “you cannot paint, you cannot picture, and the martyr tongue cannot begin to give any description of the glory of the future life; but I will tell you what you can do: you can ‘press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.’ You can die to

self; you can seek to grow up to the perfection of Christian character in Christ Jesus.” That is our work; but when men begin to meddle with God’s Word, I want to tell them to take their hands off, for they do not know what they are doing (Manuscript 13, 1888).

Chapter 4

1-5 (2 Timothy 2:14-18, 23-26; Romans 1:25; Colossians 2:8). Turning the Truth Into a Lie—

No one is to put truth to the torture by cheap imaginings, by putting a forced, mystical construction upon the Word. Thus they are in danger of turning the truth of God into a lie. There are those who need in their hearts the touch of the divine Spirit. Then the message for this time will be their burden. They will not search for human tests, for something new and strange. The Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the test for this time.

...

There is among young men a burning desire to get hold of something new, even though it be of the

cheapest quality. The Lord would not have the mind dwell on unprofitable nothings, seeking for what it will never find. He desires us to seek for a pure, clean soul, a soul washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. It is the white robe of Christ's righteousness that gives the sinner admittance into the presence of the heavenly angels. Not the color of his hair, but his perfect obedience to all God's commandments, opens to him the gates of the Holy City (Letter 207, 1899).

1-7 (2 Timothy 2:1-4). Faithfulness in Ministry—Paul has almost finished his course, and he desires Timothy to take his place, guarding the churches from the fables and heresies with which Satan and his agents would endeavor to lead them from the truth. He admonishes him to shun temporal pursuits and entanglements, which would prevent him from giving himself wholly to God's work. He is to endure with cheerfulness the opposition, reproach, and persecution to which his faithfulness would expose him. He is to make full proof to his ministry, employing every means of doing good to his fellow men (The Youth's

Instructor, July 10, 1902).

3, 4. See EGW comment on Acts 20:30; Colossians 2:8; 1 John 4:1.

6-9. See EGW comment on 2 Timothy 1:1, 2.

7, 8. See EGW comment on Revelation 14:13.

13, 14 (Acts 19:33). Alexander Effects Paul's Final Arrest— At the house of a disciple in the city of Troas, Paul was again seized, and from this place he was hurried away to his final imprisonment.

The arrest was effected by the efforts of Alexander the coppersmith, who had so unsuccessfully opposed the apostle's work at Ephesus, and who now seized the opportunity to be revenged on one whom he could not defeat (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 305).

13, 16-21. Paul Faces Death Courageously— Paul concludes his letter with various personal

messages, and again and again repeats the urgent request that Timothy use all diligence to come to him soon, and if possible to come before winter. He describes his loneliness from the desertion of some friends and the necessary absence of others, and lest Timothy should still hesitate, fearing that the church at Ephesus demanded his labors, he states that he has already dispatched Tychicus to fill the place of Timothy in his absence. And then he adds the touching request, “The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.”

At his second arrest, Paul was seized and hurried away so suddenly that he had no opportunity to gather up his few “books” and “parchments,” or even to take with him his cloak. And now winter was coming on, and he knew that he would suffer with cold in his damp prison cell. He had no money to buy another garment, he knew that his end might come at any moment, and with his usual self-forgetfulness and fear to burden the church, he desired that no expense should be

incurred on his account (Sketches from the Life of Paul, 327).

16, 17. Paul and Nero Face to Face—Paul and Nero face to face!—the countenance of the monarch bearing the shameful record of the passions that raged within; the countenance of the prisoner telling the story of a heart at peace with God and man. The result of opposite systems of education stood that day contrasted—a life of unbounded self-indulgence and a life of entire self-sacrifice. Here were the representatives of two theories of life—all-absorbing selfishness, which counts nothing too valuable to be sacrificed for momentary gratification, and self-denying endurance, ready to give up life itself, if need be, for the good of others (The Youth's Instructor, July 3, 1902).

Chapter 56

Titus

Chapter 1

9-11. See EGW comment on Acts 15:1, 5.

Chapter 2

8. See EGW comment on Colossians 4:6.

10 (Philippians 2:5). Adorning the Doctrine of Christ—To adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour, we must have the same mind which was in Christ. Our likes and dislikes, our desire to favor self to the disadvantage of others must be overcome. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. Christ must be in us a living, working power (Manuscript 39, 1896).

11. See EGW comment on Ephesians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:22.

14. See EGW comment on Luke 17:10; Romans 3:20-31; Galatians 5:6.

Chapter 3

5. See EGW comment on Luke 17:10; Romans 3:20-31.

Chapter 57

Philemon

No commentary.

Chapter 58

Hebrews

Chapter 1

3 (Colossians 1:15; 2:9; Colossians 3:10; see EGW comment on John 1:14; Acts 1:11; 17:28; Ephesians 1:20, 21; Hebrews 2:14-18). The Personality of God—He [Christ] represented God not as an essence that pervaded nature, but as a God who has a personality. Christ was the express image of His Father's person; and He came to our world to restore in man God's moral image, in order that man, although fallen, might through obedience to God's commandments become enstamped with the divine image and character—adorned with the beauty of divine loveliness (Manuscript 24, 1891).

4-14. The Omnipotence of Jesus—[Hebrews 1:4-12 quoted.] In this language is represented the omnipotence of the Lord Jesus. He is introduced to the Bible student as the Creator of the world, and

was its rightful Ruler. [Hebrews 1:13, 14 quoted.]

The first chapter of Hebrews contrasts the position of the angels and the position of Christ. God has spoken words concerning Christ that are not to be applied to the angels. They are “sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,” but Christ, as Mediator, is the great Minister in the work of redemption. The Holy Spirit is His representative in our world, to execute the divine purpose of bringing to fallen man power from above, that he may be an overcomer. All who enter into a covenant with Jesus Christ become by adoption the children of God. They are cleansed by the regenerating power of the Word, and angels are commissioned to minister unto them (Manuscript 57, 1907).

6, 8. See EGW comment on Hebrews 3:1-3; 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 2:9.

8. See EGW comment on John 1:1-3.

14 (see EGW comment on Acts 10:1-6;

Revelation 5:11). Power and Efficiency for the Church—Divine ministration is needed to give power and efficiency to the church in this world. God's family on earth, subject to temptations and trials, is very near to His heart of love. He has ordained that communication be kept up between heavenly intelligences and His children on this earth. Angels from the courts above are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation (Manuscript 142, 1899).

(James 4:8.) Good Angels Restrain Satan—God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation. Whenever one takes a step toward Jesus, Jesus is taking steps toward him. The angels' work is to keep back the powers of Satan (Manuscript 17, 1893).

(Ephesians 6:12.) To the Aid of Tempted Souls—Heavenly angels are commissioned to watch the sheep of Christ's pasture. When Satan with his deceptive snares would deceive if possible the very elect, these angels set in operation influences that will save the tempted souls if they

will take heed to the Word of the Lord, realize their danger, and say: “No, I will not enter into that scheme of Satan. I have an Elder Brother on the throne in heaven, who has shown that He has a tender interest in me, and I will not grieve His heart of love. I know and am assured that He is watching over His children, keeping them as the apple of His eye. There is no diminishing of His love. I will not grieve the heart of Christ; I will try not to become a tempter to others” (Letter 52, 1906).

(Revelation 5:9-12.) Angels Share in the Final Triumph—As invisible agencies, angels are working through human beings to proclaim the commandments of God. Angels have far more to do with the human family than many suppose. Speaking of the angels, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

Holy angels will join in the song of the redeemed. Though they cannot sing from experimental knowledge, “He hath washed us in His own blood, and redeemed us unto God,” yet

they understand the great peril from which the people of God have been saved. Were they not sent to lift up for them a standard against the enemy? They can fully sympathize with the glowing ecstasy of those who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony (Letter 79, 1900).

Angels Cooperate With Human Agencies—

Holy, ministering agencies of heaven are cooperating with human agencies to lead into safe paths all who love truth and righteousness. It is the greatest joy of the angels of heaven to spread the shield of their tender love over souls who turn to God; and Satan fights determinedly to retain every soul that has had light and evidence. His fierce, unabated desire is to destroy every soul possible. Will you choose to stand under his banner?

Angelic agencies are standing firm, determined that he shall not obtain the victory. They would recover every soul in our world who is under Satan's banner if these poor souls would not so eagerly seek to keep out of and away from their

merciful ministrations and rescuing power. Their deep and earnest love for the souls for whom Christ has died is beyond measurement. They would make these deceived souls intelligent in regard to how they might arm themselves and break the spell which Satan has cast upon them.

If they would only look unto Jesus, and for one moment discern truly, sincerely, what love has been expressed in the sacrifice which has been made for them! If only they could see the determined efforts of Satan to eclipse by his hellish shadow every ray of light that would come into the mind and heart of persons now dead in trespasses and sins! O that they would awake from their torpor as the whole world will soon awake by the trumpet of God, which will announce His appearing! ...

Angels are keeping back the destroying agencies; for they have an intense interest for these rebellious sons, and they want to help them to return to the fold in safety and peace, that they may finally be overcomers, and be saved, eternally

saved with the family of God in heaven (Manuscript 29, 1900).

(John 17:21.) Heavenly Atmosphere Brought to Earth—The work of these heavenly beings is to prepare the inhabitants of this world to become children of God, pure, holy, undefiled. But men, though professing to be followers of Christ, do not place themselves in a position where they can understand this ministry, and thus the work of the heavenly messengers is made hard. The angels, who do always behold the face of the Father in heaven, would prefer to remain close by the side of God, in the pure and holy atmosphere of heaven; but a work must be done in bringing this heavenly atmosphere to the souls who are tempted and tried, that Satan may not disqualify them for the place the Lord would have them fill in the heavenly courts.

Principalities and powers in heavenly places combine with these angels in their ministration for those who shall be heirs of salvation. But how sad it is that this work is hindered by the coarseness, the roughness, the worldly-mindedness of men and

women who are so desirous of securing their own ends, of gratifying their own wishes, that they lose sight of the Word of God, which should be their instructor and their guide.

The Lord gives to every angel his work for this fallen world. Divine help is provided for men and women. They have the opportunity of cooperating with the heavenly intelligences, of being laborers together with God. There is placed before them the possibility of gaining a fitness for the presence of God, of being enabled to see His face. Heavenly angels are working to bring the human family into a close brotherhood, a oneness described by Christ as like that existing between the Father and the Son. How can men so highly favored by God fail to appreciate their opportunities and privileges? How can they refuse to accept the divine help proffered? How much it is possible for human beings to gain if they will keep eternity in view!

Satanic agencies are always warring for the mastery over the human mind, but the angels of God are constantly at work, strengthening the weak

hands and confirming the feeble knees of all who call upon God for help (The Review and Herald, July 4, 1899).

The Line of Heavenly Communication—The angels of God are communicating with and guarding His people, and are pressing back the powers of darkness that they shall not have any control over those who shall be heirs of salvation. Are we working in harmony with the angels? This is the line of communication the Lord has established with the children of men (Manuscript 1, 1890).

A Special Work for Each Angel—The Lord Jesus has a special work appointed for each of the angelic family. Human agencies have also an appointed work to do in behalf of their own souls and the souls of others saved through their influence. The angels of God will make effectual the work of men. ...

They have an intense desire that human agencies shall come where they will find a refuge.

The angels had a constant guardianship over Christ from His birth until His reception into the heavenly courts.... Angels are working through human agents who will be worked, to bring sinners to God. ...

O that those who are halting between two opinions could only understand the agencies continually at work to keep at bay the armies of the power of darkness! By presenting earthly advantages or earthly obstacles to defeat the purposes of God, and by various other methods, Satan would intercept every ray of light from the messengers of God. But if the curtain could be rolled back, and eyes now blind to the invisible agencies could view with restored spiritual vision the conflict continually going on in behalf of the souls perishing away from Christ, what a difference would be made in the working of the agencies in this world! Decided advance movements would be made. Without delay their entire influence for good would be thrown on the side of Christ. They would behold the intense interest of the angels of God in behalf of souls who

are throwing away the opportunities and privileges now so valuable to them to obtain an experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent (Manuscript 29, 1900).

Chapter 2

9. See EGW comment on Matthew 27:21, 22, 29.

10 (Hebrews 5:8, 9; Isaiah 53:10). Sundering of the Divine Powers—The Captain of our salvation was perfected through suffering. His soul was made an offering for sin. It was necessary for the awful darkness to gather about His soul because of the withdrawal of the Father's love and favor; for He was standing in the sinner's place, and this darkness every sinner must experience. The righteous One must suffer the condemnation and wrath of God, not in vindictiveness; for the heart of God yearned with greatest sorrow when His Son, the guiltless, was suffering the penalty of sin. This sundering of the divine powers will never again occur throughout the eternal ages

(Manuscript 93, 1899).

14 (see EGW comment on Matthew 27:50; 3:14-17). Satan Vanquished at the Cross—He [Christ] vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory. The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Saviour's Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power (The Youth's Instructor, April 25, 1901).

(Hebrews 12:3; Genesis 3:15; 2 Timothy 1:10; 1 Peter 2:24.) Christ Triumphant in Death—Christ was nailed to the cross, but He gained the victory. The whole force of evil gathered itself together in an effort to destroy Him who was the Light of the world, the Truth that makes men wise unto salvation. But no advantage was gained by this confederacy. With every advance move, Satan was bringing nearer his eternal ruin. Christ was indeed enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself. But every pang of suffering that He bore helped tear away the

foundation of the enemy's kingdom. Satan bruised Christ's heel, but Christ bruised Satan's head. Through death the Saviour destroyed him that had the power of death. In the very act of grasping his prey, death was vanquished; for by dying, Christ brought to light life and immortality through the gospel.

Never was the Son of God more beloved by His Father, by the heavenly family, and by the inhabitants of the unfallen worlds, than when He humbled Himself to bear disgrace, humiliation, shame, and abuse. By becoming the sin bearer, He lifted from the human race the curse of sin. In His own body He paid the penalty of that on which the power of Satan over humanity is founded—sin (The Youth's Instructor, June 28, 1900).

14-18 (Hebrews 1:3; John 1:1-3, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; see EGW comment on Mark 16:6; Luke 22:44; Romans 5:12-19; Hebrews 3:1-3). God Reached Humanity Through Humanity— Christ alone was able to represent the Deity. He who had been in the presence of the

Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone sufficient to accomplish this work. No verbal description could reveal God to the world. Through a life of purity, a life of perfect trust and submission to the will of God, a life of humiliation such as even the highest seraph in heaven would have shrunk from, God Himself must be revealed to humanity. In order to do this, our Saviour clothed His divinity with humanity. He employed the human faculties, for only by adopting these could He be comprehended by humanity. Only humanity could reach humanity. He lived out the character of God through the human body which God had prepared for Him. He blessed the world by living out in human flesh the life of God, thus showing that He had the power to unite humanity to divinity (The Review and Herald, June 25, 1895).

Christ Took Our Place in the Universe—

Under the mighty impulse of His love, He took our place in the universe, and invited the Ruler of all things to treat Him as a representative of the human family. He identified Himself with our interests,

bared His breast for the stroke of death, took man's guilt and its penalty, and offered in man's behalf a complete sacrifice to God. By virtue of this atonement, He has power to offer to man perfect righteousness and full salvation. Whosoever shall believe on Him as a personal Saviour shall not perish, but have everlasting life (The Review and Herald, April 18, 1893).

Christ Met Man as Man—Leaving the royal courts of heaven Christ came to our world to represent the character of His Father, and thus help humanity to return to their loyalty. The image of Satan was upon men, and Christ came that He might bring to them moral power and efficiency. He came as a helpless babe, bearing the humanity we bear. “As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” He could not come in the form of an angel; for unless He met man as man, and testified by His connection with God that divine power was not given to Him in a different way to what it will be given to us, He could not be a perfect example for us. He came in humility, in order that the humblest

being upon the face of the earth could have no excuse because of his poverty, or ignorance, and say, Because of these things, I cannot obey the law of Jehovah. Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that humanity might touch humanity; that He might live with humanity and bear all the trials and afflictions of man. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. In His humanity He understood all the temptations that will come to man (Manuscript 21, 1895).

(1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1, 2; Revelation 3:4.) The Subdued Glory of the Human Christ—As we view Christ by the eye of faith, we see the necessity of becoming pure in thought and holy in character. Christ invites us to draw near to Him, and promises that He will draw nigh to us. Looking upon Him, we behold the invisible God, who clothed His divinity with humanity in order that through humanity He might shed forth a subdued and softened glory, so that our eyes might be enabled to rest upon Him, and our souls not be extinguished by His undimmed splendor. We behold God through Christ, our Creator and

Redeemer. It is our privilege to contemplate Jesus by faith, and see Him standing between humanity and the eternal throne. He is our Advocate, presenting our prayers and offerings as spiritual sacrifices to God. Jesus is the great sinless propitiation, and through His merit, God and man may hold converse together.

Christ has carried His humanity into eternity. He stands before God as the representative of our race. When we are clothed with the wedding garment of His righteousness, we become one with Him, and He says of us, “They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.” His saints will behold Him in His glory, with no dimming veil between (The Youth’s Instructor, October 28, 1897).

(Isaiah 59:20.) Human Nature but Not Human Sinfulness—He [Christ] was to take His position at the head of humanity by taking the nature but not the sinfulness of man. In heaven was heard the voice, “The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in

Jacob, saith the Lord” (The Signs of the Times, May 29, 1901).

(Hebrews 9:11-14, 22; Ruth 4:13, 14.) God of the Living and the Dead—As the sin bearer, and priest and representative of man before God, He entered into the life of humanity, bearing our flesh and blood. The life is in the living, vital current of blood, which blood was given for the life of the world. Christ made a full atone- ment, giving His life as a ransom for us. He was born without a taint of sin, but came into the world in like manner as the human family. He did not have a mere semblance of a body, but He took human nature, participating in the life of humanity.

According to the law Christ Himself gave, the forfeited inheritance was ransomed by the nearest of kin. Jesus Christ laid off His royal robe, His kingly crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity, in order to become a substitute and surety for humanity, that dying in humanity He might by His death destroy him who had the power of death. He could not have done this as God, but

by coming as man Christ could die. By death He overcame death. The death of Christ bore to the death him who had the power of death, and opened the gates of the tomb for all who receive Him as their personal Saviour.

Christ proclaimed over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, "I am the resurrection and the life." He, the world's Redeemer, has bruised the serpent's head, depriving him of all power ever to make men feel his scorpion sting; for He has brought life and immortality to light. The gates of eternal life are thrown open to all who believe on Jesus Christ. All believers who pass through a natural death, have, through eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God, eternal life in them, which is the life of Jesus Christ. In dying, Jesus has made it impossible for those who believe on Him to die eternally. ...

Christ lived and died as a man, that He might be God both of the living and of the dead. It was to make it impossible for men to lose eternal life if they believe on Him. The life of men and women is

precious in the sight of God; for Christ has purchased that life by being executed in their stead. Thus He made it possible for us to attain to immortality (Letter 97, 1898).

Creator and Creature United in Christ—In Christ were united the divine and the human—the Creator and the creature. The nature of God, whose law had been transgressed, and the nature of Adam, the transgressor, meet in Jesus—the Son of God, and the Son of man. And having with His own blood paid the price of redemption, having passed through man’s experience, having in man’s behalf met and conquered temptation, having, though Himself sinless, borne the shame and guilt and burden of sin, He becomes man’s Advocate and Intercessor. What an assurance here to the tempted and struggling soul, what an assurance to the witnessing universe, that Christ will be “a merciful and faithful high priest” (Manuscript 141, 1901)!

Edenic Mind of Man Restored—Jesus became a man that He might mediate between man and God. He clothed His divinity with humanity,

He associated with the human race, that with His long human arm He might encircle humanity, and with His divine arm grasp the throne of Divinity. And this, that He might restore to man the original mind which he lost in Eden through Satan's alluring temptation; that man might realize that it is for his present and eternal good to obey the requirements of God. Disobedience is not in accordance with the nature which God gave to man in Eden (Letter 121, 1897).

(2 Peter 1:4.) A Divine Culture for Christians—Divine culture brings perfection. If in connection with God the work is carried forward, the human agent, through Christ, will day by day gain victory and honor in the battle. Through the grace given he will overcome, and will be placed on vantage ground. In his relation to Christ he will be bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, one with Christ in a peculiar relationship, because Christ took the humanity of man. He became subject to temptation, endangering as it were, His divine attributes. Satan sought, by the constant and curious devices of his cunning, to make Christ

yield to temptation. Man must pass over the ground over which Christ has passed. As Christ overcame every temptation which Satan brought against Him, so man is to overcome. And those who strive earnestly to overcome are brought into a oneness with Christ that the angels in heaven can never know.

The divine culture of men and women will be carried forward to completion only as they are partakers of the divine nature. Thus they may overcome as Christ overcame in their behalf. Through the grace given, fallen man may be placed on vantage ground. Through toil, through patient trust and faith in Jesus Christ, through faithful continuance in well-doing, he may rise to spiritual victory (Letter 5, 1900).

Full Obedience Possible Through Christ— Christ came to the earth, taking humanity and standing as man's representative, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement (The Signs of the

Times, June 9, 1898).

16 (Philippians 2:5-8). Jesus the Friend of Sinners—Jesus came to the world not as an angel of light; we could not have endured His glory if He had come thus. One angel at the tomb of Christ was of such exceeding brightness that the Roman guard fell powerless to the ground. As the angel came from the heavens, he parted the darkness from his track, and the sentinels could not endure his glory; they fell as dead men to the earth. Suppose that Jesus had come in the glory of an angel, His brightness would have extinguished the feeble life of mortal men.

For our sake Jesus emptied Himself of His glory; He clothed His divinity with humanity that He might touch humanity, that His personal presence might be among us, that we might know that He was acquainted with all our trials, and sympathized with our grief, that every son and daughter of Adam might understand that Jesus is the friend of sinners (The Signs of the Times, April 18, 1892).

Not Angelic but Human Nature—The Lord Jesus has made a great sacrifice in order to meet man where he is. He took not on Him the nature of angels. He did not come to save angels. It is the seed of Abraham that He is helping. “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Christ helps humanity by taking human nature (Letter 97, 1898).

17 (Philippians 2:7, 8; Colossians 2:10; 1:4; see EGW comment on Hebrews 4:14-16). Christ Took Humanity Into Himself—By His obedience to all the commandments of God, Christ wrought out a redemption for man. This was not done by going out of Himself to another, but by taking humanity into Himself. Thus Christ gave to humanity an existence out of Himself. To bring humanity into Christ, to bring the fallen race into oneness with divinity, is the work of redemption. Christ took human nature that men might be one with Him as He is one with the Father, that God may love man as He loves His only-begotten Son, that men may be partakers of the divine nature, and

be complete in Him (The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906).

18 (chs. 4:15; 5:7, 8; John 14:30; see EGW comment on Matthew 4:1-11; 1 John 2:1). The Refined Sensibilities of Jesus—Would that we could comprehend the significance of the words, Christ “suffered being tempted.” While He was free from the taint of sin, the refined sensibilities of His holy nature rendered contact with evil unspeakably painful to Him. Yet with human nature upon Him, He met the archapostate face to face, and single-handed withstood the foe of His throne. Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation.

Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” The storms of temptation burst upon Him, but they could not cause Him to swerve from His allegiance to God (The Review and Herald,

November 8, 1887).

Jesus Not Pulled or Crowded Into Sin—

Have we forgotten that Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, suffered being tempted? Jesus did not allow the enemy to pull Him into the mire of unbelief, or crowd Him into the mire of despondency and despair. But many poor souls are feeble in moral power because they do not do the words of Christ (Letter 43, 1892).

Power Assured for the Children of Faith—

Christ in the weakness of humanity was to meet the temptations of one possessing the powers of the higher nature that God had bestowed on the angelic family. But Christ's humanity was united with divinity, and in this strength He would bear all the temptations that Satan could bring against Him, and yet keep His soul untainted by sin. And this power to overcome He would give to every son and daughter of Adam who would accept by faith the righteous attributes of His character (The Review and Herald, January 28, 1909).

Chapter 3

1-3 (chs. 1:6-8; 2:14-18; Philippians 2:5-8). A Heavier Retribution Than Israel's—[Hebrews 3:1-3 quoted.] Because of the unbelief manifested toward Christ, the originator and foundation of the whole Jewish economy, a heavier retribution will come upon men than befell unbelieving Israel in the wilderness. Moses was the prophet by whom God communicated to the church in the wilderness; but great as was Moses, a greater than he is the Son of God, who builded the house.

The presence of Jesus Christ, enshrouded in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, followed this people in their wilderness wandering. The Angel of the covenant came in the name of God, as the invisible leader of Israel. The Son of God over His own house is higher than Moses, higher than the highest angel. He bears the name of Jehovah upon His miter, while on His breastplate is written the name of Israel. Christ took humanity that humanity might touch humanity. In the form of man He humbled Himself, and became a servant,

but as the Son of God He was higher than the angels. By His life in humanity man may become a partaker of the divine nature. As the Majesty of heaven, He was exalted above the angels, and in His work of redemption He carries with Him all who have received Him and believed on His name (Letter 97, 1898).

3. See EGW comment on John 1:14.

6. See EGW comment on Hebrews 4:14; Revelation 3:3.

12 (Hebrews 11:6). No Encouragement Given for Unbelief—There is no encouragement given for unbelief. The Lord manifests His grace and His power over and over again, and this should teach us that it is always profitable under all circumstances to cherish faith, to talk faith, to act faith. We are not to have our hearts and hands weakened by allowing the suggestions of suspicious minds to plant in our hearts the seeds of doubt and distrust [Hebrews 3:12 quoted] (Letter 97, 1898).

Study to Believe and Obey—The Lord works in cooperation with the will and action of the human agent. It is the privilege and duty of every man to take God at His word, to believe in Jesus as his personal Saviour, and to respond eagerly, immediately, to the gracious propositions which He makes. He is to study to believe and obey the divine instruction in the Scriptures. He is to base his faith not on feeling but upon the evidence and the Word of God (Manuscript 3, 1895).

14. See EGW comment on Hebrews 4:15.

Chapter 4

1. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 5:11.

9, 11 (see EGW comment on Proverbs 31:27). The Rest Obtained by Labor—[Hebrews 4:9, 11 quoted.] The rest here spoken of is the rest of grace, obtained by following the prescription, Labor diligently. Those who learn of Jesus His meekness and lowliness find rest in the experience

of practicing His lessons. It is not in indolence, in selfish ease and pleasure-seeking, that rest is obtained. Those who are unwilling to give the Lord faithful, earnest, loving service will not find spiritual rest in this life or in the life to come. Only from earnest labor comes peace and joy in the Holy Spirit—happiness on earth and glory hereafter.

Let us therefore labor. Speak often words that will be a strength and an inspiration to those who hear. We are altogether too indifferent in regard to one another. We forget that our fellow laborers are often in need of words of hope and cheer. When one is in trouble, call upon him and speak comforting words to him. This is true friendship (Manuscript 42, 1901).

12 (see EGW comment on John 17:17). Cutting Away the Surplus of Self—Practical truth must be brought into the life, and the Word, like a sharp, two-edged sword, must cut away the surplus of self that there is in our characters [Hebrews 4:12 quoted] (Letter 5, 1897).

Transforming Power of the Word—The Word makes the proud humble, the perverse meek and contrite, the disobedient obedient. The sinful habits natural to man are interwoven with the daily practice. But the Word cuts away the fleshly lusts. It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the mind. It divides the joints and marrow, cutting away the lusts of the flesh, making men willing to suffer for their Lord (Manuscript 42, 1901).

13. See EGW comment on Proverbs 16:2; Revelation 3:1-4; 20:12, 13.

14 (chs. 3:6, 14; 10:23; see EGW comment on Revelation 3:3). **Questions to Ponder**— [Hebrews 4:14 quoted.] What is our profession? We profess to be following Christ. We claim to be Christians. Do we, then, reveal the Christlikeness? Do we serve the Saviour intelligently? Does the love of God continually flow from us to others? Do we, in word and action, confess our Redeemer? Do we conform our lives to His holy principles? Are we pure and undefiled? Christians must hold the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end. It

is not enough to profess the faith. There must be a patient endurance of all trials and a brave resistance to all temptations. Faith can be maintained only by bringing the Christian religion to the test of practice, thus demonstrating its transforming power and the faithfulness of its promises (Manuscript 42, 1901).

14-16 (chs. 2:17; 7:24-26; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1). Phases of Christ's Priesthood— [Hebrews 4:15 quoted.] The Son of God ... has fulfilled His pledge, and has passed into the heavens, to take upon Himself the government of the heavenly host. He fulfilled one phase of His priesthood by dying on the cross for the fallen race. He is now fulfilling another phase by pleading before the Father the case of the repenting, believing sinner, presenting to God the offerings of His people. Having taken human nature and in this nature having overcome the temptations of the enemy, and having divine perfection, to Him has been committed the judgment of the world. The case of each one will be brought in review before Him. He will pronounce judgment, rendering to

every man according to his works (Manuscript 42, 1901).

15 (Hebrews 3:14; Matthew 4:1-11; 19:17; John 10:30; 2 Peter 1:4; Revelation 3:21; see EGW comment on Mark 16:6; John 1:1-3, 14; Romans 5:12-19; Colossians 2:9, 10; 1 John 2:1). No trace of Imperfection in Christ—Those who claim that it was not possible for Christ to sin, cannot believe that He really took upon Himself human nature. But was not Christ actually tempted, not only by Satan in the wilderness, but all through His life, from childhood to manhood? In all points He was tempted as we are, and because He successfully resisted temptation under every form, He gave man the perfect example, and through the ample provision Christ has made, we may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust.

Jesus says, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” Here is the beginning of our confidence

which we must hold steadfast unto the end. If Jesus resisted Satan's temptations, He will help us to resist. He came to bring divine power to combine with human effort.

Jesus was free from all sin and error; there was not a trace of imperfection in His life or character. He maintained spotless purity under circumstances the most trying. True, He declared, "There is none good but one, that is, God"; but again He said, "I and my Father are one." Jesus speaks of Himself as well as the Father as God, and claims for Himself perfect righteousness (Manuscript 141, 1901).

The Obedience of a God or a Man?—Christ's overcoming and obedience is that of a true human being. In our conclusions, we make many mistakes because of our erroneous views of the human nature of our Lord. When we give to His human nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan, we destroy the completeness of His humanity. His imputed grace and power He gives to all who receive Him by faith.

The obedience of Christ to His Father was the same obedience that is required of man. Man cannot overcome Satan's temptations without divine power to combine with his instrumentality. So with Jesus Christ; He could lay hold of divine power. He came not to our world to give the obedience of a lesser God to a greater, but as a man to obey God's holy law, and in this way He is our example. The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what a God could do, but what a man could do, through faith in God's power to help in every emergency. Man is, through faith, to be a partaker in the divine nature, and to overcome every temptation wherewith he is beset.

The Lord now demands that every son and daughter of Adam, through faith in Jesus Christ, serve Him in human nature which we now have. The Lord Jesus has bridged the gulf that sin has made. He has connected earth with heaven, and finite man with the infinite God. Jesus, the world's Redeemer, could only keep the commandments of God in the same way that humanity can keep them

(Manuscript 1, 1892).

(Hebrews 2:14.) Christ Kept the Level of Humanity—Satan thought that by his temptations he could delude the world's Redeemer to make one bold move in manifesting His divine power....

It was a difficult task for the Prince of life to carry out the plan which He had undertaken for the salvation of man, in clothing His divinity with humanity. He had received honor in the heavenly courts, and was familiar with absolute power. It was as difficult for Him to keep the level of humanity as for men to rise above the low level of their depraved natures, and be partakers of the divine nature.

Christ was put to the closest test, requiring the strength of all His faculties to resist the inclination when in danger, to use His power to deliver Himself from peril, and triumph over the power of the prince of darkness. Satan showed his knowledge of the weak points of the human heart, and put forth his utmost power to take advantage of

the weakness of the humanity which Christ had assumed in order to overcome his temptations on man's account (The Review and Herald, April 1, 1875).

No Particular Adaptation for Obedience— We need not place the obedience of Christ by itself, as something for which He was particularly adapted, by His particular divine nature, for He stood before God as man's representative and was tempted as man's substitute and surety. If Christ had a special power which it is not the privilege of man to have, Satan would have made capital of this matter. The work of Christ was to take from the claims of Satan his control of man, and He could do this only in the way that He came—a man, tempted as a man, rendering the obedience of a man (Manuscript 1, 1892).

(2 Corinthians 5:19) God Endured Temptation in Christ— God was in Christ in human form, and endured all the temptations wherewith man was beset; in our behalf He participated in the suffering and trials of sorrowful

human nature (The Southern Work, December 10, 1907).

15, 16. See EGW comment on Ephesians 2:18.

16. See EGW comment on Matthew 3:13-17.

Chapter 5

5, 6 (Hebrews 4:15, 16; 1 John 2:1). Christ Appointed to the Priesthood—Christ glorified not Himself in being made High Priest. God gave Him His appointment to the priesthood. He was to be an example to all the human family. He qualified Himself to be, not only the representative of the race, but their Advocate, so that every soul if he will may say, I have a Friend at court. He is a High Priest that can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities (Manuscript 101, 1897).

7, 8. See EGW comment on Hebrews 2:18.

8, 9. See EGW comment on Hebrews 2:10.

9-12. See EGW comment on 1 Corinthians 3:1, 2.

Chapter 6

19 (Hebrews 10:19, 20; Hebrews 11:27; see EGW comment on Matthew 27:51). A Faith That Pierces the Veil—Our faith must pierce beyond the veil, seeing things that are invisible. No one else can look for you. You must behold for yourself. In the place of murmuring for blessings that are withheld, let us remember and appreciate the blessings already bestowed (Manuscript 42, 1901).

Chapter 7

17 (Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4). A High Priest After the Order of Melchisedec—The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, who was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This order of priesthood was not to pass to another, or be superseded by another (Redemption: The First

Advent of Christ, page 14).

22. See EGW comment on Hebrews 8:6, 7.

24-26. See EGW comment on Hebrews 4:14-16.

24-28. See EGW comment on Romans 8:26, 34.

25 (Hebrews 9:24; Romans 8:34; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 2:1; see EGW comment on Romans 3:20-31; Hebrews 9:11, 12; 10:19-21). “**I Will Take Their Sins.**”—What is Christ doing in heaven? He is interceding for us. By His work the threshold of heaven is flushed with the glory of God which will shine upon every soul who will open the windows of the soul heavenward. As the prayers of the sincere and contrite ones ascend to heaven Christ says to the Father, “I will take their sins. Let them stand before you innocent.” As He takes their sins from them, He fills their hearts with the glorious light of truth and love (Manuscript 28, 1901).

(Hebrews 8:1, 2; 2 Peter 1:10; Revelation 8:3, 4.) The Terms of Our Election—[Hebrews 7:25 quoted]. By His spotless life, His obedience, His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ interceded for the lost race. And now not as a mere petitioner does the Captain of our salvation intercede for us, but as a conqueror claiming His victory. His offering is complete, and as our intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censer containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people. Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, the incense ascends to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgression. To the true believer Christ is indeed the minister of the sanctuary, officiating for him in the sanctuary, and speaking through God's appointed agencies.

Christ is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him in faith. He will cleanse them from all defilement if they will let Him. But if they cling to their sins, they cannot possibly be saved; for

Christ's righteousness covers no sin unrepented of. God has declared that those who receive Christ as their Redeemer, accepting Him as the One who takes away all sin, will receive pardon for their transgressions. These are the terms of our election. Man's salvation depends upon his receiving Christ by faith. Those who will not receive Him lose eternal life because they refused to avail themselves of the only means provided by the Father and the Son for the salvation of a perishing world (Manuscript 142, 1899).

Personal Character of Christ's Intercession—Christ is watching. He knows all about our burdens, our dangers, and our difficulties; and He fills His mouth with arguments in our behalf. He fits His intercessions to the needs of each soul, as He did in the case of Peter.... Our Advocate fills His mouth with arguments to teach His tried, tempted ones to brace against Satan's temptations. He interprets every movement of the enemy. He orders events (Letter 90, 1906).

25-27. See EGW comment on Romans 8:34.

26. See EGW comment on Hebrews 9:14.

Chapter 8

1. See EGW comment on 1 Timothy 2:5.

1, 2 (Romans 12:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 12:27; see EGW comment on Romans 8:26, 34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24). Tabernacle a Type of the Christian Church—The Jewish tabernacle was a type of the Christian church.... The church on earth, composed of those who are faithful and loyal to God, is the “true tabernacle,” whereof the Redeemer is the minister. God, and not man, pitched this tabernacle on a high, elevated platform.

This tabernacle is Christ’s body, and from north, south, east, and west He gathers those who shall help to compose it.... A holy tabernacle is built up of those who receive Christ as their personal Saviour.... Christ is the minister of the true tabernacle, the high priest of all who believe in

Him as a personal Saviour (The Signs of the Times, February 14, 1900).

5. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 3:7-11.

5-13 (chs. 10:16-18; 12:24; Jeremiah 31:31; John 1:12). New Covenant Grounded on Mercy—The blessings of the new covenant are grounded purely on mercy in forgiving unrighteousness and sins. The Lord specifies, I will do thus and thus unto all who turn to Me, forsaking the evil and choosing the good. “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” All who humble their hearts, confessing their sins, will find mercy and grace and assurance. Has God, in showing mercy to the sinner, ceased to be just? Has He dishonored His holy law, and will He henceforth pass over the violation of it? God is true. He changes not. The conditions of salvation are ever the same. Life, eternal life, is for all who will obey God’s law....

Under the new covenant, the conditions by

which eternal life may be gained are the same as under the old—perfect obedience. Under the old covenant, there were many offenses of a daring, presumptuous character, for which there was no atonement specified by law. In the new and better covenant, Christ has fulfilled the law for the transgressors of law, if they receive Him by faith as a personal Saviour. “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” Mercy and forgiveness are the reward of all who come to Christ trusting in His merits to take away their sins. In the better covenant we are cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ (Letter 276, 1904).

6. See EGW comment on Hebrews 9:11, 12.

6, 7 (chs. 7:22; 10:19, 20; 13:20; Matthew 27:51; Luke 10:27, 28; 2 Corinthians 3:6-9). Terms of God’s Covenant—God’s people are justified through the administration of the “better covenant,” through Christ’s righteousness. A covenant is an agreement by which parties bind themselves and each other to the fulfillment of certain conditions. Thus the human agent enters

into agreement with God to comply with the conditions specified in His Word. His conduct shows whether or not he respects these conditions.

Man gains everything by obeying the covenant-keeping God. God's attributes are imparted to man, enabling him to exercise mercy and compassion. God's covenant assures us of His unchangeable character. Why, then, are those who claim to believe in God changeable, fickle, untrustworthy? Why do they not do service heartily, as under obligation to please and glorify God? It is not enough for us to have a general idea of God's requirements. We must know for ourselves what His requirements and our obligations are. The terms of God's covenant are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." These are the conditions of life. "This do," Christ said, "and thou shalt live."

Christ's death and resurrection completed His covenant. Before this time, it was revealed through

types and shadows, which pointed to the great offering to be made by the world's Redeemer, offered in promise for the sins of the world. Anciently believers were saved by the same Saviour as now, but it was a God veiled. They saw God's mercy in figures. The promise given to Adam and Eve in Eden was the gospel to a fallen race. The promise was made that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and it should bruise His heel. Christ's sacrifice is the glorious fulfillment of the whole Jewish economy. The Sun of Righteousness has risen. Christ our righteousness is shining in brightness upon us.

God did not lessen His claim upon men in order to save them. When as a sinless offering Christ bowed His head and died, when by the Almighty's unseen hand the veil of the temple was rent in twain, a new and living way was opened. All can now approach God through the merits of Christ. It is because the veil has been rent that men can draw nigh to God. They need not depend on priest or ceremonial sacrifice. Liberty is given to all to go directly to God through a personal Saviour.

It is God's pleasure and will that the blessings bestowed on man shall be given in perfect completeness. He has made provision that every difficulty may be overcome, every want supplied through the Holy Spirit. Thus He designs that man shall perfect a Christian character. God would have us contemplate His love, His promises, given so freely to those who have no merit in themselves. He would have us depend fully, gratefully, rejoicingly, in the righteousness provided for us in Christ. To all who come to God in His appointed way, He freely listens (Manuscript 148, 1897).

Chapter 9

9-12. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 3:7-11.

11, 12 (Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 8:6; see EGW comment on Hebrews 9:24). The Rewards of Christ's Sacrifice—Christ's priestly intercession is now going on in the sanctuary above in our behalf. But how few have a real

understanding that our great High Priest presents before the Father His own blood, claiming for the sinner who receives Him as his personal Saviour all the graces which His covenant embraces as the reward of His sacrifice. This sacrifice made Him abundantly able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He liveth to make intercession for them (Manuscript 92, 1899).

11-14, 22 (John 1:29; Revelation 13:8; see EGW comment on Romans 8:34; Hebrews 2:14-18; 1 John 1:7, 9). Without Shedding of Blood Is No Remission—Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. To many it has been a mystery why so many sacrificial offerings were required in the old dispensation, why so many bleeding victims were led to the altar. But the great truth that was to be kept before men, and imprinted upon mind and heart, was this, “Without shedding of blood is no remission.” In every bleeding sacrifice was typified “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Christ Himself was the originator of the Jewish

system of worship, in which, by types and symbols, were shadowed forth spiritual and heavenly things. Many forgot the true significance of these offerings; and the great truth that through Christ alone there is forgiveness of sin, was lost to them. The multiplying of sacrificial offerings, the blood of bulls and goats, could not take away sin (The Signs of the Times, January 2, 1893).

The Lesson of the Animal Sacrifices—A lesson was embodied in every sacrifice, impressed in every ceremony, solemnly preached by the priest in his holy office, and inculcated by God Himself—that through the blood of Christ alone is there forgiveness of sins. How little we as a people feel the force of this great truth! How seldom, by living, acting faith, do we bring into our lives this great truth, that there is forgiveness for the least sin, forgiveness for the greatest sin (The Review and Herald, September 21, 1886)!

11-14, 24. See EGW comment on 1 Timothy 2:5.

13, 14. See EGW comment on Revelation 8:3, 4.

14 (chs. 7:26; 13:20; see EGW comment on Acts 15:11; Ephesians 2:18). Everlasting Covenant Sealed Forever—Christ was without sin, else His life in human flesh and His death on the cross would have been of no more value in procuring grace for the sinner than the death of any other man. While He took upon Him humanity, it was a life taken into union with Deity. He could lay down His life as priest and also victim. He possessed in Himself power to lay it down and take it up again. He offered Himself without spot to God.

The atonement of Christ sealed forever the everlasting covenant of grace. It was the fulfilling of every condition upon which God suspended the free communication of grace to the human family. Every barrier was then broken down which intercepted the freest exercise of grace, mercy, peace, and love to the most guilty of Adam's race (Manuscript 92, 1899).

(John 14:30.) Offerer and Offering, Priest and Victim—The infinite sufficiency of Christ is demonstrated by His bearing the sins of the whole world. He occupies the double position of offerer and of offering, of priest and of victim. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. “The prince of this world cometh,” He declares, “and hath nothing in me.” He was a Lamb without blemish and without spot (Letter 192, 1906).

22. See EGW comment on Leviticus 17:11; 1 Timothy 2:5; Revelation 12:10.

24 (John 15:4; Ephesians 1:6; Colossians 2:10; see EGW comment on Romans 8:26, 34; Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1). Jesus Stands in the Holy of Holies—Jesus stands in the holy of holies, now to appear in the presence of God for us. There He ceases not to present His people moment by moment, complete in Himself. But because we are thus represented before the Father, we are not to imagine that we are to

presume upon His mercy, and become careless, indifferent, and self-indulgent. Christ is not the minister of sin. We are complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, only as we abide in Him by faith (The Signs of the Times, July 4, 1892).

(Revelation 5:11.) Not in a State of Solitude and Grandeur—Do not let your thoughts dwell upon yourselves. Think of Jesus. He is in His holy place, not in a state of solitude and grandeur, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand of heavenly beings who wait to do their Master's bidding. And He bids them go and work for the weakest saint who puts his trust in God. High and low, rich and poor, have the same help provided (Letter 134, 1899).

Chapter 10

1-7. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 3:7-11.

16-18. See EGW comment on Hebrews 8:5-13.

19, 20. See EGW comment on Hebrews 6:19; Hebrews 8:6, 7; Matthew 27:51; Revelation 3:8.

19-21 (Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 2:1). Entering the Sanctuary With Christ—This is the great day of atonement, and our Advocate is standing before the Father, pleading as our intercessor. In place of wrapping about us the garments of self-righteousness, we should be found daily humbling ourselves before God, confessing our own individual sins, seeking the pardon of our transgressions, and cooperating with Christ in the work of preparing our souls to reflect the divine image. Unless we enter the sanctuary above, and unite with Christ in working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, we shall be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and shall be pronounced wanting (Manuscript 168, 1898).

23. See EGW comment on Hebrews 4:14; 2 Peter 1:4; Revelation 3:3.

25 (see EGW comment on Malachi 3:16). Seeking the Assembly of the Saints—Those who

do not feel the necessity of seeking the assembly of the saints, with the precious assurance that the Lord will meet with them, show how lightly they value the help that God has provided for them. Satan is constantly at work to wound and poison the soul; in order to withstand his efforts we must breathe the atmosphere of heaven. We must individually get hold and keep hold of Christ (Manuscript 16, 1890).

Chapter 11

1. See EGW comment on Romans 5:1.

6. See EGW comment on Hebrews 3:12.

16. See EGW comment on Hebrews 1:3.

24-27. See EGW comment on Exodus 2:10.

26. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 9:6.

27. See EGW comment on Hebrews 6:19; 2 Corinthians 4:18; 2 Peter 3:18.

37. See EGW comment on Isaiah 1:1.

Chapter 12

1 (Colossians 3:8). Who Are the Witnesses?—[Hebrews 12:1 quoted.] The weights that are here referred to are the evil habits and practices we have formed by following our own natural dispositions. Who are the witnesses? They are those spoken of in the previous chapter—those who have breasted the evils and difficulties in their way, and who in the name of the Lord have braced themselves successfully against the opposing forces of evil. They were sustained and strengthened and the Lord held them by His hand.

There are other witnesses. All about us are those who are watching us closely, to see how we who profess a belief in the truth conduct ourselves. At all times and in all places, so far as possible, we must magnify the truth before the world (Manuscript 61, 1907).

3. See EGW comment on Hebrews 2:14.

4. See EGW comment on Hebrews 4:15; Matthew 4:1-11.

11 (James 1:2, 3; 1 Peter 1:6, 7). Blossoms Which Mature Amidst Clouds—Faith, patience, forbearance, heavenly-mindedness, trust in your wise, heavenly Father, are the perfect blossoms which mature amidst clouds and disappointments and bereavements (Letter 1, 1883).

12, 13. See EGW comment on Galatians 6:1, 2.

14. See EGW comment on Romans 6:19, 22; Ephesians 4:20-24.

15. See EGW comment on James 3:15, 16; 1 Peter 2:1, 2.

16, 17. See EGW comment on Genesis 25:29-34.

24. See EGW comment on Hebrews 8:5-13.

26, 27. See EGW comment on 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12.

Chapter 13

11-13 (Galatians 3:13). He Suffered Without the Camp—As Adam and Eve were banished from Eden for transgressing the law of God, so Christ was to suffer without the boundaries of the holy place. He died outside the camp, where felons and murderers were executed. There He trod the winepress alone, bearing the penalty that should have fallen on the sinner. How deep and full of significance are the words, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” He went forth without the camp, thus showing that He gave His life not only for the Jewish nation, but for the whole world (The Youth’s Instructor, June 28, 1900).

Christ Died for All Mankind—Christ suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for Calvary was outside the city walls. This was to show that He

died, not for the Hebrews alone, but for all mankind. He proclaims to a fallen world that He is their Redeemer, and urges them to accept the salvation He offers (The Southern Work, September 4, 1906).

12. See EGW comment on 1 Timothy 2:5.

15. See EGW comment on Romans 8:34.

20 (Hebrews 8:5-13, 6, 7; see EGW comment on Hebrews 9:14). The Everlasting Covenant of Mercy—Let those who are oppressed under a sense of sin remember that there is hope for them. The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven. The covenant of mercy was made before the foundation of the world. It has existed from all eternity, and is called the everlasting covenant. So surely as there never was a time when God was not, so surely there never was a moment when it was not the delight of the eternal mind to manifest His grace to humanity (The Signs of the Times, June 12, 1901).

Chapter 59

James

Chapter 1

2, 3. See EGW comment on Hebrews 12:11.

8. See EGW comment on James 4:8; Matthew 6:24.

13. See EGW comment on Genesis 22:1.

22-25. See EGW comment on Romans 8:15-21.

23-25. See EGW comment on Revelation 3:18.

23-27 (see EGW comment on Romans 7:7-9).
God's Moral Looking Glass—[James 1:23-27 quoted.] This is the word of the living God. The law is God's great moral looking glass. Man is to compare his words, his spirit, his actions with the Word of God.... True religion means living the Word in your practical life. Your profession is not

of any value without the practical doing of the Word (Manuscript 7, 1898).

25 (1 John 2:1, 2). The Office of the Mirror—Here is a mirror into which we are to look, and search out every defect of character. But suppose that you look into this mirror and see many defects in your character, and then go away and say, “I am righteous”; will you be righteous? In your own eyes you will be righteous and holy. But how will it be at the bar of God? God has given us a rule, and we are to comply with its requirements; if we dare to do otherwise, to trample this under our feet, and then stand up before God and say, “I am holy, I am holy,” we shall be lost in the great day of accounts.

What if we were to go out into the streets and soil our clothes with mud, and then come into the house and, beholding our filthy garments as we stand before the glass, we should say to the mirror, “Cleanse me from my filth”; would it cleanse us from our filth? That is not the office of the looking glass. All that it can do is to reveal that our

garments are defiled; it cannot take the defilement away.

So it is with the law of God. It points out the defects of character. It condemns us as sinners, but it offers no pardon to the transgressor. It cannot save him from his sins. But God has made a provision. Says John, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” So we come to Him and there we find the character of Jesus, and the righteousness of His character saves the transgressor—if we have done on our part all that we could.

And yet while He saves the transgressor, He does not do away with the law of God, but He exalts the law. He exalts the law because it is the detector of sin. And it is Christ’s cleansing blood that takes away our sins, when we come to Him with contrition of soul seeking His pardon. He imputes His righteousness, He takes the guilt upon Himself (MS 5, 1885).

26. See EGW comment on Hebrews 3:2.

27. True Religion a Fountain of Charity—

The pure religion of Jesus is the fountain from which flow streams of charity, love, self-sacrifice (Letter 7, 1883).

A Christian is a Christlike man, a Christlike woman, who is active in God's service, who is present at the social meeting, whose presence will encourage others also. Religion does not consist in works, but religion works; it is not dormant (Letter 7, 1883).

Genuine Religion Never Cramps—Many seem to feel that religion has a tendency to make its possessor narrow and cramped, but genuine religion does not have a narrowing influence; it is the lack of religion that cramps the faculties and narrows the mind. When a man is narrow, it is an evidence that he needs the grace of God, the heavenly anointing; for a Christian is one whom the Lord, the God of hosts, can work through, that he may keep the ways of the Lord of the earth and make manifest His will to men (Manuscript 3,

1892).

Chapter 2

13 (Psalm 89:14; Galatians 6:14). The Cross Joins Justice and Mercy—His [Christ's] object was to reconcile the prerogatives of Justice and Mercy, and let each stand separate in its dignity, yet united. His mercy was not weakness, but a terrible power to punish sin because it is sin; yet a power to draw to it the love of humanity. Through Christ, Justice is enabled to forgive without sacrificing one jot of its exalted holiness.

Justice and Mercy stood apart, in opposition to each other, separated by a wide gulf. The Lord our Redeemer clothed His divinity with humanity, and wrought out in behalf of man a character that was without spot or blemish. He planted His cross midway between heaven and earth, and made it the object of attraction which reached both ways, drawing both Justice and Mercy across the gulf. Justice moved from its exalted throne, and with all the armies of heaven approached the cross. There it

saw One equal with God bearing the penalty for all injustice and sin. With perfect satisfaction Justice bowed in reverence at the cross, saying, It is enough (Manuscript 94, 1899).

14-20. See EGW comment on Galatians 5:6.

21-26 (Romans 3:31). Saving Faith More Than Mere Belief—The apostle James saw that dangers would arise in presenting the subject of justification by faith, and he labored to show that genuine faith cannot exist without corresponding works. The experience of Abraham is presented. “Seest thou,” he says, “how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?” Thus genuine faith does a genuine work in the believer. Faith and obedience bring a solid, valuable experience.

There is a belief that is not a saving faith. The Word declares that the devils believe and tremble. The so-called faith that does not work by love and purify the soul will not justify any man.... Abraham believed God. How do we know that he believed?

His works testified to the character of his faith, and his faith was accounted to him for righteousness.

We need the faith of Abraham in our day, to lighten the darkness that gathers around us, 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 (The Signs of the Times, May 19, 1898).

22. See EGW comment on Luke 17:10; Ephesians 2:8, 9.

Chapter 3

2. One of the Highest Gifts—The talent of speech ranks with the highest gifts (Manuscript 92, 1899).

(James 1:26.) Power to Bridle the Tongue—

Through the help that Christ can give, we shall be able to learn to bridle the tongue. Sorely as He was tried on the point of hasty and angry speech, He never once sinned with His lips. With patient calmness He met the sneers, the taunts, and the ridicule of His fellow workers at the carpenter's bench. Instead of retorting angrily, He would begin to sing one of David's beautiful psalms; and His companions, before realizing what they were doing, would unite with Him in the hymn. What a transformation would be wrought in this world if men and women today would follow Christ's example in the use of words (The Review and Herald, May 26, 1904).

8. See EGW comment on Psalm 5:5-12.

13, 14. Heavenly Fragrance of Truth—
[James 3:13, 14 quoted.] What is lying against the truth? It is claiming to believe the truth while the spirit, the words, the deportment, represent not Christ but Satan. To surmise evil, to be impatient and unforgiving, is lying against the truth; but love, patience, and long forbearance are in accordance

with the principles of truth. Truth is ever pure, ever kind, breathing a heavenly fragrance unmingled with selfishness (The Review and Herald, March 12, 1895).

15, 16 (Hebrews 12:15). Climbing on the Judgment Seat—[James 3:15-18 quoted.] ... He who opens his heart to the suggestions of the enemy, taking in evil surmisings, and cherishing jealousy, frequently misconstrues this evil-mindedness, calling it special foresight, discrimination, or discernment in detecting guilt and fathoming the evil motives of others. He considers that a precious gift has been vouchsafed to him; and he draws apart from the very brethren with whom he should be in harmony; he climbs upon the judgment seat, and shuts his heart against the one he supposes to be in error, as though he himself were above temptation. Jesus separates from him, and leaves him to walk in the sparks of his own kindling.

Let no one among you glory any longer against the truth by declaring that this spirit is a necessary

consequence of dealing faithfully with wrongdoers and of standing in defense of the truth. Such wisdom has many admirers, but it is very deceptive and harmful. It does not come from above, but is the fruit of an unregenerated heart. Its originator is Satan himself. Let no accuser of others credit himself with discernment; for in so doing he clothes the attributes of Satan with the garments of righteousness. I call upon you, my brethren, to purify the soul temple of all these things that defile; for they are roots of bitterness.

How true are the words of the apostle, “Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” One person in an institution or in a church who gives loose rein to unkind thoughts by speaking evil of the brethren, may stir up the worst passions of the human heart, and spread abroad a leaven of evil that will work in all who come into association with him. In this way the enemy of all righteousness gains the victory, and the result of his work is to make of no effect the Saviour’s prayer when He pleaded that His disciples might be one as He is one with the Father (The Review and

Herald, March 12, 1895).

17 (see EGW comment on John 13:34). The Right Kind of Sensitiveness—Those who criticize and condemn one another are breaking God’s commandments, and are an offense to Him. They neither love God nor their fellow beings. Brethren and sisters, let us clear away the rubbish of criticism and suspicion and complaint, and do not wear your nerves on the outside. Some are so sensitive that they cannot be reasoned with. Be very sensitive in regard to what it means to keep the law of God, and in regard to whether you are keeping or breaking the law. It is this that God wants us to be sensitive about (The General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1903).

Chapter 4

4. See EGW comment on Matthew 6:24.

7, 8. Annoyances Vanish When Jesus Draws Near—“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.”

How precious to the tempted soul is this positive promise. Now if the one in trouble and temptation keeps his eye fixed on Jesus, and draws nigh to God, talking of His goodness and mercy, Jesus draws nigh to him, and his annoyances that he thought almost unbearable vanish (Letter 43, 1892).

Breaking Satan's Power—The soul that loves God, loves to draw strength from Him by constant communion with Him. When it becomes the habit of the soul to converse with God, the power of the evil one is broken; for Satan cannot abide near the soul that draws nigh unto God (The Review and Herald, December 3, 1889).

8 (James 5:16; see EGW comment on Hebrews 1:14). Safe in God's Presence—“Draw nigh to God.” What is the result of this? We cannot draw nigh to God and behold His loveliness and compassion without realizing our defects and being filled with a desire to rise higher. “And he will draw nigh to you.” The Lord will draw nigh to him who confesses to his brethren the wrongs he has

done them, and then comes to God in humility and contrition.

He who feels his own danger is on the watch lest he shall grieve the Holy Spirit and then draw away from God because he knows that He is not pleased with his course of action. How much better and safer it is to draw nigh to God, that the pure light shining from His Word may heal the wounds that sin has made in the soul. The closer we are to God, the safer we are, for Satan hates and fears the presence of God (Letter 40, 1901).

(John 17:21-23.) Answering the Prayer of Christ—If we draw nigh to God, individually, then don't you see what the result will be? Can't you see that we will draw nigh to one another? We cannot draw nigh to God, and come to the same cross, without our hearts being blended together in perfect unity, answering the prayer of Christ "that they may be one" as He is one with the Father. And therefore we should seek in spirit, in understanding, in faith, that we may be one, that God may be glorified in us as He is glorified in the

Son; and that God shall love us as He loves the Son (Manuscript 7, 1890).

Draw Nigh By Prayer—“Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.” Draw nigh to Him by prayer, by contemplation, by reading His Word. When He draws nigh to you, He lifts up for you a standard against the enemy. Let us take courage; for the enemy cannot pass this standard (Manuscript 92, 1901).

(James 1:8; Matthew 6:24.) Essential Work for the Sinner Defined—The Lord says, “Draw nigh to God.” How? By secret, earnest examination of your own heart, by childlike, heartfelt, humble dependence upon God, making known all your weakness to Jesus, and by confessing your sins. Thus you may draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.

But let us read the remainder of the lesson given for our instruction, that we may more fully comprehend what it means to draw nigh to God. “Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your

hearts, ye double minded.” The work that is essential to be done by the sinner is here clearly defined. It is a work not agreeable to the inclination of the human heart; but unless it is done the soul is not in a condition to appreciate the purity and perfection of the character of Christ, and in no condition either to understand the offensiveness of sin. The exhortation is given, “Purify your hearts, ye double minded.” While professing to be Christians, many have the mold of the world upon them, and their affections are not set upon God. They are double minded, making an attempt to serve God and mammon at the same time; but the world’s Redeemer has declared, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). By trying to serve two masters, they are unstable in all their ways, and cannot be depended upon. To all appearances they are serving God, while at the same time in heart they are yielding to the temptation of Satan and cherishing sin. They may speak words that are smoother than oil, yet their hearts are full of deception and deceit in all their practices. Professing to be righteous, yet they have a heart that is desperately wicked.

Of what profit is it to say pleasant things, to deplore the work of Satan, and yet at the same time to enter into the fulfillment of all his devices? This is being double minded (Letter 13, 1893).

8, 9 (Matthew 5:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10). The Sorrow of True Repentance—“Be afflicted, and mourn and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy into heaviness.” It is right to be cheerful, and even joyful. It is right to cultivate cheerfulness of spirit through sanctification of the truth; but it is not right to indulge in foolish jesting and joking, in lightness and trifling, in words of criticism and condemnation of others.

Those who observe such persons who make a profession of religion, know that they are deceived. They know that the hands of such professors need to be cleansed, their hearts need to be purified. They need to experience genuine repentance for sin. What have they to mourn over? They should mourn over their inclination to sin, over the danger

they are in from inward corruption and from outward temptation. They should be afraid because they have so feeble a sense of the sinfulness of sin, and so little idea of what constitutes sin (Letter 13, 1893).

10 (1 Peter 5:6). Humility Before Pardon—God grants no pardon to him whose penitence produces no humility (Manuscript 11, 1888).

Chapter 5

14-16. Miracles and Natural Remedies—God's miracles do not always bear the outward semblance of miracles. Often they are brought about in a way which looks like the natural course of events. When we pray for the sick, we also work for them. We answer our own prayers by using the remedies within our reach. Water, wisely applied, is a most powerful remedy. As it is used intelligently, favorable results are seen. God has given us intelligence, and He desires us to make the most of His health-giving blessings. We ask that God will give bread to the hungry; we are then

to act as His helping hand in relieving hunger. We are to use every blessing God has placed within our reach for the deliverance of those in danger.

Natural means, used in accordance with God's will, bring about supernatural results. We ask for a miracle, and the Lord directs the mind to some simple remedy. We ask to be kept from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, that is stalking with such power through the world; we are then to cooperate with God, observing the laws of health and life. Having done all that we possibly can, we are to keep asking in faith for health and strength. We are to eat that food which will preserve the health of the body.

God gives us no encouragement that He will do for us what we can do for ourselves. Natural laws are to be obeyed. We are not to fail of doing our part. God says to us, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

We cannot disregard the laws of nature without disregarding the laws of God. We cannot expect the Lord to work a miracle for us while we neglect the simple remedies He has provided for our use, which aptly and opportunely applied, will bring about a miraculous result. Therefore, pray, believe, and work (Letter 66, 1901).

Healed in Spite of Unconsecrated Minister—

A case was held up before me of a ... minister; eighty miles he was sent for, to pray for a sick sister who sent for him in compliance with the teaching of James. He went and prayed in earnest, and she prayed; she believed the minister to be a man of God, a man of faith. Physicians had given her up to die of consumption. She was healed immediately. She arose and prepared supper, a thing she had not done for ten years. Now the minister was vile, his life was corrupt, and yet here was a great work. He took the glory all to himself.

Then again the scene mentioned above passed before me. I saw that the woman was a true disciple of Christ; her faith was that she should be

healed. I saw their prayers: one was misty, dark, fell downward. The other prayer was mixed with light or specks which looked to me like diamonds, and arose upward to Jesus and He sent it up to His Father like sweet incense, and a beam of light was immediately sent to the afflicted one and she revived and strengthened under its influence. Said the angel, God will gather every particle of true, sincere faith; like diamonds shall they be gathered up and will surely bring a return or answer; and God will separate the precious from the vile. Although He bears long with the hypocrite and sinner, yet he will be searched out. Though he may flourish with the honest a while like the green bay tree, yet the time will come when his folly will be made manifest (Letter 2, 1851).

(2 Thessalonians 2:7-12.) The Work of False Healers—Men under the influence of evil spirits will work miracles. They will make people sick by casting their spell upon them, and will then remove the spell, leading others to say that those who were sick have been miraculously healed. This Satan has done again and again (Letter 259, 1903).

16 (see EGW comment on ch 4:8). The Eloquence That God Accepts—He who strives for eloquent language when praying is entirely out of place. The eloquence that God accepts is the earnest, longing cry of the soul which feels that it must have help.

Long prayers are not essential. Those who labor in the right spirit will pray in the right spirit. He who labors as Christ labored will be in earnest when he prays. And the Word of God assures us, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Letter 121, 1901).

Chapter 60

1 Peter

Chapter 1

2. See EGW comment on Romans 11:4-6; Ephesians 1:4, 5, 11; 2 Peter 1:10.

5. See EGW comment on Revelation 2:1-5.

6, 7. See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 4:17, 18; Hebrews 12:11.

11, 12. See EGW comment on Philippians 2:5-8; 1 Timothy 3:16.

16 (Hebrews 12:14). The Drawing Cords of Love—As Jehovah is holy, He requires His people to be holy, pure, undefiled; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Those who worship Him in sincerity and truth will be accepted by Him. If church members will put away all self-worship, and will receive in their hearts the love for God and

for one another that filled Christ's heart, our heavenly Father will constantly manifest His power through them. Let His people be drawn together with the cords of divine love. Then the world will recognize the miracle-working power of God, and will acknowledge that He is the Strength and the Helper of His commandment-keeping people (Manuscript 125, 1907).

18, 19. See EGW comment on Colossians 2:9.

19. See EGW comment on John 1:14.

22 (Romans 5:1; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 11:1). The Creation of Faith—Under the inspiration of the Spirit, the apostle Peter represents Christians as those who have purified their souls in obeying the truth. Just in accordance with the faith and love we bring into our work will be the power brought into it. No man can create faith. The Spirit operating upon and enlightening the human mind, creates faith in God. In the Scriptures faith is stated to be the gift of God, powerful unto salvation, enlightening the hearts of

those who search for truth as for hidden treasure. The Spirit of God impresses the truth on the heart. The gospel is called the power of God unto salvation because God alone can make the truth a power which sanctifies the soul. He alone can render the cross of Christ triumphant (Manuscript 56, 1899).

(John 3:21; Titus 2:11; 1 John 3:3; see EGW comment on 1 John 3:3-6; 4:7, 8.) Airing the Soul of Sin—The Lord purifies the heart very much as we air a room. We do not close the doors and windows, and throw in some purifying substance; but we open the doors and throw wide the windows, and let heaven's purifying atmosphere flow in. The Lord says, "He that doeth truth cometh to the light." The windows of impulse, of feeling, must be opened up toward heaven, and the dust of selfishness and earthliness must be expelled. The grace of God must sweep through the chambers of the mind, the imagination must have heavenly themes for contemplation, and every element of the nature must be purified and vitalized by the Spirit of God (Manuscript 3, 1892).

Chapter 2

1, 2 (Hebrews 12:15). Objectionable Missionary Work—[1 Peter 2:1, 2 quoted.] ... We are fellow pilgrims, seeking a better country, even a heavenly. God will never say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” at the end of our journey, if we now cherish a spirit which craves to crowd out and supplant others. Malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking are things which God abhors, and no one who reveals those fruits in his life will enter the kingdom of heaven. ...

Those who make faultfinding their work, may appear to be constantly anxious and interested in regard to the welfare of others. They may seem to be actively engaged in good work. But their work does harm, and by the Lord it is not regarded as of any value. “They say,” is whispered here and there; by blind suggestions, other minds are filled with suspicion and distrust; uneasiness is created. Those who have listened to the “They say,” call to mind

something they have observed in their brethren, which might have been wrong, and much is made of that which is worthy of but little notice. These apparently innocent words strike long, fibrous roots into the minds of those that hear them, and untold harm is done. Seeds of bitterness are planted; evil suggestions rankle in human hearts, and the seed springs up to bear an abundant harvest.

The enemy of all righteousness sets in operation objectionable missionary work of this kind. One who is professedly working for Christ is tempted by him to probe the minds of others, and ask their opinions of words which have been spoken. In this way suspicion and envy are planted in many breasts. If those who carry on this missionary work could see it as it is regarded by the Lord of heaven; if for one day they could trace the course of their work, and see its baleful results, they would repent.

To do good to all, to faithfully perform our home duties, to devote our time to comparing our lives with the life of Christ, praying for a humble,

sanctified mind—this is the missionary work which the Lord requires us to do. Angels of heaven cannot work with the human agent who sows the seeds of dissension and strife, but evil angels attend him wherever he goes (Manuscript 47, 1896).

2. Feeding the Soul With Truth.—Coming to God inspires confidence, and stimulates the soul to action. The body will die if deprived of suitable nourishment, and so with the soul. In order to have spiritual strength, or even life, it must be nourished by the Word, which is spirit and life. It must be constantly fed by the truth which connects the soul with Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being (Manuscript 16, 1890).

4, 5. See EGW comment on Ephesians 2:19-21.

5. See EGW comment on Psalm 144:12.

11. See EGW comment on 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

12. See EGW comment on Romans 12:17.

21. See EGW comment on Revelation 14:4.

24 (see EGW comment on Hebrews 2:14; 7:25). **Bad Habits to Be Firmly Resisted**—Christ is represented as bearing the griefs and sorrows caused by sin, and He does this, not only as our sympathizing friend, but as our substitute. Therefore our sins of selfishness, of unamiable temper, of indolence, of wrong habits and practices, are to be positively and firmly put away. The one who breaks with Satan is to give no place to his temptations. Let the souls who come to Christ consider that He is the sin bearer.... Let the repenting soul lay hold by faith of the provision made to save him, not in his sin, but from his sin. Christ as the sin bearer must take away the sin and rescue the sinner from his morbid spiritual condition (Manuscript 56, 1900).

A Bridge Over the Gulf—By transgression man was severed from God, the communion between them was broken; but Jesus Christ died upon the cross of Calvary, bearing in His body the

sins of the whole world, and the gulf between heaven and earth was bridged by that cross. Christ leads men to the gulf, and points to the bridge by which it is spanned, saying, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Manuscript 21, 1895).

Chapter 3

1-5. See EGW comment on Isaiah 3:18-23.

3, 4 (Exodus 32:1-6; see EGW comment on Numbers 15:38, 39). The Buds and Blossoms of Pride—There are idols cherished in our families and in our churches today which have the same influence upon us as did the golden calf upon the Israelites. Will the people search themselves? Will the shepherds do their work as faithful sentinels of God? Will they see what idols they are cherishing? Will every one that is in moderate circumstances consider that they are to be a people distinct and separate in their fashions of dress, their speech, their deportment, from the world? Will they see their idolatry in small as well as in large matters,

and that it is separating them from God? When reproofs come they are ashamed, but not repentant. They have had great light, great opportunities, line upon line, and precept upon precept, but pride buds and blossoms in their apparel, revealing the thoughts and intents of the heart (Manuscript 52, 1898).

(1 Timothy 2:8-10.) What Idols Are We Cherishing?—This idolatry on the part of ancient Israel was an offense to God; but are there not idols just as offensive cherished in our families and in our churches today—idols which have the same influence upon us as did the golden calf upon the Israelites? On the part of God’s professed people there is a manifest disregard of the warnings given by Peter: “Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning. ...”

The time has come when we as a people should search ourselves to see what idols we are cherishing; when the shepherds of the flock should do faithful work as the sentinels of God. In dress, in speech, in deportment, we are to be a people

distinct and separate from the world. “I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works” (The Review and Herald, March 7, 1899).

The Passion for Display—At the foundation of the ruin of many homes lies the passion for display. Men and women scheme and plan to get means in order that they may appear richer than their neighbors. But even though they may succeed in their desperate struggle, they are not truly happy. True happiness springs from a heart at peace with God [1 Peter 3:3, 4 quoted] (Manuscript 99, 1902).

The Charm of Moral Worth—Moral worth has a charm that wealth and outward attractions do not possess. The woman having the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, in the sight of God has an endowment of great value, before which the silver

of Tarshish, and the gold of Ophir, are worthless. Solomon's bride, in all her glory, cannot compare with one of these household treasures (The Health Reformer, May, 1878).

8. A Supreme Reverence for Truth—"Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." Cherish a supreme reverence for justice and truth, and a hatred for all cruelty and oppression. Do unto others as you would wish them to do to you. God forbids you to favor self, to the disadvantage of another (The Review and Herald, April 13, 1905).

18-20. See EGW comment on Genesis 6:3.

Chapter 4

17. See EGW comment on Revelation 11:1.

19. The Spirit Works With the Contrite Ones—It means much to commit the keeping of the soul to God. It means that we are to live and walk by faith, not trusting in or glorifying self, but looking to Jesus our Advocate, as the author and

finisher of our faith. The Holy Spirit will do its work upon the heart that is contrite, but never can He work upon a self-important, self-righteous soul. In his own wisdom such a one would mend himself. He interposes between his soul and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will work if self will not interpose (Manuscript 148, 1897).

Chapter 5

2, 3 (Acts 20:28). A Wide Field for Church Leaders—God is not glorified by leaders in the church who seek to drive the sheep. No, no. “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” There is a wide field for the elders and the helpers in every church. They are to feed the flock of God with pure provender, thoroughly winnowed from the chaff, the poisonous mixture of error. You who have any part to act in the church of God, be sure that you act wisely in feeding the flock of God; for its

prosperity much depends upon the quality of this food (Manuscript 59, 1900).

3. See EGW comment on Psalm 89:14.

6. See EGW comment on James 4:10.

Chapter 61

2 Peter

Chapter 1

The Keynote of Victory—The first chapter of Second Peter is full of instruction, and strikes the keynote of victory. The truth is impressively forced upon the mind by the way it is presented in this chapter. Let us more abundantly recommend the study of these words, and the practicing of these precepts (Letter 43, 1895).

1-3. No Standstill in the Christian Life—[2 Peter 1:1-3 quoted.] What a grand theme this is for contemplation—the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Contemplating Christ and His righteousness leaves no room for self-righteousness, for the glorifying of self. In this chapter there is no standstill. There is continual advancement in every stage of the knowledge of Christ (Letter 43, 1895).

2, 5-7. See EGW comment on Romans 6:1-4.

4 (Hebrews 10:23). God Behind All His Promises—Promises are estimated by the truth of the one who makes them. Many men make promises only to break them, to mock the heart that trusted in them. Those who lean upon such men lean upon broken reeds. But God is behind the promises He makes. He is ever mindful of His covenant, and His truth endureth to all generations (Manuscript 23, 1899).

(Ephesians 2:1-6; see EGW comment on Genesis 2:7; Exodus 20:1-17; Matthew 4:1-11; Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15.) Partakers of the Divine Nature—We must learn of Christ. We must know what He is to those He has ransomed. We must realize that through belief in Him it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. We need not retain one sinful propensity.... [Ephesians 2:1-6 quoted.] ...

As we partake of the divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character, and we are made a living power for good. Ever learning of the divine Teacher, daily partaking of His nature, we cooperate with God in overcoming Satan's temptations. God works, and man works, that man may be one with Christ as Christ is one with God. Then we sit together with Christ in heavenly places. The mind rests with peace and assurance in Jesus (The Review and Herald, April 24, 1900).

The Enabling Grace of God—In His Word God reveals what He can do for human beings. He molds and fashions after the divine similitude the characters of those who will wear His yoke. Through His grace they are made partakers of the divine nature, and are thus enabled to overcome the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is God who gives us power to overcome. Those who hear His voice and obey His commandments are enabled to form righteous characters. Those who disregard His expressed commands will form characters like the propensities that they indulge

(Letter 44, 1903).

One With God—It is a knowledge of the perfection of the divine character, manifested to us in Jesus Christ, that opens up to us communion with God. It is by appropriating the great and precious promises that we are to become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

What possibilities are opened up to the youth who lay hold of the divine assurances of God's Word! Scarcely can the human mind comprehend what is the breadth and depth and height of the spiritual attainments that can be reached by becoming partakers of the divine nature. The human agent who daily yields obedience to God, who becomes a partaker of the divine nature, finds pleasure daily in keeping the commandments of God; for he is one with God. It is essential that he hold as vital a relation with God as does the Son to the Father. He understands the oneness that Christ prayed might exist between the Father and the Son (Letter 43, 1895).

5-7. Graces to Grow Up Together—We are to add to faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. You are not to think that you must wait until you have perfected one grace before cultivating another. No; they are to grow up together, fed continually from the fountain of charity; every day that you live, you can be perfecting the blessed attributes fully revealed in the character of Christ; and when you do this, you will bring light, love, peace, and joy into your homes (The Review and Herald, July 29, 1890).

5-11 (Philippians 2:12, 13). Daily Diligence Needed—Temptation must be met and resisted. Day by day the spiritual battle goes on. Day by day we are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. It is God that works in us, to will and to do of His good pleasure. Every soul is to strive with “all diligence” to add constantly to his spiritual attainments, strengthening every grace,

increasing in efficiency that he may grow in usefulness and holiness, as a fruit-bearing tree in the Lord's garden. He is to be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. True religion leads to the cultivation of the gifts that make a man more precious in God's sight than the gold of Ophir.

“All diligence” means much. It means a daily diligence. There is danger that we shall be blind in regard to the working of satanic agencies, and that we shall be ensnared by Satan's alluring temptations. Therefore the word comes to us, “Giving all diligence,” add to your character the graces that will make you strong to resist evil. “He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off.” He does not realize his spiritual poverty [2 Peter 1:10, 11 quoted] (Letter 144, 1903).

6. Temperance Precedes Patience—“And to temperance patience.” An intemperate man never can be a patient man. Temperance comes first, and then patience (Manuscript 49, 1894).

10 (John 1:12; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 1 Peter 1:2, 18-20; see EGW comment on Romans 11:4-6; Ephesians 1:4, 5, 11; Hebrews 7:25). Election Price Paid for All—There could be no such thing as one not prepared for heaven entering heaven. There is no such thing as a human being sanctified and fitted for the heavenly kingdom not having an election to that kingdom. God elects those who have been working on the plan of addition. The explanation is given in the first chapter of Second Peter. For every human being, Christ has paid the election price. No one need be lost. All have been redeemed. To those who receive Christ as a personal Saviour will be given power to become the sons and daughters of God. An eternal life insurance policy has been provided for all.

Whom God elects, Christ redeems. The Saviour has paid the redemption price for every soul. We are not our own; for we are bought with a price. From the Redeemer, who from the foundation of the world has chosen us, we receive the insurance policy that entitles us to eternal life (Letter 53,

1904).

Election Within Our Reach—There is the election of God on the condition of practice, and there is no other election in the Bible. Election is within our reach. “If ye do these things, ye shall never fall” (Manuscript 49, 1894).

10, 11 (see EGW comment on Revelation 11:1). The Best Life Insurance—[2 Peter 1:10, 11 quoted.] Here are your life-insurance papers. This is not an insurance policy the value of which some one else will receive after your death; it is a policy that assures you a life measuring with the life of God—even eternal life. O what an assurance! what a hope! Let us ever reveal to the world that we are seeking for a better country, even a heavenly. Heaven has been made for us, and we want a part in it. We cannot afford to allow anything to separate us from God and heaven. In this life we must be partakers of the divine nature. Brethren and sisters, you have only one life to live. O let it be a life of virtue, a life hid with Christ in God (The Review and Herald, May 26, 1904).

(See EGW comment on 1 John 3:1.) Benefits Secured by the Elect—It depends upon your course of action as to whether or not you will secure the benefits bestowed upon those who, as the elect of God, receive an eternal life-insurance policy (Manuscript 81, 1900).

14, 15. See EGW comment on Acts 8:9-24.

21 (2 Timothy 3:16). Inspiration of the Bible Writers—God committed the preparation of His divinely inspired Word to finite man. This Word arranged into books, the Old and New Testaments, is the guidebook to the inhabitants of a fallen world; bequeathed to them, that by studying and obeying the directions, not one soul would lose its way to heaven.

Those who think to make the supposed difficulties of Scripture plain, in measuring by their finite rule that which is inspired and that which is not inspired, had better cover their faces, as Elijah when the still small voice spoke to him; for they

are in the presence of God and holy angels, who for ages have communicated to men light and knowledge, telling them what to do, and what not to do, unfolding before them scenes of thrilling interest, waymark by waymark in symbols and signs and illustrations.

And He has not, while presenting the perils clustering about the last days, qualified any finite man to unravel hidden mysteries, or inspired one man or any class of men to pronounce judgment as to that which is inspired or is not. When men, in their finite judgment, find it necessary to go into an examination of Scriptures to define that which is inspired and that which is not, they have stepped before Jesus to show Him a better way than He has led us.

I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in an entire Bible. ...

Simplicity and plain utterance are comprehended by the illiterate, by the peasant, and the child as well as by the full-grown man or the

giant in intellect. If the individual is possessed of large talents of mental powers, he will find in the Oracles of God treasures of truth, beautiful and valuable, which he can appropriate. He will also find difficulties, and secrets and wonders which will give him the highest satisfaction to study during a long lifetime, and yet there is an infinity beyond.

Men of humble acquirements, possessing but limited capabilities and opportunities to become conversant in the Scriptures, find in the Living Oracles comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam. No one need be lost for want of knowledge unless he is willfully blind.

We thank God that the Bible is prepared for the poor man as well as for the learned man. It is fitted for all ages and all classes (Manuscript 16, 1888).

The writers of the Bible had to express their ideas in human language. It was written by human men. These men were inspired of the Holy Spirit.

Because of the imperfections of human understanding of language, or the perversity of the human mind, ingenious in evading truth, many read and understand the Bible to please themselves. It is not that the difficulty is in the Bible. Opposing politicians argue points of law in the statute book, and take opposite views in their application and in these laws.

The Scriptures were given to men, not in a continuous chain of unbroken utterances, but piece by piece through successive generations, as God in His providence saw a fitting opportunity to impress man at sundry times and divers places. Men wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. There is “first the bud, then the blossom, and next the fruit,” “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” This is exactly what the Bible utterances are to us.

There is not always perfect order or apparent unity in the Scriptures. The miracles of Christ are not given in exact order, but are given just as the circumstances occurred, which called for this

divine revealing of the power of Christ. The truths of the Bible are as pearls hidden. They must be searched, dug out by painstaking effort. Those who take only a surface view of the Scriptures, will, with their superficial knowledge, which they think is very deep, talk of the contradictions of the Bible, and question the authority of the Scriptures. But those whose hearts are in harmony with truth and duty will search the Scriptures with a heart prepared to receive divine impressions. The illuminated soul sees a spiritual unity, one grand golden thread running through the whole, but it requires patience, thought, and prayer to trace out the precious golden thread. Sharp contentions over the Bible have led to investigation and revealed the precious jewels of truth. Many tears have been shed, many prayers offered, that the Lord would open the understanding to His Word.

The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are

expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes.

The stamps of minds are different. All do not understand expressions and statements alike. Some understand the statements of the Scriptures to suit their own particular minds and cases. Prepossessions, prejudices, and passions have a strong influence to darken the understanding and confuse the mind even in reading the words of Holy Writ. ...

The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not

on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the Word of God (Manuscript 24, 1886).

Finite Vehicles of Thought—The Lord speaks to human beings in imperfect speech, in order that the degenerate senses, the dull, earthly perception, of earthly beings may comprehend His words. Thus is shown God's condescension. He meets fallen human beings where they are. The Bible, perfect as it is in its simplicity, does not answer to the great ideas of God; for infinite ideas cannot be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought. Instead of the expressions of the Bible being exaggerated, as many people suppose, the strong expressions break down before the magnificence of the thought, though the penman selected the most expressive language through which to convey the truths of higher education. Sinful beings can only

bear to look upon a shadow of the brightness of heaven's glory (Letter 121, 1901).

Chapter 2

1. See EGW comment on Acts 20:30; 4:1; Revelation 1:1, 2.

15-21. See EGW comment on Ephesians 1:4, 5, 11.

20, 21. See EGW comment on Matthew 12:43-45.

Chapter 3

9 (Revelation 22:10-12). The Boundary of Divine Forbearance—God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish; but His forbearance has a limit, and when the boundary is past, there is no second probation. His wrath will go forth and He will destroy without remedy.

When men, being in power, oppress and spoil

their fellow men, and no earthly tribunal can be found to do justice, God will interpose in behalf of those who cannot defend themselves. He will punish for every act of oppression. No earthly wisdom can secure wrongdoers against the judgments of heaven. And when men put their trust in earthly powers instead of their Maker, when they become lifted up in pride and self-confidence, God will in His own time make them to be despised (Letter 122, 1900).

10 (Psalm 27:5; 91:9, 10; Isaiah 2:17-21; see EGW comment on Genesis 6:17; Revelation 20:9, 10, 14). God the Refuge of His People—Before the Son of man appears in the clouds of heaven, everything in nature will be convulsed. Lightning from heaven uniting with the fire in the earth, will cause the mountains to burn like a furnace, and pour out their floods of lava over villages and cities. Molten masses of rock, thrown into the water by the upheaval of things hidden in the earth, will cause the water to boil and send forth rocks and earth. There will be mighty earthquakes and great destruction of human life.

But as in the days of the great Deluge Noah was preserved in the ark that God had prepared for him, so in these days of destruction and calamity, God will be the refuge of His believing ones ... [Psalm 91:9, 10; 27:5 quoted] (Letter 258, 1907).

Destruction From Earth and Sky—The hand of Omnipotence is at no loss for ways and means to accomplish His purposes. He could reach into the bowels of the earth and call forth His weapons, waters there concealed, to aid in the destruction of the corrupt inhabitants of the old world. ...

Water will never destroy the earth again, but the weapons of God are concealed in the bowels of the earth, which He will draw forth to unite with the fire from heaven to accomplish His purpose in the destruction of all those who would not receive the message of warning and purify their souls in obeying the truth and being obedient to the laws of God (The Signs of the Times, January 3, 1878).

(Psalm 144:5, 6; Nahum 1:5, 6.) Destruction by Water and Fire—In the bowels of the earth

God has in reserve the weapons that He will use to destroy the sinful race. Since the Flood, God has used, to destroy wicked cities, both the water and the fire that are concealed in the earth. In the final conflagration God will in His wrath send lightning from heaven that will unite with the fire in the earth. The mountains will burn like a furnace, and pour forth streams of lava [Nahum 1:5, 6; Psalm 144:5, 6 quoted] (Manuscript 21, 1902).

11. See EGW comment on Revelation 3:14-18.

18 (Proverbs 11:25; Ephesians 4:15; see EGW comment on Revelation 2:4). Divine Law of Impartation—It is the Lord's desire that His followers shall grow in grace, that their love shall abound more and more, that they shall be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the praise and glory of God. ...

One of the divine plans for growth is impartation. The Christian is to gain strength by strengthening others. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." This is not merely a

promise; it is a divine law, a law by which God designs that the streams of benevolence, like the waters of the great deep, shall be kept in constant circulation, continually flowing back to their source. In the fulfilling of this law is the secret of spiritual growth (The Signs of the Times, June 12, 1901).

(1 Thessalonians 4:3.) Sanctification a Continual Growth in Grace—[2 Peter 3:14, 18 quoted.] There is no Bible sanctification for those who cast a part of the truth behind them. ...

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, or a day. It is a continual growth in grace. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. Satan lives, and is active, and every day we need to earnestly cry to God for help and strength to resist him. As long as Satan reigns we shall have self to subdue, besetments to overcome, and there is no stopping place. There is no point to which we can come and say we have fully attained (The Review and Herald, May 6, 1862).

(2 Corinthians 3:18; Hebrews 11:27.) A Connection With the Channel of Light—How is it possible that we may grow in grace? It is possible to us only as we empty our hearts of self, and present them to Heaven, to be molded after the divine Pattern. We may have a connection with the living channel of light; we may be refreshed with the heavenly dew, and have the showers of Heaven descend upon us. As we appropriate the blessing of God, we shall be able to receive greater measures of His grace. As we learn to endure as seeing Him who is invisible, we shall become changed into the image of Christ. The grace of Christ will not make us proud, cause us to be lifted up in self, but we shall become meek and lowly in heart (The Signs of the Times, January 16, 1893).

Chapter 62

1 John

Chapter 1

1-3. Testimony of John Invaluable.--[1 John 1:1-3 quoted.] Thus John bears testimony that he had seen Christ, had been with Christ. In the early history of the Christian church, the enemy tried to bring in questions that would lead to doubt and dissension. At this time the testimony of John was invaluable in establishing the faith of the believers. He could say with assurance, I know that Christ lived on this earth; and I can bear testimony regarding His words and works (Manuscript 29, 1911).

1-10 (see EGW comment on Revelation 1:9). John the Aged Servant of Jesus—The apostle John is an example of the way in which God can use aged workers. Read his stirring words, written when he was an old man. Who could bear a firmer, more decided testimony? [1 John 1:1-10; 2:1-5

quoted.]

In his old age John revealed the life of Christ in his life. He lived to be nearly one hundred years old, and over and over again he repeated the story of the crucified and risen Saviour. Persecution came upon the believers, and those young in experience were often in danger of losing their hold on Christ. But the old, tried servant of Jesus steadfastly maintained his faith (Manuscript 92, 1903).

7-9. See EGW comment on 1 Timothy 2:5.

7, 9 (Hebrews 9:11-14, 22; Revelation 22:1).
Efficacy of Christ's Blood—Thank God that He who spilled His blood for us, lives to plead it, lives to make intercession for every soul who receives Him. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. It speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, for Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us. We need to keep ever

before us the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. That life-cleansing, life-sustaining blood, appropriated by living faith, is our hope. We need to grow in appreciation of its inestimable value, for it speaks for us only as we by faith claim its virtue, keeping the conscience clean and at peace with God.

This is represented as the pardoning blood, inseparably connected with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer, illustrated by the ever-flowing stream that proceeds from the throne of God, the water of the river of life (Letter 87, 1894).

Chapter 2

1 (Romans 8:34; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:18; 7:25; Hebrews 9:24; see EGW comment on John 17:5, 24). Fenced From Satan's Attacks—“If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.” How careful is the Lord Jesus to give no occasion for a soul to despair. How He fences about the soul from Satan's fierce attacks. If through manifold temptations we are surprised or deceived into sin,

He does not turn from us and leave us to perish. No, no, that is not our Saviour. Christ prayed for us. He was tempted in all points like as we are; and having been tempted, He knows how to succor those who are tempted.

Our crucified Lord is pleading for us in the presence of the Father at the throne of grace. His atoning sacrifice we may plead for our pardon, our justification, and our sanctification. The Lamb slain is our only hope. Our faith looks up to Him, grasps Him as the One who can save to the uttermost, and the fragrance of the all-sufficient offering is accepted of the Father. Unto Christ is committed all power in heaven and in earth, and all things are possible to him that believeth. Christ's glory is concerned in our success. He has a common interest in all humanity. He is our sympathizing Saviour (Letter 33, 1895).

(Isaiah 49:16; Zechariah 3:1; Hebrews 4:14-16; see EGW comment on Matthew 28:18; Hebrews 5:5, 6; 10:19-21.) Efficiency of Christ's Priesthood—Let us remember that our great High

Priest is pleading before the mercy seat in behalf of His ransomed people. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

The blood of Jesus is pleading with power and efficacy for those who are back-slidden, for those who are rebellious, for those who sin against great light and love. Satan stands at our right hand to accuse us, and our Advocate stands at God’s right hand to plead for us. He has never lost a case that has been committed to Him.

We may trust in our Advocate; for He pleads His own merits in our behalf. Hear His prayer before His betrayal and trial. Listen to His prayer for us; for He had us in remembrance.

He will not forget His church in the world of temptation. He looks upon His tried and suffering people, and prays for them.... Yes, He beholds His people in this world, which is a persecuting world, and all seared and marred with the curse, and [He]

knows that they need all the divine resources of His sympathy and His love. Our Forerunner hath for us entered within the veil, and yet by the golden chain of love and truth, He is linked with His people in closest sympathy.

He is making intercession for the most lowly, the most oppressed and suffering, for the most tried and tempted ones. With upraised hands He pleads, “I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.” God loves to hear, and responds to the pleadings of His Son ... [Hebrews 4:14-16 quoted] (RH August 15, 1893).

Fixing Our Eyes Upon Our Advocate—In all our acts of true devotion, we fix our eye of faith upon our Advocate, who is standing between man and the eternal throne, waiting to meet our every effort, and by His Spirit assist us to a more perfect knowledge of God (Manuscript 7, 1898).

1, 2. See EGW comment on Hebrews 2:14-18; James 1:25.

3, 4. See EGW comment on 1 Thessalonians 4:3.

4. See EGW comment on John 14:15; Romans 3:31.

6 (see EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 14:4). Walking as Christ Walked—Those who walk even as Christ walked, who are patient, gentle, kind, meek and lowly in heart, those who yoke up with Christ and lift His burdens, who yearn for souls as He yearned for them—these will enter into the joy of their Lord. They will see with Christ the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. Heaven will triumph, for the vacancies made in heaven by the fall of Satan and his angels will be filled by the redeemed of the Lord (The Review and Herald, May 29, 1900).

The Imitation of Christ—True religion is the imitation of Christ. Those who follow Christ will deny self, take up the cross, and walk in His footsteps. Following Christ means obedience to all His commandments. No soldier can be said to

follow his commander unless he obeys orders. Christ is our model. To copy Jesus, full of love and tenderness and compassion, will require that we draw near to Him daily. O how God has been dishonored by His professed representatives (Letter 31a, 1894)!

15. Space Between the Soul and Jesus—

Those who are ever pressing a little closer to the world, and becoming more like them in feelings, in plans, in ideas, have left a space between them and the Saviour, and Satan has pressed his way into this space, and low, worldly-tainted, selfish plans become interwoven with their experience (The Review and Herald, June 7, 1887).

Not the Golden Currency of Heaven—As the lovers of the world make religion subservient to the world, God requires His worshipers to subordinate the world to religion. The things of the world, that perish with the using, are not to be made the first consideration; these are not the golden currency of heaven. God has not stamped upon them His image and superscription (Manuscript 16, 1890).

18 (Daniel 12:13; Revelation 14:6-12).
Meaning of Antichrist to Be Understood—Those who become confused in their understanding of the Word, who fail to see the meaning of antichrist, will surely place themselves on the side of antichrist. There is no time now for us to assimilate with the world. Daniel is standing in his lot and in his place. The prophecies of Daniel and of John are to be understood. They interpret each other. They give to the world truths which every one should understand. These prophecies are to be witnesses in the world. By their fulfillment in these last days they will explain themselves.

The Lord is about to punish the world for its iniquity. He is about to punish religious bodies for their rejection of the light and truth which has been given them. The great message, combining the first, second, and third angels' messages, is to be given to the world. This is to be the burden of our work. Those who truly believe in Christ will openly conform to the law of Jehovah. The Sabbath is the sign between God and His people; and we

are to make visible our conformity to the law of God by observing the Sabbath. It is to be the mark of distinction between God's chosen people and the world (Manuscript 10, 1900).

(2 Thessalonians 2:3-10; Revelation 13:16, 17; 18:3-7.) Society Ranging Into Two Classes— All society is ranging into two great classes, the obedient and the disobedient. Among which class shall we be found?

Those who keep God's commandments, those who live not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, compose the church of the living God. Those who choose to follow antichrist are subjects of the great apostate. Ranged under the banner of Satan, they break God's law and lead others to break it. They endeavor so to frame the laws of nations that men shall show their loyalty to earthly governments by trampling upon the laws of God's kingdom.

Satan is diverting minds with unimportant questions, in order that they shall not with clear

and distinct vision see matters of vast importance. The enemy is planning to ensnare the world.

The so-called Christian world is to be the theater of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Every nation will be involved ... [Revelation 18:3-7 quoted] (Manuscript 24, 1891).

All Heaven on Christ's Side—The determination of Antichrist to carry out the rebellion he began in heaven will continue to work in the children of disobedience. Their envy and hatred against those who obey the fourth commandment will wax more and more bitter. But the people of God are not to hide their banner. They are not to ignore the commandments of God, and in order to have an easy time, go with the multitude to do evil....

The greater man's influence for good, under the

control of the Spirit of God, the more determined will be the enemy to indulge his envy and jealousy toward him by religious persecution. But all heaven is on the side of Christ, not of Antichrist. Those who love God and are willing to be partakers with Christ in His sufferings, God will honor. Antichrist, meaning all who exalt themselves against the will and work of God, will at the appointed time feel the wrath of Him who gave Himself that they might not perish but have eternal life. All who persevere in obedience, all who will not sell their souls for money or for the favor of men, God will register in the book of life (Manuscript 9, 1900).

(Colossians 2:8; 1 Timothy 6:20.) Human Reason vs. God's Wisdom—Many exalt human reason, idolize human wisdom, and set the opinions of men above the revealed wisdom of God. This affords opportunity for the working of Satan, and the spirit of Antichrist is far more widespread than any of us imagine....

The maxims of the world, that know not God,

have been worked into the theories of the church. In the eyes of men, vain philosophy and science, falsely so-called, are of more value than the Word of God. The sentiment prevails to a large extent that the divine Mediator is not essential to the salvation of man. A variety of theories advanced by the so-called worldly-wise men for man's elevation, are believed and trusted in more than is the truth of God, as taught by Christ and His apostles.

The lying spirit that enticed Eve in Eden, finds acceptance with the majority of earth's inhabitants today. Even the Christian world refuses to be converted by the Spirit of God, but listens to the prince of darkness, as he comes to them in the garb of an angel of light. The spirit of Antichrist is prevailing in the world to a far greater extent than it has ever prevailed before.

The day of test and purification is just upon us. Signs of a most startling character appear, in floods, in hurricanes, in tornadoes, in cloudbursts, in casualties by land and by sea, that proclaim the

approach of the end of all things. The judgments of God are falling on the world, that men may be awakened to the fact that Christ will come speedily (The Review and Herald, November 8, 1892).

Chapter 3

1 (John 3:16; 2 Peter 1:10, 11; see EGW comment on 1 John 4:7, 8). Welcomed as a Child—The plan of redemption is not merely a way of escape from the penalty of transgression, but through it the sinner is forgiven his sins, and will be finally received into heaven—not as a forgiven culprit pardoned and released from captivity, yet looked upon with suspicion and not admitted to friendship and trust; but welcomed as a child, and taken back into fullest confidence.

The sacrifice of our Saviour has made ample provision for every repenting, believing soul. We are saved because God loves the purchase of the blood of Christ; and not only will He pardon the repentant sinner, not only will He permit him to enter heaven, but He, the Father of mercies, will

wait at the very gates of heaven to welcome us, to give us an abundant entrance to the mansions of the blest. Oh, what love, what wondrous love the Father has shown in the gift of His beloved Son for this fallen race! And this Sacrifice is a channel for the outflow of His infinite love, that all who believe on Jesus Christ may, like the prodigal son, receive full and free restoration to the favor of Heaven (The Review and Herald, September 21, 1886).

3. See EGW comment on 1 Peter 1:22; Revelation 7:2, 3.

3-6 (1 Peter 1:22). Power to Keep Us in Temptation—“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

Does this text mean that the human agent can remove one stain of sin from his soul? No. Then what does it mean to purify himself? It means to look upon the Lord’s great moral standard of righteousness, the holy law of God, and see that he is a sinner in the light of that law. “Whosoever

committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”

It is through faith in Jesus Christ that the truth is accepted in the heart, and the human agent is purified and cleansed.... He has an abiding principle in the soul, that enables him to overcome temptation. “Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.” God has power to keep the soul that is in Christ who is under temptation....

A mere profession of godliness is worthless. It is he that abideth in Christ that is a Christian.... Unless the mind of God becomes the mind of men, every effort to purify himself will be useless; for it is impossible to elevate man except through a knowledge of God. The outward gloss may be put on, and men may be as were the Pharisees whom Jesus describes as “whited sepulchres” full of corruption and dead men’s bones. But all the deformity of the soul is open to Him who judgeth righteously, and unless the truth is planted in the

heart, it cannot control the life. Cleansing the outside of the cup will never make the vessel pure within. A nominal acceptance of truth is good as far as it goes, and the ability to give a reason for our faith is a good accomplishment, but if the truth does not go deeper than this, the soul will never be saved. The heart must be purified from all moral defilement (Letter 13, 1893).

4 (Romans 3:20; see EGW comment on Galatians 3:24-26; Ephesians 2:14-16). Only Definition of Sin—“Sin is the transgression of the law.” This is the only definition of sin. Without the law there can be no transgression. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” The standard of righteousness is exceeding broad, prohibiting every evil thing (Manuscript 27, 1899).

4, 5. What Is the Justice of God?—The transgression of God’s law in a single instance, in the smallest particular, is sin. And the nonexecution of the penalty of that sin would be a crime in the divine administration. God is a judge, the avenger of justice, which is the habitation and

foundation of His throne. He cannot dispense with His law, He cannot do away with its smallest item in order to meet and pardon sin. The rectitude and justice and moral excellence of the law must be maintained and vindicated before the heavenly universe and the worlds unfallen.

What is the justice of God? It is the holiness of God in relation to sin. Christ bore the sins of the world in man's behalf that the sinner might have another trial, with all the divine opportunities and advantages which God has provided in man's behalf (Manuscript 145, 1897).

8 (see EGW comment on Genesis 6:3). Simple Godliness Not Shallowness—John bears testimony of Christ, the giver of the Word, saying, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” In the simplest language John sets before us true practical godliness. This simplicity does not show shallowness, but depth. John is speaking to real men and women, and the Holy Spirit directed him to write in such a way that they would be brought

in contact with a real, living God. He shows us what God is doing, and what man must do to meet God's requirements. John does not present the truth hesitatingly, but in a decided manner. He speaks positively [1 John 1:1-7 quoted] (The Signs of the Times, January 11, 1899).

Chapter 4

1 (Isaiah 8:20; Matthew 7:15, 16; 24:11, 23, 24; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21; 1 Timothy 4:1; see EGW comment on Colossians 2:8; Revelation 1:1, 2). Beware of False Prophets—In these days of peril we are not to accept everything that men bring to us as truth. As professed teachers from God come to us declaring that they have a message from God, it is proper to inquire carefully, How do we know that this is truth? Jesus has told us that “false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many.” But we need not be deceived; for the Word of God gives us a test whereby we may know what is truth. The prophet says, “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

From this statement it is evident that it becomes us to be diligent Bible students, that we may know what is according to the law and the testimony. We are safe in no other course of action. Jesus says, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits” (The Review and Herald, February 23, 1892).

In these days of delusion, every one who is established in the truth will have to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Every variety of error will be brought out in the mysterious working of Satan, which would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect, and turn them from the truth. ...

There will be false dreams and false visions, which have some truth, but lead away from the original faith. The Lord has given men a rule by which to detect them: “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” If they belittle the law of God, if they pay no heed to His

will as revealed in the testimonies of His Spirit, they are deceivers. They are controlled by impulse and impressions which they believe to be from the Holy Spirit and consider more reliable than the Inspired Word. They claim that every thought and feeling is an impression of the Spirit; and when they are reasoned with out of the Scriptures, they declare that they have something more reliable. But while they think that they are led by the Spirit of God, they are in reality following an imagination wrought upon by Satan (BE September, 1886).

(Acts 20:30, 31.)—I would say to our dear brethren who have been so eager to accept everything that came in the form of visions and dreams, Beware that you be not ensnared. Read the warnings that have been given by the world's Redeemer to His disciples to be given again by them to the world. The Word of God is solid rock, and we may plant our feet securely upon it. Every soul must needs be tested, every faith and doctrine must needs be tried by the law and the testimony. Take heed that no man deceive you. The warnings of Christ on this matter are needed at this time; for

delusions and deceptions will come in among us, and will multiply as we near the end.

“Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember.” Bear in mind that trials of this character are to come upon us, not only from without, but from within our own ranks. Our individual safety is in entire consecration to God (Manuscript 27, 1894).

7, 8 (1 Peter 1:22). Working With Love— Pure love is simple in its operations, and separate from every other principle of action. When combined with earthly motives and selfish interests, it ceases to be pure. God considers more with how much love we work, than the amount we do. Love is a heavenly attribute. The natural heart cannot originate it. This heavenly plant only flourishes where Christ reigns supreme. Where love exists, there is power and truth in the life. Love does good and nothing but good. Those who have love bear fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life (The Youth’s Instructor, January

13, 1898).

Chapter 63

2 John

No Commentary.

Chapter 64

3 John

No Commentary.

Chapter 65

Jude

4. See EGW comment on Revelation 2:6.

9 (Isaiah 49:24, 25). Christ's Right to Free the Captives—What right had Christ to take the captives out of the enemy's hands?—the right of having made a sacrifice that satisfies the principles of justice by which the kingdom of heaven is governed. He came to this earth as the Redeemer of the lost race, to conquer the wily foe, and, by His steadfast allegiance to right, to save all who accept Him as their Saviour. On the cross of Calvary He paid the redemption price of the race. And thus He gained the right to take the captives from the grasp of the great deceiver, who, by a lie framed against the government of God, caused the fall of man, and thus forfeited all claim to be called a loyal subject of God's glorious everlasting kingdom (The Signs of the Times, September 30, 1903).

The False Claims of Satan—Satan, the rebel

and apostate, works by every possible device to defeat the purpose of God. Because men have sinned, he claims that they have come under his dominion, and that the heavenly agencies, angels that excel in strength, should not take his subjects from under his control. Should men receive divine power, he knows that he cannot prevail against them, and work his will in cruelty upon body and mind; therefore he accuses them before God, and claims that the power of God shall not be imparted to them (The Review and Herald, June 20, 1893).

15 (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; see EGW comment on Genesis 6:3; Romans 3:19). Every Action Weighed in the Scales—[Jude 14, 15; Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14 quoted in part.] God places every action in the scale. What a scene it will be! What impressions will be made regarding the holy character of God and the terrible enormity of sin, when the judgment, based on the law, is carried forward in the presence of all the worlds. Then before the mind of the unrepentant sinner there will be opened all the sins that he has committed, and he will see and understand the aggregate of sin and

his own guilt.

When the loyal overcomers are crowned, God would have present all who have transgressed His law and broken their covenant with Him. And not one of the righteous will be absent. They see in the Judge, Christ Jesus, the One whom every sinner has crucified. The Son of man shall come in His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son (Manuscript 77, 1906).

20-25. Most Earnest Work to be Done—The instruction given by Jude from verse twenty to the close of the chapter, will make our work a complete whole, teaching us how to conduct the warfare in the service of Christ. No one-sided extravagance is to be revealed, no indolence of shiftlessness is to be indulged. We are not to ignore any man's individuality, or in any way to justify cold-hearted criticism or selfish practice.

This scripture brings to view the fact that there is most earnest work to be done, and we need

divine intuition that we may know how to work for souls ready to perish. There are souls to be plucked out of the fire, there are souls who are to be treated with the tenderest compassion. Workers are needed who have learned in the school of Christ His method of saving souls (Letter 7, 1895).

24. See EGW comment on Revelation 2:1-5.

Chapter 66

Revelation

Chapter 1

1, 2 (2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1). The Trustee of Divine Revelation—[Revelation 1:1, 2 quoted.] The whole Bible is a revelation; for all revelation to men comes through Christ, and all centers in Him. God has spoken unto us by His Son, whose we are by creation and by redemption. Christ came to John exiled on the Isle of Patmos to give him the truth for these last days, to show him that which must shortly come to pass. Jesus Christ is the great trustee of divine revelation. It is through Him that we have a knowledge of what we are to look for in the closing scenes of this earth's history. God gave this revelation to Christ, and Christ communicated the same to John.

John, the beloved disciple, was the one chosen to receive this revelation. He was the last survivor of the first chosen disciples. Under the New

Testament dispensation he was honored as the prophet Daniel was honored under the Old Testament dispensation.

The instruction to be communicated to John was so important that Christ came from heaven to give it to His servant, telling him to send it to the churches. This instruction is to be the object of our careful and prayerful study; for we are living in a time when men who are not under the teaching of the Holy Spirit will bring in false theories. These men have been standing in high places, and they have ambitious projects to carry out. They seek to exalt themselves, and to revolutionize the whole showing of things. God has given us special instruction to guard us against such ones. He bade John write in a book that which should take place in the closing scenes of this earth's history (Manuscript 129, 1905).

1-3. Revelation an Open Book—Many have entertained the idea that the book of Revelation is a sealed book, and they will not devote time and study to its mysteries. They say that they are to

keep looking to the glories of salvation, and that the mysteries revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos are worthy of less consideration than these. But God does not so regard this book. ...

The book of Revelation opens to the world what has been, what is, and what is to come; it is for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. It should be studied with reverential awe. We are privileged in knowing what is for our learning. ...

The Lord Himself revealed to His servant John the mysteries of the book of Revelation, and He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. In this book are depicted scenes that are now in the past, and some of eternal interest that are taking place around us; other of its prophecies will not receive their complete fulfillment until the close of time, when the last great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven will take place (The Review and Herald, August 31, 1897).

8. See EGW comment on 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45.

9. Companions of John on Patmos—John was sent to the Isle of Patmos, where, separated from his companions in the faith, his enemies supposed he would die from hardship and neglect. But John made friends and converts even there. They thought that they had at last placed the faithful witness where he could no longer trouble Israel or the wicked rulers of the world.

But all the heavenly universe saw the result of the conflict with the aged disciple and his separation from his companions in the faith. God and Christ and the heavenly host were John's companions on the Isle of Patmos. From them he received instruction which he imparted to those separated with him from the world. There he wrote out the visions and revelations he received from God, telling of the things which would take place in the closing period of this earth's history. When his voice would no longer witness for the truth, when he could no longer testify of the One he

loved and served, the messages given to him on that rocky, barren coast were to go forth as a lamp that burneth (Manuscript 150, 1899).

(1 John 1:1-10.) Glorious Truths Entrusted to John—Often the very best men, those whom God uses to His name's glory, are unrecognized by human wisdom, but not for one moment are they forgotten by God. When John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos, there were many who thought him to be past service, an old and broken reed ready to fall at any time. But the Lord saw fit to use him in that lonely island home where His servant was imprisoned. The world and the bigoted priests and rulers rejoiced that they were at last rid of his ever fresh testimony. [1 John 1:1-3 quoted.]

This whole chapter is full of brave courage, of hope and faith and assurance. It was because of this testimony, so amazing to those who wished to forget Christ, who hated the crucified Redeemer, whom they had rejected, that they wished to get that voice beyond their hearing, that his testimony might no more be a witness against their wicked

deeds in crucifying the Lord of glory. But they could not put him in any place where his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ could not find him.

Christ's servants who are true and faithful may be unrecognized and unhonored by men ..., but the Lord will honor them. They will not be forgotten by God. He will honor them by His presence because they have been found true and faithful. Those who have grown old in the cause and work of God have an experience of great value for the church. God honors His servants who have grown old in His service. The most glorious truths concerning the last chapters of this earth's history were given to the aged disciple whom Jesus loved (Manuscript 109, 1897).

9, 10 (Psalm 71:9; 92:14; Isaiah 46:4). John's Last Years—It was after John had grown old in the service of the Lord that he was exiled to Patmos. And on that lonely isle he received more communications from heaven than he had received during the rest of his lifetime (The Review and Herald, July 26, 1906).

Christ's aged representative was exiled that his testimony might no longer be heard; for it was a living power on the side of right. But though separated from his brethren, he was visited by Christ, whom he had not seen since the ascension (The Review and Herald, May 16, 1899).

9-15. God's Plan for Future Ages—The hand of persecution falls heavily on the apostle. He is banished to the Isle of Patmos “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” He writes, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.” He was filled with unspeakable joy; for heaven seemed open before him. In clear, distinct tones a voice spoke to him, saying, “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.” Turning, he beheld his Master, with whom he had walked and talked in Judea, on whose breast he had leaned.

But Oh, how changed is His appearance! John had seen Him clothed in an old purple robe and crowned with thorns. Now He is clothed with a garment of heavenly brightness, and girt about with

a golden girdle. Writing of His appearance, John says, “His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.” ...

God’s plan for future ages was revealed to John. The glories of heaven were opened before his enraptured vision. He saw the throne of God, and heard the anthems of joy resounding through the heavenly courts. As we read his description of what he saw in his vision, we long to stand with the redeemed in the presence of God.

Half a century had passed since Jesus ascended to present His church before God, and to prepare mansions for His faithful ones. He still loved His people; for He came to His aged servant to reveal to Him God’s plans for the future.

On the rugged, desolate island John was left alone with God and his faith. Here, among the rocks and cliffs, he held communion with his

Maker. He reviewed his past life, and at the thought of the blessings he had received at the hand of God, peace filled his heart. He had lived the life of a Christian, and he could say in faith, “It is well with my soul.” Not so the emperor who had banished him. He could look back only on fields of warfare and carnage, on desolated homes and weeping widows and orphans—the result of his ambitious desire for pre-eminence (Manuscript 99, 1902).

10. Christ Appears on the Sabbath—The Sabbath, which God had instituted in Eden, was as precious to John on the lonely isle as when he was with his companions in the cities and towns. The precious promises that Christ had given regarding this day he repeated and claimed as his own. It was the sign to him that God was his.... On the Sabbath day the risen Saviour made His presence known to John. [Revelation 1:10-13, 17, 18 quoted.]

The persecution of John became a means of grace. Patmos was made resplendent with the glory of a risen Saviour. John had seen Christ in human

form, with the marks of the nails, which will ever be His glory, in His hands and His feet. Now he was permitted again to behold his risen Lord, clothed with as much glory as a human being could behold, and live. What a Sabbath was that to the lonely exile, always precious in the sight of Christ, but now more than ever exalted! Never had he learned so much of Jesus. Never had he heard such exalted truth (The Youth's Instructor, April 5, 1900).

16, 20. See EGW comment on Revelation 2:1, 1-5.

18-20 (John 1:1-3). The Self-existent, Unchangeable One—[Revelation 1:18-20 quoted.] These are wonderfully solemn and significant statements. It was the Source of all mercy and pardon, peace and grace, the self-existent, eternal, unchangeable One, who visited His exiled servant on the isle that is called Patmos (Manuscript 81, 1900).

Chapter 2

1 (Revelation 1:16, 20; Psalm 121:3, 4; see EGW comment on Ephesians 5:25). Constant Diligence in Behalf of His Church—In the message to the church at Ephesus, Christ is represented as holding the seven stars in His hand, and walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. He is represented as “walking” among them, thus illustrating His constant diligence in behalf of His church. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. Nor does He become indifferent. These figures are to be carefully studied by the undershepherds, and faithfully applied to their own experience, that they may not lose sight of their great privilege of securing light from the Source of all light, and giving it in turn to those for whom they labor (Letter 4, 1908).

1-5 (1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24). The Warder of the Temple Courts—[Revelation 2:1-5 quoted.] The words fall from the lips of One who cannot lie. The picture reveals eternal vigilance. Christ is in

the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, walking from church to church, from congregation to congregation, from heart to heart. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. If the candlesticks were left to the care of human beings, how often the light would flicker and go out! But God has not given His church into the hands of men. Christ, the One who gave His life for the world, that all who believe in Him may not perish but have everlasting life, is the watchman of the house. He is the warder, faithful and true, of the temple courts of the Lord. ...

Christ walks in the midst of His churches through the length and breadth of the earth. He looks with intense interest to see whether His people are in such a condition spiritually that they can advance His kingdom. He is present in every assembly of the church. He knows those whose hearts He can fill with the holy oil, that they may impart it to others. Those who faithfully carry forward the work of Christ, representing in word and deed the character of God, fulfill the Lord's purpose for them, and Christ takes pleasure in them

(The Review and Herald, May 26, 1903).

(Ephesians 1:1, 15, 16.) Evil Results of Neglect—[Revelation 2:1-5 quoted.] In this scripture are outlined the conditions of acceptance with God. The first experience of the Ephesus church led to good works. God took delight in the fact that His church reflected the light of heaven by revealing the spirit of Christ in tenderness and compassion. The love that dwelt in the heart of Christ; the love that caused Him to give Himself a sacrifice for humanity, and to suffer with forbearance the reproach of men, even to the extent of being called a devil; the love that prompted Him to perform mighty works of healing during His ministry—this was the love that was to be revealed in the lives of His disciples.

But they neglected to cherish Christ's compassion and tenderness. Self, as manifested in hereditary traits of character, spoiled the principles of the grand, good works that identified the members of the Ephesus church as Christians. The Lord Jesus must needs show them that they had

lost that which was everything to them. The love that constrained the Saviour to die for us, was not revealed in its fullness in their lives; and hence they were unable to bring honor to the name of the Redeemer. And as they lost their first love, they increased in a knowledge of scientific theories originated by the father of lies (Manuscript 11, 1906).

2. See EGW comment on Galatians 5:6.

2-6. Losing the Talent of Love—This message is an example of the way in which the ministers of God are to give reproof today. Following the commendation for earnest labor comes the reproof for losing the talent of love, which is a most sacred trust. It was the love of God that saved the fallen race from eternal death (Manuscript 136, 1902).

4 (2 Peter 3:18; 2 John 6). Love for Christ Need Not Flag—“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” Thine is a decay, a declension in holy zeal—not forsaken is the object of it, but lost is the fervor.

The first affection of the convert to Christ is deep, full, and ardent. It is not necessary that this love should become less as knowledge increases, as the more and increased light shines upon him. That love should become more fervent as he becomes better acquainted with his Lord. ...

God will accept nothing less than the whole heart. Happy are they who from the commencement of their religious life have been true to their first love, growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sure result of their intercourse and fellowship with their beloved Lord will be to increase their piety, their purity, their fervor. They are receiving a divine education, and this is illustrated in a life of fervor, of diligence and zeal....

It is our work to know our special failings and sins, which cause darkness and spiritual feebleness, and quenched our first love (The Review and Herald, June 7, 1887).

4, 5 (see EGW comment on Revelation 3:14-

18; 1 Kings 11:4). Spiritually Fallen, but Unaware of It—In view of the many virtues enumerated, how striking is the charge brought against the church at Ephesus: “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” This church had been highly favored. It was planted by the apostle Paul. In the same city was the temple of Diana, which, in point of grandeur, was one of the marvels of the world. The Ephesian church met with great opposition, and some of the early Christians suffered persecution; and yet some of these very ones turned from the truths that had united them with Christ’s followers, and adopted, in their stead, the specious errors devised by Satan.

This change is represented as a spiritual fall. “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works”—as outlined in the preceding verses. The believers did not sense their spiritual fall. They knew not that a change had taken place in their hearts, and that they would have to repent because of the noncontinuance of their first works. But God in His mercy called for

repentance, for a return to their first love and to the works that are always the result of true, Christlike love (Manuscript 11, 1906).

Loss of Love a Moral Fall—The losing of the first love is specified as a moral fall. The loss of this love is represented as something that will affect the entire religious life. Of those who have lost this love, God says that unless they repent, He will come to them, and remove their candlestick out of its place (Manuscript 1, 1906).

6 (Jude 4). The Sin of the Nicolaitans—Is it [our sin] the sin of the Nicolaitans, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness (The Review and Herald, June 7, 1887)?

(Romans 3:31.) Doctrine of the Nicolaitans—The doctrine is now largely taught that the gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by “believing” we are released from the necessity of being doers of the Word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned (The Signs of the Times, January 2,

1912).

7 (Revelation 22:2). The Leaves of the Tree of Life—[Revelation 2:7 quoted.] Must we wait until we are translated before we eat of the leaves of the tree of life? He who receives into his heart the words of Christ knows what it means to eat the leaves of the tree of life. [John 6:33-63 quoted.]

When the believer, in the fellowship of the Spirit, can lay his hand upon truth itself, and appropriate it, he eats the bread that comes down from heaven. He enters into the life of Christ, and appreciates the great sacrifice made in behalf of the sinful race.

The knowledge that comes from God is the bread of life. It is the leaves of the tree of life which are for the healing of the nations. The current of spiritual life thrills the soul as the words of Christ are believed and practiced. Thus it is that we are made one with Christ. The experience that was weak and feeble becomes strong. It is eternal life to us if we hold the beginning of our

confidence firm unto the end.

All truth is to be received as the life of Jesus. Truth cleanses us from all impurity, and prepares the soul for Christ's presence. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory (Manuscript 103, 1902).

7, 11, 17, 29 (Revelation 3:6, 13, 22). Ears Closed to Folly and Nonsense—"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." If you "hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," and meditate upon the instruction given to them, your ears will be closed to the folly and nonsense which surround you. You will neither hear and repeat these things, nor will you ever hanker after them. When Christ satisfies the soul hunger, these trivialities are to you distasteful and disgusting. You have no desire to feast upon them, but choose instead the bread of heaven (Manuscript 92, 1901).

9. The Synagogue of Satan—Christ speaks of the church over which Satan presides as the synagogue of Satan. Its members are the children

of disobedience. They are those who choose to sin, who labor to make void the holy law of God. It is Satan's work to mingle evil with good, and to remove the distinction between good and evil. Christ would have a church that labors to separate the evil from the good, whose members will not willingly tolerate wrong-doing, but will expel it from the heart and life (The Review and Herald, December 4, 1900).

10. Crowns Bestowed by Christ—In that day of final punishment and reward, both saints and sinners will recognize in Him who was crucified the Judge of all living. Every crown that is given to the saints of the Most High will be bestowed by the hands of Christ—those hands that cruel priests and rulers condemned to be nailed to the cross. He alone can give to men the consolation of eternal life (The Review and Herald, November 22, 1898).

Chapter 3

1 (2 Corinthians 4:7; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 1:21; 3:8). Faithful Stewards Over

Ourselves—[Revelation 3:1 quoted.] God calls upon this church to make a change. They had a name to live, but their works were destitute of the love of Jesus. Oh, how many have fallen because they trusted in their profession for salvation! How many are lost by their effort to keep up a name! If one has the reputation of being a successful evangelist, a gifted preacher, a man of prayer, a man of faith, a man of special devotion, there is positive danger that he will make shipwreck of faith when tried by the little tests that God suffers to come. Often his great effort will be to maintain his reputation.

He who lives in the fear that others do not appreciate his value is losing sight of Him who alone makes us worthy of glorifying God. Let us be faithful stewards over ourselves. Let us look away from self to Christ. Then there will be no trouble at all. All the work done, however excellent it may appear to be, is worthless if not done in the love of Jesus. One may go through the whole round of religious activity, and yet, unless Christ is woven into all that he says and does, he will work for his

own glory (Letter 48, 1903).

1-3. Remember How Thou Hast Received—

A warning is given of a time when errors would come in as a thief to steal away the faith of God's people, when they must watch diligently and be constantly guarded against the delusions of the enemy.

In Sardis many had been converted through the preaching of the apostles. The truth had been received as a bright and shining light. But some had forgotten the wonderful manner in which they had received the truth, and Jesus found it necessary to send reproof.

One after another of the old standardbearers had fallen, and some had become wearied of the oft-repeated truths. They desired a new phase of doctrine, more pleasing to many minds. They thought they needed a wonderful change, and in their spiritual blindness did not discern that their sophistries would uproot all the experiences of the past.

But the Lord Jesus could see the end from the beginning. Through John He sent them the warning, “Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief” (Manuscript 34, 1905).

(2 Timothy 2:23-26.) Hazards of Quibbling—[Revelation 3:13 quoted.] Among the people to whom this message was sent, there were those who had heard and been convinced by the preaching of John the Baptist, but who had lost the faith in which they once rejoiced. There were others who had received the truth from Christ’s teaching, and who were once ardent believers, but who had lost their first love, and were without spiritual strength. They had not held the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end. They had a name to live, but as far as exerting a saving influence is concerned, they were dead. They had a form of godliness without the power. They quibbled about matters of no special importance, not given by the Lord as tests, till these matters

became as mountains, separating them from Christ and from one another....

“I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” With God outward show weighs nothing. The outward forms of religion, without the love of God in the soul, are utterly worthless.

“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.” This is our work. There are many ready to die spiritually, and the Lord calls upon us to strengthen them. God’s people are to be firmly united in the bonds of Christian fellowship, and are to be strengthened in the faith by speaking often to one another about the precious truths entrusted to them. Never are they to spend their time in accusing and condemning one another (The Review and Herald, August 10, 1905).

1-4 (Hebrews 4:13). Weighing the Character—[Revelation 3:1-3 quoted.] The discrimination revealed by Christ in weighing the

characters of those who have taken to themselves His name, as Christians, leads us to realize more fully that every individual is under His supervision. He is acquainted with the thoughts and intents of the heart, as well as with every word and act. He knows all about our religious experience; He knows whom we love and serve (Manuscript 81, 1900).

1-5 (Matthew 22:14). A Few Faithful Ones in Sardis—The church of Sardis is represented as having in it a few faithful ones among the many who had become, as it were, careless and insensible of their obligations to God. “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.” Who is so favored as to be numbered among these few in Sardis? Are you? Am I? Who are among this number? Is it not best for us to inquire into this matter, in order that we may learn to whom the Lord refers when He says that a few have not stained their white robes of character (Manuscript 81, 1900)?

(Revelation 3:14-18.) Read the Third Chapter of Revelation—In the message to the church at Sardis two parties are presented— those who have a name to live, but are dead; and those who are striving to overcome. Study this message, found in the third chapter of Revelation. [Revelation 3:1, 2 quoted.] Who are meant by those that are ready to die? and what has made them thus? The explanation is given, “I have not found thy works perfect before God.” [Revelation 3:3-5 quoted.]

To the church of the present day this message is sent. I call upon our church members to read the whole of the third chapter of Revelation, and to make an application of it. The message to the church of the Laodiceans applies especially to the people of God today. It is a message to professing Christians who have become so much like the world that no difference can be seen [Revelation 3:14-18 quoted] (RH August 20, 1903).

3 (Hebrews 3:6; 4:14; Hebrews 10:23). Hold Fast to the Pledge—“Remember therefore how

thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent,” Those who have been born again remember with what joy and gladness they received the light of heaven, and how eager they were to tell everybody of their happiness....

“Hold fast.” This does not mean, Hold fast to your sins; but, Hold fast to the comfort, the faith, the hope, that God has given you in His Word. Never be discouraged. A discouraged man can do nothing. Satan is seeking to discourage you, telling you it is of no use to serve God, that it does not pay, and that it is just as well to have pleasure and enjoyment in this world. But “what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” You may have worldly pleasure at the expense of the future world; but can you afford to pay such a price?

We are to “hold fast” and live up to all the light we receive from heaven. Why? Because God wants us to grasp the eternal truth, and act as His helping hand by communicating the light to those who are not acquainted with His love for them. When you

gave yourself to Christ, you made a pledge in the presence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—the three great personal Dignitaries of heaven. “Hold fast” to this pledge.

“And repent.” The life we live is to be one of continual repentance and humility. We need to repent constantly, that we may be constantly victorious. When we have true humility, we have victory. The enemy never can take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. What privileges we have in Christ Jesus!

A true sense of repentance before God does not hold us in bondage, causing us to feel like persons in a funeral procession. We are to be cheerful, not sorrowful. But all the time we are to be sorry that after Christ had given His precious life for us, we gave so many years of our life to the powers of darkness. We are to feel sorrow of heart as we

remember that after Christ had given His all for our redemption, we used in the service of the enemy some of the time and capabilities which the Lord entrusted to us as talents to use to His name's glory. We are to repent because we have not endeavored in every way possible to become acquainted with the precious truth, which enables us to exercise that faith which works by love and purifies the soul.

As we see souls out of Christ, we are to put ourselves in their place, and in their behalf feel repentance before God, resting not until we bring them to repentance. If we do everything we can for them, and yet they do not repent, the sin lies at their door; but we are still to feel sorrow of heart because of their condition, showing them how to repent, and trying to lead them step by step to Jesus Christ (Manuscript 92, 1901).

4. See EGW comment on Revelation 19:7-9; 2:14-18.

4, 5 (Luke 12:8). True and Loyal and

Faithful—[Revelation 3:4, 5 quoted.] This is the reward to be given to those who have obtained a pure and spotless character, who before the world have held fast to the faith. Jesus Christ will confess their names before the Father and before His angels. They have been true and loyal and faithful. Through evil report as well as good report they have practiced and taught the truth (Manuscript 26, 1905).

(2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.) An Eternal Weight of Glory—“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.” Because of their faith this honor is bestowed on them. In this life they did not boast, nor lift up their souls unto vanity. With intensity of desire, with a pure, holy faith, they grasped the promise of eternal riches. Their one desire was to be like Christ. Ever they kept the standard of righteousness uplifted. To them is given an eternal weight of glory, because on the earth they walked with God, keeping themselves unspotted from the world, revealing to their fellow beings the righteousness

of Christ. Of them the Saviour declares, “They shall walk with me in white, in the world that I have prepared for them” [Revelation 3:5 quoted] (RH August 10, 1905).

4, 5, 10 (1 Corinthians 10:12, 13). The Promise of Victory—[Revelation 3:4, 5 quoted.] These words are given for the people while they are in connection with the world, subject to temptations and influences which are deceiving and deluding. While they stay their mind upon Him who is their sun and their shield, the blackness and darkness that surround them will not leave one spot or stain upon their garments. They will walk with Christ. They will pray and believe and work to save the souls that are ready to perish. These are trying to break the bands that Satan has fastened upon them, and they will not be put to shame if by faith they will make Christ their companion. Temptations and deceptions will be constantly brought up by the great deceiver to spoil the work of the human agent, but if he trusts in God, if he is humble and meek and lowly of heart, keeping the way of the Lord, heaven will rejoice, for he will

gain the victory. God says, “He shall walk with Me in white, with unsullied garments, for he is worthy” (Manuscript 97, 1898).

5 (Revelation 13:8; see EGW comment on Revelation 7:9; Revelation 20:12-15). Angels Weighing Moral Worth—Christ says of the overcomer, “I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.” The names of all those who have once given themselves to God are written in the book of life, and their characters are now passing in review before Him. Angels of God are weighing moral worth. They are watching the development of character in those now living, to see if their names can be retained in the book of life. A probation is granted us in which to wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Who is doing this work? Who is separating from himself sin and selfishness (Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 138)?

6, 13, 22. See EGW comment on Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29.

8. An Open Door—The true Witness declares: “Behold, I have set before thee an open door.” Let us thank God with heart and soul and voice; and let us learn to approach unto Him as through an open door, believing that we may come freely with our petitions, and that He will hear and answer. It is by a living faith in His power to help, that we shall receive strength to fight the battles of the Lord with the confident assurance of victory (The Review and Herald, July 9, 1908).

(Hebrews 10:19, 20.) The Door of Communication—The true Witness has given us the assurance that He has set before us an open door, which no man can shut. Those who are seeking to be faithful to God may be denied many of the privileges of the world; their way may be hedged up and their work hindered by the enemies of truth; but there is no power that can close the door of communication between God and their souls. The Christian himself may close this door by indulgence in sin, or by rejection of heaven’s light. He may turn away his ears from hearing the

message of truth, and in this way sever the connection between God and his soul.... Neither man nor Satan can close the door which Christ has opened for us (The Review and Herald, March 26, 1889).

Light From the Threshold of Heaven—
[Revelation 3:8, 9 quoted.] Whenever tempted, we have this open door to behold. No power can hide from us the light of the glory which shines from the threshold of heaven along the whole length of the ladder we are to climb; for the Lord has given us strength in His strength, courage in His courage, light in His light. When the powers of darkness are overcome, when the light of the glory of God floods the world, we shall see and understand more clearly than we do today. If we only realized that the glory of God is round about us, that heaven is nearer earth than we suppose, we should have a heaven in our homes while preparing for the heaven above (Manuscript 92, 1901).

14-18 (see EGW comment on Revelation 3:1-5; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Our Condition

Revealed—The message to the Laodicean church reveals our condition as a people (The Review and Herald, December 15, 1904).

Message for the Idlers in the Vineyard—To the idlers in the Lord's vineyard the Laodicean message is sent (Manuscript 26, 1905).

(Romans 2:17-24.) Application of Laodicean Message—The message to the Laodicean church is applicable to all who have had great light and many opportunities, and yet have not appreciated them (The Review and Herald, March 11, 1902).

(Revelation 2:4, 5.) Fervor of Love Lacking—The message to the Laodicean church is applicable to our condition. How plainly is pictured the position of those who think they have all the truth, who take pride in their knowledge of the Word of God, while its sanctifying power has not been felt in their lives. The fervor of the love of God is wanting in their hearts, but it is this very fervor of love that makes God's people the light of the world (The Review and Herald, July 23, 1889).

Laodicean Message for Adventists—The message to the Laodicean church is highly applicable to us as a people. It has been placed before us for a long time, but has not been heeded as it should have been. When the work of repentance is earnest and deep, the individual members of the church will buy the rich goods of heaven. [Revelation 3:18 quoted.] Oh, how many behold things in a perverted light, in the light in which Satan would have them see.

You may manifest great zeal in missionary effort, and yet because it is corrupted with selfishness, and tastes strongly of self, it is nought in the sight of God; for it is a tainted, corrupted offering. Unless the door of the heart is open to Jesus, unless He occupies the soul temple, unless the heart is imbued with His divine attributes, human actions when weighed in the heavenly balances, will be pronounced “Wanting.” The love of Christ would make you rich; but many do not realize the value of His love. Many do not realize that the spirit which they cherish is destitute of the

meeekness and lowliness of Christ, destitute of the love that would constitute them channels of light (Manuscript 33, 1894).

(2 Peter 3:11.) Has God Made a Mistake?—

The Laodicean message is applicable to the church at this time. Do you believe this message? Have you hearts that feel? Or are you constantly saying, We are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing? Is it in vain that the declaration of eternal truth has been given to this nation to be carried to all the nations of the world? God has chosen a people and made them the repositories of truth weighty with eternal results. To them has been given the light that must illuminate the world. Has God made a mistake? Are we indeed His chosen instrumentalities? Are we the men and women who are to bear to the world the messages of Revelation fourteen, to proclaim the message of salvation to those who are standing on the brink of ruin? Do we act as if we were (Manuscript 51, 1901)?

Professors but Not Doers—The Laodicean

message applies to all who profess to keep the law of God, and yet are not doers of it. We are not to be selfish in anything. Every phase of the Christian life is to be a representation of the life of Christ. If it is not, we shall hear the terrible words, “I know you not” (The Review and Herald, October 17, 1899).

An Insipid Religious Experience—The message to the Laodicean church applies most decidedly to those whose religious experience is insipid, who do not bear decided witness in favor of the truth (Letter 98, 1901).

(Isaiah 65:5; Luke 18:11, 12.) “Hear, O Hear.”—I tell you in the name of the Lord, that those who have had great light are today in the state described by Christ in His message to the Laodicean church. They think that they are rich, and increased in goods, and feel that they have need of nothing. Christ speaks to you. Hear, O hear, if you have any regard for your souls, the words of the great Counselor, and act upon them [Revelation 3:18 quoted] (Letter 5, 1897).

To Rid the Church of Fanaticism—The design of the message to the Laodiceans was to rid the church of ... fanatical influences; but the effort of Satan has been to corrupt the message, and destroy its influence. He would be better pleased to have fanatical persons embrace the testimony, and use it in his cause, than to have them remain in a lukewarm state. I have seen that it was not the design of the message to lead brother to sit in judgment over his brother, to tell him what to do, and just how far to go, but for each individual to search his own heart, and attend to his own individual work (Spiritual Gifts 2:223).

Bankrupt!—Many are Laodiceans, living in a spiritual selfdeception. They clothe themselves in the garments of their own righteousness, imagining themselves to be rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, when they need daily to learn of Jesus, His meekness and lowliness, else they find themselves bankrupt, their whole life being a lie (Letter 66, 1894).

Self-inflated Religion—Love of self excludes the love of Christ. Those who live for self are ranged under the head of the Laodicean church who are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot. The ardor of the first love has lapsed into a selfish egotism. The love of Christ in the heart is expressed in the actions. If love for Christ is dull, the love for those for whom Christ has died will degenerate. There may be a wonderful appearance for zeal and ceremonies, but this is the substance of their self-inflated religion. Christ represents them as nauseating to His taste [Revelation 3:17, 18 quoted] (Manuscript 61, 1898).

(Proverbs 30:12; Obadiah 3.) Self-exaltation a Dangerous Element—Self-exaltation is a dangerous element. It tarnishes everything it touches. It is the offspring of pride, and it works so ingeniously that, unless guarded against, it will take possession of the thoughts and control the actions.

The Laodicean message must be proclaimed with power; for now it is especially applicable.

Now, more than ever before, are seen pride, worldly ambition, self-exaltation, double-dealing, hypocrisy, and deception. Many are speaking great swelling words of vanity, saying, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.” Yet they are miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked (The Review and Herald, September 25, 1900).

(Ecclesiastes 10:1; Matthew 7:1-5.) Self-love, Self-deception, and Self-justification—Those whom Christ warns have some excellent qualifications, but they are neutralized by all who have a diseased self-love, self-deception, self-justification for gross neglect to help brethren in the service of God by encouraging words and deeds. There is a dead fly in the ointment. They are being weighed by One who never makes a mistake. He tells the result of actions which demonstrate that the love of Christ is not an abiding principle in the soul. God calls upon you all to learn from Christ His meekness. Put away your faculty for seeing the mistakes of others. Turn your attention to your own defects. Your self-righteousness is

nauseating to the Lord Jesus Christ. [Revelation 3:15-18 quoted.] These words apply to the churches and to many of those in positions of trust in the work of God (Manuscript 108, 1899).

Spiritual Novices—There are a large number of professing Christians who do not really follow Jesus. They do not bear the cross by proper self-denial and self-sacrifice. Although making a great profession of being earnest Christians, they weave into the fabric of their character so many of the threads of their own imperfections that the beautiful pattern is spoiled. Of them Christ says: “You boast of being rich and increased with supposed spiritual attainments. In reality you are neither cold nor hot, but are filled with vain conceit. Unless converted, you cannot be saved; for you would mar heaven with your unsanctified wisdom. I cannot endorse your spirit and your work. You do not act according to the divine Example. You are following a pattern merely of your own invention. Because you are lukewarm, I must spew you out of My mouth.”

Let us thank the Lord that while this class is so numerous, there is still time for repentance. Jesus says, “I, your Redeemer, know your works. I am familiar with the motives that prompt you to declare boastingly in regard to your spiritual condition, ‘I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.’ Thou ‘knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’”

Those who are in this condition are willfully ignorant. They do not discern the real character of sin. By their wrongdoing they constantly misrepresent the character of Christ and put Him to open shame. Professing to have a knowledge of the truth, they act in spirit as novices. They do not seem to understand the truth that must be expressed in word and deed to show a decided difference between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. They are false claimants of every Christian blessing and privilege, when, as Christ’s representatives, they are not rich in spiritual grace or in good works. They are wretched, poor, blind, maimed. What a position to be in! They stand in

their own light.

But notwithstanding their willful ignorance, they are not left by the Lord without added warning and counsel (Manuscript 138, 1902).

15. The Mount of Vision—If every man who has influence could ascend some mount of vision from which he could behold all his works as Christ beholds them when He declares, “I know thy works”; if the laborer could trace from cause to effect every objectionable word and act, the sight would be more than he could bear (Manuscript 128, 1903).

15, 16 (Matthew 6:22-24). Worse Than Infidels—Halfhearted Christians are worse than infidels; for their deceptive words and noncommittal position lead many astray. The infidel shows his colors. The lukewarm Christian deceives both parties. He is neither a good worldling nor a good Christian. Satan uses him to do a work that no one else can do (Letter 44, 1903).

(Luke 13:24-30.) Fate of the Halfhearted Ones—There are those who, though professedly serving God, are witnessing against Him. To them the message to the Laodicean church is given. Christ says to them, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot.” When the avenging angel shall pass through the land, Christ cannot say of them, “Touch them not. I have graven them upon the palms of my hands.” No; of these halfhearted ones He says, “I will spew them out of my mouth. They are offensive to me” (Letter 44, 1903).

Dead in Trespasses and Sins—To those who do not practice it, the Word of God is a dead letter. Christ says of such, “I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” He cannot present their case to the Father. If they realized that they were sinners, He could plead in their behalf, and the Lord would arouse them by His Holy Spirit. But they are worse than dead in trespasses and sins. They hear the Word, but make no application of it to themselves; instead, they apply the Word spoken to their neighbors

(Manuscript 163a, 1898).

15-20 (John 4:13, 14). A Fountain of Living Water—The condition of many of those who claim to be the children of God is exactly represented by the message to the Laodicean church. There is opened before those who serve God, truths of inestimable value, which, brought into the practical life, show the difference between those who serve God and those who serve Him not.

The earth itself is not more richly interlaced with veins of golden ore than is the field of revelation with veins of precious truth. The Bible is the storehouse of the unsearchable riches of God. But those who have a knowledge of the truth do not understand it as fully as they might. They do not bring the love of Christ into the heart and life.

The student of the Word finds himself bending over a fountain of living water. The church needs to drink deeply of the spirituality of the Word. Their service to God needs to be very different from the tame, lifeless, emotionless religious

experience that makes many believers but little different from those who believe not, very similar in spirit to the unconverted (Manuscript 117, 1902).

15-21. Laodicean Message to Go to the World—The Laodicean message has been sounding. Take this message in all its phases and sound it forth to the people wherever Providence opens the way. Justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ are the themes to be presented to a perishing world (Letter 24, 1892).

15-22 (Colossians 4:12, 13). Labor Lost on the Church in Laodicea—[Revelation 3:15-22 quoted.] This is the testimony borne concerning the church at Laodicea. This church had been faithfully instructed. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul wrote: “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.”

Much excellent labor was bestowed upon the Laodicean church. To them was given the exhortation, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” But the church did not follow up the work begun by God’s messengers. They heard, but they failed to appropriate the truth to themselves, and to carry out the instruction given them. The result that followed is the result always sure to follow the rejection of the Lord’s warnings and entreaties (Manuscript 128, 1903).

17 (Romans 11:20; 12:3, 16). Exhausting the Patience of God—Christ sees that which man does not see. He sees the sins which, if not repented of, will exhaust the patience of a long-suffering God. Christ cannot take up the names of those who are satisfied in their own self-sufficiency. He cannot importune in behalf of a people who feel no need of His help, who claim to know and possess everything (The Review and Herald, July 23, 1889).

17-20. Shall We Open the Heart's Door?—

We must have the buyers and the sellers cleared out of the soul temple, that Jesus may take up His abode within us. Now He stands at the door of the heart as a heavenly merchantman; He says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” “Open unto me; buy of me the heavenly wares; buy of me the gold tried in the fire.” Buy faith and love, the precious, beautiful attributes of our Redeemer, which will enable us to find our way into the hearts of those who do not know Him, who are cold and alienated from Him through unbelief and sin. He invites us to buy the white raiment, which is His glorious righteousness; and the eyesalve, that we may discern spiritual things. Oh, shall we not open the heart's door to this heavenly visitor (BE January 15, 1892)?

18 (Isaiah 55:1; 14:6). The Vendor of Priceless Treasures— The great Vendor of spiritual riches is inviting your recognition. [Revelation 3:18 quoted.] ... The Saviour comes

with jewels of truth of the richest value in distinction from all counterfeits, all that is spurious. He comes to every house, to every door; He is knocking, presenting His priceless treasure, urging, “Buy of me” (Letter 66, 1894).

The Costly Wares of Heaven—The wares of heaven are offered to our churches. Every individual needs to have a decided interest in the invitation of Christ. Brethren and sisters, are your thoughts after this order? “These sharp, decided words do not mean me; I am in a fairly good condition spiritually, though I may not have all the fervor and zeal that some have. I believe the truth. Those to whom this message belongs may take it. I think some need it.” You who think and reason thus, be assured that you are the very ones to whom this message belongs. While the costly wares of heaven are open before you, draw nigh and buy that which you have lost—the gold of love and faith, and the white raiment which is the righteousness of Christ (Letter 30a, 1892).

Virtues Wanting Among Us—The gold that

Jesus would have us buy of Him is gold tried in the fire; it is the gold of faith and love, that has no defiling substance mingled with it. The white raiment is the righteousness of Christ, the wedding garment which Christ alone can give. The eyesalve is the true spiritual discernment that is so wanting among us, for spiritual things must be spiritually discerned (The Review and Herald, April 1, 1890).

(Isaiah 64:6; Philippians 3:9.) Ample Provision for All—The true Witness has said, “Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” What is the shame of this nakedness and poverty? It is the shame of clothing ourselves with self-righteousness, and of separating ourselves from God, when He has made ample provision for all to receive His blessing (Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventhday Adventists, 139).

(Revelation 7:14.) Encouraging Counsel for the Church—The counsel of the true Witness is

full of encouragement and comfort. The churches may yet obtain the gold of truth, faith, and love, and be rich in heavenly treasure. “Buy of me gold ... that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” The white raiment is the righteousness of Christ that may be wrought into the character. Purity of heart, purity of motive, will characterize every one who is washing his robe, and making it white in the blood of the Lamb (The Review and Herald, July 24, 1888).

(Isaiah 61:10; Zechariah 3:4, 5.) Woven in the Loom of Heaven—There is nothing in us from which we can clothe the soul so that its nakedness shall not appear. We are to receive the robe of righteousness woven in the loom of heaven, even the spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness (The Review and Herald, July 19, 1892).

(Matthew 6:22; James 1:23-25.) Correct Views for the Conscience—The eye is the sensitive conscience, the inner light, of the mind. Upon its correct view of things the spiritual

healthfulness of the whole soul and being depends. The “eyesalve,” the Word of God, makes the conscience smart under its application; for it convicts of sin. But the smarting is necessary that the healing may follow, and the eye be single to the glory of God. The sinner, beholding himself in God’s great moral looking glass, sees himself as God views him, and exercises repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. ...

The Laodiceans ... were not entirely blind, else the eyesalve would have done nothing to restore their sight, and enable them to discern the true attributes of Christ. Says Christ, By renouncing your own self-sufficiency, giving up all things, however dear to you, you may buy the gold, the raiment, and the eyesalve that you may see (The Review and Herald, November 23, 1897).

18-20. A Merchantman Laden With Riches—The great Redeemer represents Himself as a heavenly merchantman, laden with riches, calling from house to house, presenting His priceless goods [Revelation 3:18-20 quoted] (RH

July 23, 1889).

(Job 22:21-25.) Knocking at the Heart's Door—The Lord knocks at the door of your heart, desiring to enter, that He may impart spiritual riches to your soul. He would anoint the blind eyes, that they may discover the holy character of God in His law, and understand the love of Christ, which is indeed gold tried in the fire (The Review and Herald, February 25, 1890).

(Isaiah 13:12; Matthew 13:45, 46.) Spiritual Riches for the Soul—Jesus is going from door to door, standing in front of every soul temple, proclaiming, “I stand at the door, and knock.” As a heavenly merchantman, He opens His treasures and cries, “Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” The gold that He offers is without alloy, more precious than that of Ophir; for it is faith and love. The white raiment He invites the soul to wear is His own robe of righteousness; and the oil for anointing is the oil of His grace, which

will give spiritual eyesight to the soul in blindness and darkness, that he may distinguish between the workings of the Spirit of God and the spirit of the enemy. “Open your doors,” says the great Merchantman, the possessor of spiritual riches, “and transact your business with Me. It is I, your Redeemer, who counsels you to buy of Me” (The Review and Herald, August 7, 1894).

18-21 (Philippians 3:12-15). The Conflict Is for Us—The true Witness presents encouragements to all who are seeking to walk in the path of humble obedience, through faith in His name. He declares, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

These are the words of our Substitute and Surety. He who is the divine Head of the church, the mightiest of conquerors, would point His followers to His life, His toils, His self-denials, His struggles and sufferings, through contempt, through rejection ridicule, scorn, insult, mockery,

falsehood, up the path of Calvary to the scene of the crucifixion, that they might be encouraged to press on toward the mark for the prize and reward of the overcomer. Victory is assured through faith and obedience.

Let us make an application of the words of Christ to our own individual cases. Are we poor, and blind, and wretched, and miserable? Then let us seek the gold and white raiment that He offers. The work of overcoming is not restricted to the age of the martyrs. The conflict is for us, in these days of subtle temptation to worldliness, to self-security, to indulgence of pride, covetousness, false doctrines, and immorality of life (The Review and Herald, July 24, 1888).

(Song of Solomon 6:10; Isaiah 1:16-19.) A Hope of Reform—The church must and will shine forth “fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” God’s servants must, by laboring together with Christ, roll away the curse that has made the church so lukewarm. [Revelation 3:15-19 quoted.] The chastening

reveals a hope of reform [Revelation 3:20, 21 quoted] (Letter 130, 1902).

Laodicean Call Brings Fruitage—I saw that this call to the Laodicean church will affect souls. A becoming zeal is called for by God on our part. We must repent, throw away our whole feelings, feel our destitution, buy gold that we may be rich, eyesalve that we may see, white raiment that we may be clothed (Letter 2, 1851).

(Matthew 25:1-12.) Hope for the Laodiceans—[Revelation 3:15-17 quoted.] Yet the case of those who are rebuked is not a hopeless one; it is not beyond the power of the great Mediator. He says: “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Though the professed followers of Christ are in a deplorable condition, they are not yet in so desperate a strait as were the foolish virgins whose lamps were going out, and there was no time in

which to replenish their vessels with oil. When the bridegroom came, those that were ready went in with him to the wedding; but when the foolish virgins came, the door was shut, and they were too late to obtain an entrance.

But the counsel of the true Witness does not represent those who are lukewarm as in a hopeless case. There is yet a chance to remedy their state, and the Laodicean message is full of encouragement; for the backslidden church may yet buy the gold of faith and love, may yet have the white robe of the righteousness of Christ, that the shame of their nakedness need not appear. Purity of heart, purity of motive, may yet characterize those who are halfhearted and who are striving to serve God and mammon. They may yet wash their robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb (The Review and Herald, August 28, 1894).

There is hope for our churches if they will heed the message given to the Laodiceans (Manuscript 139, 1903).

20 (Revelation 22:17; Proverbs 1:23-33).
Will You Squander God's Talents?—Says the true Witness, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the Word of God, or through His delegated messengers, is a knock at the door of the heart; it is the voice of Jesus, asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, your determination to open becomes weaker and weaker. If the voice of Jesus is not heeded at once, it becomes confused in the mind with a multitude of other voices, the world's care and business engross the attention, and conviction dies away. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of time, and of the great eternity beyond.

The heavenly Guest is standing at your door, while you are piling up obstructions to bar His entrance. Jesus is knocking through the prosperity He gives you. He loads you with blessings to test your fidelity, that they may flow out from you to others. Will you permit your selfishness to

triumph? Will you squander God's talents, and lose your soul through idolatrous love of the blessings He has given (The Review and Herald, November 2, 1886)?

No Discouraging Message for the Church—
We have no discouraging message for the church. Although reproofs and cautions and corrections have been made, yet the church has stood as God's instrumentality to diffuse light. The commandment-keeping people of God have sounded forth a warning to the world, to all languages, tongues, and kindreds. The church of God is a living witness, a continual testimony, to convince men if accepted, to condemn them if resisted and rejected (Manuscript 96, 1893).

21. See EGW comment on Romans 8:17; Galatians 6:7, 8; Hebrews 4:15.

Chapter 4

3. See EGW comment on Romans 3:24-26.

Chapter 5

6 (Ephesians 2:5, 6). The Lamb in the Midst of the Throne—The Lamb of God is represented before us as in the midst of the throne of God. He is the great ordinance by which man and God are united and commune together. Thus men are represented as sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is the appointed place of meeting between God and humanity (Manuscript 7, 1898).

8. See EGW comment on Revelation 8:3, 4.

9-12. See EGW comment on Hebrews 1:14.

11 (chs. 7:1-3; 16:13-16; 1:14; see EGW comment on Hebrews 9:24). Angel Hands Linked About the World—John writes, “I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne.” Angels were united in the work of Him who had broken the seals and taken the book. Four mighty angels hold back the powers of this earth till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. The nations of the world are eager for

conflict; but they are held in check by the angels. When this restraining power is removed, there will come a time of trouble and anguish. Deadly instruments of warfare will be invented. Vessels, with their living cargo, will be entombed in the great deep. All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of satanic agencies. But they are to be kept under control till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon.

Angels are belting the world, refusing Satan his claims to supremacy, made because of the vast multitude of his adherents. We hear not the voices, we see not with the natural sight the work of these angels, but their hands are linked about the world, and with sleepless vigilance they are keeping the armies of Satan at bay till the sealing of God's people shall be accomplished.

The ministers of Jehovah, angels have skill and power and great strength, being commissioned to go forth from heaven to earth to minister to His people. They are given the work of keeping back the raging power of him who has come down like a

roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. The Lord is a refuge for all who put their trust in Him. He bids them hide in Him for a little moment, until the indignation shall be overpast. He is soon to come out of His place to punish the world for its iniquity. Then the earth shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain (Letter 79, 1900).

Heaven a Place of Busy Activity—Oh, that all could behold our precious Saviour as He is, a Saviour. Let His hand draw aside the veil which conceals His glory from our eyes. It shows Him in His high and holy place. What do we see? Our Saviour, not in a position of silence and inactivity. He is surrounded with heavenly intelligences, cherubim, and seraphim, ten thousand times ten thousand of angels.

All these heavenly beings have one object above all others, in which they are intensely interested—His church in a world of corruption. All these armies are in the service of the Prince of heaven, exalting the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. They are working for

Christ under His commission, to save to the uttermost all who look to Him and believe in Him. These heavenly intelligences are speeding on their mission, doing for Christ that which Herod and Pilate did against Him. They confederate together to uphold the honor and glory of God. They are united in a holy alliance, in a grand and sublime unity of purpose, to show forth the power and compassion and love and glory of the crucified and risen Saviour.

In their service, these armies of heaven illustrate what the church of God should be. Christ is working in their behalf in the heavenly courts, sending out His messengers to all parts of the globe, to the assistance of every suffering one who looks to Him for relief, for spiritual life and knowledge.

The church of Christ on earth is amid the moral darkness of a disloyal world, which is trampling upon the law of Jehovah. But their Redeemer, who has purchased their ransom with the price of His own precious blood, has made every provision that

His church shall be a transformed body, illumined with the Light of the world, possessing the glory of Emmanuel. The bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, shining through His church, will gather into His fold every lost, straying sheep, who will come unto Him and find refuge in Him. They will find peace and light and joy in Him who is peace and righteousness for ever (Letter 89c, 1897).

12. See EGW comment on 1 Corinthians 15:51-55.

Chapter 6

9 (Revelation 18:1-5; see EGW comment on Romans 12:19). Opening of the Fifth Seal—When the fifth seal was opened, John the Revelator in vision saw beneath the altar the company that were slain for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. After this came the scenes described in the eighteenth of Revelation, when those who are faithful and true are called out from Babylon [Revelation 18:1-5 quoted] (Manuscript

39, 1906).

13-17. See EGW comment on Revelation 16:1-21.

14-17. See EGW comment on Matthew 28:2-4.

15-17. See EGW comment on Romans 3:19.

16. See EGW comment on Matthew 27:21, 22, 29.

Chapter 7

1-3 (Revelation 16:13-16; see EGW comment on Revelation 5:11; Ephesians 4:30). **Probationary Time Running Out**—Already kingdom is rising against kingdom. There is not now a determined engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle. How carefully we should improve the little remaining period of our probation (The Review

and Herald, November 27, 1900)!

Just before we entered it [the time of trouble], we all received the seal of the living God. Then I saw the four angels cease to hold the four winds. And I saw famine, pestilence and sword, nation rose against nation, and the whole world was in confusion (Day-Star, March 14, 1846).

Everything in the world is in an unsettled state. The nations are angry, and great preparations for war are being made. Nation is plotting against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. The great day of God is hastening greatly. But although the nations are mustering their forces for war and bloodshed, the command to the angels is still in force, that they hold the four winds until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads (The Review and Herald, January 28, 1909).

2, 3 (see EGW comment on Revelation 13:16, 17; Revelation 14:9-12). Angels Read the Mark—What is the seal of the living God, which is placed in the foreheads of His people? It is a

mark which angels, but not human eyes, can read; for the destroying angel must see this mark of redemption. The intelligent mind has seen the sign of the cross of Calvary in the Lord's adopted sons and daughters. The sin of the transgression of the law of God is taken away. They have on the wedding garment, and are obedient and faithful to all God's commands (Letter 126, 1898).

(Exodus 12:7, 12, 13; Ezekiel 9:4; 20:12, 20.)

The Signature of God's Appointment—The Israelites placed over their doors a signature of blood, to show that they were God's property. So the children of God in this age will bear the signature God has appointed. They will place themselves in harmony with God's holy law. A mark is placed upon every one of God's people just as verily as a mark was placed over the doors of the Hebrew dwellings, to preserve the people from the general ruin. God declares, "I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them" (The Review and Herald, February 6, 1900).

(Exodus 31:12-17.) God's Special Possession—Every soul in our world is the Lord's property, by creation and by redemption. Each individual soul is on trial for his life. Has he given to God that which belongs to Him? Has he surrendered to God all that is His as His purchased possession? All who cherish the Lord as their portion in this life will be under His control, and will receive the sign, the mark of God, which shows them to be God's special possession. Christ's righteousness will go before them, and the glory of the Lord will be their reward. The Lord protects every human being who bears His sign. [Exodus 31:12-17 quoted.]

This recognition of God is of the highest value to every human being. All who love and serve Him are very precious in His sight. He would have them stand where they are worthy representatives of the truth as it is in Jesus (Letter 77, 1899).

Natural Traits Must Be Transformed—How few bear in mind that the tempter was once a covering cherub, a being whom God created for

His own name's glory. Satan fell from his high position through self-exaltation; he misused the high capabilities with which God had so richly endowed him. He fell for the same reason that thousands are falling today, because of an ambition to be first, an unwillingness to be under restraint. The Lord would teach man the lesson that, though united in church capacity, he is not saved until the seal of God is placed upon him....

The Lord has a work for us all to do. And if the truth is not rooted in the heart, if the natural traits of character are not transformed by the Holy Spirit, we can never be colaborers with Jesus Christ. Self will constantly appear, and the character of Christ will not be manifested in our lives (Letter 80, 1898).

Without Spot or Wrinkle—Missionary agencies are greatly needed in every branch of God's work. Our institutions need converted, devoted men, who will make the Lord their dependence. God will reveal through such workers the power of His grace. His servants are to be

distinguished from the world by the seal of the living God; their words and their works are to reveal that they are laborers together with God.

God can use the human agent just to the extent that he will be worked by the Holy Spirit. To men who accept positions of responsibility as presidents, ministers, physicians, or workers in any line, I am bidden to say: God will test every man who enters His service. He does not ask, Do they possess learning and eloquence? Have they ability to command and control and manage? He asks, Will they represent My character? Will they walk in humility, that I may teach them My way? The soul temple must not be defiled by any loose or unclean practice. Those whom I will acknowledge in the courts of heaven must be without spot and wrinkle.

The Lord will use humble men to do a great and good work. Through them He will represent to the world the ineffaceable characteristics of the divine nature (Letter 270, 1907).

(Revelation 14:1-3; Revelation 22:4; John 1:12.) An Honor to Bear God's Sign—Those who come out from the world, to stand distinct from worldlings in words and works, those who realize that it is an honor to bear God's sign, will receive power to become His sons. The Lord will have men who can be depended on. No one will enter the courts above who does not bear the sign of God. Those who in this sin-cursed earth bear this sign in holy boldness, looking upon it as an honor, will be recognized and honored by Christ in the courts above (Letter 125, 1903).

(Jeremiah 8:20; 1 John 3:3.) Will the Angel Pass Us By?—“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” In a little while every one who is a child of God will have His seal placed upon him. O that it may be placed upon our foreheads! Who can endure the thought of being passed by when the angel goes forth to seal the servants of God in their foreheads (The Review and Herald, May 28, 1889)?

Passport to the Holy City—Only those who

receive the seal of the living God will have the passport through the gates of the Holy City. But there are many who take upon themselves responsibilities in connection with the work of God who are not wholehearted believers, and while they remain thus cannot receive the seal of the living God. They trust in their own righteousness, which the Lord accounts as foolishness (Letter 164, 1909).

The Mark of Distinction—Those who would have the seal of God in their foreheads must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. This is what distinguishes them from the disloyal, who have accepted a man-made institution in the place of the true Sabbath. The observance of God's rest day is the mark of distinction between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not (Manuscript 27, 1899).

Like Christ in Character—The seal of the living God will be placed upon those only who bear a likeness to Christ in character (The Review and Herald, May 21, 1895).

Image of Christ on the Soul—As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ (The Signs of the Times, July 18, 1911).

The Seal and the Commandments—Many will not receive the seal of God because they do not keep His commandments or bear the fruits of righteousness (Letter 76, 1900).

Bitter Disappointment in the Day of God—The great mass of professing Christians will meet with bitter disappointment in the day of God. They have not upon their foreheads the seal of the living God. Lukewarm and halfhearted, they dishonor God far more than the avowed unbeliever. They grope in darkness, when they might be walking in the noonday light of the Word, under the guidance of One who never errs (Letter 121, 1903).

2-4. See EGW comment on Revelation 14:1-14.

**4-17 (Revelation 14:1-4; 2 Corinthians 3:18).
Strive to Be Among the 144,000—** [Revelation 7:9-17 quoted.] Those whom the Lamb shall lead by the fountains of living waters, and from whose eyes He shall wipe away all tears, will be those now receiving the knowledge and understanding revealed in the Bible, the Word of God. ...

We are to copy no human being. There is no human being wise enough to be our criterion. We are to look to the man Christ Jesus, who is complete in the perfection of righteousness and holiness. He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the pattern man. His experience is the measure of the experience that we are to gain. His character is our model. Let us, then, take our minds off the perplexities and the difficulties of this life, and fix them on Him, that by beholding we may be changed into His likeness. We may behold Christ to good purpose. We may safely look to Him; for He is all-wise. As we look to Him and think of Him, He will be formed within, the hope of glory.

Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand (The Review and Herald, March 9, 1905).

9 (Revelation 3:5; Revelation 19:7-9; John 12:12, 13). The Palms and the Robes—The palms signify that they have gained the victory, and the white robes that they have been clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Thank God that a fountain has been opened to wash our robes of character, and make them as white as snow (Und. Manuscript 23).

14. See EGW comment on Revelation 3:18; Revelation 19:7-9; Matthew 22:11, 12.

17. See EGW comment on Revelation 22:1, 2; Romans 11:33.

Chapter 8

3, 4 (Isaiah 1:18; Hebrews 9:13, 14; see EGW comment on Romans 8:26, 34; Hebrews 7:25). Prayers Made Fragrant by Christ's

Merit—As the high priest sprinkled the warm blood upon the mercy seat while the fragrant cloud of incense ascended before God, so, while we confess our sins and plead the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood, our prayers are to ascend to heaven, fragrant with the merits of our Saviour's character. Notwithstanding our unworthiness, we are to remember that there is One who can take away sin, and who is willing and anxious to save the sinner. With His own blood He paid the penalty for all wrongdoers. Every sin acknowledged before God with a contrite heart, He will remove [Isaiah 1:18; Hebrews 9:13, 14 quoted] (RH September 29, 1896).

(Revelation 5:8; Psalm 141:2; 1:29; Ephesians 5:2.) Incense Represents Blood of Atonement—[Revelation 8:3, 4 quoted.] Let the families, the individual Christians, and the churches bear in mind that they are closely allied to heaven. The Lord has a special interest in His church militant here below. The angels who offer the smoke of the fragrant incense are for the praying saints. Then let the evening prayers in

every family rise steadily to heaven in the cool sunset hour, speaking before God in our behalf of the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour. That blood alone is efficacious. It alone can make propitiation for our sins. It is the blood of the only-begotten Son of God that is of value for us that we may draw nigh unto God, His blood alone that taketh “away the sin of the world.” Morning and evening the heavenly universe behold every household that prays, and the angel with the incense, representing the blood of the atonement, finds access to God (Manuscript 15, 1897).

Chapter 10

1-11 (Revelation 14:6-12; Daniel 12:4-13).
No Less a Person Than Christ—The mighty angel who instructed John was no less a personage than Jesus Christ. Setting His right foot on the sea, and His left upon the dry land, shows the part which He is acting in the closing scenes of the great controversy with Satan. This position denotes His supreme power and authority over the whole earth. The controversy had waxed stronger and

more determined from age to age, and will continue to do so, to the concluding scenes when the masterly working of the powers of darkness shall reach their height. Satan, united with evil men, will deceive the whole world and the churches who receive not the love of the truth. But the mighty angel demands attention. He cries with a loud voice. He is to show the power and authority of His voice to those who have united with Satan to oppose the truth.

After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the injunction comes to John as to Daniel in regard to the little book: "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered." These relate to future events which will be disclosed in their order. Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel's prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels' messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time.

The books of Daniel and the Revelation are

one. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation; one a book sealed, the other a book opened. John heard the mysteries which the thunders uttered, but he was commanded not to write them.

The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels' messages. It was not best for the people to know these things, for their faith must necessarily be tested. In the order of God most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels' messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work. This is represented by the angel standing with one foot on the sea, proclaiming with a most solemn oath that time should be no longer.

This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world's history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon

definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844.

The angel's position, with one foot on the sea, the other on the land, signifies the wide extent of the proclamation of the message. It will cross the broad waters and be proclaimed in other countries, even to all the world. The comprehension of truth, the glad reception of the message, is represented in the eating of the little book. The truth in regard to the time of the advent of our Lord was a precious message to our souls (Manuscript 59, 1900).

7 (Revelation 22:10-12). The Last Period of Probation—The gospel dispensation is the last period of probation that will ever be granted to men. Those who live under this dispensation of test and trial and yet are not led to repent and obey will perish with the disloyal. There is no second trial. The gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition

of gaining eternal life. Christ imparts His righteousness to those who consent to let Him take away their sins. We are indebted to Christ for the grace which makes us complete in Him (Manuscript 40, 1900).

Chapter 11

1 (Revelation 20:12, 13; 1 Peter 4:17; 2 Peter 1:10, 11). Measuring the Church of God—The grand judgment is taking place, and has been going on for some time. Now the Lord says, Measure the temple and the worshipers thereof. Remember when you are walking the streets about your business, God is measuring you; when you are attending your household duties, when you engage in conversation, God is measuring you. Remember that your words and actions are being daguerreotyped [photographed] in the books of heaven, as the face is reproduced by the artist on the polished plate. ...

Here is the work going on, measuring the temple and its worshipers to see who will stand in

the last day. Those who stand fast shall have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. When we are doing our work remember there is One that is watching the spirit in which we are doing it. Shall we not bring the Saviour into our everyday lives, into our secular work and domestic duties? Then in the name of God we want to leave behind everything that is not necessary, all gossiping or un-profitable visiting, and present ourselves as servants of the living God (Manuscript 4, 1888).

19 (see EGW comment on Exodus 31:18; Isaiah 6:1-7; 58:12-14). Tables of Stone a Convincing Testimony—When God's temple in heaven is opened, what a triumphant time that will be for all who have been faithful and true! In the temple will be seen the ark of the testament in which were placed the two tables of stone, on which are written God's law. These tables of stone will be brought forth from their hiding place, and on them will be seen the Ten Commandments engraved by the finger of God. These tables of stone now lying in the ark of the testament will be

a convincing testimony to the truth and binding claims of God's law (Letter 47, 1902).

Ark in Heaven Contains Commandments—Sacrilegious minds and hearts have thought they were mighty enough to change the times and laws of Jehovah; but, safe in the archives of heaven, in the ark of God, are the original commandments, written upon the two tables of stone. No potentate of earth has power to draw forth those tables from their sacred hiding place beneath the mercy seat (The Signs of the Times, February 28, 1878).

Chapter 12

3-6, 13-17 (Revelation 13:1, 2, 11). God's People in the Minority—Under the symbols of a great red dragon, a leopardlike beast, and a beast with lamblike horns, the earthly governments which would especially engage in trampling upon God's law and persecuting His people, were presented to John. The war is carried on till the close of time. The people of God, symbolized by a holy woman and her children, were represented as

greatly in the minority. In the last days only a remnant still existed. Of these John speaks as they “which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (The Signs of the Times, November 1, 1899).

7. War in Heaven—Opposition to the law of God had its beginning in the courts of heaven, with Lucifer, the covering cherub. Satan determined to be first in the councils of heaven, and equal with God. He began his work of rebellion with the angels under his command, seeking to diffuse among them the spirit of discontent. And he worked in so deceptive a way that many of the angels were won to his allegiance before his purposes were fully known. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character, nor see to what his work was leading. When Satan had succeeded in winning many angels to his side, he took his cause to God, representing that it was the desire of the angels that he occupy the position that Christ held.

The evil continued to work until the spirit of

disaffection ripened into active revolt. Then there was war in heaven, and Satan, with all who sympathized with him, was cast out. Satan had warred for the mastery in heaven, and had lost the battle. God could no longer trust him with honor and supremacy, and these, with the part he had taken in the government of heaven, were taken from him.

Since that time Satan and his army of confederates have been the avowed enemies of God in our world, continually warring against the cause of truth and righteousness. Satan has continued to present to men, as he presented to the angels, his false representations of

Christ and of God, and he has won the world to his side. Even the professedly Christian churches have taken sides with the great apostate (The Review and Herald, January 28, 1909).

(See EGW comment on 2 Corinthians 10:5.)
The Influence of Mind on Mind—In so deceptive a way did he [Lucifer] work that the sentiments

that he inculcated could not be dealt with until they had developed in the minds of those who received them.

The influence of mind on mind, so strong a power for good when sanctified, is equally strong for evil in the hands of those opposed to God. This power Satan used in his work of instilling evil into the minds of the angels, and he made it appear that he was seeking the good of the universe. As the anointed cherub, Lucifer had been highly exalted; he was greatly loved by the heavenly beings, and his influence over them was strong. Many of them listened to his suggestions and believed his words. “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.”

Cast out of heaven, Satan set up his kingdom in this world, and ever since, he has been untiringly striving to seduce human beings from their allegiance to God. He uses the same power that he used in heaven—the influence of mind on mind.

Men become tempters of their fellow men. The strong, corrupting sentiments of Satan are cherished, and they exert a masterly, compelling power. Under the influence of these sentiments, men bind up with one another in confederacies (Letter 114, 1903).

Satan's Refusal to Obey Christ—He [Satan] declares he cannot submit to be under Christ's command, that God's commands alone will he obey. Good angels weep to hear the words of Satan, and to see how he despises to follow the direction of Christ, their exalted and loving Commander.

The Father decides the case of Satan, and declares that he must be turned out of heaven for his daring rebellion, and that all those who united with him in his rebellion should be turned out with him. Then there was war in heaven. Christ and His angels fought against Satan and his angels, for they were determined to remain in heaven with all their rebellion. But they prevailed not. Christ and loyal angels triumphed, and drove Satan and his rebel

sympathizers from heaven. (Spiritual Gifts 3:38).

Rebellion Transferred to This World—When Satan rebelled, there was war in heaven, and he, with all his sympathizers, was cast out. He had held a high office in heaven, possessing a throne radiant with light. But he swerved from his allegiance to the blessed and only Potentate, and fell from his first estate. All who sympathized with him were driven from the presence of God, doomed to be no more acknowledged in the heavenly courts as having a right there. Satan became the avowed antagonist of Christ. On the earth he planted the standard of rebellion, and round it his sympathizers rallied (Manuscript 78, 1905).

7-9. See EGW comment on Ezekiel 28:15-19; Ephesians 6:12; 1 John 2:6.

10. Satan Cast Down by Death of Christ—The casting down of Satan as an accuser of the brethren in heaven was accomplished by the great work of Christ in giving up His life. Notwithstanding Satan's persistent opposition, the

plan of redemption was being carried out. Man was esteemed of sufficient value for Christ to sacrifice His life for him. Satan, knowing that the empire he had usurped would in the end be wrested from him, determined to spare no pains to destroy as many as possible of the creatures whom God had created in His image. He hated man because Christ had manifested for him such forgiving love and pity, and he now prepared to practice upon him every species of deception by which he might be lost; he pursued his course with more energy because of his own hopeless condition (The Spirit of Prophecy 3:194, 195).

(2 Corinthians 5:19; Philippians 2:6.) Satan Uprooted From Affections of the Universe—In carrying out his enmity to Christ until He hung upon the cross of Calvary, with wounded, bruised body and broken heart, Satan completely uprooted himself from the affections of the universe. It was then seen that God had in His Son denied Himself, giving Himself for the sins of the world, because He loved mankind. The Creator was revealed in the Son of the infinite God. Here the question, “Can

there be self-denial with God?” was forever answered. Christ was God, and condescending to be made flesh, He assumed humanity and became obedient unto death, that He might undergo infinite sacrifice (Manuscript 50, 1900).

(John 3:14-17; Galatians 6:14; Hebrews 9:22.) Accusing Power of Satan Broken—Christ on the cross, not only draws men to repentance toward God for the transgression of His law—for whom God pardons He first makes penitent—but Christ has satisfied justice; He has proffered Himself as an atonement. His gushing blood, His broken body, satisfy the claims of the broken law, and thus He bridges the gulf which sin has made. He suffered in the flesh that with His bruised and broken body He might cover the defenseless sinner. The victory gained at His death on Calvary broke forever the accusing power of Satan over the universe, and silenced his charges that self-denial was impossible with God and therefore not essential in the human family (Manuscript 50, 1900).

11 (Deuteronomy 33:25; see EGW comment on 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). Power to Conquer Day by Day—All who will can be overcomers. Let us strive earnestly to reach the standard set before us. Christ knows our weakness, and to Him we can go daily for help. It is not necessary for us to gain strength a month ahead. We are to conquer from day to day (Manuscript 28, 1886).

The Secret of Overcoming Sin—We become overcomers by helping others to overcome, by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. The keeping of the commandments of God will yield in us an obedient spirit, and the service that is the offspring of such a spirit, God can accept (Letter 236, 1908).

12. See EGW comment on Revelation 16:13-16; Psalm 17.

17 (Revelation 14:9-12; see EGW comment on Isaiah 59:13-17). Satan's Masterpiece of Evil—Those who love and keep the commandments of God are most obnoxious to the

synagogue of Satan, and the powers of evil will manifest their hatred toward them to the fullest extent possible. John foresaw the conflict between the remnant church and the power of evil, and said, “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

The forces of darkness will unite with human agents who have given themselves into the control of Satan, and the same scenes that were exhibited at the trial, rejection, and crucifixion of Christ will be revived. Through yielding to satanic influences, men will be transformed into fiends; and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an apostate race his masterpiece of evil—men who reflect his own image (The Review and Herald, April 14, 1896).

Only Two Parties Upon Earth—There are only two parties upon this earth—those who stand

under the bloodstained banner of Jesus Christ and those who stand under the black banner of rebellion. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation is represented the great conflict between the obedient and the disobedient [Revelation 12:17; 13:1117 quoted] (Manuscript 16, 1900).

(Ephesians 6:10-12.) The Earth a Stage for Horrors—[Revelation 12:17 quoted.] Satanic agencies have made the earth a stage for horrors, which no language can describe. War and bloodshed are carried on by nations claiming to be Christian. A disregard for the law of God has brought its sure result.

The great conflict now being waged is not merely a strife of man against man. On one side stands the Prince of life, acting as man's substitute and surety; on the other, the prince of darkness, with the fallen angels under his command [Ephesians 6:12, 13, 10, 11 quoted] (RH February 6, 1900).

Chapter 13

1, 2, 11. See EGW comment on Revelation 12:3-6, 13-17.

8. See EGW comment on Revelation 3:5; Revelation 20:12-15; Hebrews 9:11-14, 22.

11. A Unique Symbol—Here is a striking figure of the rise and growth of our own nation. And the lamblike horns, emblems of innocence and gentleness, well represent the character of our government, as expressed in its two fundamental principles, republicanism and Protestantism (The Spirit of Prophecy 4:277).

Shield of Omnipotence Over America—The United States is a land that has been under the special shield of the Omnipotent One. God has done great things for this country, but in the transgression of His law, men have been doing a work originated by the man of sin. Satan is working out his designs to involve the human family in disloyalty (Manuscript 17, 1906).

The Prospect Before Us—Prophecy represents Protestantism as having lamblike horns, but speaking like a dragon. Already we are beginning to hear the voice of the dragon. There is a satanic force propelling the Sunday movement, but it is concealed. Even the men who are engaged in the work, are themselves blinded to the results which will follow their movement.

Let not the commandment-keeping people of God be silent at this time, as though we gracefully accepted the situation. There is the prospect before us of waging a continuous war, at the risk of imprisonment, of losing property and even life itself, to defend the law of God, which is being made void by the laws of men (The Review and Herald, January 1, 1889).

11-17 (Revelation 14:9-12; Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4; see EGW comment on Revelation 17:13, 14; Revelation 18:1-5). Persecuting Hand of the Enemy—[Revelation 13:11-13 quoted.] Religious powers, allied to

heaven by profession and claiming to have the characteristics of a lamb, will show by their acts that they have the heart of a dragon, and that they are instigated and controlled by Satan. The time is coming when God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day. Satan has caused the change of the Sabbath in the hope of carrying out his purpose for the defeat of God's plans. He seeks to make the commands of God of less force in the world than human laws.

The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observance of the first day of the week. But God's people are to stand firm for Him. And the Lord will work in their behalf, showing plainly that He is the God of gods (Manuscript 135, 1902).

Church and the World in Corrupt Harmony—The Word of God plainly declares that His law is to be scorned, trampled upon, by the world; there will be an extraordinary prevalence of iniquity. The professed Protestant world will form

a confederacy with the man of sin, and the church and the world will be in corrupt harmony.

Here the great crisis is coming upon the world. The Scriptures teach that popery is to regain its lost supremacy, and that the fires of persecution will be rekindled through the timeserving concessions of the so-called Protestant world (The General Conference Bulletin, April 13, 1891).

13, 14 (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; see EGW comment on Revelation 16:13-16; Matthew 7:21-23). Miracles Performed in Our Sight—The time is at hand when Satan will work miracles to confirm minds in the belief that he is God. All the people of God are now to stand on the platform of truth as it has been given in the third angel's message. All the pleasant pictures, all the miracles wrought, will be presented in order that, if possible, the very elect will be deceived. The only hope for anyone is to hold fast the evidences that have confirmed the truth in righteousness (The Review and Herald, August 9, 1906).

Miracles Wrought Under Supervision of the Enemy—[Matthew 7:21-23 quoted.] These may profess to be followers of Christ, but they have lost sight of their Leader. They may say, “Lord, Lord”; they may point to the sick who are healed through them, and to other marvelous works, and claim that they have more of the Spirit and power of God than is manifested by those who keep His law. But their works are done under the supervision of the enemy of righteousness, whose aim it is to deceive souls, and are designed to lead away from obedience, truth, and duty. In the near future there will be still more marked manifestations of this miracle-working power; for it is said of him, “And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” (The Signs of the Times, February 26, 1885).

14. Preparing for the Image of the Beast—Already preparations are advancing, and movements are in progress, which will result in making an image to the beast. Events will be brought about in the earth’s history that will fulfill the predictions of prophecy for these last days (The

Review and Herald, April 23, 1889).

14-17 (Revelation 14:9-12). Tested by the Image—The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided.... [Revelation 13:11-17 quoted.] ...

This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast (Letter 11, 1890).

Apostasy and National Ruin—When the Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution; when the state shall use its power to

enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church—then will Protestant America have formed an image to the papacy, and there will be a national apostasy which will end only in national ruin (The Signs of the Times, March 22, 1910).

The Mark of Apostasy and God’s Patience—There are many who have never had the light. They are deceived by their teachers, and they have not received the mark of the beast. The Lord is working with them; He has not left them to their own ways. Until they shall be convicted of the truth and trample upon the evidence given to enlighten them, the Lord will not withdraw His grace from them (Letter 7, 1895).

15-17 (see EGW comment on 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4). Perfecting the Device of Satan—When the legislature frames laws which exalt the first day of the week, and put it in the place of the seventh day, the device of Satan will be perfected (The Review and Herald, April 15, 1890).

16, 17 (Daniel 3:1-18; see EGW comment on 1 John 2:18). History Will Be Repeated—History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan's plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation.

The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world. In a limited degree, it has already gone forth. In several places the civil power is speaking with the voice of a dragon, just as the heathen king spoke to the Hebrew captives.

Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to the Word of God, refuse to worship this false sabbath. Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image,

the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so. We need the same spirit that was manifested by God's servants in the conflict with paganism (The Signs of the Times, May 6, 1897).

(Revelation 14:9-12.) Men in Authority to Hear—God is going to bring around a condition of things where the good men and the men in authority will have an opportunity to know what is truth indeed. And because a people will not bow the knee to the image, and receive the mark of the beast in the hand or the forehead, but will stand to the truth because it is truth, there will be oppression, and an attempt to compel the conscience; but those who have known the truth will be afraid to yield to the powers of darkness. God has a people who will not receive the mark of the beast in their right hand or in their forehead. ...

Not a move has been made in exalting the idol sabbath, in bringing around Sunday observance

through legislation, but Satan has been behind it, and has been the chief worker; but the conscience should not be compelled even for the observance of the genuine Sabbath, for God will accept only willing service (The Review and Herald, April 15, 1890).

The Law of God Made Void—A time is coming when the law of God is, in a special sense, to be made void in our land. The rulers of our nation will, by legislative enactments, enforce the Sunday law, and thus God's people be brought into great peril. When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land; and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin (The Review and Herald, December 18, 1888).

Contempt for the Great Lawgiver—The sins of the world will have reached unto heaven when

the law of God is made void; when the Sabbath of the Lord is trampled in the dust, and men are compelled to accept in its stead an institution of the papacy through the strong hand of the law of the land. In exalting an institution of man above the institution ordained of God, they show contempt for the great Lawgiver, and refuse His sign or seal (The Review and Herald, November 5, 1889).

Prepared for Injustice—As Christ was hated without cause, so will His people be hated because they are obedient to the commandments of God. If He who was pure, holy, and undefiled, who did good and only good in our world, was treated as a base criminal and condemned to death, His disciples must expect but similar treatment, however faultless may be their life and blameless their character.

Human enactments, laws manufactured by satanic agencies under a plea of goodness and restriction of evil, will be exalted, while God's holy commandments are despised and trampled underfoot. And all who prove their loyalty by

obedience to the law of Jehovah must be prepared to be arrested, to be brought before councils that have not for their standard the high and holy law of God (The Review and Herald, December 26, 1899).

(2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.) Living in a Momentous Period—We are living in a momentous period of this earth's history. The great conflict is just before us. We see the world corrupted under the inhabitants thereof. The man of sin has worked with a marvelous perseverance to exalt the spurious sabbath, and the disloyal Protestant world has wondered after the beast, and has called obedience to the Sabbath instituted by Jehovah disloyalty to the laws of the nations. Kingdoms have confederated to sustain a false sabbath institution, which has not a word of authority in the oracles of God (The Review and Herald, February 6, 1900).

(Revelation 7:2, 3). The Question Before Us Now—The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict, in which all the world will

act a part. Men have honored Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. Each Sabbath institution, both true and false, bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each.

The great decision now to be made by every one is, whether he will receive the mark of the beast and his image, or the seal of the living and true God (The Signs of the Times, March 22, 1910)

Mark of Beast Not Yet Applied— Sundaykeeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath. The time will come when this day will be the test, but that time has not come yet (Manuscript 118, 1899).

Chapter 14

1-3. See EGW comment on Revelation 7:2, 3.

1-4 (Revelation 7:2-4; Ezekiel 9:4; see EGW comment on Ephesians 4:30). A Mark of Character—[Revelation 14:1-4 quoted.] This scripture represents the character of the people of God for these last days (Manuscript 139, 1903).

(Revelation 14:9-12; see EGW comment on Revelation 16:13-16.) The Signet of Heaven—John saw a Lamb on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 having His Father's name written in their foreheads. They bore the signet of heaven. They reflected the image of God. They were full of the light and the glory of the Holy One. If we would have the image and superscription of God upon us, we must separate ourselves from all iniquity. We must forsake every evil way, and then we must trust our cases in the hands of Christ. While we are working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, God will work in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure (The Review and Herald, March 19, 1889).

Christ Formed Within—[Revelation 14:1-3

quoted.] Why were they so specially singled out? Because they had to stand with a wonderful truth right before the whole world, and receive their opposition, and while receiving this opposition they were to remember that they were sons and daughters of God, that they must have Christ formed within them the hope of glory (Manuscript 13, 1888).

Eternal Interests Supreme—Those who have in their foreheads the seal of the infinite God will regard the world and its attractions as subordinate to eternal interests (The Review and Herald, July 13, 1897).

(2 Timothy 2:14-16; see EGW comment on Revelation 7:417.) Identity of 144,000 Not Revealed—Christ says that there will be those in the church who will present fables and suppositions, when God has given grand, elevating, ennobling truths, which should ever be kept in the treasure house of the mind. When men pick up this theory and that theory, when they are curious to know something it is not necessary for them to

know, God is not leading them. It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the Word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as, Who is to compose the hundred and forty-four thousand. This those who are the elect of God will in a short time know without question.

My brethren and sisters, appreciate and study the truths God has given for you and your children. Spend not your time in seeking to know that which will be no spiritual help. “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” This is the all-important question, and it has been clearly answered. “What is written in the law? how readest thou? (Manuscript 26, 1901).

4 (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6). God’s People Follow the Lamb Now—The Lord has a people on the earth, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. He has His thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Such will stand with Him on Mount Zion. But they must stand on this earth, girded with the whole armor, ready to engage in

the work of saving those who are ready to perish. Heavenly angels conduct this search, and spiritual activity is demanded of all who believe present truth, that they may join the angels in their work.

We need not wait till we are translated to follow Christ. God's people may do this here below. We shall follow the Lamb of God in the courts above only if we follow Him here. Following Him in heaven depends on our keeping His commandments now. We are not to follow Christ fitfully or capriciously, only when it is for our advantage.

We must choose to follow Him. In daily life we must follow His example, as a flock trustfully follows its shepherd. We are to follow Him by suffering for His sake, saying, at every step, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." His life practice must be our life practice. And as we thus seek to be like Him, and to bring our wills into conformity to His will, we shall reveal Him (The Review and Herald, April 12, 1898).

5. See EGW comment on 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12.

6-12 (see EGW comment on Revelation 10:1-11; 2:18). Soon to Be Understood—The fourteenth chapter of Revelation is a chapter of the deepest interest. This scripture will soon be understood in all its bearings, and the messages given to John the revelator will be repeated with distinct utterance (The Review and Herald, October 13, 1904).

Identifying the Three Angels—Christ is coming the second time, with power unto salvation. To prepare human beings for this event, He has sent the first, second, and third angels' messages. These angels represent those who receive the truth, and with power open the gospel to the world (Letter 79, 1900).

(Revelation 18:1-5.) A Loyal Company—The churches have become as described in the eighteenth chapter of Revelation. Why are the messages of Revelation fourteen given? Because

the principles of the churches have become corrupted.... [Revelation 14:6-10 quoted.]

Apparently the whole world is guilty of receiving the mark of the beast. But the prophet sees a company who are not worshiping the beast, and who have not received his mark in their foreheads or in their hands. “Here is the patience of the saints,” he declares; “here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Manuscript 92, 1904).

Large Numbers Accept the Truth—The time of God’s destructive judgments is the time of mercy for those who have no opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched; His hand is still stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter. Large numbers will be admitted who in these last days hear the truth for the first time (The Review and Herald, July 5, 1906).

7. Giving Glory to God—To give glory to

God is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God (Manuscript 16, 1890).

8 (Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4; see EGW comment on Revelation 18:1-5). World Drunk With Wine of Babylon—God denounces Babylon “because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” This means that she has disregarded the only commandment which points out the true God, and has torn down the Sabbath, God’s memorial of creation.

God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh, sanctifying this day, and setting it apart from all others as holy to Himself, to be observed by His people throughout their generations.

But the man of sin, exalting himself above God, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself to be God, thought to change times and laws. This power, thinking to prove that it was not

only equal to God, but above God, changed the rest day, placing the first day of the week where the seventh should be. And the Protestant world has taken this child of the papacy to be regarded as sacred. In the Word of God this is called her fornication.

God has a controversy with the churches of today. They are fulfilling the prophecy of John. “All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” They have divorced themselves from God by refusing to receive His sign. They have not the spirit of God’s true commandment-keeping people. And the people of the world, in giving their sanction to a false sabbath, and in trampling under their feet the Sabbath of the Lord, have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (Letter 98, 1900).

9-12 (Revelation 13:11-17; see EGW comment on Revelation 12:17; Revelation 18:1; Isaiah 58:12-14). The Real Issue in the Final Conflict—[Revelation 14:9, 10 quoted.] It is for the interest of all to understand what the mark of

the beast is, and how they may escape the dread threatenings of God. Why are men not interested to know what constitutes the mark of the beast and his image? It is in direct contrast with the mark of God. [Exodus 31:12-17 quoted.]

The Sabbath question will be the issue in the great conflict in which all the world will act a part. [Revelation 13:4-10 quoted.] This entire chapter is a revelation of what will surely take place [Revelation 13:11, 15-17 quoted] (Manuscript 88, 1897).

What Is the Mark of the Beast?—John was called to behold a people distinct from those who worship the beast and his image by keeping the first day of the week. The observance of this day is the mark of the beast (Letter 31, 1898).

(Revelation 13:16, 17.) Warning Against Mark of the Beast—The third angel's message has been sent forth to the world, warning men against receiving the mark of the beast or of his image in their foreheads or in their hands. To

receive this mark means to come to the same decision as the beast has done, and to advocate the same ideas, in direct opposition to the Word of God. Of all who receive this mark, God says, “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.” ...

If the light of truth has been presented to you, revealing the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and showing that there is no foundation in the Word of God for Sunday observance, and yet you still cling to the false sabbath, refusing to keep holy the Sabbath which God calls “My holy day,” you receive the mark of the beast. When does this take place? When you obey the decree that commands you to cease from labor on Sunday and worship God, while you know that there is not a word in the Bible showing Sunday to be other than a common working day, you consent to receive the mark of the beast, and refuse the seal of God.

If we receive this mark in our foreheads or in our hands, the judgments pronounced against the disobedient must fall upon us. But the seal of the living God is placed upon those who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord (The Review and Herald, July 13, 1897).

A Life and Death Question—This message embraces the two preceding messages. It is represented as being given with a loud voice; that is, with the power of the Holy Spirit. Everything is now at stake. The third angel's message is to be regarded as of the highest importance. It is a life and death question. The impression made by this message will be proportionate to the earnestness and solemnity with which it is proclaimed (Manuscript 16, 1900).

(Verse 1-4.) Not a Visible Mark—In the issue of the great contest two parties are developed, those who “worship the beast and his image,” and receive his mark, and those who receive “the seal of the living God,” who have the “Father's name written in their foreheads.” This is not a visible

mark (The Signs of the Times, November 1, 1899).

(Revelation 18:1-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12.)
Guard Against Mystery of Iniquity—The third angel's message increases in importance as we near the close of this earth's history. ...

God has presented to me the dangers that are threatening those who have been given the sacred work of proclaiming the third angel's message. They are to remember that this message is of the utmost consequence to the whole world. They need to search the Scriptures diligently, that they may learn how to guard against the mystery of iniquity, which plays so large a part in the closing scenes of this earth's history.

There will be more and still more external parade by worldly powers. Under different symbols, God presented to John the wicked character and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished for their persecution of His people. The eighteenth chapter of Revelation speaks of mystic Babylon, fallen from her high

estate to become a persecuting power. Those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus are the object of the wrath of this power [Revelation 18:1-8 quoted] (Manuscript 135, 1902).

The Time of Test Makes the Issue Clear—

The work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The world can only be warned by seeing those who believe the truth sanctified through the truth, acting upon high and holy principles, showing in a high, elevated sense, the line of demarcation between those who keep the commandments of God and those who trample them under their feet. The sanctification of the Spirit signalizes the difference between those who have the seal of God and those who keep a spurious rest day.

When the test comes, it will be clearly shown what the mark of the beast is. It is the keeping of Sunday. Those who, after having heard the truth, continue to regard this day as holy bear the signature of the man of sin, who thought to change

times and laws (Letter 12, 1900).

The Last Act in the Drama—The substitution of the false for the true is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. When the laws of men are exalted above the laws of God, when the powers of this earth try to force men to keep the first day of the week, know that the time has come for God to work. He will arise in His majesty, and will shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity (The Review and Herald, April 23, 1901).

(Revelation 19:1-4; Revelation 7:2, 3; Revelation 13:13, 16; Exodus 31:13-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.) The Mark of Distinction—We are nearing the close of this earth's history. Satan is making desperate efforts to make himself god, to speak and act like God, to appear as one who has a right to control the consciences of men. He strives with all his power to place a human institution in the position of God's holy rest day. Under the jurisdiction of the

man of sin, men have exalted a false standard in complete opposition to God's enactment. Each Sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark showing the authority of each. The first day of the week has not one particle of sanctity. It is the production of the man of sin, who strives in this way to counterwork God's purposes.

God has designated the seventh day as His Sabbath. [Exodus 31:13, 17, 16 quoted.]

Thus the distinction is drawn between the loyal and the disloyal. Those who desire to have the seal of God in their foreheads must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Thus they are distinguished from the disloyal, who have accepted a manmade institution in place of the true Sabbath. The observance of God's rest day is a mark of distinction between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not (The Review and Herald, April 23, 1901).

10. See EGW comment on Genesis 6:17; Matthew 27:21, 22, 29.

12. God's Denominated People—Who are these? God's denominated people—those who on this earth have witnessed to their loyalty. Who are they? Those who have kept the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ; those who have owned the Crucified One as their Saviour (Manuscript 132, 1903).

(Exodus 31:13-17.) What Is God's Sign?—The sign of obedience is the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. If men keep the fourth commandment, they will keep all the rest (Letter 31, 1898).

(Revelation 7:2, 3; Ezekiel 9:4.) The Mark of the Holy Sabbath— There is to be a mark placed upon God's people, and that mark is the keeping of His holy Sabbath (Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 217).

Loyal to Whom?—God has declared that it means much to discard the Word of the living God,

and accept the assertions of those who seek to change times and laws. [Exodus 31:12-17 quoted.]

Those who in the face of these specifications refuse to repent of their transgressions will realize the result of disobedience. Individually we need to inquire, In observing a day of rest, have I drawn my faith from the Scriptures, or from a spurious representation of truth? Every soul who fastens himself to the divine, everlasting covenant, made and presented to us as a sign and mark of God's government, fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise. He shows that he regards God's Word as above the word of man, God's love as preferable to the love of man. And those who repent of transgression, and return to their loyalty by accepting God's mark, show themselves to be true subjects, ready to do His will, to obey His commandments. True observance of the Sabbath is the sign of loyalty to God (Manuscript 63, 1899).

Fidelity Grows With the Emergency—In Revelation 14 John beholds another scene. He sees

a people whose fidelity and loyalty to the laws of God's kingdom, grow with the emergency. The contempt placed upon the law of God only makes them reveal more decidedly their love for that law. It increases with the contempt that is placed upon it (Manuscript 163, 1897).

(Psalm 119:126, 127; Malachi 3:18.) It Is Time to Fight!—Let no one yield to temptation and become less fervent in his attachment to God's law because of the contempt placed upon it; for that is the very thing that should make us pray with all our heart and soul and voice, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law." Therefore, because of the universal contempt, I will not turn traitor when God will be most glorified and most honored by my loyalty.

What! shall Seventh-day Adventists relax their devotedness when all their capabilities and powers should be placed on the Lord's side; when an unflinching testimony, noble and uplifting, should come from their lips? "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold."

When the law of God is most derided and brought into the most contempt, then it is time for every true follower of Christ, for those whose hearts have been given to God, and who are fixed to obey God, to stand unflinchingly for the faith once delivered to the saints. “Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” It is time to fight when champions are most needed (The Review and Herald, June 8, 1897).

13 (2 Timothy 4:7, 8). God Honors the Faithful Aged—There are living upon our earth men who have passed the age of fourscore and ten. The natural results of old age are seen in their feebleness. But they believe God, and God loves them. The seal of God is upon them, and they will be among the number of whom the Lord has said, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.” With Paul they can say, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished by course, I have kept the faith: 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 which love his appearing.” There are many whose grey hairs God honors because they have fought a good fight and kept the faith (Letter 207, 1899).

Chapter 15

2, 3 (Exodus 15:1-19; Deuteronomy 31:30 to 32:44; Isaiah 26:2). The Final Song of Victory—What a song that will be when the ransomed of the Lord meet at the gate of the Holy City, which is thrown back on its glittering hinges and the nations that have kept His word—His commandments—enter into the city, the crown of the overcomer is placed upon their heads, and the golden harps are placed in their hands! All heaven is filled with rich music, and with songs of praise to the Lamb. Saved, everlastingly saved, in the kingdom of glory! To have a life that measures with the life of God—that is the reward (Manuscript 92, 1908).

Chapter 16

1-21 (Revelation 6:13-17; Psalm 46:1-3; Matthew 24:7). John Witnessed Terrors of the Last Days—John ... was a witness of the terrible scenes that will take place as signs of Christ's coming. He saw armies mustering for battle, and men's hearts failing them for fear. He saw the earth moved out of its place, the mountains carried into the midst of the sea, the waves thereof roaring and troubled, and the mountains shaking with the swelling thereof. He saw the vials of God's wrath opened, and pestilence, famine, and death come upon the inhabitants of the earth (The Review and Herald, January 11, 1887).

13-16 (Revelation 13:13, 14; Revelation 17:13, 14; Revelation 19:11-16; see EGW comment on Revelation 7:1-3). Battle of Armageddon Soon to Be Fought—There are only two parties in our world, those who are loyal to God, and those who stand under the banner of the prince of darkness. Satan and his angels will come down with power and signs and lying wonders to

deceive those who dwell on the earth, and if possible the very elect. The crisis is right upon us. Is this to paralyze the energies of those who have a knowledge of the truth? Is the influence of the powers of deception so far reaching that the influence of the truth will be overpowered?

The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white (Manuscript 172, 1899).

Every form of evil is to spring into intense activity. Evil angels unite their powers with evil men, and as they have been in constant conflict and attained an experience in the best modes of deception and battle, and have been strengthening for centuries, they will not yield the last great final contest without a desperate struggle. All the world will be on one side or the other of the question. The battle of Armageddon will be fought, and that day must find none of us sleeping. Wide awake we must be, as wise virgins having oil in our vessels

with our lamps. ...

The power of the Holy Ghost must be upon us, and the Captain of the Lord's host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle. Solemn events before us are yet to transpire. Trumpet after trumpet is to be sounded, vial after vial poured out one after another upon the inhabitants of the earth. Scenes of stupendous interest are right upon us (Letter 112, 1890).

14-16 (Ephesians 6:12; see EGW comment on Revelation 5:11). Two Opposing Powers—Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the Creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion (The Review and Herald, May 7, 1901).

(Revelation 12:12.) Satan Mustering His Forces for Last Battle—The present is a solemn, fearful time for the church. The angels are already

girded, awaiting the mandate of God to pour their vials of wrath upon the world. Destroying angels are taking up the work of vengeance; for the Spirit of God is gradually withdrawing from the world. Satan is also mustering his forces of evil, going forth “unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world,” to gather them under his banner, to be trained for “the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” Satan is to make most powerful efforts for the mastery in the last great conflict. Fundamental principles will be brought out, and decisions made in regard to them. Skepticism is prevailing everywhere. Ungodliness abounds. The faith of individual members of the church will be tested as though there were not another person in the world (Manuscript 1a, 1890).

14-17 (Revelation 18:1). The Armies of God Take the Field—We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the

religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field (Manuscript 175, 1899).

Chapter 17

1-5 (Revelation 13:11-17; Revelation 18:1-5; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). Deceiver of All Nations—In the seventeenth of Revelation is foretold the destruction of all the churches who corrupt themselves by idolatrous devotion to the service of the papacy, those who have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. [Revelation 17:1-4 quoted.]

Thus is represented the papal power, which with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, by outside attraction and gorgeous display, deceives all nations; promising them, as did Satan our first parents, all good to those who receive its mark, and all harm to those who oppose its fallacies. The power which has the deepest inward corruption will make the greatest display, and will clothe itself with the most elaborate signs of power. The Bible

plainly declares that this covers a corrupt and deceiving wickedness. “Upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.”

What is it that gives its kingdom to this power? Protestantism, a power which, while professing to have the temper and spirit of a lamb and to be allied to Heaven, speaks with the voice of a dragon. It is moved by a power from beneath (Letter 232, 1899).

13, 14 (Revelation 13:11-17; Revelation 16:13-16). A Confederacy of Satan’s Forces— [Revelation 17:13, 14 quoted.] “These have one mind.” There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan’s forces. “And shall give their power and strength unto the beast.” Thus is manifested the same arbitrary, oppressive power against religious liberty, freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, as was manifested by the papacy, when in the past it persecuted those who dared to refuse to conform with the religious rites

and ceremonies of Romanism.

In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God's people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah. In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue; for in the Sabbath commandment the great Lawgiver identifies Himself as the Creator of the heavens and the earth (Manuscript 24, 1891).

14. Christ Glorified in the Last Crisis—As Christ was glorified on the day of Pentecost, so will He again be glorified in the closing work of the gospel, when He shall prepare a people to stand the final test, in the closing conflict of the great controversy (The Review and Herald, November 29, 1892).

Chapter 18

1 (Revelation 14:9-12; Habakkuk 2:14; see EGW comment on Acts 2:1-4). The Angel of

Revelation 18— The prophecies in the eighteenth of Revelation will soon be fulfilled. During the proclamation of the third angel’s message, “another angel” is to “come down from heaven, having great power,” and the earth is to be “lightened with his glory.” The Spirit of the Lord will so graciously bless consecrated human instrumentalities that men, women, and children will open their lips in praise and thanksgiving, filling the earth with the knowledge of God, and with His unsurpassed glory, as the waters cover the sea.

Those who have held the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end will be wide awake during the time that the third angel’s message is proclaimed with great power (The Review and Herald, October 13, 1904).

(2 Timothy 2:14-16; see EGW comment on Revelation 16:14-17.) Message Prepares for Translation—Amid the confusing cries, “Lo, here is Christ! Lo, there is Christ!” will be borne a special testimony, a special message of truth appropriate for this time, which message is to be

received, believed, and acted upon. It is the truth, not fanciful ideas, that is efficacious. The eternal truth of the Word will stand forth free from all seductive errors and spiritualistic interpretations, free from all fancifully drawn, alluring pictures. Falsehoods will be urged upon the attention of God's people, but the truth is to stand clothed in its beautiful, pure garments. The Word, precious in its holy, uplifting influence, is not to be degraded to a level with common, ordinary matters. It is always to remain uncontaminated by the fallacies by which Satan seeks to deceive, if possible, the very elect.

The proclamation of the gospel is the only means in which God can employ human beings as His instrumentalities for the salvation of souls. As men, women, and children proclaim the gospel, the Lord will open the eyes of the blind to see His statutes, and will write upon the hearts of the truly penitent His law. The animating Spirit of God, working through human agencies, leads the believers to be of one mind, one soul, unitedly loving God and keeping His commandments—preparing here below for translation (The Review

and Herald, October 13, 1904).

(Jeremiah 30:7; Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:23; Zechariah 10:1; Ephesians 4:13, 15.) Refreshing of the Latter Rain—As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, “the time of Jacob’s trouble,” they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His Spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble. Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel (The Review and Herald, May 27, 1862).

(Isaiah 61:11.) Not to Wait for Latter Rain—We must not wait for the latter rain. It is coming upon all who will recognize and appropriate the dew and showers of grace that fall upon us. When we gather up the fragments of light, when we appreciate the sure mercies of God, who loves to have us trust Him, then every promise will be

fulfilled. [Isaiah 61:11 quoted.] The whole earth is to be filled with the glory of God (Letter 151, 1897).

Revelation of the Righteousness of Christ—

The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth (The Review and Herald, November 22, 1892).

No Time Specified for Outpouring—

I have no specific time of which to speak when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit will take place—when the mighty angel will come down from heaven, and unite with the third angel in closing up the work for this world; my message is that our only safety is in being ready for the heavenly refreshing, having our lamps trimmed and burning (The Review and Herald, March 29, 1892).

1-5 (Revelation 13:11-17; Revelation 14:6-12; Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4; see

EGW comment on Revelation 6:9; 17:1-5). Every Power of Evil Will Work—As God called the children of Israel out of Egypt, that they might keep His Sabbath, so He calls His people out of Babylon, that they may not worship the beast or his image. The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, has exalted himself above God, by presenting a spurious sabbath to the world; the Christian world has accepted the child of the papacy, and cradled and nourished it, thus defying God by removing His memorial, and setting up a rival sabbath.

After the truth has been proclaimed as a witness to all nations, every conceivable power of evil will be set in operation, and minds will be confused by many voices crying, “Lo, here is Christ; lo, He is there. This is the truth, I have the message from God, He has sent me with great light.” Then there will be a removing of the landmarks, and an attempt to tear down the pillars of our faith. A more decided effort will be made to exalt the false sabbath, and to cast contempt upon God Himself by supplanting the day He has

blessed and sanctified. This false sabbath is to be enforced by an oppressive law.

Satan and his angels are wide awake and intensely active, working with energy and perseverance through human instrumentalities to bring about his purpose of obliterating from the minds of men the knowledge of God. But while Satan works with his lying wonders, the time will be fulfilled foretold in the Revelation, and the mighty angel that shall lighten the earth with his glory will proclaim the fall of Babylon, and call upon God's people to forsake her (The Review and Herald, December 13, 1892).

(Revelation 14:8.) Part of a Series of Events—The message in regard to the fall of Babylon must be given. God's people are to understand in regard to the angel who is to lighten the whole world with his glory, while he cries mightily, with a loud voice, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen." The solemn events which are now taking place belong to a series of events in the chain of history, the first link of which is connected

with Eden. Let the people of God prepare for what is coming upon the earth. Extravagance in the use of means, selfishness, heresies, have taken the world captive. For centuries satanic agencies have been at work. Will they now give up without a struggle (Manuscript 172, 1899)?

(Matthew 15:9; 21:11, 12; John 2:13-16; see EGW comment on Revelation 6:9.) Two Calls to the Churches—[Revelation 18:1, 2 quoted.] This is the same message that was given by the second angel. Babylon is fallen, “because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” What is that wine?—her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the falsehood that Satan first told to Eve in Eden—the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”

When Jesus began His public ministry, He cleansed the temple from its sacrilegious

profanation. Among the last acts of His ministry was the second cleansing of the temple. So in the last work for the warning of the world, two distinct calls are made to the churches. The second angel's message is, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." And in the loud cry of the third angel's message a voice is heard from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (The Review and Herald, December 6, 1892).

Three Messages to Be Combined—The three angels' messages are to be combined, giving their threefold light to the world. In the Revelation, John says, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." [Revelation 18:2-5 quoted.] This represents the giving of the last and threefold message of warning to the world (Manuscript 52, 1900).

1-8 (see EGW comment on Revelation 14:9-12). Danger in Worldly Alliances— [Revelation 18:1-8 quoted.] This terrible picture, drawn by John to show how completely the powers of earth will give themselves over to evil, should show those who have received the truth how dangerous it is to link up with secret societies or to join themselves in any way with those who do not keep God's commandments (Manuscript 135, 1902).

3-7. See EGW comment on 1 John 2:18.

Chapter 19

7-9 (Ephesians 5:23-25; see EGW comment on Revelation 7:9). God the Husband of His Church—God is the husband of His church. The church is the bride, the Lamb's wife. Every true believer is a part of the body of Christ. Christ regards unfaithfulness shown to Him by His people as the unfaithfulness of a wife to her husband. We are to remember that we are members of Christ's body (Letter 39, 1902).

Conduct Befitting the Bride of a King—The church is the bride, the Lamb's wife. She should keep herself pure, sanctified, holy. Never should she indulge in any foolishness; for she is the bride of a King. Yet she does not realize her exalted position. If she understood this, she would be all-glorious within (Letter 177, 1901).

(Revelation 3:4; Revelation 7:14; Revelation 16:15.) Clean Garments—The church is the bride of Christ, and her members are to yoke up with their Leader. God warns us not to defile our garments (Letter 123 1/2, 1898).

11-16. See EGW comment on Revelation 16:13-16.

Chapter 20

5, 6. Marks of Curse in Second Resurrection—At the first resurrection all come forth in immortal bloom, but at the second, the marks of the curse are visible upon all. All come up

as they went down into their graves. Those who lived before the Flood, come forth with their giant-like stature, more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and well proportioned. The generations after the Flood were less in stature (Spiritual Gifts 3:84, 85).

9, 10, 14 (Genesis 8:1; 2 Peter 3:10). New Jerusalem Preserved Amid Flames—When the flood of waters was at its height upon the earth, it had the appearance of a boundless lake of water. When God finally purifies the earth, it will appear like a boundless lake of fire. As God preserved the ark amid the commotions of the Flood, because it contained eight righteous persons, He will preserve the New Jerusalem, containing the faithful of all ages, from righteous Abel down to the last saint which lived. Although the whole earth, with the exception of that portion where the city rests, will be wrapped in a sea of liquid fire, yet the city is preserved as was the ark, by a miracle of Almighty power. It stands unharmed amid the devouring elements (Spiritual Gifts 3:87).

12, 13 (Daniel 7:9, 10; see EGW comment on Exodus 31:18; Matthew 5:21, 22, 27, 28; 1 Timothy 5:24, 25; Revelation 11:1; 22:14). God's Law Seen in New Light—When the judgment shall sit, and everyone shall be judged by the things written in the books, the authority of God's law will be looked upon in a light altogether different from that in which it is now regarded by the Christian world. Satan has blinded their eyes and confused their understanding, as he blinded and confused Adam and Eve, and led them into transgression. The law of Jehovah is great, even as its Author is great. In the judgment it will be recognized as holy, just, and good in all its requirements. Those who transgress this law will find that they have a serious account to settle with God; for His claims are decisive (The Review and Herald, May 7, 1901).

(Romans 3:19; 7:12; Jude 15.) All the Worlds Witness Judgment—Christ would have all understand the events of His second appearing. The judgment scene will take place in the presence of all the worlds; for in this judgment the

government of God will be vindicated, and His law will stand forth as “holy, and just, and good.” Then every case will be decided, and sentence will be passed upon all. Sin will not then appear attractive, but will be seen in all its hideous magnitude. All will see the relation in which they stand to God and to one another (The Review and Herald, September 20, 1898).

Deep Heart Searching—[Revelation 20:12 quoted.] Then men will have a clear, sharp remembrance of all their transactions in this life. Not a word or a deed will escape their memory. Those will be trying times. And while we are not to mourn over the time of trouble to come, let us, as Christ’s followers, search our hearts as with a lighted candle to see what manner of spirit we are of. For our present and eternal good, let us criticize our actions, to see how they stand in the light of the law of God. For this law is our standard. Let every soul search his own heart (Letter 22, 1901).

(Psalm 33:13-15; Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Jeremiah 17:10; Hebrews 4:13; see EGW

comment on Psalm 139:1-12.) Every Case Examined—Though all nations are to pass in judgment before Him, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being on earth (The Review and Herald, January 19, 1886).

(Malachi 3:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 3:13.) Angels Marking Deeds of Men—All heaven is interested in our salvation. The angels of God are walking up and down the streets of these cities, and marking the deeds of men. They record in the books of God's remembrance the words of faith, the acts of love, the humility of spirit; and in that day when every man's work shall be tried of what sort it is, the work of the humble follower of Christ will stand the test, and will receive the commendation of Heaven (The Review and Herald, September 16, 1890).

As Accurate as Photographer's Plate—All of us, as beings blessed of God with reasoning powers, with intellect and judgment, should acknowledge our accountability to God. The life

He has given us is a sacred responsibility, and no moment of it is to be trifled with; for we shall have to meet it again in the record of the judgment. In the books of heaven our lives are as accurately traced as in the picture on the plate of the photographer. Not only are we held accountable for what we have done, but for what we have left undone. We are held to account for our undeveloped characters, our unimproved opportunities (The Review and Herald, September 22, 1891).

Our Characters Represented in Books—In the books of heaven are accurately recorded the sneers and the trivial remarks of sinners who pay no heed to the call of mercy made, as Christ is presented to them by His ministering servants. As the artist takes on the polished glass a true picture of the human face, so the angels of God daily place upon the books of heaven an exact representation of the character of every human being (The Signs of the Times, February 11, 1903).

Heaven's Service Record—All who are

partakers of this great salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ are under obligation to work as laborers together with God. In the heavenly courts the roll is called, on which every name is registered, and the heavenly agencies respond to the call. The service given by every human being upon earth is there recorded. If any are negligent, it is recorded; if diligent, the same is reported; if idlers, the fact stands against their names. In all the great mass of humanity, not one is lost sight of. Then let every one be ready to answer the call, saying, "Here, Lord, ready for action."

The world has claims upon you. If you fail to shine as lights in the world, some will rise in the judgment, and charge upon you the blood of their souls. It will be seen that you were an agent in the hands of the enemy of God and man to mislead and deceive by your profession of Christianity. You did not lead souls to piety and devotion. You had a name to live, but were spiritually dead. You had not the vitalizing influence of the Spirit of God, which is abundantly provided for all who, in faith, make demands upon it (The Review and Herald,

August 16, 1898).

A Daily Inventory—God judges every man according to his work. Not only does He judge, but He sums up, day by day and hour by hour, our progress in well-doing (The Review and Herald, May 16, 1899).

12-15 (Revelation 3:5; Revelation 13:8; 21:27; Revelation 22:19). The Book of Life—When we become children of God, our names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and they remain there until the time of the investigative judgment. Then the name of every individual will be called, and his record examined, by Him who declares, "I know thy works." If in that day it shall appear that all our wicked deeds have not been fully repented of, our names will be blotted from the book of life, and our sins will stand against us (The Signs of the Times, August 6, 1885).

(Exodus 32:30-33; see EGW comment on Matthew 12:31, 32.) A Just Punishment for the Sinner—Moses manifested his great love for Israel

in his entreaty to the Lord to forgive their sin, or blot his name out of the book which He had written. His intercessions here illustrate Christ's love and mediation for the sinful race. But the Lord refused to let Moses suffer for the sins of His backsliding people. He declared to him that those who had sinned against Him He would blot out of His book which He had written; for the righteous should not suffer for the guilt of the sinner.

The book here referred to is the book of records in heaven, in which every name is inscribed, and the acts of all, their sins, and obedience, are faithfully written. When individuals commit sins which are too grievous for the Lord to pardon, their names are erased from the book, and they are devoted to destruction (The Signs of the Times, May 27, 1880).

Chapter 21

1 (Isaiah 33:21). No Engulfing Ocean—The sea divides friends. It is a barrier between us and those whom we love. Our associations are broken

up by the broad, fathomless ocean. In the new earth there will be no more sea, and there shall pass there “no galley with oars.” In the past many who have loved and served God have been bound by chains to their seats in galleys, compelled to serve the purpose of cruel, hardhearted men. The Lord has looked upon their suffering in sympathy and compassion. Thank God, in the earth made new there will be no fierce torrents, no engulfing ocean, no restless, murmuring waves (Manuscript 33, 1911).

1-4 (Isaiah 30:26). God’s Family United at Last—Now the church is militant, now we are confronted with a world in midnight darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry. But the day is coming in which the battle will have been fought, the victory won. The will of God is to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven. Then the nations will own no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving—the robe of Christ’s righteousness.

All nature in its surpassing loveliness will offer to God a constant tribute of praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. The years will move on in gladness. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold greater than it is now. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while Christ and God will unite in proclaiming, “There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death” (The Review and Herald, December 17, 1908).

4 (see EGW comment on 1 Corinthians 15:51-55). The Christian’s Summer—This earth is the place of preparation for heaven. The time spent here is the Christian’s winter. Here the chilly winds of affliction blow upon us, and the waves of trouble roll against us. But in the near future, when Christ comes, sorrow and sighing will be forever ended. Then will be the Christian’s summer. All trials will be over, and there will be no more sickness or death. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death,

neither sorrow, nor crying ... : for the former things are passed away” (Manuscript 28, 1886).

23. See EGW comment on Ephesians 5:25.

27. See EGW comment on Revelation 20:12-15.

Chapter 22

1. See EGW comment on 1 John 1:7, 9.

1, 2 (Revelation 7:17; see EGW comment on Luke 23:40-43). Higher Education in the Future Life—Christ, the heavenly Teacher, will lead His people to the tree of life that grows on either side of the river of life, and He will explain to them the truths they could not in this life understand. In that future life His people will gain the higher education in its completeness. Those who enter the city of God will have the golden crowns placed upon their heads. That will be a joyful scene that none of us can afford to miss. We shall cast our crowns at the feet of Jesus, and again and again we

will give Him the glory and praise His holy name. Angels will unite in the songs of triumph. Touching their golden harps, they will fill all heaven with rich music and songs to the Lamb (Manuscript 31, 1909).

2 (Revelation 2:7; Genesis 2:9; see EGW comment on Genesis 3:22-24; John 5:39). Life-giving Power in Tree of Life—The tree of life is a representation of the preserving care of Christ for His children. As Adam and Eve ate of this tree, they acknowledged their dependence upon God. The tree of life possessed the power to perpetuate life, and as long as they ate of it, they could not die. The lives of the antediluvians were protracted because of the life-giving power of this tree, which was transmitted to them from Adam and Eve (The Review and Herald, January 26, 1897).

(John 1:4.) Life-giving Fruit Ours Through Christ—The fruit of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death. Its leaves were for the sustaining of life and

immortality. But through man's disobedience, death entered the world. Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the fruit of which he had been forbidden to touch. His transgression opened the floodgates of woe upon our race.

After the entrance of sin, the heavenly Husbandman transplanted the tree of life to the Paradise above; but its branches hang over the wall to the lower world. Through the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ, we may still eat of its life-giving fruit.

Of Christ it is written, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." He is the fountain of life. Obedience to Him is the life-giving power that gladdens the soul.

Christ declares: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" [John 6:57, 63; Revelation 2:7, last part, quoted] (The Signs of the Times, March 31, 1909).

(Psalm 19:10; John 6:54-57.) Tree of Life Planted for Us—The sons of men have had a practical knowledge of evil, but Christ came to the world to show them that He had planted for them the tree of life, the leaves of which were for the healing of the nations (Manuscript 67, 1898).

The leaves of the tree of life are proffered you. They are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. Take them, eat them, digest them, and your faintheartedness will pass away (Manuscript 71, 1898).

Christ ... was the tree of life to all who would pluck and eat (Manuscript 95, 1898).

Bible the Tree of Life to Us—Let all bear in mind that the tree of life bears twelve manner of fruits. This represents the spiritual work of our earthly missions. The Word of God is to us the tree of life. Every portion of the Scripture has its use. In every part of the Word is some lesson to be learned. Then learn how to study your Bibles. This book is not a heap of odds and ends. It is an

educator. Your own thoughts must be called into exercise before you can be really benefited by Bible study. Spiritual sinew and muscle must be brought to bear upon the Word. The Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance the words of Christ. He will enlighten the mind, and guide the research (Letter 3, 1898).

Christ the Tree of Life—Christ is the source of our life, the source of immortality. He is the tree of life, and to all who come to Him He gives spiritual life (The Review and Herald, January 26, 1897).

3, 4. A Definition of Heaven—Christ is the truth of all that we find in the Father. The definition of heaven is the presence of Christ (Und. Manuscript 58).

4. See EGW comment on Revelation 7:2, 3.

10-12 (chs. 4:3; 10:1; see EGW comment on Revelation 10:7; 2 Peter 3:9). Christ's Intercession Soon to Cease—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 (The Review and Herald, January 1, 1889).

Probation Ends When Least Expected—

When probation ends, it will come suddenly, unexpectedly—at a time when we are least expecting it. But we can have a clean record in heaven today, and know that God accepts us; and finally, if faithful, we shall be gathered into the kingdom of heaven (Manuscript 95, 1906).

No Second Probation—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 is gone forever (Manuscript 49, 1894).

(John 9:4.) Time of Probation's Close Not Revealed—God has not revealed to us the time when this message will close, or when probation will have an end. Those things that are revealed we shall accept for ourselves and for our children; but let us not seek to know that which has been kept secret in the councils of the Almighty. ...

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.

The Word of the Lord reveals the fact that the end of all things is at hand, and its testimony is most decided that it is necessary for every soul to have the truth planted in the heart so that it will control the life and sanctify the character. The Spirit of the Lord is working to take the truth of the Inspired Word and stamp it upon the soul so that

the professed followers of Christ will have a holy, sacred joy that they will be able to impart to others. The opportune time for us to work is now, just now, while the day lasts. But there is no command for anyone to search the Scriptures in order to ascertain, if possible, when probation will close. God has no such message for any mortal lips. He would have no mortal tongue declare that which He has hidden in His secret councils (The Review and Herald, October 9, 1894).

13. See EGW comment on 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45.

13-17 (John 1:8). The Alpha and Omega of Scripture— [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 (The Review and Herald, June 8, 1897).

14 (Revelation 20:12, 13; see EGW comment

on Genesis 3:22-24; Romans 3:31; 2 Corinthians 3:7-11). City of God for Commandment Keepers—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 Review and Herald, August 25, 1885).

(Colossians 1:26, 27.) Travel in the Future Life—Many seem to have the idea that this world and the heavenly mansions constitute the universe of God. Not so. The redeemed throng will range

from world to world, and much of their time will be employed in searching out the mysteries of redemption. And throughout the whole stretch of eternity, this subject will be continually opening to their minds. The privileges of those who overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony are beyond comprehension (The Review and Herald, March 9, 1886).

17. See EGW comment on Revelation 3:20; Romans 3:20-31.

19. See EGW comment on Revelation 20:12-15.