



Christian Character (I)

*Sabbath Bible Lessons*

Senior Division

*January–March 2005*

- 5 Humanity's Fall
- 10 Jesus Christ Our Only Hope
- 15 Jesus Christ—Fully God
- 20 The Divinity of Christ—Confessions
- 25 “The Word Was Made Flesh”
- 31 The Holy Spirit
- 36 The Heavenly Trio
- 41 Jacob's Experience
- 46 Jacob's Dream
- 52 The Great Law of Love
- 57 The Righteousness of Christ
- 62 False Justification
- 67 A Special Invitation

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

**Illustrations:** M. Burgess/Robertstock on front cover; PhotoDisc on back cover and on p. 30.

**Sabbath Bible Lessons** (USPS 005-118), Vol. 80, No. 1, January–March 2005. Published quarterly by the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement General Conference, Sabbath School Department. Copyright © 2005, printed and distributed by Reformation Herald Publishing Association, 5240 Hollins Road, Roanoke, Virginia 24019–5048, USA. Periodical postage paid at Roanoke, Virginia 24022–9993. Telephone 540-366-9400 \* USA and Canada 1888-712-1234 \* Fax 540-366-2814 \* Internet <http://www.sdarm.org> \* E-mail: [gc@sdarm.org](mailto:gc@sdarm.org)

**Annual subscriptions:** U.S.A. \$12.95. Other countries \$13.00, or by AIRMAIL \$17.00. Single copies \$4.50. Please send subscription requests and payments (in U.S. currency only) to the address below. Prices subject to change without notice.

POSTMASTER, please send address changes to: **Sabbath Bible Lessons**, P. O. Box 7240, Roanoke, VA 24019-0240.

# Foreword

As we contemplate the future work of God's people, we can see that there is a great work to do in spreading the gospel of salvation. But before we can fully share the gospel with others, we must first give all diligence to make our own calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10). To this end, during 2005 we will be studying in the Sabbath school the advice given by Peter in the first chapter of his second epistle regarding the growth of Christian character.

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your 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. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall” (2 Peter 1:5–10).

“Can I say anything that will make an impression upon the young? Never before was there so much at stake; never were there such weighty results depending upon a generation as upon those now coming upon the stage of action. Not for one moment should they think that they can fill any position of trust without possessing a good character. Just as well might they expect to gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. A good character must be built up brick by brick, every day growing in proportion to the effort put forth. Those characteristics which they will take to heaven with them must be obtained by the diligent exercise of their own faculties, by improving every advantage Providence gives them, and by connecting with the Source of all wisdom. Aim for no low standard. Let not your minds be cast in an inferior mold. . . . Christ is the perfect pattern.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 129.

“No one can take to heaven his natural and cultivated traits of character. He who has carried these traits with him through his period of probation has misrepresented Christ by acting upon principles which God cannot endorse. The principles of true spiritual life are not understood by those who know the truth, but fail to practice it.

“The Lord calls for reforms, marked, distinct reforms. Those in whose hearts Christ dwells will reveal His presence in their dealing with their fellowmen.”—*Testimony to the Battle Creek Church*, February 25, 1901.

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

# First Sabbath Offering

## for a chapel in Saint Lucia

Saint Lucia is a most beautiful tropical island in the Caribbean. The 162,157 (2003 est.) inhabitants live on 616 sq. km. of land, of which 23% is used for permanent agriculture. The majority of the island is Roman Catholic (90%) with small Anglican (3%) and Protestant (7%) memberships. But the real jewel for the work in Saint Lucia is that it is a major tourist destination for many thousands of visitors each year. As a transit point, Saint Lucians may spread the gospel throughout the world.

The message of reformation is young on this island. A number of brethren from the United States were active in establishing the first few souls in the truth, and from there the work has expanded quickly. The brethren and sisters here, while few in number and lacking in financial resources, have been active missionaries and there is need for a more permanent meeting house to be established. It is their desire to build a lighthouse that will be a beacon of truth to all the people of this island.

In this work your assistance is appreciated. From what the brethren and sisters in Saint Lucia have they have given much for this project and many have volunteered their time to see this work go forward. In order to complete the work, your donations are needed. Please remember the work in Saint Lucia as we begin this new year, and pray that the Lord will continue to bless the progress of His work in the Caribbean islands.

David Zic, GC Secretary

PROJECT 022



# Humanity's Fall

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

“Transgression placed the whole world under the death sentence. But in heaven there was heard a voice saying, ‘I have found a ransom.’”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 27, 1900.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 52–62.

## Sunday

December 26

### 1. THE IMAGE OF GOD

a. What is mentioned about Adam and Eve when they were created? Genesis 1:26, 27.

---

“When Adam came from the Creator’s hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. ‘God created man in His own image’ (Genesis 1:27), and it was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image—the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. All his faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase.”—*Education*, p. 15.

b. What special garment surrounded our first parents? Genesis 2:25.

---

“The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. All the strength of their affections was given to their heavenly Father. A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair. This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 310, 311.

“The sinless pair wore no artificial garments; they were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. So long as they lived in obedience to God, this robe of light continued to enshroud them.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45.

## 2. SIN CAUSES RUIN

- a. What special instructions did God give to Adam and Eve about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Genesis 2:16, 17.

---

“Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. God made them free moral agents, capable of appreciating the wisdom and benevolence of His character and the justice of His requirements, and with full liberty to yield or to withhold obedience. They were to enjoy communion with God and with holy angels; but before they could be rendered eternally secure, their loyalty must be tested. At the very beginning of man’s existence a check was placed upon the desire for self-indulgence, the fatal passion that lay at the foundation of Satan’s fall. The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the midst of the garden, was to be a test of the obedience, faith, and love of our first parents. While permitted to eat freely of every other tree, they were forbidden to taste of this, on pain of death. They were also to be exposed to the temptations of Satan; but if they endured the trial, they would finally be placed beyond his power, to enjoy perpetual favor with God.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 48, 49.

- b. Describe the sad experience of Adam and Eve. Genesis 3:1–6.

---

“When Eve, disregarding the Lord’s admonition concerning the forbidden tree, ventured to approach it, she came in contact with her foe. Her interest and curiosity having been awakened, Satan proceeded to deny God’s word, and to insinuate distrust of His wisdom and goodness. To the woman’s statement concerning the tree of knowledge, ‘God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die,’ the tempter made answer, ‘Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil’ (Genesis 3:3–5).”—*Education*, p. 24.

“We must set our hearts to know what is truth. All the lessons which God has caused to be placed on record in His word are for our warning and instruction. They are given to save us from deception. Their neglect will result in ruin to ourselves. Whatever contradicts God’s word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 55.

## 3. SELF-JUSTIFICATION, SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. After their disobedience, what did Adam and Eve try to do? Genesis 3:7.

“But when sin entered, [our first parents] severed their connection with God, and the light that had encircled them departed. Naked and ashamed, they tried to supply the place of the heavenly garments by sewing together fig leaves for a covering.

“This is what the transgressors of God’s law have done ever since the day of Adam and Eve’s disobedience. They have sewed together fig leaves to cover the nakedness caused by transgression. They have worn the garments of their own devising, by works of their own they have tried to cover their sins, and make themselves acceptable with God.”—*Christ’s Objects Lessons*, p. 311.

- b. What explanation did they present to the Lord? Genesis 3:8–13.

“Adam could neither deny nor excuse his sin; but instead of manifesting penitence, he endeavored to cast the blame upon his wife, and thus upon God Himself: ‘The woman whom *Thou gavest* to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.’ He who, from love to Eve, had deliberately chosen to forfeit the approval of God, his home in Paradise, and an eternal life of joy, could now, after his fall, endeavor to make his companion, and even the Creator Himself, responsible for the transgression. So terrible is the power of sin.

“When the woman was asked, ‘What is this that thou hast done?’ she answered, ‘The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.’ ‘Why didst Thou create the serpent? Why didst Thou suffer him to enter Eden?’—these were the questions implied in her excuse for her sin. Thus, like Adam, she charged God with the responsibility of their fall. The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies; it was indulged by our first parents as soon as they yielded to the influence of Satan, and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Instead of humbly confessing their sins, they try to shield themselves by casting the blame upon others, upon circumstances, or upon God—making even His blessings an occasion of murmuring against Him.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 57, 58 (author’s italics).

“He who is guilty of wrong is the first to suspect wrong. By condemning another he is trying to conceal or excuse the evil of his own heart. It was through sin that men gained the knowledge of evil; no sooner had the first pair sinned than they began to accuse each other; and this is what human nature will inevitably do when uncontrolled by the grace of Christ.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 126.

## 4. THE ONLY REMEDY FOR SINNERS

- a. What provision had been made to save the human race? Genesis 3:21; John 3:16.

---

“The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth; for Christ is ‘the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world’ (Revelation 13:8); yet it was a struggle, even with the King of the universe, to yield up His Son to die for the guilty race. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life’ (John 3:16). Oh, the mystery of redemption! the love of God for a world that did not love Him! Who can know the depths of that love which ‘passeth knowledge’? Through endless ages immortal minds, seeking to comprehend the mystery of that incomprehensible love, will wonder and adore.

“God was to be manifest in Christ, ‘reconciling the world unto Himself’ (2 Corinthians 5:19). Man had become so degraded by sin that it was impossible for him, in himself, to come into harmony with Him whose nature is purity and goodness. But Christ, after having redeemed man from the condemnation of the law, could impart divine power to unite with human effort. Thus by repentance toward God and faith in Christ the fallen children of Adam might once more become ‘sons of God’ (1 John 3:2).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 63, 64.

- b. What ray of hope was presented to Adam and Eve? Genesis 3:15.

---

“To Adam was given an assurance of the coming of the Redeemer. The sentence pronounced on Satan, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel’ (Genesis 3:15), was to our first parents a promise of the redemption to be wrought out through Christ.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 222.

“Ever since the fall of man, Christ had been the Revealer of truth to the world. By Him the incorruptible seed, ‘the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever,’ is communicated to men (1 Peter 1:23). In that first promise spoken to our fallen race in Eden, Christ was sowing the gospel seed.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 38.

## 5. “ALL HAVE SINNED”

- a. What is written regarding the condition of the human race? Romans 3:10, 11, 23.

---

“Transgression placed the whole world under the death sentence. But in heaven there was heard a voice saying, ‘I have found a ransom.’”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 27, 1900.

“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.

- b. What promise is given to those who accept the provision made? Romans 6:23; John 5:24.

---

“Only by the precious blood of the Son of God could the transgressor be redeemed. The plan of salvation was laid in sacrifice. The apostle Paul wrote, ‘Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich’ (2 Corinthians 8:9). Christ gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity. And as the crowning blessing of salvation, ‘the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord’ (Romans 6:23).”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 519.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What kind of dress was worn by our first parents before the Fall?
2. How can we be secure against Satan’s deception?
3. What is self-justification or self-righteousness?
4. What is the only way we can be saved?
5. What is written about humanity in general?

# Jesus Christ Our Only Hope

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

“Christ alone is exalted to be ‘a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.’ ‘Neither is there salvation in any other’ (Acts 5:31; 4:12).”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 264.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 226–228.

## Sunday

January 2

### 1. THE DIVINE SUBSTITUTE

- a. What happened the same day Adam and Eve sinned? Genesis 3:21.

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

- b. How does the prophet Isaiah explain this substitution? Isaiah 53:4, 5.

“Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

## Monday

January 3

### 2. THE CONDITION OF ETERNAL LIFE

- a. What is the condition of eternal life? Matthew 19:16, 17.

“The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been—just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents—perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any condition short of this, then the happiness of the whole universe would be imperiled. The way would be open for sin, with all its train of woe and misery, to be immortalized.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 62.

“Christ does not lessen the claims of the law. In unmistakable language He presents obedience to it as the condition of eternal life—the same condition that was required of Adam before his fall. The Lord expects no less of the soul now than He expected of man in Paradise, perfect obedience, unblemished righteousness. The requirement under the covenant of grace is just as broad as the requirement made in Eden—harmony with God’s law, which is holy, just, and good.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 391.

“As the Bible presents two laws, one changeless and eternal, the other provisional and temporary, so there are two covenants. The covenant of grace was first made with man in Eden, when after the Fall there was given a divine promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. To all men this covenant offered pardon and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ. It also promised them eternal life on condition of fidelity to God’s law. Thus the patriarchs received the hope of salvation.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 370.

- b. Can human beings present perfect obedience by themselves? Isaiah 64:6.

“It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God’s law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 62.

### 3. PERFECT OBEDIENCE THROUGH CHRIST

- a. What assurance do we have through the merits of Christ? John 15:5; Philippians 4:13.

---

“The world’s Redeemer, the only-begotten Son of God, by His perfect obedience to the law, by His life and character, redeemed that which was lost in the fall, and made it possible for man to obey that holy law of righteousness which Adam transgressed. Christ did not exchange His divinity for humanity, but combined humanity with divinity; and in humanity He lived the law in behalf of the human family. The sins of every one who will receive Christ were set to His account, and He has fully satisfied the justice of God.”—*Special Testimonies on Education*, p. 21.

“Because man fallen could not overcome Satan with his human strength, Christ came from the royal courts of heaven to help him with His human and divine strength combined. Christ knew that Adam in Eden with his superior advantages might have withstood the temptations of Satan and conquered him. He also knew that it was not possible for man out of Eden, separated from the light and love of God since the Fall, to resist the temptations of Satan in his own strength. In order to bring hope to man, and save him from complete ruin, He humbled Himself to take man’s nature, that with His divine power combined with the human He might reach man where he is. He obtained for the fallen sons and daughters of Adam that strength which it is impossible for them to gain for themselves, that in His name they might overcome the temptations of Satan.”—*The Review and Herald*, August 18, 1874.

- b. What was prophesied by Daniel in regard to the righteousness of Christ? Daniel 9:24.

---

“In the prophecy of Daniel it was recorded of Christ that He shall ‘make reconciliation for iniquity, and . . . bring in everlasting righteousness’ (Daniel 9:24). Every soul may say: ‘By His perfect obedience He has satisfied the claims of the law, and my only hope is found in looking to Him as my substitute and surety, who obeyed the law perfectly for me. By faith in His merits I am free from the condemnation of the law. He clothes me with His righteousness, which answers all the demands of the law. I am complete in Him who brings in everlasting righteousness.’—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 396.

### 4. THE LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH

- a. Under what symbol did John the Baptist introduce Christ to the people? John 1:29.

---

“John had been deeply moved as he saw Jesus bowed as a suppliant, pleading with tears for the approval of the Father. As the glory of God encircled Him, and the voice from heaven was heard, John recognized the token which God had promised. He knew that it was the world’s Redeemer whom he had baptized. The Holy Spirit rested upon him, and with outstretched hand pointing to Jesus, he cried, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world’ (John 1:29).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 112.

- b. What does the apostle Peter say about Jesus Christ? 1 Peter 1:18, 19.

---

“‘In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily’ (Colossians 2:9). 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.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 907.

“As the sinner looks upon the Saviour dying on Calvary, and realizes that the sufferer is divine, he asks why this great sacrifice was made, and the cross points to the holy law of God which has been transgressed. The death of Christ is an unanswerable argument as to the immutability and righteousness of the law. In prophesying of Christ, Isaiah says, ‘He will magnify the law, and make it honourable’ (Isaiah 42:21). The law has no power to pardon the evildoer. Its office is to point out his defects, that he may realize his need of One who is mighty to save, his need of One who will become his substitute, his surety, his righteousness. Jesus meets the need of the sinner; for He has taken upon Him the sins of the transgressor. ‘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’ (Chapter 53:5). The Lord could have cut off the sinner, and utterly destroyed him; but the costlier plan was chosen. In His great love He provides hope for the hopeless, giving His only-begotten Son to bear the sins of the world.”—*The Bible Echo*, March 15, 1893.

## 5. THE DIVINE CHALLENGE

- a. What unanswerable question did Christ put to His enemies? John 8:46.

“In His life on earth, Christ developed a perfect character, He rendered perfect obedience to His Father’s commandments. In coming to the world in human form, in becoming subject to the law, in revealing to men that He bore their sickness, their sorrow, their guilt, He did not become a sinner. Before the Pharisees He could say, ‘Which of you convinceth me of sin?’ (John 8:46). Not one stain of sin was found upon Him. He stood before the world the spotless Lamb of God.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 29, 1898.

- b. How can we be saved? John 3:16–18.

“How, then, are we to be saved? ‘As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,’ so the Son of man has been lifted up, and everyone who has been deceived and bitten by the serpent may look and live. ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world’ (John 1:29). The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ. The heart, the mind, are created anew in the image of Him who works in us to subdue all things to Himself. Then the law of God is written in the mind and heart, and we can say with Christ, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O my God’ (Psalm 40:8).”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 175, 176.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain Isaiah 53:4, 5.
2. How does the Bible clarify human righteousness?
3. How can we present perfect obedience to the law of God?
4. What does the death of Christ on Calvary prove?
5. What challenge did Christ direct to His enemies?

## Jesus Christ—Fully God

“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (1 John 5:20).

“That we might become acquainted with His divine character and life, Christ took our nature and dwelt among us. Divinity was revealed in humanity; the invisible glory in the visible human form.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 17.

Suggested Reading: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 463–475.

## 1. “I AM THAT I AM”

- a. How did Christ identify Himself to Moses? Exodus 3: 2–7, 11–14.

“Leading his flocks one day near Horeb, ‘the mountain of God,’ Moses saw a bush in flames, branches, foliage, and trunk, all burning, yet seeming not to be consumed. He drew near to view the wonderful sight, when a voice from out of the flame called him by name. With trembling lips he answered, ‘Here am I.’ He was warned not to approach irreverently: ‘Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. . . . I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’ (Exodus 3:4–6).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 251, 252.

- b. When did Christ use the same title? John 8:56–58.

“With solemn dignity Jesus answered, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM.’ Silence fell upon the vast assembly. The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, ‘whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity’ (Micah 5:2, margin).”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 469, 470.

## 2. "THE CAPTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOST"

- a. How did Christ appear to Joshua in Jericho? Joshua 5:13, 14.

"To reduce Jericho was seen by Joshua to be the first step in the conquest of Canaan. But first of all he sought an assurance of divine guidance, and it was granted him. Withdrawing from the encampment to meditate and to pray that the God of Israel would go before His people, he beheld an armed warrior, of lofty stature and commanding presence, 'with his sword drawn in his hand.' To Joshua's challenge, 'Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?' the answer was given, 'As Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come' (Joshua 5:13, 14)." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 487, 488.

- b. What command, similar to that given to Moses, was given also to Joshua? Joshua 5:15.

"The same command given to Moses in Horeb, 'Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy' (Joshua 5:15), revealed the true character of the mysterious stranger. It was Christ, the Exalted One, who stood before the leader of Israel. Awe-stricken, Joshua fell upon his face and worshiped, and heard the assurance, 'I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor' (Chapter 6:2), and he received instruction for the capture of the city." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 488.

"Our Sabbath schools are nothing less than Bible societies, and in the sacred work of teaching the truths of God's word, they can accomplish far more than they have hitherto accomplished. The Sabbath school, when rightly managed, possesses marvelous power, and is adapted to doing a great work, but it is not now [WRITTEN IN 1889] what it may and should be. The influence growing out of Sabbath school work should improve and enlarge the church; but in no case should it ever be allowed to divert from the interests of the church. There is a most precious missionary field in the Sabbath school, and if there are now omens of good, they are only indications and beginnings of what may be done." —*Testimonies on Sabbath-School Work*, p. 29.

## 3. "WONDERFUL COUNSELOR"

- a. What titles are applied to Christ by Isaiah? Isaiah 9:6.

"We need more simplicity, more trust and confidence in our Saviour. He whose name is called 'The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace;' He of whom it is written, 'The government shall be upon His shoulder,' is the Wonderful Counselor. We are invited to ask wisdom of Him. He 'giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not' (Isaiah 9:6; James 1:5)." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 363.

- b. How did Thomas address Christ after the resurrection? John 20:24–29.

"Many who have a weak and wavering faith, reason that if they had the evidence which Thomas had from his companions they would not doubt as he did. They do not realize that they have not only that evidence, but additional testimony piled up about them on every side. Many who, like Thomas, wait for all cause of doubt to be removed, may never realize their desire as he did, but gradually become entrenched in their unbelief, until they cannot perceive the weight of evidence in favor of Jesus, and, like the skeptical Jews, what little light they have will go out in the darkness which closes around their minds. To reject the plain and conclusive evidences of divine truth hardens the heart, and blinds the understanding. The precious light, being neglected, fades utterly from the mind that is unwilling to receive it.

"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' (John 20:28)." —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, pp. 221, 222.

## 4. "GOD WITH US"

- a. How did the prophet Isaiah foretell the incarnation? Isaiah 7:14.

---

"His name shall be called Immanuel, . . . God with us.' 'The light of the knowledge of the glory of God' is seen 'in the face of Jesus Christ.' From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was 'the image of God,' the image of His greatness and majesty, 'the outshining of His glory.' It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. To this sin-darkened earth He came to reveal the light of God's love, to be 'God with us.' Therefore it was prophesied of Him, 'His name shall be called Immanuel.'

"By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. He was the Word of God—God's thought made audible. In His prayer for His disciples He says, 'I have declared unto them Thy name'—'merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth'—'that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.' But not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which 'angels desire to look,' and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which 'seeketh not her own' has its source in the heart of God."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 19, 20.

- b. How was this prophecy fulfilled? Matthew 1:21–23.

---

"Again God dwelt on earth; human hearts became conscious of His presence; the world was encompassed with His love. Heaven came down to men. In Christ their hearts acknowledged Him who had opened to them the science of eternity—

"Immanuel, . . . God with us."—*Education*, p. 83.

"The eternal Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and of His fulness have all we received. He is the author and finisher of our faith. 'As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name' (John 1:12)."—*The Review and Herald*, November 3, 1904.

## 5. "THE WORD"

- a. What title does John apply to Christ? John 1:1–3.

---

"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 Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

- b. What does Paul say about Christ in connection with the works of creation? Colossians 1:16, 17.

---

"As a personal Saviour He came to the world. As a personal Saviour He ascended on high. As a personal Saviour He intercedes in the heavenly courts. Before the throne of God in our behalf ministers 'One like the Son of man' (Daniel 7:13).

"The apostle Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, declares of Christ that 'all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together' (Colossians 1:16, 17, R.V., margin). The hand that sustains the worlds in space, the hand that holds in their orderly arrangement and tireless activity all things throughout the universe of God, is the hand that was nailed to the cross for us."—*Education*, p. 132.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the meaning of the title "I am that I am".
2. What titles are applied to Christ in Isaiah 9:6?
3. How did Christ identify Himself to Joshua?
4. Explain the expression "God with us."
5. "The Word was God." What does this expression mean?

# The Divinity of Christ — Confessions

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Romans 10:9).

“We must confess Christ openly and bravely, exhibiting in our characters His meekness, humility, and love, till men shall be charmed by the beauty of holiness.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 400.

Suggested Reading: *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, pp. 127–142.

## Sunday January 16

### 1. BY THE ANGEL

#### a. What did the angel Gabriel declare about Christ? Luke 1:35.

“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. ‘Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same’ (Hebrews 2:14). Only through Him can we become children of God. To all who believe on Him, He gives power to become the sons of God. Thus the heart becomes the temple of the living God. It is because Christ took human nature that men and women become partakers of the divine nature. He brings life and immortality to light through the gospel.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 2, 1905.

#### b. What else did the angel say to Mary? Matthew 1:21–23.

“Since Jesus came to dwell with us, we know that God is acquainted with our trials, and sympathizes with our griefs. Every son and daughter of Adam may understand that our Creator is the friend of sinners. For in every doctrine of grace, every promise of joy, every deed of love, every divine attraction presented in the Saviour’s life on earth, we see ‘God with us.’”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 24.

## Monday January 17

### 2. BY THE APOSTLES

#### a. What public confession did Peter make? Matthew 16:16.

“Jesus now put a second question, relating to the disciples themselves: ‘But whom say ye that I am?’ Peter answered, ‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God’ (Matthew 16:15, 16).

“From the first, Peter had believed Jesus to be the Messiah. Many others who had been convicted by the preaching of John the Baptist, and had accepted Christ, began to doubt as to John’s mission when he was imprisoned and put to death; and they now doubted that Jesus was the Messiah, for whom they had looked so long. Many of the disciples who had ardently expected Jesus to take His place on David’s throne left Him when they perceived that He had no such intention. But Peter and his companions turned not from their allegiance. The vacillating course of those who praised yesterday and condemned today did not destroy the faith of the true follower of the Saviour. Peter declared, ‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ He waited not for kingly honors to crown his Lord, but accepted Him in His humiliation.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 411, 412.

#### b. Later, during the crisis in Galilee, what did Peter again declare? John 6:68, 69.

“Without attempting to hinder those who were leaving Him, Jesus turned to the twelve and said, ‘Will ye also go away?’

“Peter replied by asking, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go?’ ‘Thou hast the words of eternal life,’ he added. ‘And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God’ (John 6:67–69).

“‘To whom shall we go?’ The teachers of Israel were slaves to formalism. The Pharisees and Sadducees were in constant contention. To leave Jesus was to fall among sticklers for rites and ceremonies, and ambitious men who sought their own glory. The disciples had found more peace and joy since they had accepted Christ than in all their previous lives. How could they go back to those who had scorned and persecuted the Friend of sinners? They had long been looking for the Messiah; now He had come, and they could not turn from His presence to those who were hunting His life, and had persecuted them for becoming His followers.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 393.

## 3. BY THE BELIEVERS

- a. What confession was made by the Ethiopian before his baptism? Acts 8:36, 37.

---

“The [Ethiopian’s] heart thrilled with interest as the Scriptures were explained to him; and when the disciple had finished, he was ready to accept the light given. He did not make his high worldly position an excuse for refusing the gospel. ‘As they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him’ (Acts 8:36–38).”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 108.

“Among the Jews there were those who were seeking for that which they had not. Dissatisfied with a formal religion, they longed for that which was spiritual and uplifting. Christ’s chosen disciples belonged to the latter class, Cornelius and the Ethiopian eunuch to the former. They had been longing and praying for light from heaven; and when Christ was revealed to them, they received Him with gladness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 116.

“When the Ethiopian asked, ‘What doth hinder me to be baptized?’ Philip did not wait to see how he would hold on to the faith. He said, ‘If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him’ (verses 37, 38).”—*The Upward Look*, p. 130.

“Had Philip left the eunuch with his case hanging in the balance, he might never have accepted the Saviour. Evil angels were waiting for their opportunity, when they could press in their falsehoods and divert the Ethiopian from seeking after truth.”—*The Bible Echo*, December 10, 1900.

- b. How did the Roman centurion confess his faith in Christ? Mark 15:39.
- 

## 4. BY GOD THE FATHER

- a. What did God the Father declare about Jesus? Matthew 3:16, 17.

---

“Christ’s prayer on the banks of the Jordan includes everyone 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’ (Matthew 3:17). 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.

“When Christ bowed on the banks of Jordan, after His baptism, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended in the form of a dove, like burnished gold, and encircled Him with its glory; and the voice of God from the highest heaven was heard, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’ (Matthew 3:17). The prayer of Christ in man’s behalf opened the gates of heaven, and the Father had responded, accepting the petition for the fallen race. Jesus prayed as our substitute and surety, and now the human family may find access to the Father through the merits of His well-beloved Son. This earth, because of transgression had been struck off from the continent of heaven. Communication had ceased between man and his Maker; but the way has been opened so that he may return to the Father’s house. Jesus is ‘the way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6). The gate of heaven has been left ajar, and the radiance from the throne of God shines into the hearts of those who love Him, even though they dwell in this sin-cursed earth.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 28, 1888.

- b. When did the Father utter a similar declaration? John 12:28.

---

“On another occasion Christ made the request: ‘Father, glorify Thy name.’ And in answer there came ‘a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again’ (John 12:28).

“If this voice did not move the impenitent, if the power that Christ manifested in His mighty miracles did not cause the Jews to believe, we should not be greatly surprised to find that men and women today are in danger, through continual association with those who are incredulous, of manifesting the same unbelief that the Jews manifested, and of developing the same perverted understanding.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 202, 203.

## 5. BY CHRIST HIMSELF

- a. How did Jesus give evidence of His divinity? John 10:24–29.

---

“The blessed Bible gives us a knowledge of the great plan of salvation, and shows us how every individual may have eternal life. Who is the author of the book?—Jesus Christ. He is the True Witness, and He says to His own, ‘I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand’ (John 10:28). The Bible is to show us the way to Christ, and in Christ eternal life is revealed.”—*The Review and Herald*, September 11, 1894.

- b. What words of Christ angered the Jews? John 10:29–32. Why did they try to stone Him? John 10:33.

---

“Again the priests and rabbis cried out against Jesus as a blasphemer. His claim to be one with God had before stirred them to take His life, and a few months later they plainly declared, ‘For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God’ (John 10:33). Because He was, and avowed Himself to be, the Son of God, they were bent on destroying Him. Now many of the people, siding with the priests and rabbis, took up stones to cast at Him. ‘But Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by’ (Chapter 8:59).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 470.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of “salvation” according to Matthew 1:21?
2. What does the confession of Peter mean when he said “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”?
3. What was the confession of the Roman centurion?
4. To whom do the words “This is my beloved Son” apply?
5. Why did the Jews try to stone Christ?

## “The Word Was Made Flesh”

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:1–4, 14).

“The apostle [Paul] exalted Christ before his brethren as the One by whom God had created all things and by whom He had wrought out their redemption. He declared that the hand that sustains the worlds in space, and holds in their orderly arrangements and tireless activity all things throughout the universe of God, is the hand that was nailed to the cross for them.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 471, 472.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 252–256.

## 1. “THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS”

- a. How does Paul summarize the incarnation? 1 Timothy 3:16.

---

“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength?” (Isaiah 63:1). With assurance comes the answer: ‘Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory’ (1 Timothy 3:16).”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 262.

- b. How can we get a glimpse of this mystery? Matthew 16:24; Galatians 6:14.

---

“The cross of Christ is all covered with reproach and stigma, yet it is the hope of life and exaltation to man. No one can comprehend the mystery of godliness so long as he is ashamed to bear the cross of Christ.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 15, 1875.

## 2. "THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS" (continued)

- a. What other description does Paul make of the incarnation? Philippians 2:5–8.

"Point after point Paul lingered over, in order that those who should read his epistle might fully comprehend the wonderful condescension of the Saviour in their behalf. Presenting Christ as He was when equal with God and with Him receiving the homage of the angels, the apostle traced His course until He had reached the lowest depths of humiliation. Paul was convinced that if they could be brought to comprehend the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, all selfishness would be banished from their lives. He showed how the Son of God had laid aside His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to the conditions of human nature, and then had humbled Himself as a servant, becoming obedient unto death, 'even the death of the cross' (Philippians 2:8), that He might lift fallen man from degradation to hope and joy and heaven."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 333.

- b. Why did Christ submit Himself to such humiliation? John 3:16.

"When we study the divine character in the light of the cross we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice. We see in the midst of the throne One bearing in hands and feet and side the marks of the suffering endured to reconcile man to God. We see a Father, infinite, dwelling in light unapproachable, yet receiving us to Himself through the merits of His Son. The cloud of vengeance that threatened only misery and despair, in the light reflected from the cross reveals the writing of God: Live, sinner, live! ye penitent, believing souls, live! I have paid a ransom.

"In the contemplation of Christ we linger on the shore of a love that is measureless. We endeavor to tell of this love, and language fails us. We consider His life on earth, His sacrifice for us, His work in heaven as our advocate, and the mansions He is preparing for those who love Him, and we can only exclaim, O the height and depth of the love of Christ! 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' 'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God' (1 John 4:10; 3:1)."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 333, 334.

## 3. "LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM"

- a. How does God the Father address Christ? Hebrews 1:7–10.

"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."—*The S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, [E. G. White Comments] vol. 7, p. 928.

- b. How clearly does John recognize the divinity of Christ? 1 John 5:20.

"Everyone who is chosen of God should improve his intellectual powers. Jesus came to represent the character of the Father, and He sent His disciples into the world to represent the character of Christ. He has given us His word to point out the way of life, and He has not left us simply to carry that word, but has also promised to give it efficiency by the power of the Holy Spirit. Is there need, then, that any should walk in uncertainty, grieving that they do not know and experience the movings of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts? Are you hungering and thirsting for instruction in righteousness? Then you have the sure promise that you shall be filled. 'And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life' (1 John 5:20).

"The Lord would have us in possession of the spirit of heavenly wisdom. Are we all being impressed to pray to the Lord humbly and earnestly as our necessities require, importuning Him for the spirit of wisdom? Do we pray, saying, 'Show me the secrets which I know not, teach Thou me'? Oh, for humble, earnest prayer to go forth from unfeigned lips praying for the counsel that is of God! He says, Counsel is Mine, and sound wisdom."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 199, 200.

4. "A BODY HAST THOU PREPARED ME"

- a. What was prophesied about Christ's incarnation? Psalm 40:6-8 (compare with Hebrews 10:5-7).

---

"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 in the courts of heaven had known that the time would come when the power of Satan must be met and conquered if the human race was ever to be saved from his dominion. And when that time came, the Son of God laid off His kingly crown and royal robe, and clothing His divinity with humanity, came to the earth to meet the prince of evil, and to conquer him. In order to become the advocate of man before the Father, the Saviour would live His life on earth as every human being must, accepting its adversities and sorrows and temptations."—*Ibid.*, January 28, 1909.

- b. How did Christ manifest His divinity even in His human nature? Matthew 2:2, 11.

---

"When [the wise men from the East] were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him.' Beneath the lowly guise of Jesus, they recognized the presence of Divinity. They gave their hearts to Him as their Saviour, and then poured out their gifts 'gold, and frankincense, and myrrh' (Matthew 2:11)."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 63.

5. FURTHER EVIDENCE OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY

- a. What other evidence do we have about Christ's divinity in His human nature? Matthew 12:25; Luke 6:8.

---

"In the multitude that listened to Christ's teaching there were many Pharisees. These noted contemptuously how few of His hearers acknowledged Him as the Messiah. And they questioned with themselves how this unpretending teacher could exalt Israel to universal dominion. Without riches, power, or honor, how was He to establish the new kingdom? Christ read their thoughts and answered them."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 76.

- b. How did Christ publicly reveal His divinity in Capernaum? Matthew 9:1-7.

---

"Jesus had declared that the sins of the paralytic were forgiven. The Pharisees caught at these words as blasphemy, and conceived that they could present this as a sin worthy of death. They said in their hearts, 'He blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but One, even God?' (Mark 2:7, R.V.)."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 269.

"They saw that Christ possessed a power which they had ascribed to God alone; yet the gentle dignity of His manner was in marked contrast to their own haughty bearing. They were disconcerted and abashed, recognizing, but not confessing, the presence of a superior being. The stronger the evidence that Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins, the more firmly they entrenched themselves in unbelief."—*Ibid.*, pp. 270, 271.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the "mystery of godliness"?
2. What is the basis of our salvation?
3. Why did Christ accept adoration?
4. To whom were the words "A body hast thou prepared me" applied?
5. Who alone can forgive sin?

## First Sabbath Offering

### Welfare Department



Since the entrance of sin in the world human selfishness has divided the people in two major social classes: those who are very rich, and those who are very poor. But we should consider the existence of the poor people as a blessing, because we have an opportunity to develop self-denial.

The Lord made special plans for His people to assist the poor among them. In spite of the good plans divinely established, the Lord said: "For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land" (Deuteronomy 15:11). During the feast in the house of Simon, Christ said: "For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good" (Mark 14:7).

At the General Conference headquarters we receive frequent appeals for help. As we consider the special need of some areas, however, it is too painful for us that we have almost nothing to send. Besides the regular need of our poor people in different areas, serious problems arise due to natural disasters and political strife. And we as God's people cannot be indifferent to these appeals.

"Sin has extinguished the love that God placed in man's heart. The work of the church is to rekindle this love. The church is to cooperate with God by uprooting selfishness from the human heart, placing in its stead the benevolence that was in man's heart in his original state of perfection."—*Welfare Ministry*, p. 14.

Today we have a wonderful opportunity to help those in need. Let's take advantage of the privilege that God grants us to be His helping hand to benefit our brethren and sisters less favored than us. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:7, 8).

PROJECT 019

Davi P. Silva, GC Welfare Department Secretary

# The Holy Spirit

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:1, 2).

"Through the creation we are to become acquainted with the Creator. The book of nature is a great lesson book, which in connection with the Scriptures we are to use in teaching others of His character, and guiding lost sheep back to the fold of God. As the works of God are studied, the Holy Spirit flashes conviction into the mind."—*The Southern Watchman*, November 3, 1908.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 668–672.

## Sunday

January 30

### 1. THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- a. What title does the apostle Peter apply to the Holy Spirit? Acts 5:3, 4.

"God hates hypocrisy and falsehood. Ananias and Sapphira practiced fraud in their dealing with God; they lied to the Holy Spirit, and their sin was visited with swift and terrible judgment. When Ananias came with his offering, Peter said: 'Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God' (Acts 5:3, 4)."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 73.

"The Spirit, being God, knoweth the mind of God."—*The Signs of the Times*, October 3, 1892.

- b. What is the Holy Spirit called in Isaiah 6:8–10? (Compare with Acts 28:25–27.)

## 2. DIVINE ATTRIBUTES—ETERNAL AND OMNIPOTENT

- a. What divine attribute is applied to the Holy Spirit in Hebrews 9:14?
- 

- b. What other attribute is mentioned by the angel Gabriel? Luke 1:35.
- 

“The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy’s power. The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your helper.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 490–493.

“A portion of the joy which was set before Christ, was the joy of seeing His truth armed with the omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit, impressing His image upon the life and character of His followers. . . .

“What has the rich blessing of God done for those who were humble and contrite in heart to receive it? Has the blessing been cherished? Have the receivers been showing forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light? There are some who are already questioning the work that was so good, and that should have been most highly appreciated. They are looking upon it as a certain species of fanaticism. It would be surprising if there were not some, who, not being well-balanced in mind, have spoken and acted indiscreetly; for whenever and wherever the Lord works in giving a genuine blessing, a counterfeit is also revealed, in order to make of none effect the true work of God. Therefore we need to be exceedingly careful, and walk humbly before God, that we may have spiritual eyesalve that we may distinguish the working of the Holy Spirit of God from the working of that spirit that would bring in wild license and fanaticism. ‘By their fruits ye shall know them’ (Matthew 7:20). Those who are really beholding Christ will be changed into His image, even by the Spirit of the Lord, and will grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit of God will inspire men with love and purity; and refinement will be manifest in their characters.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 6, 1894.

## 3. DIVINE ATTRIBUTES—OMNISCIENT AND OMNIPRESENT

- a. What characteristic does Paul mention with reference to the Holy Ghost? 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11.
- 

“Never can humanity, of itself, attain to a knowledge of the divine. ‘It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?’ (Job 11:8). Only the spirit of adoption can reveal to us the deep things of God, which ‘eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man.’ ‘God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God’ (1 Corinthians 2:9, 10).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 412.

- b. Mention another quality described in Psalm 139.
- 

“Although our Lord ascended from earth to heaven, the Holy Spirit was appointed as His representative among men. ‘If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless’ (John 14:15–18).

“Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent. ‘But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall (although unseen by you), [THIS PHRASE WAS ADDED BY ELLEN WHITE.] teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you’ (John 14:26). ‘Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will come not unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you’ (John 16:7).”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, pp. 23, 24.

4. THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

a. Mention some evidences concerning the personality of the Holy Spirit:

- The Holy Spirit speaks: Acts 28:25
- He teaches: John 14:26
- He strives with sinners: Genesis 6:3
- He comforts: Acts 9:31
- He helps in our infirmities: Romans 8:26
- He is vexed: Isaiah 63:10
- He is grieved: Ephesians 4:30
- He can be resisted: Acts 7:51
- He has a mind: Romans 8:27

“Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

“We need to realize that the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds.”—*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 2, p. 137.

“The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 28.

“The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. ‘For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God’ (1 Corinthians 2:11).”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, p. 69.

“The prince of the power of evil can only be held in check by the power of God in the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.”—*Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 10, p. 37.

5. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH

a. Mention some of the actions of the Holy Spirit:

- He creates: Job 33:4
- He renews: Isaiah 32:15
- He convicts: John 16:8–11
- He regenerates: John 3:3, 5
- He indwells: Romans 8:11
- He anoints: 1 John 2:20, 27
- He baptizes: Acts 2:17, 18

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Against whom did Ananias and Sapphira lie?
2. What attribute of the Holy Spirit is mentioned in Hebrews 9:14?
3. Why is the Holy Spirit called “another Comforter”?
4. Mention some of the functions of the Holy Spirit.
5. What does the Holy Spirit do in the heart of the believers?

# The Heavenly Trio

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:2).

“There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.”—*Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, p. 63.

**Suggested Reading:** *The SDA Bible Commentary*, [E. G. White Comments] vol. 7, Appendix A, p. 442.

## Sunday

February 6

### 1. JESUS' BAPTISM

- a. How many persons of the Godhead were present at Jesus' baptism? Matthew 3:16, 17.

“When Christ bowed on the banks of Jordan, after His baptism, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended in the form of a dove, like burnished gold, and encircled Him with its glory; and the voice of God from the highest heaven was heard, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’ (Matthew 3:17). The prayer of Christ in man's behalf opened the gates of heaven, and the Father had responded, accepting the petition for the fallen race. Jesus prayed as our substitute and surety, and now the human family may find access to the Father through the merits of His well-beloved Son.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 28, 1888.

- b. What assurance is given to those who believe in Christ as their personal Saviour? John 20:17.

## Monday

February 7

### 2. THE PROMISE OF THE COMFORTER

- a. How many persons are mentioned in Christ's promise to send the Comforter? John 14:16.

“The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.”—*Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, p. 63.

- b. Why is the Holy Spirit called “another Comforter” in John 14:16? (Compare with 1 John 2:1.)

“The promise of the Comforter presented a rich truth to the disciples. It assured them that they should not lose their faith under the most trying circumstances. The Holy Spirit, sent in the name of Christ, was to be their Guide, teaching them all things, and bringing all things to their remembrance. This Comforter was to be the representative of Christ their Advocate, who is constantly pleading in behalf of the fallen race.

“He who knows the end from the beginning has provided for the attack of satanic agencies; and He will fulfill His Word to the faithful in every age. That Word is sure and steadfast; not one jot or tittle of it can fail. The Holy Spirit is constantly at work, teaching, reminding, testifying, coming to the soul as a divine comforter, and convincing of sin as an appointed judge and guide. If men will keep under the protection of God, He will be to them as an impregnable fortress. He will give evidence that His Word can never fail. He will prove a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn; as the Sun of Righteousness He will arise with healing in His beams.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1897.

## 3. THE GOSPEL COMMISSION

- a. Who was mentioned by Christ in His commission to His disciples? Matthew 28:19.

---

“The disciples were to carry their work forward in Christ’s name. Their every word and act was to fasten attention on His name, as possessing that vital power by which sinners may be saved. Their faith was to center in Him who is the source of mercy and power. In His name they were to present their petitions to the Father, and they would receive answer. They were to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christ’s name was to be their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing was to be recognized in His kingdom that did not bear His name and superscription.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 28.

- b. What assurance did Christ give to His followers? Matthew 28:20.

---

“Christ gave His disciples their commission. He made full provision for the prosecution of the work, and took upon Himself the responsibility for its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail. Go to all nations, He bade them. Go to the farthest part of the habitable globe, but know that My presence will be there. Labor in faith and confidence, for the time will never come when I will forsake you.

“The Saviour’s commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of saving souls depends alone on the ordained minister. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the gospel. All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellowmen. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be coworkers with Christ.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 822.

## 4. PETER’S SALUTATION

- a. How does Peter salute the readers of his epistle? 1 Peter 1:2. What does Paul mention also? 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14.

---

“‘God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation,’ the apostle Paul writes, ‘through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth’ (2 Thessalonians 2:13). In this text the two agencies in the work of salvation are revealed—the divine influence, and the strong, living faith of those who follow Christ. It is through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth that we become laborers together with God. Christ waits for the cooperation of His church. He does not design to add a new element of efficiency to His word; He has done His great work in giving His inspiration to the word. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the divine word, are ours. The object of all this provision of heaven is before us—the salvation of the souls for whom Christ died; and it depends upon us to lay hold on the promises God has given, and become laborers together with Him. Divine and human agencies must cooperate in the work.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 22.

- b. Who worked out the plan of redemption at the very beginning?

---

“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love? God would make it impossible for man to say that He could have done more. With Christ He gave all the resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting in the plan for man’s uplifting. Here is love—the contemplation of which should fill the soul with inexpressible gratitude! Oh, what love, what matchless love! The contemplation of this love will cleanse the soul from all selfishness. It will lead the disciple to deny self, take up the cross, and follow the Redeemer.”—*Counsels on Health*, pp. 222, 223.

## 5. THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

- a. What promise does the apostolic benediction include? 2 Corinthians 13:14.

“To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father’s love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, and that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against.”—*Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 209.

- b. How can we avail ourselves of the help of the heavenly trio? Luke 11:11–13.

“Christ illustrates the willingness of God to bless by the willingness of a father to grant the request of his child. He says, ‘If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?’ (Luke 11:11, 13).”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 242.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which persons of the Godhead were present at Jesus’ baptism?
2. Why did Christ promise to send the Comforter to His disciples?
3. What does it mean to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
4. Which divine agencies are involved in the plan of redemption?
5. Who reveals Christ to the believers?

## Jacob’s Experience

“And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and [Esau] swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob” (Genesis 25:33).

“Jacob had learned from his mother of the divine intimation that the birthright should fall to him, and he was filled with an unspeakable desire for the privileges which it would confer. It was not the possession of his father’s wealth that he craved; the spiritual birthright was the object of his longing.”—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 60.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 177–182.

## 1. JACOB AND ESAU

- a. What was revealed to Rebekah about her two children? Genesis 25:21–23.

“Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac, present a striking contrast, both in character and in life. This unlikeness was foretold by the angel of God before their birth. When in answer to Rebekah’s troubled prayer he declared that two sons would be given her, he opened to her their future history, that each would become the head of a mighty nation, but that one would be greater than the other, and that the younger would have the preeminence.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 177.

- b. What contrasting life-style did the two brothers follow? Genesis 25:27.

“Esau grew up loving self-gratification and centering all his interest in the present. Impatient of restraint, he delighted in the wild freedom of the chase, and early chose the life of a hunter. Yet he was the father’s favorite. . . . Jacob, thoughtful, diligent, and care-taking, ever thinking more of the future than the present, was content to dwell at home, occupied in the care of the flocks and the tillage of the soil.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 177.

## 2. BIRTHRIGHT—DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES

## a. What duties and privileges did the firstborn son have?

---

“Jacob had learned from his mother of the divine intimation that the birthright should fall to him, and he was filled with an unspeakable desire for the privileges which it would confer. It was not the possession of his father’s wealth that he craved; the spiritual birthright was the object of his longing. To commune with God as did righteous Abraham, to offer the sacrifice of atonement for his family, to be the progenitor of the chosen people and of the promised Messiah, and to inherit the immortal possessions embraced in the blessings of the covenant—here were the privileges and honors that kindled his most ardent desires. His mind was ever reaching forward to the future, and seeking to grasp its unseen blessings.

“With secret longing he listened to all that his father told concerning the spiritual birthright; he carefully treasured what he had learned from his mother. Day and night the subject occupied his thoughts, until it became the absorbing interest of his life.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 178.

## b. What did Jacob do to obtain the promised birthright? Genesis 25:29–34. Why?

---

“But while he thus esteemed eternal above temporal blessings, Jacob had not an experimental knowledge of the God whom he revered. His heart had not been renewed by divine grace. He believed that the promise concerning himself could not be fulfilled so long as Esau retained the rights of the first-born, and he constantly studied to devise some way whereby he might secure the blessing which his brother held so lightly, but which was so precious to himself.

“When Esau, coming home one day faint and weary from the chase, asked for the food that Jacob was preparing, the latter, with whom one thought was ever uppermost, seized upon his advantage, and offered to satisfy his brother’s hunger at the price of the birthright. ‘Behold, I am at the point to die,’ cried the reckless, self-indulgent hunter, ‘and what profit shall this birthright do to me?’ (Genesis 25:32). And for a dish of red pottage he parted with his birthright, and confirmed the transaction by an oath. A short time at most would have secured him food in his father’s tents, but to satisfy the desire of the moment he carelessly bartered the glorious heritage that God Himself had promised to his fathers.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 178, 179.

## 3. ESAU

## a. What is written about Esau? Genesis 25:34 (last part).

---

“Esau had no love for devotion, no inclination to a religious life. The requirements that accompanied the spiritual birthright were an unwelcome and even hateful restraint to him. The law of God, which was the condition of the divine covenant with Abraham, was regarded by Esau as a yoke of bondage. Bent on self-indulgence, he desired nothing so much as liberty to do as he pleased. To him power and riches, feasting and reveling, were happiness. He gloried in the unrestrained freedom of his wild, roving life.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 178.

## b. What lessons are applicable to us today about Esau’s experience? Hebrews 12:16, 17.

---

“There are very many who are like Esau. He represents a class who have a special, valuable blessing within their reach—the immortal inheritance, life that is as enduring as the life of God, the Creator of the universe, happiness immeasurable, and an eternal weight of glory—but who have so long indulged their appetites, passions, and inclinations, that their power to discern and appreciate the value of eternal things is weakened.

“Esau had a special, strong desire for a particular article of food, and he had so long gratified self that he did not feel the necessity of turning from the tempting, coveted dish. He thought upon it, making no special effort to restrain his appetite, until the power of appetite . . . controlled him, and he imagined that 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.

“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.”—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 61.

## 4. DECEPTION

- a. What mistake did Rebekah and Jacob make? Genesis 27:1–29.

---

“No sooner had Esau departed on his errand than Rebekah set about the accomplishment of her purpose. She told Jacob what had taken place, urging the necessity of immediate action to prevent the bestowal of the blessing, finally and irrevocably, upon Esau. And she assured her son that if he would follow her directions, he might obtain it as God had promised. Jacob did not readily consent to the plan that she proposed. The thought of deceiving his father caused him great distress. He felt that such a sin would bring a curse rather than a blessing. But his scruples were overborne, and he proceeded to carry out his mother’s suggestions. It was not his intention to utter a direct falsehood, but once in the presence of his father he seemed to have gone too far to retreat, and he obtained by fraud the coveted blessing.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 180.

- b. What results immediately followed their wrong action? Genesis 27:41–45.

---

“Jacob and Rebekah succeeded in their purpose, but they gained only trouble and sorrow by their deception. God had declared that Jacob should receive the birthright, and His word would have been fulfilled in His own time had they waited in faith for Him to work for them. But like many who now profess to be children of God, they were unwilling to leave the matter in His hands. Rebekah bitterly repented the wrong counsel she had given her son; it was the means of separating him from her, and she never saw his face again. From the hour when he received the birthright, Jacob was weighed down with self-condemnation. He had sinned against his father, his brother, his own soul, and against God. In one short hour he had made work for a lifelong repentance. This scene was vivid before him in afteryears, when the wicked course of his sons oppressed his soul.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 180.

## 5. DECEPTION (CONTINUED)

- a. What does God’s law say about deception? Exodus 20:16.

---

“False speaking in any matter, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included [Exodus 20:16 quoted]. An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor’s reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 309.

- b. What characteristic is mentioned about the 144,000? Revelation 14:5.

“I address the people of God who today are holding fast their confidence, who will not depart from the faith once delivered unto the saints, who stand amid the moral darkness of these days of corruption. The word of the Lord to you is: ‘I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people’ (Isaiah 65:19). Can we not here see the paternal love of God expressed to those who hold fast to the faith in righteousness? The closest relationship exists between God and His people. Not only are we objects of His sparing mercy, His pardoning love; we are more than this. The Lord rejoices over His people. He delights in them. He is their surety. He will beautify all who are serving Him with a whole heart with the spirit of holiness. He clothes them with righteousness.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 414, 415.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe the contrasted characters of Jacob and Esau.
2. Why did Jacob use deception to get the promised blessing?
3. Which class of people is represented by Esau?
4. What were the consequences of the deception practiced by Rebekah and Jacob?
5. Mention an essential characteristic of the 144,000.

# Jacob's Dream

“And [Jacob] dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it” (Genesis 28:12).

“The ladder represents Jesus, the appointed medium of communication. Had He not with His own merits bridged the gulf that sin had made, the ministering angels could have held no communion with fallen man. Christ connects man in his weakness and helplessness with the source of infinite power.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 184.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 183–187.

## Sunday

February 20

### 1. JACOB, THE RUNAWAY

- a. After deceiving his brother, what step was Jacob forced to take? Genesis 28:10, 11.

“Threatened with death by the wrath of Esau, Jacob went out from his father’s home a fugitive; but he carried with him the father’s blessing; Isaac had renewed to him the covenant promise, and had bidden him, as its inheritor, to seek a wife of his mother’s family in Mesopotamia. Yet it was with a deeply troubled heart that Jacob set out on his lonely journey.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 183.

- b. Describe the state of Jacob’s conscience.

“The evening of the second day found [Jacob] far away from his father’s tents. He felt that he was an outcast, and he knew that all this trouble had been brought upon him by his own wrong course. The darkness of despair pressed upon his soul, and he hardly dared to pray. But he was so utterly lonely that he felt the need of protection from God as he had never felt it before. With weeping and deep humiliation he confessed his sin, and entreated for some evidence that he was not utterly forsaken. Still his burdened heart found no relief. He had lost all confidence in himself, and he feared that the God of his fathers had cast him off.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 183.

## Monday

February 21

### 2. A DIVINE REVELATION

- a. How did the Lord manifest Himself to His fugitive servant? Genesis 28:12–15.

“But God did not forsake Jacob. His mercy was still extended to His erring, distrustful servant. The Lord compassionately revealed just what Jacob needed—a Saviour. He had sinned, but his heart was filled with gratitude as he saw revealed a way by which he could be restored to the favor of God.

“Wearied with his journey, the wanderer lay down upon the ground, with a stone for his pillow. As he slept he beheld a ladder, bright and shining, whose base rested upon the earth, while the top reached to heaven. Upon this ladder angels were ascending and descending; above it was the Lord of glory, and from the heavens His voice was heard: ‘I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac.’ The land whereon he lay as an exile and fugitive was promised to him and to his posterity, with the assurance, ‘In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’ This promise had been given to Abraham and to Isaac, and now it was renewed to Jacob. Then in special regard to his present loneliness and distress, the words of comfort and encouragement were spoken: ‘Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of’ (Genesis 28:13–15).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 183.

- b. How did Jacob react to his dream? Genesis 28:16–22.

“Jacob awoke from his sleep in the deep stillness of night. The shining forms of his vision had disappeared. Only the dim outline of the lonely hills, and above them the heavens bright with stars, now met his gaze. But he had a solemn sense that God was with him. An unseen presence filled the solitude. ‘Surely the Lord is in this place,’ he said, ‘and I knew it not. . . . This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.’”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 187.

## 3. THE PLAN OF SALVATION

## a. What was revealed to Jacob through his dream?

---

“The Lord knew the evil influences that would surround Jacob, and the perils to which he would be exposed. In mercy He opened up the future before the repentant fugitive, that he might understand the divine purpose with reference to himself, and be prepared to resist the temptations that would surely come to him when alone amid idolaters and scheming men. There would be ever before him the high standard at which he must aim; and the knowledge that through him the purpose of God was reaching its accomplishment, would constantly prompt him to faithfulness.

“In this vision the plan of redemption was presented to Jacob, not fully, but in such parts as were essential to him at that time.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 184.

## b. How did Jesus explain the meaning of this ladder? John 1:51.

---

“The mystic ladder revealed to him in his dream was the same to which Christ referred in His conversation with Nathanael. Said He, ‘Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man’ (John 1:51). Up to the time of man’s rebellion against the government of God, there had been free communion between God and man. But the sin of Adam and Eve separated earth from heaven, so that man could not have communion with his Maker. Yet the world was not left in solitary hopelessness. The ladder represents Jesus, the appointed medium of communication. Had He not with His own merits bridged the gulf that sin had made, the ministering angels could have held no communion with fallen man. Christ connects man in his weakness and helplessness with the source of infinite power.

“All this was revealed to Jacob in his dream. Although his mind at once grasped a part of the revelation, its great and mysterious truths were the study of his lifetime, and unfolded to his understanding more and more.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 184.

## 4. THE LADDER

## a. Describe the ladder Jacob saw and its meaning. Genesis 28:12, 13 (John 1:51; compare with Matthew 3:13–16).

---

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man’ (John 1:51).

“Here Christ virtually says, On the bank of the Jordan the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended like a dove upon Me. That scene was but a token that I am the Son of God. If you believe on Me as such, your faith shall be quickened. You shall see that the heavens are opened, and are never to be closed. I have opened them to you. The angels of God are ascending, bearing the prayers of the needy and distressed to the Father above, and descending, bringing blessing and hope, courage, help, and life, to the children of men.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 142, 143.

## b. Why could only Christ be humanity’s Saviour? Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23.

---

“From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was ‘the image of God,’ the image of His greatness and majesty, ‘the outshining of his glory.’ It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. To this sin-darkened earth He came to reveal the light of God’s love—to be ‘God with us.’ . . .

“Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God’s wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which ‘angels desire to look,’ and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which ‘seeketh not her own’ has its source in the heart of God. . . .

“Jesus might have remained at the Father’s side. He might have retained the glory of heaven, and the homage of the angels. But He chose to give back the scepter into the Father’s hands, and to step down from the throne of the universe, that He might bring light to the benighted, and life to the perishing.”—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 45.

5. THE RED HEIFER

a. Describe the animal sacrificed for purification. Numbers 19:2.

“This heifer was to be red without spot, which was a symbol of blood. It must be without blemish, and one that had never borne a yoke. Here, again, Christ was typified. 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 Review and Herald*, January 9, 1883.

b. Where should the red heifer be offered as a sacrifice? Numbers 19:3. Where was Jesus offered as sacrifice for us? Hebrews 13: 11, 12.

“The sacrificial heifer was conducted without the camp and slain in the most solemn manner. Thus Christ suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for Calvary was outside the city walls. This was to show that Christ did not die for the Hebrews alone, but for all mankind. He proclaims to a fallen world that He has come to be their Redeemer, and urges them to accept the salvation which He offers.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 9, 1883.

c. What is our duty as Christ’s followers? Hebrews 13:13; Matthew 28:19, 20.

“Go to the farthest part of the habitable globe, but know that My presence will be there. Labor in faith and confidence, for the time will never come when I will forsake you.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 822.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did Jacob’s conscience feel after deceiving his father?
2. Explain the meaning of the ladder revealed to Jacob in his dream.
3. Who take an active part in the plan of redemption?
4. Explain the broad meaning of the expression “God with us.”
5. Describe the ceremonial sacrifice of the red heifer.

First Sabbath Offering for Phoenix, Arizona, USA



Phoenix, the capital of Arizona, is located on the eastern upper edge of the Sonoran Desert also known as, “the Valley of the Sun.” Arizona is known for one of the seven natural wonders of the world, the Grand Canyon.

Phoenix has become one of the nation’s largest and fastest-growing cities. This makes the city an excellent place for evangelism. Almost two-thirds of Arizona’s population lives in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Phoenix is an agricultural, industrial and service center, surrounded by 22 other cities. The regional population increased from 1,600,000 in 1980 to 3,252,000 in 2000. As a result of this growing, the work of Reformation reached Phoenix in 1999 when a church was immediately established in the area. The blessings of the Lord have been with this church and new souls have been added to the truth daily.

When Sister White was traveling across Arizona, she witnessed the weather conditions: “The weather during the first part of our journey was exceedingly oppressive. At one place the thermometer stood at 125 degrees in the shade. In Southern California and Arizona the wind was as hot as though it came from a furnace. This was what I had dreaded; but to my great surprise I was not exhausted with the heat” (*The Review and Herald*, September 15, 1885).

Due to the increasing volume of visitors and friends attending the meetings every Sabbath, the place of worship is becoming very small in order to accommodate them comfortably. The shortage of funds for the remodeling of the place of worship is the greatest need we face in this fast-growing church. When the First Sabbath Offering is collected on March 5, 2005, please remember this humble church, and give generously for the advancement of the Lord’s vineyard in this part of the world. Phoenix church is part of the Southwest US Field of the Western North American Union.

May the Lord bless every gift and every giver that we may have a worthy lighthouse in Phoenix for the honor of the King of kings.

PROJECT 010

Your brethren and sisters from Phoenix

# The Great Law of Love

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (Psalm 119:18).

“The law of God is as holy as He is holy, as perfect as He is perfect. It presents to men the righteousness of God. It is impossible for man, of himself, to keep this law; for the nature of man is depraved, deformed, and wholly unlike the character of God. The works of the selfish heart are ‘as an unclean thing;’ and ‘all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags’ (Isaiah 64:6).”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings*, p. 54.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 211–215.

## Sunday

February 27

### 1. THE LAW IS PERFECT

a. What is written about the Law of God? Psalm 19:7, 8.

“In the precepts of His holy law, God has given a perfect rule of life; and He has declared that until the close of time this law, unchanged in a single jot or tittle, is to maintain its claim upon human beings. Christ came to magnify the law and make it honorable. He showed that it is based upon the broad foundation of love to God and love to man, and that obedience to its precepts comprises the whole duty of man.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 505.

b. What is the relation between the Law of God and the unconverted heart? Romans 8:7.

“By nature the heart is evil, and ‘who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one’ (Job 14:4). No human invention can find a remedy for the sinning soul. ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.’ ‘Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies’ (Romans 8:7; Matthew 15:19).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 172.

## Monday

February 28

### 2. THE LAW IS HOLY

a. What did Paul declare in regard to the Law? Romans 7:12.

“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’ (Ephesians 1:7). 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.

b. Mention one of the purposes of the Law. Romans 7:7, 8.

“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.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 22, 1890.

## 3. THE LAW—A SCHOOLMASTER

- a. What other essential function does the Law of God have? Galatians 3:24.

---

“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith’ (Galatians 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ, and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”—*The S.D.A. Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1110.

“When the law was proclaimed from Sinai, God made known to men the holiness of His character, that by contrast they might see the sinfulness of their own. The law was given to convict them of sin, and reveal their need of a Saviour. It would do this as its principles were applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit. This work it is still to do. In the life of Christ the principles of the law are made plain; and as the Holy Spirit of God touches the heart, as the light of Christ reveals to men their need of His cleansing blood and His justifying righteousness, the law is still an agent in bringing us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. ‘The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul’ (Psalm 19:7).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 308.

- b. What is the essence of God’s Law? Romans 13:8–10.

---

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

## 4. THE LAW—THE STANDARD OF JUDGMENT

- a. What will be the standard of judgment of all human beings? Romans 2:12, 13.

---

“There are only two classes in the world today, and only two classes will be recognized in the judgment—those who violate God’s law and those who obey it. Christ gives the test by which to prove our loyalty or disloyalty. ‘If ye love Me,’ He says, ‘keep My commandments. . . . He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. . . . He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings; and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father’s which sent Me.’ ‘If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love’ (John 14:15–24; 15:10).”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 283.

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

- b. How is the duty of every person clearly delineated? Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Matthew 5:17–20.

---

“In the precepts of His holy law, God has given a perfect rule of life; and He has declared that until the close of time this law, unchanged in a single jot or tittle, is to maintain its claim upon human beings. Christ came to magnify the law and make it honorable. He showed that it is based upon the broad foundation of love to God and love to man, and that obedience to its precepts comprises the whole duty of man. In His own life He gave an example of obedience to the law of God. In the Sermon on the Mount He showed how its requirements extend beyond the outward acts and take cognizance of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 505.

## 5. OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW—THE CONDITION OF ETERNAL HAPPINESS

- a. What vital question did a learned man put to Christ? Matthew 19:16.

---

“The Lord desires every one of us to be decidedly in earnest. We cannot afford to make a mistake in spiritual matters. The life-and-death question with us is, ‘What shall I do that I may be saved, eternally saved?’ ‘What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life—a life that measures with the life of God?’ This is a question that it becomes every one of us to consider carefully.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 98.

- b. What was Christ’s answer? Matthew 19:17.

---

“‘If thou wilt enter into life,’ [the Saviour] added, ‘keep the commandments.’ The character of God is expressed in His law; and in order for you to be in harmony with God, the principles of His law must be the spring of your every action.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 391.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is the Law of God immutable?
2. Mention three characteristics of the Law of God.
3. What is the meaning of the word “schoolmaster” as applied to the Law of God?
4. Before God, how many classes are there in the world?
5. How can we fulfill the condition of eternal life?

# The Righteousness of Christ

“The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable” (Isaiah 42:21).

“Paul and his fellow workers proclaimed the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. They presented Christ as the one who, seeing the helpless condition of the fallen race, came to redeem men and women by living a life of obedience to God’s law and by paying the penalty of disobedience.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 207.

**Suggested Readings:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 236–241.

## 1. “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS”

- a. What did Jeremiah prophesy about Jesus? Jeremiah 23:5, 6.

---

“Jeremiah also bore witness of the coming Redeemer as a Prince of the house of David: ‘Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.’ And again: ‘Thus saith the Lord: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before Me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually’ (Jeremiah 23:5, 6; 33:17, 18).”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 223.

- b. How did Micah identify Jesus in his prophecy? Micah 5:1.

---

“Had not Micah prophesied, ‘They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek?’ (Micah 5:1).”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 225.

## 2. A SINLESS LIFE

- a. What did Pilate declare about Jesus during the judgment? Luke 23:4.

---

“Christ affirmed that His word was in itself a key which would unlock the mystery to those who were prepared to receive it. It had a self-commending power, and this was the secret of the spread of His kingdom of truth. He desired Pilate to understand that only by receiving and appropriating truth could his ruined nature be reconstructed.

“Pilate had a desire to know the truth. His mind was confused. He eagerly grasped the words of the Saviour, and his heart was stirred with a great longing to know what it really was, and how he could obtain it. ‘What is truth?’ he inquired. But he did not wait for an answer. The tumult outside recalled him to the interests of the hour; for the priests were clamorous for immediate action. Going out to the Jews, he declared emphatically, ‘I find in Him no fault at all’ (John 18:38).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 727.

- b. What words did Judas utter before the Sanhedrin? Matthew 27:3, 4.

---

“As the trial [of Jesus] drew to a close, Judas could endure the torture of his guilty conscience no longer. Suddenly a hoarse voice rang through the hall, sending a thrill of terror to all hearts: He is innocent; spare Him, O Caiaphas!

“The tall form of Judas was now seen pressing through the startled throng. His face was pale and haggard, and great drops of sweat stood on his forehead. Rushing to the throne of judgment, he threw down before the high priest the pieces of silver that had been the price of his Lord’s betrayal. Eagerly grasping the robe of Caiaphas, he implored him to release Jesus, declaring that He had done nothing worthy of death. Caiaphas angrily shook him off, but was confused, and knew not what to say. The perfidy of the priests was revealed. It was evident that they had bribed the disciple to betray his Master.

“‘I have sinned,’ again cried Judas, ‘in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.’ But the high priest, regaining his self-possession, answered with scorn, ‘What is that to us? see thou to that’ (Matthew 27:4). The priests had been willing to make Judas their tool; but they despised his baseness. When he turned to them with confession, they spurned him.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 721, 722.

## 3. “THE HOLY ONE”

- a. What powerful public testimony did Peter give about Jesus? Acts 3:14, 15.

---

“When Jesus died, the priests thought that no more miracles would be performed among them, that the excitement would die out and the people would again turn to the traditions of men. But lo! right among them the disciples were working miracles, and the people were filled with amazement. Jesus had been crucified, and they wondered where His followers had obtained this power. When He was alive, they thought that He imparted power to them; but when He died, they expected the miracles to cease. Peter understood their perplexity and said to them, ‘Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And His name through faith in His name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know’ (Acts 3:12–16).”—*Early Writings*, p. 192.

- b. What did the same apostle write later? 1 Peter 2:21–23.

---

“Christ was holy, harmless, undefiled. He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 570.

“Christ is our Master. By definite instructions He prepared His followers for their work before leaving them. As soon as He could talk, Christ used the talent of speech, in the family circle and among friends and acquaintances, in a way that was without fault. Not one impure word escaped His lips. Never did He do a wrong action, for He was the Son of God. Although He possessed a human form, yet He was without a taint of sin.”—*Welfare Ministry*, pp. 286, 287.

## 4. "THE REJECTED STONE"

- a. What other title was prophetically applied to Jesus? Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 28:16.

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

"But every building erected on other foundation than God's word will fall. He who, like the Jews in Christ's day, builds on the foundation of human ideas and opinions, of forms and ceremonies of man's invention, or on any works that he can do independently of the grace of Christ, is erecting his structure of character upon the shifting sand. The fierce tempests of temptation will sweep away the sandy foundation and leave his house a wreck on the shores of time."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 150, 151.

- b. What application did Jesus make of this prophecy? Matthew 21:42–44.

"The prophets had spoken of the rejected stone; and Christ Himself, speaking on one occasion to the priests and elders, said: 'Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder' (Matthew 21:42–44)."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 64.

"Christ would have averted the doom of the Jewish nation if the people had received Him. But envy and jealousy made them implacable. They determined that they would not receive Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. They rejected the Light of the world, and thenceforth their lives were surrounded with darkness as the darkness of midnight. The doom foretold came upon the Jewish nation. Their own fierce passions, uncontrolled, wrought their ruin. In their blind rage they destroyed one another. Their rebellious, stubborn pride brought upon them the wrath of their Roman conquerors."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 295, 296.

## 5. "THE REJECTED STONE" (CONTINUED)

- a. How did Peter apply the prophecy of Isaiah to Jesus? Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:4–8.

"Peter himself, writing by inspiration, applies this prophecy to Jesus. He says, 'If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious: unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house' (1 Peter 2:3–5, R. V.)."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 413.

- b. What did Paul declare about the "chief corner stone"? Ephesians 2:20–22.

"In infinite wisdom, God chose the foundation stone, and laid it Himself. He called it 'a sure foundation.' The entire world may lay upon it their burdens and griefs; it can endure them all. With perfect safety they may build upon it. Christ is a 'tried stone.' Those who trust in Him, He never disappoints. He has borne every test. He has endured the pressure of Adam's guilt, and the guilt of his posterity, and has come off more than conqueror of the powers of evil. He has borne the burdens cast upon Him by every repenting sinner. In Christ the guilty heart has found relief. He is the sure foundation. All who make Him their dependence rest in perfect security."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 598, 599.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of the expression "The Lord Our Righteousness"?
2. What testimony did Pilate and Judas bear about Christ?
3. What is written about Christ's character?
4. Explain the words "whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken."
5. Why is Christ called "the rejected stone"?

# False Justification

“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Romans 4:4, 5).

“Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do.”—*Faith and Works*, p. 20.

**Suggested Readings:** *Faith and Works*, pp. 15–18.

## Sunday

March 13

### 1. THE LAW CANNOT JUSTIFY

#### a. What is written about the purpose of God’s Law? Romans 3:20, 28.

“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 SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1070.

#### b. What is written about the Israelites as a nation? Romans 10:1–4.

“Priests and rulers became fixed in a rut of ceremonialism. They were satisfied with a legal religion, and it was impossible for them to give to others the living truths of heaven. They thought their own righteousness all-sufficient, and did not desire that a new element should be brought into their religion. The good will of God to men they did not accept as something apart from themselves, but connected it with their own merit because of their good works.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 15.

## Monday

March 14

### 2. HUMAN WORKS CANNOT JUSTIFY

#### a. What does the Bible say about the good works of a person? Romans 4:1–5.

“The reward is not of works, lest any man should boast; but it is all of grace. ‘What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness’ (Romans 4:1–5). Therefore there is no occasion for one to glory over another or to grudge against another. No one is privileged above another, nor can anyone claim the reward as a right.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 401, 402.

“The work of faith means more than we think. It means genuine reliance upon the naked word of God. By our actions we are to show that we believe that God will do just as He has said. The wheels of nature and of providence are not appointed to roll backward nor to stand still. We must have an advancing, working faith, a faith that works by love and purifies the soul from every vestige of selfishness. It is not self, but God, that we must depend upon. We must not cherish unbelief. We must have that faith that takes God at His word. . . .

“Sanctification of soul, body, and spirit will surround us with the atmosphere of heaven. If God has chosen us from eternity, it is that we might be holy, our conscience purged from dead works to serve the living God. We must not in any way make self our god. God has given Himself to die for us, that He might purify us from all iniquity. The Lord will carry on this work of perfection for us if we will allow ourselves to be controlled by Him. He carries on this work for our good and His own name’s glory.”—*Bible Training School*, June 1, 1915.

#### b. What is said about the works of righteousness and our salvation? Titus 3:5.

“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.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, [E. G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1122.

### 3. FAITH PLUS WORKS CANNOT JUSTIFY

- a. What did the apostle Paul explain to the Galatians? Galatians 2:16.

---

“Let the subject be made distinct and plain that it is not possible to effect anything in our standing before God or in the gift of God to us through creature merit. Should faith and works purchase the gift of salvation for anyone, then the Creator is under obligation to the creature. Here is an opportunity for falsehood to be accepted as truth. If any man can merit salvation by anything he may do, then he is in the same position as the Catholic to do penance for his sins. Salvation, then, is partly of debt, that may be earned as wages. If man cannot, by any of his good works, merit salvation, then it must be wholly of grace, received by man as a sinner because he receives and believes in Jesus. It is wholly a free gift. Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. And all this controversy is ended, as soon as the matter is settled that the merits of fallen man in his good works can never procure eternal life for him.”—*Faith and Works*, pp. 19, 20.

- b. Who is the author of the theory of salvation by works?

---

“A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an abomination in the sight of God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposing sacrifice, proclaim that the doer of these things regards himself as righteous, and as entitled to heaven; but it is all a deception. Our own works can never purchase salvation.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 280.

“The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 35, 36.

### 4. FALSE FAITH vs. TRUE FAITH

- a. What did James explain about false faith? James 2:14–20.

---

“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?’ (James 2:22). Thus genuine faith does a genuine work in the believer. Faith and obedience bring a solid, valuable experience.

“The so-called faith that does not work by love and purify the soul will not justify any man. ‘Ye see,’ says the apostle, ‘how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only’ (James 2:24). 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.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 115.

- b. On the other hand, what is the result of true faith? Galatians 5:6.

---

“The Holy Spirit comes to convict of sin, and the faith that springs up in the heart works by love to Christ, conforming us in body, soul, and spirit to His own image. Then God can use us to do His will. The power given us works from within outwardly, leading us to communicate to others the truth that has been communicated to us.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 100.

“The faith that works by love and purifies the soul could find no place for union with the religion of the Pharisees, made up of ceremonies and the injunctions of men.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 15.

## 5. OUR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS CANNOT JUSTIFY US

- a. What is written about our own righteousness? Isaiah 64:6; Revelation 3:18.

---

“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’ (Revelation 3:18). 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.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 965.

- b. What will be the fate of those who cling to their own righteousness? Revelation 3:16.

---

“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’ (Revelation 3:15). 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.’”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 963.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why cannot God’s Law justify anyone?
2. Can a person’s good works assure his or her salvation?
3. Why do we have no merits in ourselves before God?
4. How does James explain true faith?
5. Why cannot our own righteousness justify us before God?

## A Special Invitation

“Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified” (Romans 8:30).

“Calling and justification are not one and the same thing. Calling is the drawing of the sinner to Christ, and it is a work wrought by the Holy Spirit upon the heart, convicting of sin, and inviting to repentance.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 390.

**Suggested Readings:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 328–332.

## 1. CHRIST’S INVITATION

- a. What invitation does Jesus Christ send to all of us? Matthew 11:28.

---

“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.’”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1103.

“Turning from the ambitious, self-satisfied favorites of this world, He declared that those were blessed who, however great their need, would receive His light and love. To the poor in spirit, the sorrowing, the persecuted, He stretched out His arms, saying, ‘Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest’ (Matthew 11:28).”—*Education*, p. 79, 80.

- b. What is the relationship between Christ’s invitation and the Sabbath? Isaiah 58:13, 14.

---

“And the Lord says, ‘If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; . . . then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord’ (Isaiah 58:13, 14). To all who receive the Sabbath as a sign of Christ’s creative and redeeming power, it will be a delight. Seeing Christ in it, they delight themselves in Him.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 289.

## 2. "TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU"

- a. What does Christ offer us together with His invitation? Matthew 11:29.

"Take My yoke upon you,' Jesus says. The yoke is an instrument of service. Cattle are yoked for labor, and the yoke is essential that they may labor effectually. By this illustration Christ teaches us that we are called to service as long as life shall last. We are to take upon us His yoke, that we may be coworkers with Him.

"The yoke that binds to service is the law of God. The great law of love revealed in Eden, proclaimed upon Sinai, and in the new covenant written in the heart, is that which binds the human worker to the will of God. If we were left to follow our own inclinations, to go just where our will would lead us, we should fall into Satan's ranks and become possessors of his attributes. Therefore God confines us to His will, which is high, and noble, and elevating. He desires that we shall patiently and wisely take up the duties of service. The yoke of service Christ Himself has borne in humanity. He said, 'I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart' (Psalm 40:8). 'I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me' (John 6:38)."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 329, 330.

"When you find your work hard, when you complain of difficulties and trials, when you say that you have no strength to withstand temptation, that you cannot overcome impatience, and that the Christian life is uphill work, be sure that you are not bearing the yoke of Christ; you are bearing the yoke of another master."—*Child Guidance*, p. 267.

- b. What is Christ willing to teach us? Matthew 11:29.

"We are to enter the school of Christ, to learn from Him meekness and lowliness. Redemption is that process by which the soul is trained for heaven. This training means a knowledge of Christ. It means emancipation from ideas, habits, and practices that have been gained in the school of the prince of darkness. The soul must be delivered from all that is opposed to loyalty to God.

"In the heart of Christ, where reigned perfect harmony with God, there was perfect peace. He was never elated by applause, nor dejected by censure or disappointment. Amid the greatest opposition and the most cruel treatment, He was still of good courage."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.

## 3. "MY YOKE IS EASY"

- a. What does Christ mean when He says, "My yoke is easy"? Matthew 11:30.

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

- b. What words does John employ to utter the same message? 1 John 5:3.

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

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul' (Psalm 19:7). Without the law, men have no just conception of the purity and holiness of God or of their own guilt and uncleanness. They have no true conviction of sin and feel no need of repentance. Not seeing their lost condition as violators of God's law, they do not realize their need of the atoning blood of Christ. The hope of salvation is accepted without a radical change of heart or reformation of life. Thus superficial conversions abound, and multitudes are joined to the church who have never been united to Christ."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 468.

## 4. "ENTERING INTO HIS REST"

- a. What is the main hindrance that has prevented our entrance into the heavenly Canaan? Hebrews 3:18, 19.

"It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be . . . delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in 'because of unbelief.' Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfill His covenant with them.

"For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.

"We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action."—*Evangelism*, p. 696.

- b. On the other hand, how can we enter into Christ's rest? Hebrews 4:1–3.

"It is not a conclusive evidence that a man is a Christian because he manifests spiritual ecstasy under extraordinary circumstances. Holiness is not rapture: it is an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in the light; it is walking by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with unquestioning confidence, and resting in His love."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 51.

"By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord's return."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 633.

## 5. PRACTICAL RESULTS OF CHRIST'S REST

- a. What is the fruit of entering into Christ's rest? Hebrews 4:10, 11.

"[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."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 928.

- b. What is the final rest reserved for God's people? Revelation 7:15–17.

"As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come, learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 331, 332.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does Christ offer to those who accept His invitation?
2. What is the meaning of the "yoke" of Christ?
3. Under what circumstances is the "yoke" of Christ easy?
4. When do we really enter into Christ's rest?
5. When will God's people have complete rest?

# FIRST SABBATH OFFERINGS



**JANUARY 1**  
A chapel in  
Saint Lucia  
(See p. 4.)

**FEBRUARY 5**  
Welfare Department  
(See p. 30.)



**MARCH 5**  
for Phoenix,  
Arizona, USA  
(See p. 51.)