

A scenic photograph of a natural rock archway spanning a river. The arch is made of grey, layered rock and is surrounded by lush green trees. A white swan is swimming in the river in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue.

A Perpetual Covenant

Sabbath Bible Lessons

Senior Division

October-December 2003

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

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Foreword

The time is coming very soon when every person of this planet will need to make an eternal decision. Either he or she will follow the Saviour to glory or he or she will choose to be the slave of Satan. God has given His people a clear way to follow. He informs us that if we will be true to the truth, He will make a covenant with us. This covenant has existed as a memorial between God and His people since the creation of this world.

“The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. It had been made known to man in Eden, and, like the other precepts of the Decalogue, it is of imperishable obligation. Of that law of which the fourth commandment forms a part, Christ declares, ‘Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law.’ So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator’s power. And when Eden shall bloom on earth again, God’s holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun. ‘From one Sabbath to another’ the inhabitants of the glorified new earth shall go up ‘to worship before Me, saith the Lord’ (Matthew 5:18; Isaiah 66:23).” — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 283.

As the people of the world see the choice before them they will be filled with questions. They will seek to know more about the true Sabbath of the Lord. Are you ready to give them an answer?

This quarter we will study the Sabbath issue from creation until today so that we as a people will be able to go out and proclaim the Sabbath more fully. “I saw that God had children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They had not rejected the light upon it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully” (*Early Writings*, p. 33).

In order to stress the point, a number of Bible verses will appear more than once in the lesson book. The serious Bible student will commit these verses to memory. They include verses from Genesis chapter 1, Exodus chapters 20 and 31, Isaiah chapter 58 and Ezekiel chapter 20. The time will come when the preaching of the strait testimony will bring persecution and your Bible may be taken from you, but you will have the proofs to establish your faith. “This enraged the churches and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. And at this time God’s chosen all saw clearly that we had the truth, and they came out and endured the persecution with us” (Ibid.).

The General Conference Sabbath School Department

First Sabbath Offering

South India Mission (Palayamkottai)

When the work of Reformation came to India it began in the south of the country. A group of faithful souls stood forward and called sin by its right name. Their search for truth led them to the Reform Movement and soon the South India Mission was organized. A few years later, as a result of the spreading of the message, the North India Mission was established. Today India is one of the fastest growing countries in the Reform Movement, with 3 organized Fields and 2 Missions.

In order to help the progress of the work, new mission centers are needed from which to organize and direct the work. The South India Mission, the oldest unit in India, is now in need of a chapel in Palayamkottai. From this location the workers and missionaries will be able to cover a vast territory.

India is a country that needs the light of salvation desperately. Modern ideas are creeping into society and the people are being led further from God. Please help us to reach out to these souls and bring them closer to their Creator while there is still time. Your generous donation will make possible the building of a lighthouse which will serve as a beacon to the lost sheep of Israel.

*Your brethren from the South
India Mission*

PROJECT SI01



VITAL STATISTICS

- **Area:** 3,287,590 sq km (1,229,737 sq mi)
- **Population:** 1,045,845,226 (2002 est.)
- **Capital:** New Delhi (pop. of Delhi metropolitan area 11,500,000)
- **Literacy Rate:** 52% (1995)
- **Languages:** Hindi, English, 14 official regional languages
- **Religions:** Hindu 81.3%, Muslim 12%, other 6.7%

ECONOMY

- **Monetary Unit:** Rupee
- **GDP/PPP:** \$2.6 trillion; \$2,540 per capita (2002 est.)
- **Inflation:** 5.4% (2002)
- **Major Trading Partners:** United States, UK, Japan, EU.

The Sabbath in Eden

“And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made” (Genesis 2:2).

“After resting upon the seventh day, God sanctified it, or set it apart, as a day of rest for man.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 47.

Suggested Reading: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 47–51.

Sabbath

September 27

Psalm 1.

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

1. CREATION

- a. According to the creation story as recorded in the Bible, in how many days did God create the earth and all the life in it?

- b. Were the days of creation literal days as we know them now? Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; Psalm 33:6, 9.

“The Bible recognizes no long ages in which the earth was slowly evolved from chaos. Of each successive day of creation, the sacred record declares that it consisted of the evening and the morning, like all other days that have followed.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 112.

“Inferences erroneously drawn from facts observed in nature have, however, led to supposed conflict between science and revelation; and in the effort to restore harmony, interpretations of Scripture have been adopted that undermine and destroy the force of the word of God. Geology has been thought to contradict the literal interpretation of the Mosaic record of the creation. Millions of years, it is claimed, were required for the evolution of the earth from chaos; and in order to accommodate the Bible to this supposed revelation of science, the days of creation are assumed to have been vast, indefinite periods, covering thousands or even millions of years.

“Such a conclusion is wholly uncalled for. The Bible record is in harmony with itself and with the teaching of nature. Of the first day employed in the work of creation is given the record, ‘The evening and the morning were the first day’ (Genesis 1:5). And the same in substance is said of each of the first six days of creation week. Each of these periods Inspiration declares to have been a day consisting of evening and morning, like every other day since that time. In regard to the work of creation itself the divine testimony is, ‘He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast’ (Psalm 33:9). With Him who could thus call into existence unnumbered worlds, how long a time would be required for the evolution of the earth from chaos? In order to account for His works, must we do violence to His word?”—*Education*, pp. 128, 129.

2. SANCTIFIED

- a. What did God do on the seventh day of creation? Genesis 2:1, 2.

“The great Jehovah had laid the foundations of the earth; He had dressed the whole world in the garb of beauty and had filled it with things useful to man; He had created all the wonders of the land and of the sea. In six days the great work of creation had been accomplished. And God ‘rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.’ God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All was perfect, worthy of its divine Author, and He rested, not as one weary, but as well pleased with the fruits of His wisdom and goodness and the manifestations of His glory.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 47.

- b. What does it mean when the Bible records that God sanctified the seventh day? Leviticus 20:7.

“Because He had rested upon the Sabbath, ‘God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it’—set it apart to a holy use. He gave it to Adam as a day of rest. It was a memorial of the work of creation, and thus a sign of God’s power and His love. The Scripture says, ‘He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered.’ ‘The things that are made,’ declare ‘the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world,’ ‘even His everlasting power and divinity.’”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 281.

“After resting upon the seventh day, God sanctified it, or set it apart, as a day of rest for man. Following the example of the Creator, man was to rest upon this sacred day, that as he should look upon the heavens and the earth, he might reflect upon God’s great work of creation; and that as he should behold the evidences of God’s wisdom and goodness, his heart might be filled with love and reverence for his Maker.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 47.

3. A MEMORIAL OF CREATIVE POWER

- a. **Of what was the Sabbath intended to remind us? Exodus 20:11; 31:16, 17.**

“In Eden, God set up the memorial of His work of creation, in placing His blessing upon the seventh day. The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the father and representative of the whole human family. Its observance was to be an act of grateful acknowledgment, on the part of all who should dwell upon the earth, that God was their Creator and their rightful Sovereign; that they were the work of His hands and the subjects of His authority. Thus the institution was wholly commemorative, and given to all mankind. There was nothing in it shadowy or of restricted application to any people.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.

“When God created the earth and placed man upon it, He divided time into seven periods. Six he gave to man for his own use, to employ in secular business; one He reserved for Himself. Having rested on the seventh day, He blessed and sanctified it. Henceforth, the seventh day was to be regarded as the Lord’s rest-day, and to be sacredly observed as the memorial of His creative work. It was not the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, or sixth day that was sanctified, or set apart to a holy use, neither was it a seventh part of time and no day in particular; but it was the seventh day, the day upon which God had rested. We are every day to think of God and live as in His sight; but when the six day’s work is done, we are to ‘remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy’—to cease from labor and devote the day exclusively to meditation and worship.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1884.

- b. **In reminding us of creation, how does the Sabbath point to redemption? Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12.**

“All things were created by the Son of God. ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. . . . All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made’ (John 1:1–3). And since the Sabbath is a memorial of the work of creation, it is a token of the love and power of Christ.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 281.

4. A DAY OF REST

- a. **What work was given to Adam and Eve in the garden? Genesis 2:15.**

“To Adam and Eve was committed the care of the garden, ‘to dress it and to keep it’ (Genesis 2:15). Though rich in all that the Owner of the universe could supply, they were not to be idle. Useful occupation was appointed them as a blessing, to strengthen the body, to expand the mind, and to develop the character.”—*Education*, p. 21.

- b. **After working six days, how can we keep the Sabbath as Adam and Eve did?**

“I was shown that the law of God would stand fast forever, and exist in the new earth to all eternity. At the creation, when the foundations of the earth were laid, the sons of God looked with admiration upon the work of the Creator, and all the heavenly host shouted for joy. It was then that the foundation of the Sabbath was laid. At the close of the six days of creation, God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made; and He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work. The Sabbath was instituted in Eden before the Fall, and was observed by Adam and Eve, and all the heavenly host. God rested on the seventh day, and blessed and hallowed it. I saw that the Sabbath never will be done away; but that the redeemed saints, and all the angelic host, will observe it in honor of the great Creator to all eternity.”—*Early Writings*, p. 217.

“The demands upon God are even greater upon the Sabbath than upon other days. His people then leave their usual employment, and spend the time in meditation and worship. They ask more favors of Him on the Sabbath than upon other days. They demand His special attention. They crave His choicest blessings. God does not wait for the Sabbath to pass before He grants these requests. Heaven’s work never ceases, and men should never rest from doing good. The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular labor on the rest day of the Lord; the toil that gains a livelihood must cease; no labor for worldly pleasure or profit is lawful upon that day; but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207.

5. OUT OF THE GARDEN

- a. **When Adam and Eve sinned against the Lord, what sentence was pronounced upon them? Were they still to be engaged in labor? Genesis 3:23, 24.**

“When the Lord placed our first parents in the Garden of Eden, it was with the injunction that they ‘dress it’ and ‘keep it.’ God had finished His work of creation, and had pronounced all things very good. Everything was adapted to the end for which it was made. While Adam and Eve obeyed God, their labors in the garden were a pleasure; the earth yielded of its abundance for their wants. But when man departed from his obedience to God, he was doomed to wrestle with the seeds of Satan’s sowing, and to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Henceforth he must battle in toil and hardship against the power to which he had yielded his will.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 512, 513.

- b. **As a token of God’s love and care for Adam and Eve and all mankind, what remained for them to know Him? Ezekiel 20:20.**

“The Sabbath was instituted in Eden and observed by our first parents before the Fall. Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s command and ate of the forbidden fruit, they were expelled from Eden; but they observed the Sabbath after their fall. They had experienced the bitter fruits of disobedience, and learned what every one who tramples upon God’s commands will sooner or later learn, that God means just what He says, and that He will surely punish the transgressor. Those who venture to lightly esteem the day upon which Jehovah rested, the day which He sanctified and blessed, the day which He has commanded to be kept holy, will yet know that all the precepts of His law are alike sacred, and that death is the penalty of the transgression.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 6, 1879.

PERSONAL REVIEW

A Memorial of Creation.—“But when the claims of the Sabbath are presented, there are many who ask, What difference does it make what day we keep as the Sabbath, so long as we observe one day in seven? We answer, It makes all possible difference whether we obey or disregard the word of God. God has given us the Sabbath as a memorial of the great work of creation. He says: ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.’ He declares through Moses, ‘It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever.’ And the children of Israel include all who believe in Christ. For ‘if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed.’ Again, by the prophet Ezekiel, the Lord says, ‘Hallow my Sabbaths; for they shall be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.’ The Sabbath is a sign of God’s creative power; it shows Him to be supreme, the Maker and Upholder of the universe, the One from whom we receive ‘life and breath and all things,’ and hence the One to whom our allegiance is due.”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 12, 1893.

Reconciled to God.—“Wherefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.’ These words are full of instruction and comfort. Because the Sabbath was made for man, it is the Lord’s day. It belongs to Christ. For ‘all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made’ (John 1:3). Since He made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. It declares that He who created all things in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things hold together, is the head of the church, and that by His power we are reconciled to God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 288.

1. **Why is it important to understand the literal interpretation of the creation account?**
2. **Who only can sanctify something or make it holy? Why is this significant?**
3. **As we contemplate creation, how does this affect us personally?**
4. **Is physical labor the only thing that should be rested from in observing the Sabbath?**
5. **Has the importance of Sabbath observance increased or decreased since the fall of Adam and Eve?**

The Sabbath After Eden

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8).

“Before the Fall our first parents had kept the Sabbath, which was instituted in Eden; and after their expulsion from Paradise they continued its observance.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 80.

Suggested Reading: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 307, 308.

Sabbath

October 4

Psalm 92:1–10.

“It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night, upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound. For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands. O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this. When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever: But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore. For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered. But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

Sunday

October 5

1. KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

- a. What did Adam and Eve obtain after they had disobeyed God? Genesis 3:5.

“In the Garden of Eden was the ‘tree of knowledge of good and evil. . . . And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat’ (Genesis 2:9–17). It was the will of God that Adam and Eve should not know evil. The knowledge of evil—of sin and its results, of wearing toil, of anxious care, of disappointment and grief, of pain and death—this was in love withheld.”—*Education*, p. 23.

“It was not the will of God that this sinless pair should have any knowledge of evil. He had freely given them the good, but withheld the evil. Eve . . . ate, and was delighted with the fruit. It seemed delicious to her taste, and she imagined that she realized in herself the wonderful effects of the fruit. She took the fruit and found her husband and related to him the words spoken by the serpent, and told him that by eating the fruit she had felt, instead of death, a pleasing influence. As soon as Eve had disobeyed, she became a powerful medium through which to occasion the fall of her husband.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 41, 42.

- b. Did having the knowledge of sin then exclude Adam and Eve from observing the Sabbath? Exodus 31:16, 17.

“Before the Fall our first parents had kept the Sabbath, which was instituted in Eden; and after their expulsion from Paradise they continued its observance. They had tasted the bitter fruits of disobedience, and had learned what every one that tramples upon God’s commandments will sooner or later learn—that the divine precepts are sacred and immutable, and that the penalty of transgression will surely be inflicted. The Sabbath was honored by all the children of Adam that remained loyal to God. But Cain and his descendants did not respect the day upon which God had rested. They chose their own time for labor and for rest, regardless of Jehovah’s express command.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 80, 81.

2. ETERNAL NATURE OF THE LAW

- a. **How long has the ten-commandment law been in existence? Psalm 119:151, 152.**

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

“The Sabbath of the fourth commandment was instituted in Eden. After God had made the world, and created man upon the earth, He made the Sabbath for man. After Adam’s sin and fall nothing was taken from the law of God. The principles of the ten commandments existed before the Fall, and were of a character suited to the condition of a holy order of beings. After the Fall, the principles of those precepts were not changed, but additional precepts were given to meet man in his fallen state.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 295.

- b. **Can God’s law ever be changed? Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17.**

“The Father did not yield up His dearly beloved Son without a struggle, whether to let guilty man perish or to give His Son to die for the lost race. It was impossible for God to change His law, or give up the smallest part of its claims, in order to save man; therefore He suffered His Son to die for man’s transgression.”—*The Signs of the Times*, January 30, 1879.

“Through Jesus, God’s mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God’s character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man’s redemption. ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself’ (2 Corinthians 5:19).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 762.

“Could the law have been changed, Christ need not have died. But it was impossible for God to change.”—*The Review and Herald*, September 24, 1901.

3. THE SABBATH IN THE LAW

- a. **Where in the Bible do we find the Sabbath clearly explained to us? Exodus 20:8–11; Deuteronomy 5:12–15.**

“In the third month [the children of Israel] came to the desert of Sinai, and there the law was spoken from the mount in awful grandeur. During their stay in Egypt, Israel had so long heard and seen idolatry practiced that to a large degree they had lost their knowledge of God and of His law, and their sense of the importance and sacredness of the Sabbath; the law was given a second time to call these things to their remembrance. In God’s statutes was defined practical religion for all mankind. Before Israel was placed the true standard of righteousness.”—*The Review and Herald*, August 30, 1898.

- b. **What is our duty with regards to all ten of the precepts of God’s law? Deuteronomy 27:9, 10, 26; 1 John 3:4; Romans 6:23; Ecclesiastes 12:13.**

“In their bondage the Israelites had to some extent lost the knowledge of God’s law, and they had departed from its precepts. The Sabbath had been generally disregarded, and the exactions of their taskmasters made its observance apparently impossible. But Moses had shown his people that obedience to God was the first condition of deliverance; and the efforts made to restore the observance of the Sabbath had come to the notice of their oppressors.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 258.

“John brings the commandments of God to view away down this side of the crucifixion of Christ, and shows their positive, binding claims upon men. Those who have taken the position that the commandments of God were done away when Christ hung upon the cross, are in harmony with the great deceiver. God has made His constitution and His laws, and He can encircle in His arms those who are obedient, and shield them from the powerful deceptions of Satan. When the foundations of the earth were laid, then was laid the foundation of the Sabbath, and the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 15, 1890.

4. THE HEART OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

- a. **By the fourth commandment all are required to “remember” the One who created the heavens and the earth. How does the fourth commandment protect us from idolatry? Jeremiah 10:10–12 (cf. Exodus 20:3–6).**

“Every man in God’s world is under the laws of His government. God has placed the Sabbath in the bosom of the Decalogue, and has made it the criterion of obedience. Through it we may learn of His power, as displayed in His works and His Word. But today the world is following the example of those that lived before the Flood. Now, as then, men choose to follow their own inclinations, rather than to obey the commandments of God. The inhabitants of the antediluvian world glorified themselves instead of commemorating the glorious works of creation. They did not obey the law of God; they did not honor the Sabbath. Had they done this, they would have recognized their duty to their Creator. This was the original and supreme object of the command, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 31, 1898.

- b. **What is the role of the Sabbath among the Ten Commandments?**

“As the tree of knowledge was placed in the midst of the Garden of Eden, so the Sabbath command is placed in the midst of the Decalogue. In regard to the fruit of the tree of knowledge, the restriction was made, ‘Ye shall not eat of it, . . . lest ye die.’ Of the Sabbath God said, ‘Ye shall not defile it, but keep it holy. ‘Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.’ As the tree of knowledge was the test of Adam’s obedience, so the fourth command is the test that God has given to prove the loyalty of all His people.”—*The Review and Herald*, August 30, 1898.

- c. **How important is it that we come to know God? John 17:3.**

- d. **Is there any danger that the people of God may forget Him? Deuteronomy 8:11.**

5. BLESSINGS FOR KEEPING

- a. **What blessing is promised to the obedient? Isaiah 56:1, 2; 58:12–14.**

“Here is our test which God has made, and He will fulfill His word, if human agents will show their love to God in keeping all His commandments. If they reverence the Sabbath, which is engraved on the first table of stone, they will keep the first three commandments, and the last six will reveal the duty of man to his fellow man; for the Sabbath sign is the covenant between God and man. It is the golden clasp which unites man to God in supreme obedience and reverence, and which unites man to his fellow man.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 89.

“In these last days there is a call from Heaven inviting you to keep the statutes and ordinances of the Lord. The world has set at naught the law of Jehovah; but God will not be left without a witness to His righteousness, or without a people in the earth to proclaim His truth. The door of the heavenly sanctuary has been opened, and no man can shut it, and the light of the Holy of Holies is shining into the world. The people of God have had their attention called to the ark of the testimony, and the law within it has been revealed with its unalterable precepts. In holy vision, John saw the remnant church on the earth, in an age of lawlessness, and he points them out in unmistakable language: ‘Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.’ They are in harmony with that law that rests in the ark in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. The whole duty of man is summed up in its sacred precepts. In the heart of the law is the commandment enjoining upon man the observance of the Sabbath of Jehovah, which the world and the church have trodden under their feet. For centuries men have walked in blindness concerning the true Sabbath, and the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now is the day of reformation, and He calls upon men everywhere to repent. When the light of God’s disregarded commandment shone upon the path of those who sincerely loved God, they delayed not to keep His statutes. They realized that they must come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean, that they might claim the promise, ‘I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’ They became the repairers of the breach that has been made in the law of God, because they turned away their feet from the Sabbath, from doing their pleasure on God’s holy day, and called the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and did honor Him, not speaking their own words or finding their own pleasure.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 3, 1888.

PERSONAL REVIEW

A Test To Our Generation.—“Now the question is, Will we ally ourselves with those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? Will we cease to trample upon the Sabbath of the Lord our God? We want to be sure that we are the children of light; that we are following in the footsteps of our Redeemer and Example. The cross lies in our pathway, but shall we not take it up and bear it for His sake who bore the cross for us?”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 3, 1888.

“The sign of obedience is the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

“The Sabbath is a test to this generation. In obeying the fourth commandment in spirit and truth, men will obey all the precepts of the Decalogue. To fulfill this commandment one must love God supremely, and exercise love toward all the creatures that He has made.

“The time is coming when God’s people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day. . . . The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observance of the first day of the week. But God’s people are to stand firm for Him.

Unflinching Testimony.—“Let no one yield to temptation and become less fervent in his attachment to God’s law because of the contempt placed upon it; for that is the very thing that should make us pray with all our heart, and soul, and voice, ‘It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law’ (Psalm 119:126). Therefore, because of the universal contempt, I will not turn traitor when God will be most glorified and most honored by my loyalty. . . .

“Shall Seventh-day Adventists relax their devotedness when all their capabilities and powers should be placed on the Lord’s side; when an unflinching testimony, noble and uplifting, should come from their lips? ‘Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold’ (Psalm 119:127). When the law of God is most derided and brought into the most contempt, then it is time for every true follower of Christ . . . to stand unflinchingly for the faith once delivered to the saints.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 291.

1. Why did God restrict access to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
2. Explain the relationship between mercy and justice.
3. When was the foundation of the Sabbath laid down?
4. What is the role of the Sabbath in the law of God?
5. What will God do in the last days for those who are faithful to the Sabbath?

The Sabbath in the Wilderness

“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10).

“God designed to teach the people that they must approach Him with reverence and awe, and in His own appointed manner. He cannot accept partial obedience.”—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 100.

Suggested Readings: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 336–340.
Testimonies, vol. 4, pp. 248–252.

Sabbath

October 11

Psalm 100.

“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

1. THE SABBATH LOST SIGHT OF

- a. **When Israel was taken captive in Egypt, what happened to Sabbath observance? Genesis 15:13, 14; Exodus 1:13, 14.**

“The Sabbath institution, which originated in Eden, is as old as the world itself. It was observed by all the patriarchs, from creation down. During the bondage in Egypt, the Israelites were forced by their taskmasters to violate the Sabbath, and to a great extent they lost the knowledge of its sacredness. When the law was proclaimed at Sinai the very first words of the fourth commandment were, ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy’—showing that the Sabbath was not then instituted; we are pointed back for its origin to creation. In order to obliterate God from the minds of men, Satan aimed to tear down this great memorial. If men could be led to forget their Creator, they would make no effort to resist the power of evil, and Satan would be sure of his prey.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 336.

- b. **Why did God deliver Israel from Egyptian captivity? Psalm 105:43–45.**

“When the law was given at Sinai, the Sabbath was placed in the midst of moral precepts, in the very bosom of the Decalogue. But the Sabbath institution was not then made known for the first time. The fourth commandment places its origin at creation. The Creator’s rest-day was hallowed by Adam in holy Eden, and by men of God throughout the patriarchal ages. During Israel’s long bondage in Egypt, under taskmasters that knew not God, they could not keep the Sabbath; therefore the Lord brought them out where they could remember His holy day.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1884.

“Those who are offering prayers to the God of heaven and earth will not refuse to be obedient to the plainest precept of the law. They will listen to the voice of Christ, and will ‘remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,’ as the day on which the Creator of the heavens and the earth rested from all the work which He had done. They will not turn away from the holy commandment, and accept a spurious sabbath instead of the holy, sanctified day that God instituted in Eden as a memorial of His creative power. The Sabbath was given to man as a sign that was to show to whom the allegiance of the people was given.”—*Ibid.*, March 12, 1894.

2. BEFORE SINAI

- a. **How did God impress upon the newly delivered Israelites the importance of the Sabbath? Exodus 16:14, 15, 22–26.**

“A threefold miracle was wrought in honor of the Sabbath, even before the law was given on Sinai. A double quantity of manna fell on the sixth day, none upon the Sabbath, and the portion needed for the Sabbath was preserved sweet and pure, when if any were kept over at any other time, it became unfit for food. Here is conclusive evidence that the Sabbath was instituted at creation, when the foundations of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. And its sacredness remains unchanged, and will so remain even to the close of time. From the creation, every precept of the divine law has been obligatory on man, and has been observed by those who fear the Lord. The doctrine that God’s law has been abolished is one of Satan’s devices to compass the ruin of the race.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1884.

- b. **How did God view those who disregarded any of His commandments? Exodus 16:27, 28; 35:2; Hebrews 3:15–19.**

“God will not pass over any transgression of His law more lightly now than in the day when He pronounced judgment against Adam. The Saviour of the world raises His voice in protest against those who regard the divine commandments with carelessness and indifference. Said He: ‘Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, He shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.’ The teaching of our lives is wholly for or against the truth. If your works seem to justify the transgressor in his sin, if your influence makes light of breaking the commandments of God, then you are not only guilty yourself, but you are to a certain extent responsible for the consequent errors of others.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 248.

3. PRESENTED IN AWFUL GRANDEUR

- a. How did God represent the law to Israel? Exodus 19:11–25.

“On the morning of the third day, as the eyes of all the people were turned toward the mount, its summit was covered with a thick cloud, which grew more black and dense, sweeping downward until the entire mountain was wrapped in darkness and awful mystery. Then a sound as of a trumpet was heard, summoning the people to meet with God; and Moses led them forth to the base of the mountain. From the thick darkness flashed vivid lightnings, while peals of thunder echoed and reechoed among the surrounding heights. ‘And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.’ ‘The glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount’ in the sight of the assembled multitude. And ‘the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder.’ So terrible were the tokens of Jehovah’s presence that the hosts of Israel shook with fear, and fell upon their faces before the Lord. Even Moses exclaimed, ‘I exceedingly fear and quake’ (Hebrews 12:21).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 304.

- b. Why did God present such a display? Deuteronomy 4:24.

“God purposed to make the occasion of speaking His law a scene of awful grandeur, in keeping with its exalted character. The people were to be impressed that everything connected with the service of God must be regarded with the greatest reverence.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 303.

“The law was not spoken at this time exclusively for the benefit of the Hebrews. God honored them by making them the guardians and keepers of His law, but it was to be held as a sacred trust for the whole world. The precepts of the Decalogue are adapted to all mankind, and they were given for the instruction and government of all. Ten precepts, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, cover the duty of man to God and to his fellow man; and all based upon the great fundamental principle of love.”—*Ibid.*, p. 305.

4. REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY

- a. What word did God use to express the importance of the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments? Exodus 20:8.

“In the law given from Sinai, God recognized the week, and the facts upon which it is based. After giving the command, ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,’ and specifying what shall be done on the six days, and what shall not be done on the seventh, He states the reason for thus observing the week, by pointing back to His own example: ‘For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it’ (Exodus 20:8–11). This reason appears beautiful and forcible when we understand the days of creation to be literal. The first six days of each week are given to man for labor, because God employed the same period of the first week in the work of creation. On the seventh day man is to refrain from labor, in commemoration of the Creator’s rest.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 111.

- b. Why did God tell us to “remember”? Psalm 46:10; Mark 4:18, 19.

“‘Remember’ is placed at the very first of the Fourth Commandment. Parents, you need to remember the Sabbath day yourselves to keep it holy. And if you do this, you are giving the proper instruction to your children; they will reverence God’s holy day. . . . Christian education is needed in your homes. All through the week keep the Lord’s holy Sabbath in view, for that day is to be devoted to the service of God. It is a day when the hands are to rest from worldly employment, when the soul’s needs are to receive special attention.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 527.

“At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said, ‘Remember.’ He knew that amid the multitude of cares and perplexities man would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirement of the law, or would forget its sacred importance. Therefore He said: ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy’ (Exodus 20:8).

“All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 353.

5. A REQUIREMENT OF OBEDIENCE

- a. **What admonition was connected with the declaration of the Ten Commandments? Deuteronomy 11:22, 23.**

“Obedience to God would preserve harmony between man and man and between man and his Maker, and would cause Israel to be regarded as a wise and understanding people. And in the path of obedience alone was there safety for them either as individuals or as a nation; for nothing but obedience would secure the divine favor, and insure to them happiness and prosperity in the land to which they were going. God had plainly stated this to them. If they did not keep His commandments, He would not—He could not—fulfill the rich promises which were given them on condition of obedience.”—*The Signs of the Times*, May 13, 1886.

- b. **Are we under the same obligation as Israel as it relates to the Ten Commandments? 1 John 5:2, 3.**

“God’s blessing was never withheld from His obedient people. The wrath of God was brought upon the Jews by their disobedience of His law. Many persons contrast the freedom found in Christ with what they regard as the severe requirements of the law of God. Their words and example say to the world, Christ is so lenient and forgiving that we need not be particular to keep to the strict letter of the law. They slide away from their allegiance in a loose reckless manner, doing the works of Satan, while professing to love the Lord. Yet Jesus positively declared in His last conversation with His disciples, that those who love Him will keep His commandments. In the Old Testament entire obedience is required in order to secure blessings, and entire obedience is also required in the New Testament as the conditions of receiving the approval of God. Obedience of the divine requirements is the demonstration of our faith, and the test of our love and discipleship. Professing theories, and observing forms will not answer the requirements of God. The vital principle of love is kept active through obedience. ‘Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.’”—*The Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1878.

PERSONAL REVIEW

No Excuse.—“To leave them without excuse, the Lord Himself condescended to come down upon Sinai, enshrouded in glory and surrounded by His angels, and in a most sublime and awful manner made known His law of Ten Commandments. He did not trust them to be taught by anyone, not even His angels, but spoke His law with an audible voice in the hearing of all the people. He did not, even then, trust them to the short memory of a people who were prone to forget His requirements, but wrote them with His own holy finger upon tables of stone. He would remove from them all possibility of mingling with His holy precepts any tradition, or of confusing His requirements with the practices of men.”—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 148.

A Condition for Salvation.—“God has laid down the conditions of salvation. He requires that men keep His commandments as obedient children. The Holy Scriptures are full of lessons showing that God is satisfied with no partial obedience. He does not leave men to rely on their human judgment, and select that portion of His law which they choose to obey. They are required to have correct views of duty. They are not at liberty to accept what ignorant, sinful, feeble man may suggest, believe, or urge upon them; but they must take God’s word, and walk in accordance with His revealed will.”—*The Signs of the Times*, July 24, 1884.

“God designed to teach the people that they must approach Him with reverence and awe, and in His own appointed manner. He cannot accept partial obedience. It was not enough that in this solemn season of worship *nearly* everything was done as He had directed. . . . Let no one deceive himself with the belief that a part of God’s commandments are nonessential, or that He will accept a substitute for that which He has required.”—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 100 (author’s italics).

1. **What happened to the knowledge of the Sabbath when God’s people were in Egyptian bondage? Why?**
2. **How were God’s people reminded of the Sabbath before reaching Mount Sinai?**
3. **Why did God restate the principles of the Ten Commandments in such awful grandeur? What lesson is here for us?**
4. **Why does God tell us to “remember” the Sabbath?**
5. **Have God’s requirements in relation to the Ten Commandments ever been changed? How does this relate to us personally? How many of the commandments are binding on us today?**

The Babylonian Captivity

“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. But they said, We will not walk therein” (Jeremiah 6:16).

“The conditions prevailing in the land of Judah were such that only by the most decided measures could a change for the better be brought about.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 412.

Suggested Readings: *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 408–416.
Ibid., pp. 425–429.

Sabbath

October 18

Psalm 119:49–56.

“Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me. The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law. I remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord; and have comforted myself. Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law. Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law. This I had, because I kept thy precepts.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

Sunday

October 19

1. APOSTASY AMONG GOD’S PEOPLE

- a. In the time of Jeremiah, what was the condition of God’s chosen people? Jeremiah 8:5, 6.

“For forty years Jeremiah was to stand before the nation as a witness for truth and righteousness. In a time of unparalleled apostasy he was to exemplify in life and character the worship of the only true God. During the terrible sieges of Jerusalem he was to be the mouthpiece of Jehovah. He was to predict the downfall of the house of David and the destruction of the beautiful temple built by Solomon. And when imprisoned because of his fearless utterances, he was still to speak plainly against sin in high places. Despised, hated, rejected of men, he was finally to witness the literal fulfillment of his own prophecies of impending doom, and share in the sorrow and woe that should follow the destruction of the fated city.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 408.

- b. Especially on what point of transgression did God specify through His prophets? Jeremiah 17:19–23.

“The work of the priests in connection with the sacrificial offerings was increased upon the Sabbath, yet in their holy work in the service of God they did not violate the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. As Israel separated from God, the true object of the Sabbath institution became less distinct in their minds. They grew careless of its observance, and unmindful of its ordinances. The prophets testified to them of God’s displeasure in the violation of His Sabbath. Nehemiah says: ‘In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.’ . . .

“But they heeded not the admonitions of the inspired prophets, and departed more and more from the religion of their fathers. At length calamities, persecution, and bondage came upon them in consequence of their disregard of God’s requirements.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 194.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR REPENTANCE

- a. **How did God reveal His longsuffering and forgiving character to His people in spite of their continued transgression? Jeremiah 17:24–26.**

“Through Jeremiah the word of the Lord to His people was: ‘Return, thou backsliding Israel, . . . and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. . . . Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you.’ ‘Thou shalt call Me, My Father; and shalt not turn away from Me.’ ‘Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings’ (Jeremiah 3:12–14, 19, 22).”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 410.

- b. **Where was God directing His people then, just as He is today? Isaiah 58:12–14.**

“Thus the prophet stood firmly for the sound principles of right living so clearly outlined in the book of the law. But the conditions prevailing in the land of Judah were such that only by the most decided measures could a change for the better be brought about; therefore he labored most earnestly in behalf of the impenitent. ‘Break up your fallow ground,’ he pleaded, ‘and sow not among thorns.’ ‘O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved’ (Jeremiah 4:3, 14).”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 412.

“[Isaiah 61:4; 58:12 quoted.] The prophet here describes a people who, in a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, are seeking to restore the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God. They are repairers of a breach that has been made in God’s law—the wall that He has placed around His chosen ones for their protection, and obedience to whose precepts of justice, truth, and purity is to be their perpetual safeguard.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 677, 678.

3. DESTRUCTION FORETOLD

- a. **What condition must be met before we can realize the fulfillment of God’s promises? Deuteronomy 4:30, 31; 11:26–28; Isaiah 1:19.**

“There are those who profess holiness, who declare that they are wholly the Lord’s, who claim a right to the promises of God, while refusing to render obedience to His commandments. These transgressors of the law claim everything that is promised to the children of God; but this is presumption on their part, for John tells us that true love for God will be revealed in obedience to all His commandments. It is not enough to believe the theory of truth, to make a profession of faith in Christ, to believe that Jesus is no impostor, and that the religion of the Bible is no cunningly devised fable. ‘He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments,’ John wrote, ‘is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him.’ ‘He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him’ (1 John 2:4, 5; 3:24).”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 562, 563.

“So it is with every other one of God’s requirements. All His gifts are promised on condition of obedience. God has a heaven full of blessings for those who will cooperate with Him. All who obey Him may with confidence claim the fulfillment of His promises.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 145.

- b. **What was the warning given to Israel if they would not turn from their ways especially in regards to the Sabbath? Jeremiah 18:15–17; 25:8–12.**

“[Jeremiah 17:24, 25 quoted.] This promise of prosperity as the reward of allegiance was accompanied by a prophecy of the terrible judgments that would befall the city should its inhabitants prove disloyal to God and His law. If the admonitions to obey the Lord God of their fathers and to hallow His Sabbath day were not heeded, the city and its palaces would be utterly destroyed by fire.”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 411, 412.

4. THE TERRIBLE RESULTS OF APOSTASY

- a. What course did God’s people take in spite of the warnings? Jeremiah 6:16, 17; 2 Chronicles 36:17–20.

“God had pleaded with Judah not to provoke Him to anger, but they had hearkened not. Finally sentence was pronounced against them. They were to be led away captive to Babylon. The Chaldeans were to be used as the instrument by which God would chastise His disobedient people. The sufferings of the men of Judah were to be in proportion to the light they had had and to the warnings they had despised and rejected. Long had God delayed His judgments, but now He would visit His displeasure upon them as a last effort to check them in their evil course.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 425.

“In calling the attention of Judah to the sins that finally brought upon them the Babylonian Captivity, the Lord declared: ‘Thou hast . . . profaned My Sabbaths.’ ‘Therefore have I poured out Mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads’ (Ezekiel 22:8, 31).”—*Ibid.*, p. 182.

- b. Why was God compelled to take such action? 2 Chronicles 36:14–16; Ezekiel 22:8, 31.

“The children of Israel were taken captive to Babylon because they separated from God, and no longer maintained the principles that had been given to keep them free from the methods and practices of the nations who dishonored God. The Lord could not give them prosperity, He could not fulfil His covenant with them, while they were untrue to the principles He had given them zealously to maintain. By their spirit and their actions they misrepresented His character, and He permitted them to be taken captive. Because of their separation from Him, He humbled them. He left them to their own ways, and the innocent suffered with the guilty.”—*The Review and Herald*, May 2, 1899.

5. AN UNCHANGING GOD

- a. What are the most important characteristics of God’s love towards us? Psalm 89:14; Exodus 34:6, 7.

“The infinite love of God has been manifested in the gift of His only-begotten Son to redeem a lost race. Christ came to the earth to reveal to men the character of His Father, and His life was filled with deeds of divine tenderness and compassion. And yet Christ Himself declares, ‘Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law’ (Matthew 5:18). The same voice that with patient, loving entreaty invites the sinner to come to Him and find pardon and peace, will in the judgment bid the rejecters of His mercy, ‘Depart from Me, ye cursed’ (Matthew 25:41). In all the Bible, God is represented not only as a tender father but as a righteous judge. Though He delights in showing mercy, and ‘forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,’ yet He ‘will by no means clear the guilty’ (Exodus 34:7).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 469.

- b. How can we be assured that God will always deal justly with the sinner? Hebrews 13:8.

“God does not change His plans and devise new expedients to save man in different ages or dispensations. With Him ‘is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.’ He does not abolish the law to bring man into harmony with Himself. If He had proposed to destroy the jurisdiction of the law over man at any time, He would have done so when Adam’s failure to keep its requirements brought him under its terrible condemnation. But God does not provide any such escape in this emergency. He expels the guilty pair from the garden. The law says the penalty of sin is death, and they have brought on themselves, by deliberate choice, the loss of eternal life. The course of God toward the rebellious has not changed. There is no way back to innocence and life except through repentance for having transgressed God’s law, and faith in the merits of the divine sacrifice, who has suffered for your transgressions of the past; and you are accepted in the Beloved on condition of obedience to the commandments of your Creator.”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1887.

PERSONAL REVIEW

Spiritual Blindness.—“God’s love and justice have provided one way, and one only, whereby man can be saved from eternal separation from Heaven and alienation from God, and that is by faith in Christ and obedience to His law. The Spirit of God operating upon the human heart never leads men to belittle the law of Jehovah. Enlightened by this divine influence, we will see with awe the majesty of its requirements, the heinousness of sin, and feel the terror of its inevitable penalties upon the transgressor.

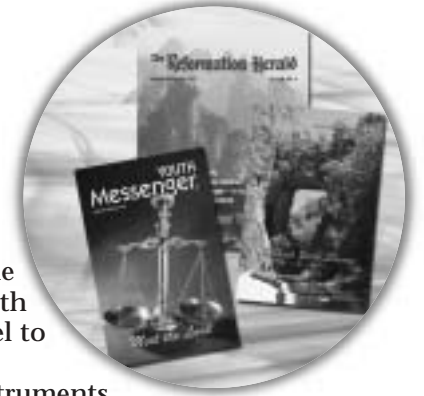
“If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and to this refuge the repentant soul turns to plead the merits of his Saviour’s blood. But while the blood of Christ avails for the repenting soul, Christ is not the minister of sin, and there is no peace, no assurance, no genuine hope, for anyone who ignores the claims of God’s law and tramples upon its just demands. To trust in man’s good purposes or works is seen by the repenting sinner to be utmost folly. To suppose that a few deeds of beneficence or the performance of duty will cancel a life-time of sin, is a blindness that Satan brings over the mind to befog the moral perceptions, and lead men to trust in themselves.”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1887.

Glorious Deliverance.—“Thus prophecies of oncoming judgment were mingled with promises of final and glorious deliverance. Those who should choose to make their peace with God and live holy lives amid the prevailing apostasy, would receive strength for every trial and be enabled to witness for Him with mighty power. And in the ages to come the deliverance wrought in their behalf would exceed in fame that wrought for the children of Israel at the time of the Exodus. The days were coming, the Lord declared through His prophet, when ‘they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land’ (Jeremiah 23:7, 8).”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 427.

1. If you find that you are not in communion with God’s will, how should you feel about approaching Him?
2. Why did God eventually have to use drastic measures to reach Israel?
3. Does God ever want to punish the transgressor?
4. What conditions must be met to receive the blessings of God?
5. Why is the Sabbath especially important to God’s people?

First Sabbath Offering

Literature for poor countries



Jesus said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor” (Luke 4:18).

“God works by means of instruments, or second causes. He uses the gospel ministry, medical missionary work, and the publications containing present truth to impress hearts. All are made effectual by means of faith. As the truth is heard or read, the Holy Spirit sends it home to those who hear and read with an earnest desire to know what is right.”—*Evangelism*, p. 547.

“Papers and books are the Lord’s means of keeping the message for this time continually before the people. In enlightening and confirming souls in the truth, the publications will do a far greater work than can be accomplished by the ministry of the Word alone. The silent messengers that are placed in the homes of the people through the work of the canvasser, will strengthen the gospel ministry in every way; for the Holy Spirit will impress minds as they read the books, just as He impresses the minds of those who listen to the preaching of the Word.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 161, 162.

“Our publications should be printed in different languages and sent to every civilized country, at any cost. What is the value of money at this time, in comparison with the value of souls? Every dollar of our means should be considered as the Lord’s, not ours; and as a precious trust from God to us; not to be wasted for needless indulgences, but carefully used in the cause of God, in the work of saving men and women from ruin.”—*Life Sketches*, p. 214.

Dear brethren, sisters and friends: In light of these inspired statements, please remember the urgent need of means to spread the light of present truth to souls starving for the bread of life in poor countries around the world. When the First Sabbath Offering is collected on November 1, 2003, let us stretch forth our hands with open hearts for this timely work. May the Lord richly bless each gift and giver!

PROJECT RH01

Daniel Dumitru, GC Publishing Secretary

A Perpetual Covenant

“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, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words” (Isaiah 58:13).

“Great blessings are promised to those who keep holy God’s Sabbath.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 13, 1897.

Suggested Readings: *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 53–56. *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 677, 678.

Sabbath

October 25

Isaiah 58:8–14.

“Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. 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, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

Sunday

October 26

1. BY THEIR FRUITS YOU SHALL KNOW THEM

- a. **What identifies the true followers of Jesus? Matthew 7:15–20; 2 Corinthians 6:14–18.**

“Not all who name the name of Christ are one with Christ. Those who do not have the Spirit and the grace of Christ are none of His, no matter what may be their profession. By their fruits ye shall know them. The customs and practices that are after the order of the world do not carry out the principles of God’s law, and therefore do not breathe of His Spirit nor express His character. Christlikeness will be revealed only by those who are assimilated to the divine image. Only those who are being molded through the operation of the Holy Spirit are doers of the Word of God, and express the mind and the will of God. There is counterfeit Christianity in the world as well as genuine Christianity. The true spirit of a man is manifested by the way in which he deals with his fellowman. We may ask the question, Does he represent the character of Christ in spirit and action, or simply manifest the natural, selfish traits of character that belong to the people of this world? Profession weighs nothing with God. Before it is everlastingly too late for wrongs to be righted, let each one ask himself, ‘What am I?’ It depends upon ourselves as to whether we shall form such characters as will constitute us members of God’s royal family above.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 9, 1895.

- b. **How do we know that true Christianity is more than a profession? Matthew 7:21–23; James 1:22–25.**

“A mere profession of discipleship is of no value. The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. ‘Believe, believe,’ they say, ‘and you need not keep the law.’ But a belief that does not lead to obedience is presumption. The apostle John says, ‘He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him’ (1 John 2:4). Let none cherish the idea that special providences or miraculous manifestations are to be the proof of the genuineness of their work or of the ideas they advocate. When persons will speak lightly of the word of God, and set their impressions, feelings, and exercises above the divine standard, we may know that they have no light in them.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 146.

2. A MARK OF DISTINCTION

- a. While the keeping of the Ten Commandments is the fruit of our relationship with God, which of the Ten Commandments serves specifically as a sign of our allegiance to God? Exodus 31:16, 17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20.

- b. How do we know that the seventh-day Sabbath was not given only to the Jews? When was it instituted? Genesis 2:3.

“Christ was the leader of the Hebrews as they marched from Egypt to Canaan. In union with the Father, Christ proclaimed the law amid the thunders of Sinai to the Jews, and when He appeared on earth as a man among men, He came as a descendant of Abraham. Shall we use the same argument concerning the Bible and Christ, and reject them as Jewish, as is done in rejecting the Sabbath of the Lord our God? The Sabbath institution is as closely identified with the Jews as is the Bible, and there is the same reason for the rejection of one as of the other. But the Sabbath is not Jewish in its origin. It was instituted in Eden before there were such a people known as the Jews. The Sabbath was made for all mankind, and was instituted in Eden before the fall of man. The Creator called it ‘my holy day.’—*The Signs of the Times*, November 12, 1894.

- c. According to Exodus 31:16, how long was the Sabbath to endure?

“Christ announced Himself as ‘the Lord of the Sabbath.’ Beginning with creation, it is as old as the human race, and having been made for man it will exist as long as man shall exist. Hallowed by the Creator’s rest and blessing, the Sabbath was kept by Adam in his innocence in holy Eden, by Adam fallen, yet repentant, when he was driven from his happy estate. It was kept by all the patriarchs from Abel to Noah, to Abraham, to Jacob. When the chosen people were in bondage in Egypt, many, in the midst of the prevailing idolatry, lost their knowledge of God’s law; but when the Lord delivered Israel, He proclaimed His law in awful grandeur to the assembled multitude, that they might know His will, and fear and obey Him forever.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 12, 1894.

3. A PERPETUAL COVENANT

- a. Will there ever be a time when the people of God will not keep the Sabbath? Isaiah 66:22, 23.

“The children of Israel were to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations ‘for a perpetual covenant’ (Exodus 31:16). The Sabbath has lost none of its meaning. It is still the sign between God and His people, and it will be so forever. Now and ever we are to stand as a distinct and peculiar people, free from all worldly policy, unembarrassed by confederation with those who have not wisdom to discern the claims of God, so plainly set forth in His law.

“We are to show that we are seeking to work in harmony with heaven in preparing the way of the Lord. We are to bear witness to all nations, kindreds, and tongues, that we are a people who love and fear God, a people who keep holy the seventh-day Sabbath, and we are to show plainly that we have full faith that the Lord is soon to come in the clouds of heaven.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 345.

“To us as to Israel the Sabbath is given ‘for a perpetual covenant.’ To those who reverence His holy day the Sabbath is a sign that God recognizes them as His chosen people. It is a pledge that He will fulfill to them His covenant. Every soul who accepts the sign of God’s government places himself under the divine, everlasting covenant. He fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 350.

“The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. It had been made known to man in Eden, and, like the other precepts of the Decalogue, it is of imperishable obligation. Of that law of which the fourth commandment forms a part, Christ declares, ‘Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law.’ So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator’s power. And when Eden shall bloom on earth again, God’s holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun. ‘From one Sabbath to another’ the inhabitants of the glorified new earth shall go up ‘to worship before Me, saith the Lord’ (Matthew 5:18; Isaiah 66:23).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 283.

4. EXAMPLES FOR US

- a. Why was the Old Testament written and given to us? Romans 15:4; John 5:39.

“The Old Testament . . . was not written merely for the ancients; it was for all ages and for all people.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 254.

- b. What example of Israel concerning the Sabbath is given to us? Exodus 16:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 10:11.

“Through Moses the Lord said to the children of Israel: ‘Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.’ ‘And the people went about, and gathered it [the manna], and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it’ (Exodus 16:23; Numbers 11:8). There was something to be done in preparing the heaven-sent bread for the children of Israel. The Lord told them that this work must be done on Friday, the preparation day. This was a test to them. God desired to see whether or not they would keep the Sabbath holy.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 354, 355.

- c. What was the reason some Israelites did not pass the test? Hebrews 4:1–6, 9–11.

“Unbelief greatly dishonors God. Our lack of faith is withholding from us precious blessings which are hanging over us, and which God would have us receive and appreciate. When we practice the Word, we shall be perfect in Him who is our righteousness. If the Word is believed by us, soberly, meekly, if it is received and appropriated, it will give us a precious experience, that will make us wise unto salvation. But, like the children of Israel, we are in danger of indulging a spirit of unbelief and murmuring.”—*The Signs of the Times*, October 4, 1899.

5. REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH

- a. What special work will God’s people be doing in the end time in reference to the Sabbath? Isaiah 58:12, 13.

“In words of unmistakable meaning the prophet points out the specific work of this remnant people who build the wall. ‘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; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it’ (Isaiah 58:13, 14).”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 678.

- b. What promise is given to those who engage in this most important work? Isaiah 58:14; Revelation 22:14.

“Great blessings are promised to those who keep holy God’s Sabbath. ‘If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath,’ God says, ‘from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.’”—*The Review and Herald*, July 13, 1897.

“But you must not think that you have nothing to do, because Christ died for you. You must repent of all of your sins, and give your hearts to God, and then believe that the blood of Christ will cleanse you from all sin. Then if you keep all the commandments of God, the Sabbath with the rest, you may through the merits of Christ, be brought back to the tree of life. This will be when Jesus comes to raise the righteous dead, and change the living saints. Then you will have right to the tree of life, and eat of the leaves, and immortal fruit of the tree of life and live for ever in perfect happiness. Read Rev. xxii, 14.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, August 1, 1856.

“Let us consider that all these rich blessings are for those who keep the commandments of God. What more can we desire? What richer reward can we ask?”—*The Review and Herald*, January 22, 1895.

PERSONAL REVIEW

Constant Vigilance.—“The time in which we are living calls for constant vigilance, and God’s ministers are to present the light on the Sabbath question. They should warn the inhabitants of the world that Christ is soon to come with power and great glory. The last message of warning to the world is to lead men to see the importance that God attaches to His law. So plainly is the truth to be presented that no transgressor, hearing it, shall be excusable in failing to discern the importance of obedience to God’s commands.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 148.

“To Adam and Eve in Eden the Lord gave the use of every tree in the garden save one. So the Lord has given to men six days in which they are to engage in common labor; but He has put His sanctity upon the seventh day, declaring it to be holy. That day is to be sacredly observed as a memorial of creation. ‘God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all His work.’”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 31, 1898.

Worshippers of Jehovah.—“God rested on the seventh day, not merely to furnish an example to the Jews. The Sabbath commandment is obligatory upon all men to the end of time. And not only this, its observance is to be carried into the future world, to be perpetuated throughout eternity.”—*Ibid.*, July 29, 1897.

“Pointing to God as the maker of the heavens and the earth, [the Sabbath] distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day signify by this act that they are worshippers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man’s allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 59.

1. Since God has not given us the ability to read the heart, how only can we identify those who are following the Lord?
2. Why is observance of the true Sabbath so significant?
3. How long did God intend for the Sabbath to be kept in honor of Him?
4. What was the root cause of Israel’s failure to honor God in the wilderness?
5. Why is it important that there is a people restoring the Sabbath to its prominence?

The Sabbath in the New Testament

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil” (Matthew 5:17).

“Christ’s death on the cross is an unanswerable argument in favor of the changeless character of every precept of God’s holy law.”—*The Review and Herald*, December 20, 1898.

Suggested Reading: *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 170–174.

Sabbath

November 1

Luke 6:6–10.

“And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

1. JESUS AND THE SABBATH

- a. What example did Jesus give us concerning the Sabbath? Luke 4:16; Mark 6:2; Luke 13:10; Matthew 12:6-8.

“Jesus said at the close of His earthly ministry, ‘I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.’ Neither the Saviour nor His followers ever broke the law of the Sabbath. Had the Jews been able to sustain their charge against Christ as a Sabbath breaker, as they tried to do, they would have had no need of bringing false witnesses in order that they might secure His condemnation and death. But because no fault could be found with Him, in order to secure His death it was necessary that men should perjure their souls by testifying to a lie.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 12, 1894.

- b. What evidence did Jesus give that the seventh day was to remain the Sabbath even after His death? Matthew 24:15-20; 28:1, 2.

“Christ emphasizes His words: ‘For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.’ So long as the heavens and the earth remain, so long will the Sabbath of the fourth commandment hold its claim on the human family.”—*The Review and Herald*, December 20, 1898.

“There was only one entrance to the tomb, and neither human fraud nor force could tamper with the stone that guarded the entrance. Here Jesus rested during the Sabbath. A strong guard of angels kept watch over the tomb, and had a hand been raised to remove the body, the flashing forth of their glory would have laid him who ventured powerless on the earth. He who died for the sins of the world was to remain in the tomb for the allotted time. He was in that stony prison house as a prisoner of divine justice, and he was responsible to the Judge of the universe. He was bearing the sins of the world, and His Father only could release Him.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, May 2, 1901.

2. WALK AS HE WALKED

- a. Who is our pattern in all things? 1 Timothy 1:16; 1 Peter 2:21.

“I am instructed to say to our people, Let us follow Christ. Do not forget that He is to be our pattern in all things. We may safely discard those ideas that are not found in His teaching. I appeal to our ministers to be sure that their feet are planted on the platform of eternal truth. Beware how you follow impulse, calling it the Holy Spirit. Some are in danger of doing this. The word of God urges us to be sound in the faith, able to give to every one who asks, a reason of the hope that is in us.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 306.

“In daily doing the works of Christ, it becomes a pleasure to do His will. Christ came to our world to live out the law of God, to be our pattern in all things. He placed Himself between the mercy seat, and the vast number of heartless worshippers who were full of ostentation, pride, and vanity, and by His lessons of truth, which were ‘eloquent with simplicity,’ He impressed the people with the necessity of spiritual worship. His lessons were impressive, beautiful and weighty with importance, and yet so simple that a child could understand them. The truth He presented was so deep that the wisest and most accomplished teacher could never exhaust it. Those who work as seeing the Invisible, will always preserve simplicity, charging the simplest words with the power of the grandest truths.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 266.

- b. Since He is our pattern, how should we live and worship? 1 John 2:4-6; 1:6, 7; John 14:15, 23.

“Christ has come to be our example, and we are to walk as He walked, and work as He worked, with unselfish purpose, ever keeping the Pattern before us. Weighted with the sense of responsibility, we are to represent Christ to the world. This is our work as Christians; for we are to let our light shine forth to the world in good works. Actions will tell, and therefore how important it is to study the life of Christ to see how He glorified the Father, that we may go and do likewise.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 15, 1892.

3. THE APOSTLES AND THE SABBATH

- a. Since the New Testament was written after the death of Christ, how did the apostles regard the Law of God after the cross? 1 John 3:4; James 2:10; Romans 3:31.

“Many religious teachers assert that Christ by His death abolished the law, and men are henceforth free from its requirements. There are some who represent it as a grievous yoke, and in contrast to the bondage of the law they present the liberty to be enjoyed under the gospel.

“But not so did prophets and apostles regard the holy law of God. Said David: ‘I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts’ (Psalm 119:45). The apostle James, who wrote after the death of Christ, refers to the Decalogue as ‘the royal law’ and ‘the perfect law of liberty’ (James 2:8; 1:25). And the revelator, half a century after the crucifixion, pronounces a blessing upon them ‘that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city’ (Revelation 22:14).”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 466.

- b. What examples do we have of the apostles concerning the Sabbath day? Acts 13:14; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4.

- c. How do we know that the apostles also met with the Gentiles on the Sabbath day? Acts 13:42–44.

“[The Jews] listened, on one Sabbath day, with intense interest to the teachings of Paul and Barnabas, who preached Jesus as the promised Messiah; and upon the next Sabbath day, because of the multitude of Gentiles who assembled also to hear them, they were excited to a frenzy of indignation, the words of the apostles were distorted in their minds, and they were unfitted to weigh the evidence presented by them. When they learned that the Messiah preached by the apostles was to be a light to the Gentiles, as well as the glory of His people Israel, they were beside themselves with rage, and used the most insulting language to the apostles.”—*Sketches From the Life of Paul*, pp. 49, 50.

4. THE APOSTLES AND THE SABBATH (continued)

- a. How careful were the apostles not to offend the Jewish converts? Acts 15:5, 6.

“Here is a decisive refutation of the claims so often made, that Christ and His apostles violated the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Could the sin of Sabbath breaking have been fastened upon Christ or Stephen or others who died for their faith, men would not have been suborned to bear false witness against them to furnish some pretext for their condemnation. One such instance of transgression of the law would have placed the Christians in the power of their enemies. Their carefulness to show the utmost respect for customs and ceremonies of minor importance is an evidence that it would have been impossible for them to violate the Sabbath of the fourth commandment without suffering the severest penalty.”—*Sketches From the Life of Paul*, p. 213.

- b. What were the issues discussed at a very important meeting of the church? Acts 15:24–29.

“The Gentiles, and especially the Greeks, were extremely licentious, and there was danger that some, unconverted in heart, would make a profession of faith without renouncing their evil practices. The Jewish Christians could not tolerate the immorality that was not even regarded as criminal by the heathen. The Jews therefore held it as highly proper that circumcision and the observance of the ceremonial law should be enjoined on the Gentile converts as a test of their sincerity and devotion. This, they believed, would prevent the addition to the church of those who, adopting the faith without true conversion of heart, might afterward bring reproach upon the cause by immorality and excess.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 192.

- c. Some years after this meeting, how did the apostles reiterate the binding claims of the Law, including the Sabbath? Romans 2:13; 6:14, 15; James 2:12.

5. THE EARLY CHRISTIANS AND THE SABBATH

- a. **What was the commission given to the church after Christ's ascension to heaven? Matthew 28:19, 20. Which day of worship did Christ observe?**

“In the commission to His disciples, Christ not only outlined their work, but gave them their message. Teach the people, He said, ‘to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.’ The disciples were to teach what Christ had taught. That which He had spoken, not only in person, but through all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament, is here included. Human teaching is shut out. There is no place for tradition, for man's theories and conclusions, or for church legislation. No laws ordained by ecclesiastical authority are included in the commission. None of these are Christ's servants to teach. ‘The law and the prophets,’ with the record of His own words and deeds, are the treasure committed to the disciples to be given to the world. Christ's name is their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing that does not bear His superscription is to be recognized in His kingdom.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 826.

- b. **What was the strength of the early church? Matthew 16:18.**

“Christ founded His church upon the living Rock. That Rock is Himself—His own body, for us broken and bruised. Against the church built upon this foundation, the gates of hell shall not prevail.

“How feeble the church appeared when Christ spoke these words! There was only a handful of believers, against whom all the power of demons and evil men would be directed; yet the followers of Christ were not to fear. Built upon the Rock of their strength, they could not be overthrown.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 413.

- c. **What were the early Christians to teach concerning the ten commandments of which the fourth commandment forms a part? Matthew 5:19, 20.**

“In the first centuries the true Sabbath had been kept by all Christians. They were jealous for the honor of God, and, believing that His law is immutable, they zealously guarded the sacredness of its precepts.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 52.

PERSONAL REVIEW

Answering Accusations.—“We would say to all who are thus anxious in regard to their duty, Upon no consideration are you excusable in violating the fourth commandment. It is no violation of the Sabbath to perform works of necessity, as ministering to the sick or aged, and relieving distress. Such works are in perfect harmony with the Sabbath law. Our great Exemplar was ever active upon the Sabbath, when the necessities of the sick and suffering came before Him. The Pharisees, because of this, accused Him of Sabbath breaking, as do many ministers today who are in opposition to the law of God. But we say, Let God be true, and every man a liar who dares make this charge against the Saviour.

“Jesus answered the accusation of the Jews thus, ‘If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.’ He had already declared to them that He had kept His Father's commandments. When He was accused of Sabbath breaking in the matter of healing the withered hand, He turned upon His accusers with the question, ‘Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?’ In summing up His answer to the questioning of the Pharisees He said, ‘Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.’ Here Christ justified His work as in perfect harmony with the Sabbath law. Ministers who profess to be ambassadors of Christ, yet assert that He did not regard the Sabbath day, and thus endeavor to justify themselves in disregarding it, make the same accusation against Christ as did the Pharisees. They certainly select poor company in those caviling Jews who persecuted the Redeemer.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1878.

1. **What pattern should the Christian follow?**
2. **Why is it important that we be not only hearers of the word but doers also?**
3. **What examples do we have of the disciples even after Christ's ascension observing the Sabbath?**
4. **Have the ten commandments lost any of their significance since the death of Christ?**
5. **What should the true Christian be teaching in regard to the Law of God and the Sabbath?**

Sunday in the Scriptures

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come” (1 Corinthians 16:2).

“Each member of the different families in our churches who believes the truth may act a part in its advancement by cheerfully adopting systematic benevolence.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 411.

Suggested Readings: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 283–289.
Ibid., pp. 788–794.

Sabbath

November 8

Psalm 111:1–7.

“Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation. The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious and full of compassion. He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant. He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen. The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

Sunday

November 9

1. THE RESURRECTION DAY

- a. What is the first reference to the first day of the week (Sunday) in the New Testament? Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1.

- b. What were the followers of Jesus doing on that day that indicates that it was not a special day for worship? Luke 23:56; 24:1.

“The spices with which the body of Jesus was to be anointed had been prepared on the day preceding the Sabbath. Early in the morning of the first day of the week, the Marys, with certain other women, went to the sepulcher to proceed with the work of embalming the body of the Saviour. As they neared the garden, they were surprised to see the heavens beautifully lighted up, and the earth trembling beneath their feet. They hastened to the sepulcher, and were astonished to find that the stone was rolled away from the door, and that the Roman guard were not there. They noticed a light shining about the tomb, and, looking in, saw that it was empty.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 198.

- c. When Mary saw Jesus, did He give any indication that the first day was to henceforth be regarded as a sacred day of worship? Mark 16:9; John 20:11–17.

“But now in His own familiar voice Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ Now she knew that it was not a stranger who was addressing her, and turning she saw before her the living Christ. In her joy she forgot that He had been crucified. Springing toward Him, as if to embrace His feet, she said, ‘Rabboni.’ But Christ raised His hand, saying, Detain Me not; ‘for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.’ And Mary went her way to the disciples with the joyful message.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 790.

2. JESUS APPEARS BEFORE THE DISCIPLES

- a. What were the circumstances surrounding Jesus' first appearance to the disciples? John 20:19–23.

“The Holy Spirit is the breath of life in the soul. The breathing of Christ upon His disciples was the breath of true spiritual life. The disciples were to interpret this as imbuing them with the attributes of their Saviour, that in purity, faith, and obedience, they might exalt the law, and make it honorable. God’s law is the expression of His character. By obedience to its requirements we meet God’s standard of character. Thus the disciples were to witness for Christ.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 13, 1899.

- b. After Jesus breathed the Holy Ghost on His disciples, was there any indication of a change in their obligation to the Law and the Sabbath?

“[John 20:20–23 quoted.] Thus the disciples received their commission. They were to teach and to preach in Christ’s name. The instruction given them had in it the vital, spiritual breath that is in Christ. He alone could give them the oil which they must have in order to work successfully. Christ’s likeness must appear in them. They could be successful only as they studied their Master’s character and followed His example.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 13, 1899.

- c. Eight days later when he met with them for the second time, what message was given to them? John 20:26–31.

“Many who are given to doubt excuse themselves by saying that if they had the evidence which Thomas had from his companions, they would believe. They do not realize that they have not only that evidence, but much more. Many who, like Thomas, wait for all cause of doubt to be removed, will never realize their desire. They gradually become confirmed in unbelief. Those who educate themselves to look on the dark side, and murmur and complain, know not what they do. They are sowing the seeds of doubt, and they will have a harvest of doubt to reap. At a time when faith and confidence are most essential, many will thus find themselves powerless to hope and believe.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 807, 808.

3. AN OFFERING FOR THE POOR

- a. Where do we find the next reference to the first day of the week? 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2.

- b. What did the apostle mean when he said “lay by him” (see marginal reading for 1 Corinthians 16:2)? Was this a meeting in the church?

“Each member of the different families in our churches who believes the truth may act a part in its advancement by cheerfully adopting systematic benevolence. ‘Let every one of you lay by him in store [by himself at home], . . . that there be no gatherings when I come.’ The burden of urging and pressing individuals to give of their means was not designed to be the work of God’s ministers. The responsibility should rest upon every individual who enjoys the belief of the truth. ‘Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him.’ Every member of the family, from the oldest down to the youngest, may take part in this work of benevolence.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 411, 412.

- c. Did the apostle put any religious significance on this day when he designates it as the “first day of the week” in 1 Corinthians 16:2? Ezekiel 46:1.

- d. Should the Sabbath be a day when we count our income? Exodus 31:14, 15.

“When the Sabbath begins, we should place a guard upon ourselves, upon our acts and our words, lest we rob God by appropriating to our own use that time which is strictly the Lord’s. We should not do ourselves, nor suffer our children to do any manner of our own work for a livelihood, or anything which could have been done on the six working days. Friday is the day of preparation. . . . Those who are not fully converted to the truth, frequently let their minds run freely upon worldly business, and although they may rest from physical toil upon the Sabbath, their tongues speak out what is in their minds; hence these words concerning cattle, crops, losses, and gains. All this is Sabbath breaking. If the mind is running upon worldly matters, the tongue will reveal it; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”—*Gospel Workers* (1892 edition), pp. 207, 208.

4. THE DEPARTURE OF PAUL

- a. In Acts 20:7 we find the only recorded public meeting on the first day of the week. How often did they assemble to “break bread”? Acts 2:42, 46.

- b. When did this meeting begin and how long did it last? Acts 20:7, 8, 11.

- c. Since the creation record informs us that the day begins at sunset (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31), we can see that this meeting was held on Saturday evening. Why did Paul hold a meeting on this evening?

“Upon the last evening of [Paul’s] tarry with them, the brethren ‘came together to break bread.’ The fact that their beloved teacher was about to depart, had called together a larger company than usual. They assembled in an upper room on the third story, the coolest and pleasantest place for such a gathering on that warm spring evening. The nights were then dark, but many lights were burning in the chamber. Paul’s mind was impressed with a sense of the perils that awaited him, and the uncertainty of again meeting with his brethren; he had matters of great interest and importance to present before them; and in the earnestness of his love and solicitude for them, he preached until midnight.”—*Sketches From the Life of Paul*, pp. 196, 197.

- d. Where was Paul going? Did he believe that he would ever see the brethren again? Acts 20:16, 22, 25.

“Since his conversion, Paul’s visits to Jerusalem had always been attended with anxiety, and with a feeling of remorse as he gazed upon scenes that recalled his former life. There was the school of Gamaliel, where he had received his education, the synagogue in which he worshiped, the house where the high priest had given him his commission to Damascus, the spot where the blood of Stephen had witnessed for Christ. As the apostle gazed upon the place for martyrdom, the scene in all its vividness rose up before him. Was he going forward to a similar fate? Never had he trod the streets of Jerusalem with so sad a heart as now.”—*Sketches From the Life of Paul*, p. 206.

5. THE LORD’S DAY

- a. On which day does the apostle John say he was in the spirit? Revelation 1:10.

- b. Of which day did Jesus say He was the Lord? Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5.

- c. Which day did He declare was “my holy day”? Isaiah 58:13.

“The Sabbath was made for all mankind, and was instituted in Eden before the fall of man. The Creator called it ‘my holy day.’ Christ announced Himself as ‘the Lord of the Sabbath.’ Beginning with creation, it is as old as the human race, and having been made for man it will exist as long as man shall exist.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 12, 1894.

- d. What is the only day according to Scripture that can be termed the “Lord’s day”?

“It was on the Sabbath that the Lord of glory appeared to the exiled apostle. The Sabbath was as sacredly observed by John on Patmos as when he was preaching to the people in the towns and cities of Judea. He claimed as his own the precious promises that had been given regarding that day. ‘I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day,’ John writes, ‘and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. . . . And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks One like unto the Son of man’ (Revelation 1:10–13).”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 581, 582.

PERSONAL REVIEW

“He Is Risen!”—“The women who had stood by the cross of Christ waited and watched for the hours of the Sabbath to pass. On the first day of the week, very early, they made their way to the tomb, taking with them precious spices to anoint the Saviour’s body. They did not think about His rising from the dead. The sun of their hope had set, and night had settled down on their hearts. As they walked, they recounted Christ’s works of mercy and His words of comfort. But they remembered not His words, ‘I will see you again’ (John 16:22). . . .

“He is risen, He is risen! The women repeat the words again and again. No need now for the anointing spices. The Saviour is living, and not dead. They remember now that when speaking of His death He said that He would rise again. What a day is this to the world! Quickly the women departed from the sepulcher ‘with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word.’”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 788, 789.

Obedience At Any Cost.—“This subject opens before the earnest seeker after truth. It becomes more and more clear to him that God has not changed or altered the thing that has gone out of His lips. He sees the sanctity and blessing placed upon the seventh day, and the necessity for its observance. The more earnestly he investigates this subject, the more convinced he becomes of the truth of God’s word, as seen in the law of the ten commandments. His interest in truth is tested, his love for God proved, as he advances. If he submits his will to God’s will, all will be well. If he chooses obedience to God’s commandments at any cost, his peace and happiness will increase.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 13, 1897.

1. How many times is the first day of the week mentioned in the New Testament?
2. Is there any indication in the Scripture that special significance was ever placed on the first day of the week as a day of worship?
3. In reference to Paul collecting an offering for the believers in Jerusalem, where were those giving supposed to lay aside their offering?
4. According to Scripture, what is the only day that can truly be said is the “Lord’s day”? Why?
5. What is our rule and guide in religious matters, the Word of God or the opinions of men?

The Attempted Change

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

“That the attention of the people might be called to the Sunday, it was made a festival in honor of the resurrection of Christ.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 52.

Suggested Reading: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 444–450.

Sabbath

November 15

Revelation 13:4–10.

“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

1. THE SABBATH AND THE LAW

- a. **What is the relationship between the Sabbath and the Law of God? Exodus 20:1–17; Deuteronomy 11:13; Matthew 22:37–40.**

“The first four commandments were given to show men their duty to God. The fourth is the connecting link between the great God and man. The Sabbath, especially, was given for the benefit of man, and for the honor of God. These last six precepts show the duty of man to his fellow man.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 266, 267.

“In the heart of the law is the commandment enjoining upon man the observance of the Sabbath of Jehovah, which the world and the church have trodden under their feet. For centuries men have walked in blindness concerning the true Sabbath, and the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now is the day of reformation, and He calls upon men everywhere to repent. When the light of God’s disregarded commandment shone upon the path of those who sincerely loved God, they delayed not to keep His statutes.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 3, 1888.

- b. **Can any part of the Law be changed without affecting our relationship with God? Matthew 5:17–19; 15:9.**

“Those who teach for doctrines the commandments of men make void the law of God thru their tradition. . . . Just as long as the heavens remain above us, and the earth is beneath our feet, there can be no semblance of excuse for any power in heaven or earth to change the law of God.”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1901.

“If the law of God could have been changed, or altered in one of its statutes, it would have been so altered when sin originated in heaven, when the brightest son of the morning, who was good, noble, and lovely above all the beings that God had created, found fault with the precepts of that law in the counsels of angels. If ever a change was to have been made, it would have been accomplished when rebellion revealed itself in heaven, and so have prevented the great apostasy of the angels. The fact that no change was made in God’s administration, even when the most exalted of the angels drew away from allegiance to God’s law, is evidence enough to reasonable minds that the law, the foundation of God’s government, will not relax its claims to save the willful transgressor.”—*Ibid.*, April 28, 1890.

2. CHANGING TIMES AND LAWS

- a. **What Scripture predicts that man will attempt to change the Law of God? Daniel 7:23–25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.**

“That the law which was spoken by God’s own voice is faulty, that some specification has been set aside, is the claim which Satan now puts forward. It is the last great deception that he will bring upon the world. He needs not to assail the whole law; if he can lead men to disregard one precept, his purpose is gained. For ‘whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all’ (James 2:10). By consenting to break one precept, men are brought under Satan’s power. By substituting human law for God’s law, Satan will seek to control the world. This work is foretold in prophecy. Of the great apostate power which is the representative of Satan, it is declared, ‘He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand’ (Daniel 7:25).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 763.

- b. **What evidences show that Satan’s specific attack on the Law is in regard to worship? 2 Thessalonians 2:5–11; Isaiah 14:12–14; Matthew 4:8–10.**

“The detector of error having been removed, Satan worked according to his will. Prophecy had declared that the papacy was to ‘think to change times and laws’ (Daniel 7:25). This work it was not slow to attempt. To afford converts from heathenism a substitute for the worship of idols, and thus to promote their nominal acceptance of Christianity, the adoration of images and relics was gradually introduced into the Christian worship. The decree of a general council finally established this system of idolatry. To complete the sacrilegious work, Rome presumed to expunge from the law of God the second commandment, forbidding image worship, and to divide the tenth commandment, in order to preserve the number.

“The spirit of concession to paganism opened the way for a still further disregard of Heaven’s authority. Satan, working through unconsecrated leaders of the church, tampered with the fourth commandment also, and essayed to set aside the ancient Sabbath, the day which God had blessed and sanctified (Genesis 2:2, 3), and in its stead to exalt the festival observed by the heathen as ‘the venerable day of the sun.’”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 51, 52.

3. HALLOW MY SABBATHS

- a. What has God given as a sign of allegiance to Him? Exodus 31:13–17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20.

“Gather from the Scriptures the proofs that God has sanctified the seventh day, and let these proofs be read before the congregation. Let those who have not heard the truth be shown that all who turn aside from a plain ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ must suffer the result of their course. In all ages the Sabbath has been the test of loyalty to God. ‘It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever,’ the Lord declares (Exodus 31:17).”—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 148, 149.

- b. To whom is Sunday, “the venerable day of the sun,” a sign of allegiance? Deuteronomy 17:2–5; 2 Kings 23:5; Ezekiel 8:16–18.

“The day of the sun, Sunday, was a day devoted to the most vile of the heathen worship, for it was celebrated in connection with sun-worship. This Sunday sabbath has been accepted by many who know it to be the foundling of heathenism, which has been cherished and nourished by the Church of Rome, and by her clothed in the garments of sanctity. But while many are now aware of its origin, there are true Christians in every church who do not know the origin of the Sunday sabbath, and believe that they are keeping the day which God sanctified and blest. This is true of worshipers even in the Catholic Church; and while this ignorance and integrity remain, God accepts of their sincerity; but when light shall fall upon their pathway, God requires them to come into harmony with His law, and to observe the Sabbath of His appointing.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 19, 1894.

- c. When we come to a knowledge of God’s will, what should our attitude be? Acts 5:29; 1 Samuel 15:22.

“We are to receive [God’s] word as supreme authority. We are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 69.

4. CHOICE OF WORSHIP

- a. How do we know that God is reasonable and does not require anything that is unreasonable? Isaiah 1:18, 19; Romans 12:2.

“God is merciful. His requirements are reasonable, in accordance with the goodness and benevolence of His character. The object of the Sabbath was that all mankind might be benefited. Man was not made to fit the Sabbath; for the Sabbath was made after the creation of man, to meet his necessities. God rested, after He had made the world in six days. He sanctified and blessed the day upon which He rested from all His work which He had created and made. He set apart that special day for man to rest from his labor, and reflect, as he should look upon the earth beneath and the heavens above, that God made all these in six days, and rested upon the seventh; and that his heart might be filled with love and reverence to his Maker, as he should behold the tangible proofs of His infinite wisdom.”—*The Review and Herald*, May 30, 1871.

- b. What does God call each believer to do? Deuteronomy 30:19, 20; Joshua 24:14, 15.

“After presenting the goodness of God toward Israel, Joshua called upon the people, in the name of Jehovah, to choose whom they would serve. The worship of idols was still to some extent secretly practiced, and Joshua endeavored now to bring the people to a decision that they would banish this sin from Israel. ‘If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord,’ he said, ‘choose ye this day whom ye will serve.’ Joshua desired to lead them to serve God, not by compulsion, but willingly. Love to God is the very foundation of religion. To engage in His service merely from the hope of reward or the fear of punishment would avail nothing. Open apostasy would not be more offensive to God than hypocrisy and mere formal worship.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, June 20, 1901.

“The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can *choose* to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 47 (author’s italics).

5. SPARKS OF THEIR OWN KINDLING

- a. **How does God view man's substitutions in place of His directions in religious matters? Leviticus 10:1, 2; Numbers 3:4.**

“The priests who burned incense before the Lord were required to use the fire of God's kindling, which burned day and night, and was never extinguished. God gave explicit directions how every part of His service should be conducted, that all connected with His sacred worship might be in accordance with His holy character. And any deviation from the express directions of God in connection with His holy service was punishable with death. . . .

“Aaron's sons took the common fire which God did not accept, and they offered insult to the infinite God by presenting this strange fire before Him. God consumed them by fire for their positive disregard of His express directions.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 25, 1875.

- b. **What will be the result if we venture today to substitute man's idea of proper worship in place of God's explicit directions? Isaiah 50:11; 2:11, 12.**

“Those who ignore the Lord's Sabbath to keep holy the first day of the week, offer strange fire to God. It is a strange sabbath, which He has commanded them not. Will He accept it at their hands? Men have sought out many inventions. They have taken a common day, upon which God has placed no sanctity, and have clothed it with sacred prerogatives. They have declared it to be a holy day, but this does not give it a vestige of sanctity. They dishonor God by accepting human institutions and presenting to the world as the Christian Sabbath a day which has no “Thus saith the Lord” for its authority. As did Nadab and Abihu, they offer the common in place of the sacred.”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 31, 1898.

“The punishment visited upon the sons of Aaron for their sin in departing from God's commandment should be a warning to those who transgress the fourth commandment of Jehovah, which is very plain.”—*Ibid.*, July 8, 1880.

PERSONAL REVIEW

Sparks of Their Own Kindling.—“This [Sabbath] change was not at first attempted openly. . . . But with great subtlety Satan worked through his agents to bring about his object. That the attention of the people might be called to the Sunday, it was made a festival in honor of the resurrection of Christ. Religious services were held upon it; yet it was regarded as a day of recreation, the Sabbath being still sacredly observed.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 52.

“In the near future it will be seen just who have been walking humbly with God, and who have been obeying His orders. Those who have been walking in the sparks of their own kindling will lie down in sorrow. It will be seen that they have made a terrible mistake. O let us awake! Light is now shining; let the windows of the mind and heart be opened to welcome the heaven-sent rays.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 259.

Papal Substitution.—“‘To obey is better than sacrifice.’ This lesson is of special importance at the present time, when the claims of God's law are urged upon our attention. The light now shining from the sacred word reveals the fact that an alien power has tampered with the statutes of Jehovah. The papacy, ‘the man of sin,’ has attempted to change the times and laws of divine appointment. The Creator of the heavens and the earth commanded, ‘The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.’ This command was enforced by the example of its Author, proclaimed with His own voice, and placed in the very bosom of the Decalogue. But the papal power has removed this divine ordinance, and substituted a day which God has not sanctified, and upon which He did not rest, the festival so long adored by heathens as the ‘venerable day of the sun.’”—*The Signs of the Times*, September 14, 1882.

1. **What is the relationship between the Sabbath and the Ten-Commandment Law?**
2. **Does any person or religious institution have the ability, right or authority to change God's law? Why?**
3. **How do we show our allegiance to God?**
4. **What does God's willingness to reason with us tell of His love for the human race?**
5. **How important is it for us to set aside our opinions and accept God's direction when making choices for our life?**

The Seal of God

“Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them” (Ezekiel 20:12).

“The seal of God’s law is found in the fourth commandment.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 452.

Suggested Readings: *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 575–577.
The Desire of Ages, pp. 763, 764.
The Great Controversy, pp. 605–610.

Sabbath

November 22

Revelation 7:13–17.

“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

Sunday

November 23

1. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A SEAL

- a. In ancient times, as today, what did an official decree have to contain to make it binding? 1 Kings 21:8; Nehemiah 9:38; Esther 8:8; Daniel 6:17.

- b. How do we know that the Ten-Commandment Law is binding? Isaiah 8:16.

- c. Seals always contain the name, title, and territory of the lawgiver. Where do we find God’s seal in the Ten-Commandment Law? Exodus 20:8–11.

“The Sabbath is not introduced as a new institution but as having been founded at creation. It is to be remembered and observed as the memorial of the Creator’s work. Pointing to God as the Maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day signify by this act that they are worshipers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man’s allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him. The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 307.

“The Lord commands by the same prophet: ‘Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples’ (Isaiah 8:16). The seal of God’s law is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all the ten, brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given. When the Sabbath was changed by the papal power, the seal was taken from the law. The disciples of Jesus are called upon to restore it by exalting the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to its rightful position as the Creator’s memorial and the sign of His authority.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 452.

2. GOD'S SEAL

- a. **What does God's seal declare about the Ten-Commandment Law and especially the Sabbath? Ezekiel 20:12, 20; 2 Timothy 2:19.**

“The Israelites placed over their doors a signature of blood, to show that they were God's property. So the children of God in this age will bear the signature God has appointed. They will place themselves in harmony with God's holy law. A mark is placed upon every one of God's people just as verily as a mark was placed over the doors of the Hebrew dwellings, to preserve the people from the general ruin. God declares, ‘I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.’ When men say that the law of God is abrogated by the testimony of the Fathers, they are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. Their word is not founded upon the teaching of the apostles and prophets. Jesus Christ is not the chief cornerstone of their structure. John says, ‘He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’ Those who permit themselves to be deceived will, with the deceiver, feel the wrath of the Lamb.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 6, 1900.

- b. **From where does true allegiance to God come? John 14:15, 23; 1 John 5:2, 3; Deuteronomy 5:29.**

“We must have that genuine faith which works by love, and purifies the soul. God has given us a perfect standard of righteousness in His law. ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.’ This comprehends the whole duty of man to his God and to his neighbor. We owe to God our life, and all that makes life desirable, and when we refuse to render obedience to Him, we rob and defraud our own souls. No man can choose his own way without deep ingratitude to God; in so doing he renders to God enmity for love.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 5, 1889.

“The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 350.

3. GOD'S SPECIAL WARNING

- a. **What is God waiting for before He will end this world and usher in the new heavens and the new earth? Revelation 7:1–3.**

“We are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Prophecies are fulfilling. Strange and eventful history is being recorded in the books of heaven—events which it was declared should shortly precede the great day of God. Everything in the world is in an unsettled state. The nations are angry, and great preparations for war are being made. Nation is plotting against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. The great day of God is hastening greatly. But although the nations are mustering their forces for war and bloodshed, the command to the angels is still in force, that they hold the four winds until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 221, 222.

- b. **In this final work on earth, how many classes are developed? Matthew 25:32, 33; Revelation 14:1, 9.**

“The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time. Every man will be tested. Obedience or disobedience is the question to be decided by the whole world. All will be called to choose between the law of God and the laws of men. Here the dividing line will be drawn. There will be but two classes. Every character will be fully developed; and all will show whether they have chosen the side of loyalty or that of rebellion.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 763.

“In the issue of the great contest, two distinct, opposite classes are developed. One class ‘worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark,’ and thus bring upon themselves the awful judgments threatened by the third angel. The other class, in marked contrast to the world, ‘keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus’ (Revelation 14:9, 12). Though the powers of earth summon their forces to compel ‘all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,’ to receive the mark of the beast, yet the people of God do not receive it. The prophet of Patmos beholds ‘them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God’ (Revelation 15:2), and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 282, 283.

- c. **Since we see these things coming, what should we be doing? 2 Peter 3:11, 12.**

4. THE MARK OF THE BEAST

- a. We have seen that the seal of God is the Sabbath. This is not a physical mark but is apparent by adhering to the sign of allegiance designated by the Father to His children. What then is the mark of the beast? Revelation 14:9-11.

“If the light of truth has been presented to you, revealing the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and showing that there is no foundation in the Word of God for Sunday observance, and yet you still cling to the false sabbath, refusing to keep holy the Sabbath which God calls ‘My holy day,’ you receive the mark of the beast. When does this take place?—When you obey the decree that commands you to cease from labor on Sunday and worship God, while you know that there is not a word in the Bible showing Sunday to be other than a common working day, you consent to receive the mark of the beast, and refuse the seal of God. If we receive this mark in our foreheads or in our hands, the judgments pronounced against the disobedient must fall upon us. But the seal of the living God is placed upon those who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 13, 1897.

- b. How do we know that the mark of the beast is connected with how we worship? Revelation 13:12, 15.

“After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image the prophecy declares, ‘Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.’ Since those who keep God’s commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God’s law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 445, 446.

“The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.”—*Ibid.*, p. 605.

5. PERSECUTION OF COMMANDMENT KEEPERS

- a. What evidence do we have that the world will oppose those who are loyal to God? Matthew 24:9-12; 10:17-22.

“Jesus does not present to His followers the hope of attaining earthly glory and riches, of living a life free from trial. Instead He calls upon them to follow Him in the path of self-denial and reproach. He who came to redeem the world was opposed by the united forces of evil. In an unpitied confederacy, evil men and evil angels arrayed themselves against the Prince of Peace. His every word and act revealed divine compassion, and His unlikeness to the world provoked the bitterest hostility.

“So it will be with all who will live godly in Christ Jesus. Persecution and reproach await all who are imbued with the Spirit of Christ. The character of the persecution changes with the times, but the principle—the spirit that underlies it—is the same that has slain the chosen of the Lord ever since the days of Abel.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 576.

- b. How do we know that those who are true to God in keeping the Sabbath will be persecuted? Revelation 13:15-17; 2 Timothy 3:12.

“As the Protestant churches reject the clear, Scriptural arguments in defense of God’s law, they will long to silence those whose faith they cannot overthrow by the Bible. Though they blind their own eyes to the fact, they are now adopting a course which will lead to the persecution of those who conscientiously refuse to do what the rest of the Christian world are doing, and acknowledge the claims of the papal sabbath.

“The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected. In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet’s words: ‘The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ’ (Revelation 12:17).”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 592.

PERSONAL REVIEW

A Warning.—“Christ warned us in view of this very time that we should not be engrossed in the cares of the world, to the neglect of eternal interests; but how many of us allow the things of this life to interpose between our souls and the great gift of Heaven. How few are living for the glory of God and the good of humanity. How few are telling their children of the love of Christ, of the mansions of Heaven, of the necessity of faith and obedience. How few are warning their friends and neighbors of the fast-hastening Judgment. My heart is pained with the thought of the ingratitude of man to his Maker, and the indifference of souls to their dearly-purchased salvation. We are warned that if we do not watch and pray, the day of final reckoning will overtake us as a thief in the night, and our portion will be appointed with the hypocrites and unbelievers. ‘But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day.’ There is every provision made that we may have the light, and there will be no excuse in the day of God if we are overtaken in our sins. Sorrow and woe await those who do not heed the instructions of the word of life; but what joy is in store for those who have made preparation for the coming of their Lord! They will be changed from mortality to immortality. They will see the King in His beauty, and reflect His image. They will be caught up to be forever with the Lord.”—*The Signs of the Times*, January 27, 1888.

Human Wisdom.—“Conscientious obedience to the word of God will be treated as rebellion. . . . As the defenders of truth refuse to honor the Sunday sabbath, some of them will be thrust into prison, some will be exiled, some will be treated as slaves. To human wisdom all this now seems impossible; but as the restraining Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from men, and they shall be under the control of Satan, who hates the divine precepts, there will be strange developments. The heart can be very cruel when God’s fear and love are removed.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 608.

1. What must accompany any formal law to make it binding?
2. Explain how the Fourth Commandment answers to the seal of the Law of God making it binding upon all men.
3. How is our manner of worship directly related to our eternal destiny?
4. What important warning is given concerning the seal of God?
5. In this world, what fate awaits all who are faithful?

First Sabbath Offering for Moldova



Moldova is a small European country landlocked between Romania and Ukraine. Yet its size should not be reflective of its value to the spread of the gospel message.

Originally known as Bessarabia, the country was ceded to Russia by the Turks all the way back in 1812. It was after this that the Advent message came to the country. As the Reform Movement was born in the aftermath of WWI, the faithful few in this country found themselves annexed to Romania.

During these early years of Reformation, the small country of Moldova sent pioneering missionaries as far away as South America. By the grace of God the present truth found fertile soil in this country and the message spread rapidly. The new believers praised God for every new soul saved from the snares of the enemy.

Then in 1940 the territory passed to the control of the Soviet Union. The believers were forced to maintain their religion in secret. Many perished in prisons, were persecuted, and even sent to Siberia to waste away in the harsh climate. The question may be asked, could the believers remain faithful in adversity? When communism fell in the early 1990’s Moldova gained its freedom, and for the first time in 50 years, the believers could assemble without fear. Not only had they remained faithful, but their numbers had actually increased under persecution.

Today Moldova has the largest ratio of Reformers to the general population of any country in the world. The brethren here appreciate what it means to be free to exercise their religion. Time is short and the Moldova Union is holding frequent evangelistic programs to ensure that every soul will hear the message of salvation.

To this end, we need your help. The church facility in the capital city of Chisinau is now too small to accommodate the growing number of interested souls. Your offering this Sabbath will help us to complete construction on a new facility that will serve as a light-house for the whole country.

PROJECT MU01

The brethren from the Moldova Union

Spiritual Power

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

“The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 350.

Suggested Readings: *Steps to Christ*, pp. 60–64.
Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 349–351.

Sabbath

November 29

Psalm 51:10–17.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

Sunday

November 30

1. KNOWING GOD

- a. **What is the biblical definition of eternal life? John 17:3; Deuteronomy 8:11–18.**

“To know God is eternal life. Are you teaching this to your children, or are you teaching them to meet the world’s standard? Are you getting ready for the home that God is preparing for you? . . . Teach your children of the Saviour’s life, death, and resurrection. Teach them to study the Bible. . . . Teach them to form characters that will live through the eternal ages. We must pray as we never have before that God will keep and bless our children.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 494.

“It is our privilege to know God experimentally, and in true knowledge of God is life eternal. The only begotten Son of God was God’s gift to the world, in whose character was revealed the character of Him who gave the law to men and angels. He came to proclaim the fact, ‘The Lord our God is one Lord,’ and Him only shalt thou serve. He came to make it manifest that, ‘Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.’ That which proceeds from the mind of God is perfect, and needs not to be taken back, corrected, or altered in the least. We may ascribe all perfection to God. He holds in His hand the existence of every human being, and upholds all things by the word of His power.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1897.

- b. **What gift did the Father and the Son give to the human race that they may know them? Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:20.**

“God will more than fulfil the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. He desires us to remember that when we are humble and contrite, we stand where He can and will manifest Himself to us. He is well pleased when we urge past mercies and blessings as a reason why He should bestow on us higher and greater blessings. He is honored when we love Him, and bear testimony to the genuineness of our love by keeping His commandments. He is honored when we set apart the seventh day as sacred and holy. To those who do this the Sabbath is a sign, ‘that they might know,’ God declares, ‘that I am the Lord that sanctify them.’ Sanctification means habitual communion with God. There is nothing so great and powerful as God’s love for those who are His children.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 15, 1906.

2. A PERPETUAL COVENANT

- a. Since the Sabbath is to be a sign of a perpetual covenant, to what is the covenant pointing us? Exodus 31:16, 17; Hebrews 8:10.

“Obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, ‘I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them’ (Hebrews 10:16). And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship. Thus the Scripture says, ‘This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.’ ‘He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him’ (1 John 5:3; 2:4). Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 60, 61.

“God has declared in His Word that the seventh day is a sign between Him and His chosen people—a sign of their loyalty. ‘I am the Lord your God,’ He says; ‘walk in My statutes, and keep My judgments, and do them; and hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.’ The day God set apart to be kept free from secular labor He designed should be respected in commemoration of His wisdom, power, and goodness in creating the world and man. The Sabbath was instituted before the Jews were distinguished as a people, and was given to all mankind to keep holy, ‘that ye may know,’ God declares, ‘that I am the Lord which do sanctify you.’ If the Sabbath is accepted, the rest of the commands in the Decalogue will be obeyed; for no one can truly keep the Sabbath and disregard one precept of the law.”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 31, 1898.

3. ENTERING INTO HIS REST

- a. How does the Sabbath illustrate the “New Covenant”? Hebrews 4:10.

“God gave the Sabbath to His people to be a continual sign of His love and mercy and of their obedience. As He rested on this day and was refreshed, so He desired His people to rest and be refreshed. It was to be a constant reminder to them that they were included in His covenant of grace. Throughout your generations, He said, the Sabbath is to be My sign, My pledge, to you that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you, that I have chosen you and set you apart as My peculiar people. And as you keep the Sabbath holy, you will bear testimony to the nations of the earth that you are My chosen people.”—*The Review and Herald*, October 28, 1902.

“Let us remember that we are pilgrims and strangers on this earth, seeking a better country, even a heavenly. Let us work with such earnestness, such devotion, that sinners will be drawn to Christ. Those who have united with the Lord in the covenant of service are under bonds to unite with Him in the great, grand work of soul saving. Let church members, during the week, act their part faithfully, and on the Sabbath relate their experience. The meeting will then be as meat in due season, bringing to all present new life and fresh vigor. When God’s people see the great need of working as Christ worked for the conversion of sinners, the testimonies borne by them in the Sabbath service will be filled with power. With joy they will tell of the precious experience they have gained in working for others.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 19.

- b. To enter into His rest we must cease then from our own works. What are our own works from which we must cease? Galatians 5:19–21.
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- c. What is the only way that we may be released from these “works of the flesh”? John 3:3, 5; Ezekiel 36:25–27.

“If we have the love of Christ in our souls it will be a natural consequence for us to have all the other graces—joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; and ‘against such there is no law.’ The law of God does not condemn and hold in bondage those who have these graces; because they are obeying the requirements of the law of God. They are law keepers, and therefore they are not under the bondage of the law.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 4, 1887.

4. MIXED WITH FAITH

- a. **Why could Israel enter not into His rest? Hebrews 3:12, 19; 4:4-6; Romans 1:17; Galatians 2:20.**

“Faith is essential in order to the keeping of the law of God; for ‘without faith it is impossible to please Him.’ And ‘whatsoever is not of faith is sin’ (Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23).”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 436.

“We must exercise faith toward Jesus Christ because He has become our sacrifice and surety. He has died that we might have ‘remission of sins that are past,’ and obtain grace and help so that we may keep the commandments of the Lord our God. Faith in Jesus does not make void the law, but establishes it, and will work the fruits of obedience in our lives. Faith in Christ means that you are to do whatsoever He commands; it means that you are to follow in His footsteps. ‘He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.’ ‘He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’”—*The Review and Herald*, January 31, 1888.

- b. **How did Israel come to this point of unbelief? How may we do the same? Hebrews 3:8-11, 15-18; Psalm 95:6-11.**

“God speaks to us today, in the warnings, counsels, and reproofs given to ancient Israel. If we depart from Him, our condemnation will be greater than theirs; for we have their experience as a warning, and all the instruction which God has given since their time. Many and varied are the idols which we cherish; idols that engross the mind and harden the heart, so that sacred things are not rightly valued. Oh that the lessons given to ancient Israel might so impress our hearts and affect our lives that we would fully turn from idols, to serve the living God.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 18, 1881.

“And you that have not sanctified your souls by obeying the truth, do you expect that Christ at His appearing will make you ready? There will then be no atoning blood to wash away the stains of sins. It is while it is called today that you may, if you will, hear His voice, and harden not your heart, as in the day of provocation. It is today that the Spirit of God invites. It is today that the sweet voice of mercy is falling upon your ears.”—*The Review and Herald*, August 17, 1869.

5. A SANCTIFYING POWER

- a. **How does the Holy Spirit work to sanctify us through the Sabbath? Ezekiel 20:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7.**

“The fourth commandment alone of all the ten contains the seal of the great Lawgiver, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Those who obey this commandment take upon themselves His name, and all the blessings it involves are theirs. . . . Each sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each. It is our work to lead the people to understand this. We are to show them that it is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God’s kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion, for they acknowledge themselves subjects of the kingdom whose mark they bear.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 350, 352.

- i) **We must be free from sin upon entering the Sabbath: Nehemiah 13:22; 1 Peter 2:9, 10.**

“This was the commandment of the great and mighty God. There was to be nothing slack and untidy about those who appeared before Him when they came into His holy presence. And why was this? What was the object of all this carefulness? Was it merely to recommend the people to God? Was it merely to gain His approbation? The reason that was given me was this, that a right impression might be made upon the people. If those who ministered in sacred office should fail to manifest care, and reverence for God, in their apparel and their deportment, the people would lose their awe and their reverence for God and His sacred service.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 612.

- ii) **As the shewbread was prepared every Sabbath, so we should partake of the bread of life every Sabbath: 1 Chronicles 9:32; John 6:48, 53, 54, 56, 63; Hebrews 4:11, 12.**

- iii) **Not only are we to rest on the Sabbath but we are to assemble together for worship: Leviticus 23:3; Hebrews 10:24, 25.**

PERSONAL REVIEW

Encouraging Others.—“As you meet from Sabbath to Sabbath, sing praises to Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. ‘Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood’ let the heart’s adoration be given. Let the love of Christ be the burden of the speaker’s utterance. Let it be expressed in simple language in every song of praise. Let the inspiration of the Spirit of God dictate your prayers. As the word of life is spoken, let your heartfelt response testify that you receive the message as from heaven. This is very old-fashioned, I know; but it will be a thank offering to God for the bread of life given to the hungry soul. This response to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will be a strength to your own soul and an encouragement to others. It will give some evidence that there are in God’s building living stones that emit light.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 367.

Children of God.—“In freeing our souls from the bondage of sin, God has wrought for us a deliverance greater than that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Like the Hebrew host, we should praise the Lord with heart and soul and voice for His ‘wonderful works to the children of men.’ Those who dwell upon God’s great mercies, and are not unmindful of His lesser gifts, will put on the girdle of gladness and make melody in their hearts to the Lord. The daily blessings that we receive from the hand of God, and above all else the death of Jesus to bring happiness and heaven within our reach, should be a theme for constant gratitude. What compassion, what matchless love, has God shown to us, lost sinners, in connecting us with Himself, to be to Him a peculiar treasure! What a sacrifice has been made by our Redeemer, that we may be called children of God!”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 289.

1. What does it mean to know God? Is it truly possible to love someone you do not “know”?
2. What covenant did God give that was to be perpetual? What does perpetual mean?
3. Are we only to rest from our physical labors on the Sabbath day? To what rest are we truly looking forward when we keep the Sabbath?
4. Does merely fulfilling the letter of the Sabbath commandment satisfy the requirements of the law? What must we have to truly keep the Sabbath?
5. When we receive sanctification through faith in Christ, will we only keep the Sabbath holy?

True Sabbath Observance

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares” (Luke 21:34).

“All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 536.

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 360–368.
Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 703, 704.

Sabbath

December 6

Psalm 46:1–5, 8–11.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. . . . Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

1. PERSONAL REST

- a. From what physical things are we to rest on the Sabbath day? Exodus 20:9, 10; 31:15; Jeremiah 17:22.

“All ordinary labor for a livelihood or for worldly profit was forbidden upon the seventh day. According to the fourth commandment the Sabbath was dedicated to rest and religious worship. All secular employment was to be suspended; but works of mercy and benevolence were in accordance with the purpose of the Lord. They were not to be limited by time nor place. To relieve the afflicted, to comfort the sorrowing is a labor of love that does honor to God’s holy day.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 193, 194.

“Servile work for a livelihood, or common business transactions upon the Sabbath, constitute those who take part in them transgressors. All labor necessary to provide for the sustenance of the body is to be done in the six working days.”—*The Review and Herald*, September 6, 1898.

“God has given man six days in which to work for himself, but He has reserved one day in which He is to be specially honored. He is to be glorified, His authority respected. And yet man will rob God by stealing a little of the time which the Creator has reserved for Himself. God reserved the seventh day as a period of rest for man, for the good of man as well as for His own glory.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 532.

- b. Why is it necessary to have this rest? Psalm 46:10; Luke 8:14; 21:34.

“God saw that a Sabbath was essential for man, even in Paradise. He needed to lay aside his own interests and pursuits for one day of the seven, that he might more fully contemplate the works of God and meditate upon His power and goodness. He needed a Sabbath to remind him more vividly of God and to awaken gratitude because all that he enjoyed and possessed came from the beneficent hand of the Creator.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.

2. PUBLIC WORSHIP

- a. Besides rest from our labor, what other precious privilege do we have on the Sabbath day? Psalms 92:1; 100:1-5.

“God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love Him. There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 368.

- b. If we are devoted to God where will we be found on the Sabbath? Hebrews 10:23-25; Matthew 11:28-30.

“None should permit themselves, through the week, to become so absorbed in their temporal interests, and so exhausted by their efforts for worldly gain, that on the Sabbath they have no strength or energy to give to the service of God. We are robbing the Lord when we unfit ourselves to worship Him upon His holy day. And we are robbing ourselves as well; for we need the warmth and glow of association, as well as the strength to be gained from the wisdom and experience of other Christians.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 13, 1882.

“Fathers and mothers should make it a rule that their children attend public worship on the Sabbath, and should enforce the rule by their own example. It is our duty to command our children and our household after us, as did Abraham. By example as well as precept we should impress upon them the importance of religious teaching. All who have taken the baptismal vow have solemnly consecrated themselves to the service of God; they are under covenant obligation to place themselves and their children where they may obtain all possible incentives and encouragement in the Christian life.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 530, 531.

“Never entertain the thought that you can be Christians and yet withdraw within yourselves. Each one is a part of the great web of humanity, and the nature and quality of your experience will be largely determined by the experiences of those with whom you associate. Jesus says: ‘Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst’ (Matthew 18:20). Then let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhort one another; and so much the more, as we see the day approaching.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 190.

3. NOT SEEKING OUR OWN PLEASURES

- a. In resting from our labors on the Sabbath day, of what must we be careful? Isaiah 58:13; 2 Timothy 3:2-5.

“All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable. They cannot do this by seeking their own pleasure in sinful, forbidden amusements. Yet they can do much to exalt the Sabbath in their families and make it the most interesting day of the week. We should devote time to interesting our children. A change will have a happy influence upon them. We can walk out with them in the open air; we can sit with them in the groves and in the bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them upon the works of God, and can inspire them with love and reverence by calling their attention to the beautiful objects in nature.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 536.

- b. Does this mean we will find no joy in the Sabbath? 3 John 4; Philippians 2:13; Psalm 5:11.

“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 Sabbath points them to the works of creation as an evidence of His mighty power in redemption. While it calls to mind the lost peace of Eden, it tells of peace restored through the Saviour. And every object in nature repeats His invitation, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest’ (Matthew 11:28).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 289.

- c. Where do we find the most joy? Psalm 16:11; Proverbs 21:15; Matthew 25:21; John 15:10, 11.

4. NOT SPEAKING OUR OWN WORDS

- a. Not only are we to cease from the actual labor on the Sabbath day, but what else should we cease? James 3:5, 6.

“Those who discuss business matters or lay plans on the Sabbath are regarded by God as though engaged in the actual transaction of business. To keep the Sabbath holy, we should not even allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character. And the commandment includes all within our gates. The inmates of the house are to lay aside their worldly business during the sacred hours. All should unite to honor God by willing service upon His holy day.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 307, 308.

“God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. The Fourth Commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things or by engaging in light and trifling conversation. Talking upon anything or everything which may come into the mind is speaking our own words. Every deviation from right brings us into bondage and condemnation.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 529, 530.

- b. Why has God given this instruction? Matthew 15:18; Job 6:24, 25.

“Those who are not fully converted to the truth frequently let their minds run freely upon worldly business, and, although they may rest from physical toil upon the Sabbath, their tongues speak out what is in their minds; hence these words concerning cattle, crops, losses, and gains. All this is Sabbath breaking. If the mind is running upon worldly matters, the tongue will reveal it; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 703.

“When you are speaking of your hope in God, of Jesus and of His soon coming, and of the beauties of the New Earth, you are not speaking your own words. Of these things you may freely speak on the Sabbath. On six days you may talk of business matters, and lay plans that are necessary; but the Sabbath is holy time, and all worldly thoughts must, on that day, be dismissed from the mind. The blessing of God will then rest upon you, and you will have the sweet consolations of His Spirit, and you will also have confidence when you approach the throne of grace.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, February 1, 1853.

5. THE STRANGER WITHIN THY GATES

- a. **What is our responsibility concerning those who dwell in our homes on the Sabbath? Exodus 20:11; Genesis 18:19.**

“Parents, above everything take care of your children upon the Sabbath. Do not suffer them to violate God’s holy day by playing in the house or out-of-doors. You may just as well break the Sabbath yourselves as to let your children do it, and when you suffer your children to wander about and suffer them to play upon the Sabbath, God looks upon you as Sabbathbreakers.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 533.

“Make your children feel that you love them, and desire to do them good. Encourage every effort to do right. Show them that you have confidence in them. Remember that your example will be the most impressive lesson which you can give. Your courtesy and self-control will have greater influence upon the characters of your children than mere words could have.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 13, 1882.

- b. **How far does our responsibility connected with the Sabbath commandment extend beyond our homes? Deuteronomy 5:14; Nehemiah 13:19–22; 2 Corinthians 6:14–18.**

“Some who claim to be giving allegiance to the law of Jehovah have even gone so far in Sabbath desecration as to unite in partnership with those who have no respect for the Sabbath. The professed Sabbathkeeper may cease his own labors on the Sabbath, but his partner continues the work. How must angels look upon this partnership, as the Sabbath observer kneels reverently before God in the house of worship, while those with whom he is united in business continue their labor just the same as on any other day! How does Heaven look upon the noise and confusion, the sound of the mechanic’s ax and hammer, which ascends instead of thanksgiving, as if in defiance of His injunctions! Can the Lord regard as guiltless the man who thus unites with transgressors?”—*The Review and Herald*, November 13, 1888.

PERSONAL REVIEW

The Church Triumphant.—“The children of God will be triumphant. They will come off conquerors and more than conquerors over all the opposing, persecuting elements. Fear not. By the power of Bible truth and love exemplified in the cross, and set home by the Holy Spirit, we shall have the victory. The whole battle before us hinges upon the observance of the true Sabbath of Jehovah.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 319.

The Path of Transgression.—“Faith in God’s love and overruling providence lightens the burdens of anxiety and care. It fills the heart with joy and contentment in the highest or the lowliest lot. Religion tends directly to promote health, to lengthen life, and to heighten our enjoyment of all its blessings. It opens to the soul a never-failing fountain of happiness. Would that all who have not chosen Christ might realize that He has something vastly better to offer them than they are seeking for themselves. Man is doing the greatest injury and injustice to his own soul when he thinks and acts contrary to the will of God. No real joy can be found in the path forbidden by Him who knows what is best, and who plans for the good of His creatures. The path of transgression leads to misery and destruction; but wisdom’s ‘ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.’”—*Christian Education*, p. 68.

1. **What labors must we cease on the Sabbath day? Which are acceptable?**
2. **Why should we not shun the precious privilege of gathering together to worship on the Sabbath day?**
3. **In what ways will we find our highest pleasure in the Sabbath day?**
4. **How careful must we be with our conversation on the Sabbath day? Where does this work begin?**
5. **Can we be guilty of Sabbath breaking if we allow those in our home to disregard the Sabbath? Does this include visitors? Can we break the Sabbath even as we reverently worship God on His holy day? In what ways?**

From Sunset to Sunset

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much” (Luke 16:10).

“God is no less particular now in regard to His Sabbath than when He made this requirement of the children of Israel.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 259.

Suggested Readings: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 295, 296.
Testimonies, vol. 1, pp. 531–533.

Sabbath

December 13

***The Faith I Live By*, p. 34.**

“On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. . . . The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

“There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, ‘confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another.’

“Before the setting of the sun let the members of the family assemble to read God’s Word, to sing and pray.

“We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

Sunday

December 14

1. THE HOURS OF THE SABBATH

a. **What is the biblical reckoning of the beginning and end of a day? Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31.**

b. **The Bible gives a number of examples of how the faithful have observed the Sabbath from the Creation (Genesis 2:1–3), in the time of Israel (Leviticus 23:32), during the post-captivity Reformation (Nehemiah 13:19), and all the way to the time of Christ (John 19:31).**

“At last Jesus was at rest. The long day of shame and torture was ended. As the last rays of the setting sun ushered in the Sabbath, the Son of God lay in quietude in Joseph’s tomb. His work completed, His hands folded in peace, He rested through the sacred hours of the Sabbath day.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 769.

“The Sabbath was now drawing on, and it would be a violation of its sanctity for the bodies to hang upon the cross. So, using this as a pretext, the leading Jews requested Pilate that the death of the victims might be hastened, and their bodies be removed before the setting of the sun.”—*Ibid.*, p. 771.

“Gently and reverently [the three disciples] removed with their own hands the body of Jesus from the cross. Their tears of sympathy fell fast as they looked upon His bruised and lacerated form. Joseph owned a new tomb, hewn in a rock. This he was reserving for himself; but it was near Calvary, and he now prepared it for Jesus. The body, together with the spices brought by Nicodemus, was carefully wrapped in a linen sheet, and the Redeemer was borne to the tomb. There the three disciples straightened the mangled limbs, and folded the bruised hands upon the pulseless breast. The Galilean women came to see that all had been done that could be done for the lifeless form of their beloved Teacher. Then they saw the heavy stone rolled against the entrance of the tomb, and the Saviour was left at rest. The women were last at the cross, and last at the tomb of Christ. While the evening shades were gathering, Mary Magdalene and the other Marys lingered about the resting place of their Lord, shedding tears of sorrow over the fate of Him whom they loved. ‘And they returned, . . . and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment’ (Luke 23:56).”—*Ibid.*, p. 774.

2. GUARDING THE EDGES

- a. **How important is it that we do not encroach on any of the Lord's time on the Sabbath day? Luke 19:17; 16:10.**

“God is no less particular now in regard to His Sabbath than when He made this requirement of the children of Israel. His eye is upon all His people, and over all the works of their hands. He will not pass by unnoticed those who crowd upon His Sabbath, and employ time for their own use which belongs to Him. Some professed Sabbath keepers will intrude upon the Sabbath in doing those things which should have been done previous to the Sabbath. Such may think they gain a little time; but instead of being advantaged by robbing God of holy time, which He has reserved to Himself, they will lose.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 259.

“There has been too much slackness in regard to the observance of the Sabbath. There has not been promptness to fulfill the secular duties within the six working days which God has given to man and carefulness not to infringe upon one hour of the holy, sacred time which He has reserved to Himself. . . . Transgress in a small matter, and look upon it as no particular sin on our part, and the conscience becomes hardened, the sensibilities blunted, until we can go still further and perform quite an amount of labor and still flatter ourselves that we are Sabbathkeepers, when, according to Christ's standard, we are breaking every one of God's holy precepts. There is a fault with Sabbathkeepers in this respect; but God is very particular, and all who think that they are saving a little time, or advantaging themselves by infringing a little on the Lord's time, will meet with loss sooner or later. He cannot bless them as it would be His pleasure to do, for His name is dishonored by them, His precepts lightly esteemed.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 531, 532.

- b. **How can we be sure that we will not infringe on the sacred time of the Sabbath?**

“Before the Sabbath begins, the mind as well as the body should be withdrawn from worldly business. God has set His Sabbath at the end of the six working days, that men may stop and consider what they have gained during the week in preparation for the pure kingdom which admits no transgressor. We should each Sabbath reckon with our souls to see whether the week that has ended has brought spiritual gain or loss.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 356.

3. THE PREPARATION DAY

- a. **What time has God given us to be prepared to keep His Sabbath according to the commandment? Mark 15:42; Luke 23:52-56.**

“While preparation for the Sabbath is to be made all through the week, Friday is to be the special preparation day.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 354.

“The day before the Sabbath should be made a day of preparation, that everything may be in readiness for its sacred hours. In no case should our own business be allowed to encroach upon holy time. God has directed that the sick and suffering be cared for; the labor required to make them comfortable is a work of mercy, and no violation of the Sabbath; but all unnecessary work should be avoided. Many carelessly put off till the beginning of the Sabbath little things that might have been done on the day of preparation. This should not be. Work that is neglected until the beginning of the Sabbath should remain undone until it is past. This course might help the memory of these thoughtless ones, and make them careful to do their own work on the six working days.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 296.

- b. **What should we consider when planning for our temporal needs on the Sabbath? Exodus 16:23.**

“The Lord is no less particular now in regard to His Sabbath than when He gave the foregoing special directions to the children of Israel. He required them to bake that which they would bake, and seethe (that is, boil) that which they would seethe, on the sixth day, preparatory to the rest of the Sabbath. Those who neglect to prepare for the Sabbath on the sixth day, and who cook food upon the Sabbath, violate the fourth commandment, and are transgressors of God's law. All who are really anxious to observe the Sabbath according to the commandment, will not cook any food upon the Sabbath. They will, in the fear of that God who gave His law from Sinai, deny themselves, and eat food prepared upon the sixth day, even if it is not so palatable. God forbade the children of Israel baking and boiling upon the Sabbath. That prohibition should be regarded by every Sabbathkeeper as a solemn injunction from Jehovah to them. The Lord would guard His people from indulging in gluttony upon the Sabbath, which He has set apart for sacred meditation and worship.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 225, 226.

4. CLEANLINESS NEXT TO GODLINESS (I)

- a. Since we desire to come into the presence of the Lord on the Sabbath, how should we present ourselves before Him? Exodus 19:9–11.

“On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness, and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked, and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule, you can do it. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun, let all secular work be laid aside, and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 528.

- b. How should our dress be when we come into the presence of the Lord on His holy Sabbath day? Leviticus 19:30; Hebrews 12:28, 29; Genesis 35:2.

“Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God’s house. While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment. The children of God should be pure within and without.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 531.

“Especial care will be taken to dress in a manner that will show a sacred regard for the holy Sabbath, and the worship of God. The line of demarcation between such a class and the world will be too plain to be mistaken. The influence of believers would be tenfold greater if men and women who embrace the truth, who have been formerly careless and slack in their habits, would be so elevated, and sanctified through the truth, as to observe habits of neatness, order, and good taste in their dress. Our God is a God of order, and He is not in any degree pleased with distraction, with filthiness, or with sin.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 476.

5. CLEANLINESS NEXT TO GODLINESS (II)

- a. On the Sabbath, how should our homes be prepared to welcome the heavenly angels into them? 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40; Ezekiel 44:23.

“The ten commandments spoken by Jehovah from Sinai cannot live in the hearts of persons of disorderly, filthy habits. If ancient Israel could not so much as listen to the proclamation of that holy law, unless they had obeyed the injunction of Jehovah, and had cleansed their clothing, how can that sacred law be written upon the hearts of persons who are not cleanly in person, in clothing, or in their houses?—It is impossible. Their profession may be as high as Heaven, yet it is not worth a straw. Their influence disgusts unbelievers. Better if they had ever remained outside the ranks of God’s loyal people. The house of God is dishonored by such professors.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 23, 1900.

“He who was so particular that the children of Israel should cherish habits of cleanliness, will not sanction any impurity in the homes of His people today. God looks with disfavor on uncleanness of any kind. How can we invite Him into our homes unless all is neat and clean and pure?

“Believers should be taught that even though they may be poor, they need not be uncleanly or untidy in their persons or in their homes. Help must be given in this line to those who seem to have no sense of the meaning and importance of cleanliness. They are to be taught that those who are to represent the high and holy God must keep their souls pure and clean, and that this purity must extend to their dress, and to everything in the home, so that the ministering angels will have evidence that the truth has wrought a change in the life, purifying the soul and refining the tastes. Those who, after receiving the truth, make no change in word or deportment, in dress or surroundings, are living to themselves, not to Christ. They have not been created anew in Christ Jesus, unto purification and holiness.”—*Ibid.*, June 10, 1902.

- b. What did Jesus teach about the small details? Luke 24:1–3; John 20:7.

PERSONAL REVIEW

Guarding the Edges.—“We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from Friday noon until the beginning of the Sabbath. Give them time for preparation, that they may welcome the Lord’s day with quietness of mind. By such a course you will suffer no loss even in temporal things.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 356.

The Preparation Day.—“Let every family of Seventh-day Adventists honor God by a strict regard for His law. The children should be taught to respect the Sabbath. On the day of preparation, clothing should be put in proper repair, shoes polished, baths taken. Then around the family altar all should wait to welcome God’s holy day, as they would watch for the coming of a dear friend.”—*The Signs of the Times*, May 25, 1882.

“At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said, ‘Remember.’ He knew that amid the multitude of cares and perplexities man would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirement of the law, or would forget its sacred importance. Therefore He said: ‘Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.’

“All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment. . . .

“When the Sabbath is thus remembered, the temporal will not be allowed to encroach upon the spiritual. No duty pertaining to the six working days will be left for the Sabbath. During the week our energies will not be so exhausted in temporal labor that on the day when the Lord rested and was refreshed we shall be too weary to engage in His service.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 34.

1. When do the Sabbath hours begin and end?
2. Why is it so important to be prepared before the Sabbath actually begins?
3. What types of things must we consider preparing before the Sabbath that we may avoid breaking this day?
4. How much time has God given to prepare for the Sabbath?
5. Is God particular in regard to our bodies, homes, and hearts?

Practical Sabbathkeeping

“And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace” (Mark 3:4).

“The Saviour by His example has shown us that it is right to relieve suffering on the Sabbath.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 236.

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 356–360.
Education, pp. 250–252.
Medical Ministry, pp. 214–216.

Sabbath

December 20

The Faith I Live By, p. 35.

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

“All heaven is keeping the Sabbath, but not in a listless, do-nothing way. On this day every energy of the soul should be awake, for are we not to meet with God and with Christ our Saviour? We may behold Him by faith. He is longing to refresh and bless every soul.

“On Sabbath morning the family should be astir early. If they rise late, there is confusion and bustle in preparing for breakfast and Sabbath school. There is hurrying, jostling, and impatience. Thus unholy feelings come into the home. The Sabbath, thus desecrated, becomes a weariness, and its coming is dreaded rather than loved.

“The Sabbath is God’s time. He sanctified and hallowed the seventh day. He set it apart for man to keep as a day of worship.”

“As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost.”—*Education*, pp. 251, 252.

1. CEASING OUR OWN WORKS (I)

- a. What types of “work” are permitted by God on the Sabbath day? Mark 3:4; Luke 6:9; 13:11–16.

“Often physicians and nurses are called upon during the Sabbath to minister to the sick, and sometimes it is impossible for them to take time for rest and for attending devotional services. The needs of suffering humanity are never to be neglected. The Saviour by His example has shown us that it is right to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. But unnecessary work, such as ordinary treatments and operations that can be postponed, should be deferred. Let the patients understand that physicians and helpers should have one day for rest. Let them understand that the workers fear God and desire to keep holy the day that He has set apart for His followers to observe as a sign between Him and them.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 236.

“There will always be duties which have to be performed on the Sabbath for the relief of suffering humanity. This is right, and in accordance with the law of Him who says, ‘I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.’ But there is danger of falling into carelessness on this point, and of doing that which it is not positively essential to do on the Sabbath.”—*Medical Ministry*, p. 50.

- b. The Sabbath is a day of rest, but does this mean we should sleep more on this day than on other days? Romans 13:11; Psalm 132:4, 5; Proverbs 20:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:6.

“None should feel at liberty to spend sanctified time in an unprofitable manner. It is displeasing to God for Sabbathkeepers to sleep during much of the Sabbath. They dishonor their Creator in so doing, and, by their example, say that the six days are too precious for them to spend in resting. They must make money, although it be by robbing themselves of needed sleep, which they make up by sleeping away holy time. They then excuse themselves by saying, ‘The Sabbath was given for a day of rest. I will not deprive myself of rest to attend meeting; for I need rest.’ Such make a wrong use of the sanctified day. They should, upon that day especially, interest their families in its observance and assemble at the house of prayer with the few or with the many, as the case may be. They should devote their time and energies to spiritual exercises, that the divine influence resting upon the Sabbath may attend them through the week. Of all the days in the week, none are so favorable for devotional thoughts and feelings as the Sabbath.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 704.

2. CEASING OUR OWN WORKS (II)

- a. List some of the “small” things that should be completed before the Sabbath.

“In many families [on Sabbath] boots and shoes are blacked and brushed, and stitches are taken, all because these little odds and ends were not done on Friday. They did not ‘remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ . . .

“On Friday the clothing of the children is to be looked after. During the week they should be all laid out by their own hands under the direction of the mother, so that they can dress quietly, without any confusion or rushing about and hasty speeches.

“There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 528, 529.

“The violation of the fourth commandment is not confined to the preparation of food. Many carelessly put off blacking their boots, and shaving, until after the beginning of the Sabbath. This should not be. If any neglect to do such work on a working day, they should have respect enough for God’s holy time to let their beards remain unshaven, their boots rough and brown, until the Sabbath is past. This might help their memory, and make them more careful to do their own work on the six working days.”—*The Signs of the Times*, May 25, 1882.

- b. What should we consider when traveling on the Sabbath? Should we eliminate unnecessary travel? What travel is acceptable to God? Acts 1:12.

“If we desire the blessing promised to the obedient, we must observe the Sabbath more strictly. I fear that we often travel on this day when it might be avoided. In harmony with the light which the Lord has given in regard to the observance of the Sabbath, we should be more careful about traveling on the boats or cars on this day. In these matters we should set a right example before our children and youth. In order to reach the churches that need our help, and to give them the message that God desires them to hear, it may be necessary for us to travel on the Sabbath; but so far as possible we should secure our tickets and make all necessary arrangements on some other day. When starting on a journey we should make every possible effort to plan so as to avoid reaching our destination on the Sabbath.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 359, 360.

3. CHILDREN AND THE SABBATH

- a. **Since the Sabbath commandment extends to ourselves as well as to our families, what example should we exhibit to our children in regard to it? Proverbs 22:6; Deuteronomy 6:6–9.**

“I counsel you, my brethren and sisters: ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.’ If you desire your children to observe the Sabbath according to the commandment, you must teach them by both precept and example. The deep engraving of truth in the heart is never wholly effaced. It may be obscured, but can never be obliterated. The impressions made in early life will be seen in afteryears. Circumstances may occur to separate the children from their parents and their home, but as long as they live the instruction given in childhood and youth will be a blessing.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 359.

“We are not to teach our children that they must not be happy on the Sabbath, that it is wrong to walk out-of-doors. Oh, no. Christ led His disciples out by the lakeside on the Sabbath day and taught them. His sermons on the Sabbath were not always preached within enclosed walls.

“Teach the children to see Christ in nature. Take them out into the open air, under the noble trees, into the garden; and in all the wonderful works of creation teach them to see an expression of His love.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 533, 534.

- b. **What kinds of activities should we provide for our children on the Sabbath day? Romans 1:20.**

“The parents may take their children outdoors to view God in nature. They can be pointed to the blooming flowers and the opening buds, the lofty trees and beautiful spires of grass, and taught that God made all these in six days and rested on the seventh day and hallowed it. Thus the parents may bind up their lessons of instruction to their children, so that when these children look upon the things of nature, they will call to mind the great Creator of them all. Their thoughts will be carried up to nature’s God— back to the creation of our world, when the foundation of the Sabbath was laid, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Such are the lessons to be impressed on the minds of our children.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 533.

4. COMMUNION WITH GOD

- a. **What is God’s desire for us especially on the Sabbath? John 17:19–23.**

“The Sabbath calls our thoughts to nature, and brings us into communion with the Creator. In the song of the bird, the sighing of the trees, and the music of the sea, we still may hear His voice who talked with Adam in Eden in the cool of the day. And as we behold His power in nature we find comfort, for the word that created all things is that which speaks life to the soul. He ‘who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ’ (2 Corinthians 4:6).”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 281, 282.

- b. **What work must be done in our heart before we can really commune with Him? Matthew 5:23, 24.**

“There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, ‘confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed’ (James 5:16).”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 356.

“The Saviour goes farther than this. He says, ‘If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.’ Many are zealous in religious services, while between them and their brethren are unhappy differences which they might reconcile. God requires them to do all in their power to restore harmony. Until they do this, He cannot accept their services. The Christian’s duty in this matter is clearly pointed out.

“God pours His blessings upon all. ‘He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.’ He is ‘kind unto the unthankful and to the evil’ (Luke 6:35). He bids us to be like Him. ‘Bless them that curse you,’ said Jesus; ‘do good to them that hate you, . . . that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.’ These are the principles of the law, and they are the wellsprings of life.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 310, 311.

5. CLOSING THE SABBATH

- a. **As the end of the Sabbath approaches, what temptation presents itself? Amos 8:5; Matthew 15:8.**

“I saw that through the past summer the prevailing spirit has been to grasp as much of this world as possible. The commandments of God have not been kept. With the mind we serve the law of God; but the minds of many have been serving the world. And while their minds were all occupied with things of earth and serving themselves, they could not serve the law of God. The Sabbath has not been kept. By some the work of six days has been carried into the seventh. One hour, and even more, has often been taken from the commencement and close of the Sabbath.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 150.

- b. **What should be our attitude even beyond the Sabbath hours? John 15:5.**

“As the sun goes down, let the voice of prayer and the hymn of praise mark the close of the sacred hours and invite God’s presence through the cares of the week of labor.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 359.

“Let the members of every family bear in mind that they are closely allied to heaven. The Lord has a special interest in the families of His children here below. Angels offer the smoke of the fragrant incense for the praying saints. Then in every family let prayer ascend to heaven both in the morning and at the cool sunset hour, in our behalf presenting before God the Saviour’s merits. Morning and evening the heavenly universe take notice of every praying household.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 519.

- c. **Will there be a time at all when those who love God will ever stop looking forward to His blessed day of rest? Isaiah 66:22.**

“God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love Him. There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 37.

PERSONAL REVIEW

Creative Power.—“Since the Sabbath is the memorial of creative power, it is the day above all others when we should acquaint ourselves with God through His works. In the minds of the children the very thought of the Sabbath should be bound up with the beauty of natural things. Happy is the family who can go to the place of worship on the Sabbath as Jesus and His disciples went to the synagogue—across the fields, along the shores of the lake, or through the groves. Happy the father and mother who can teach their children God’s written word with illustrations from the open pages of the book of nature; who can gather under the green trees, in the fresh, pure air, to study the word and to sing the praise of the Father above.”—*Education*, p. 251.

“Parents should have a thorough understanding with their family that the sacred hours of the Sabbath are to be spent to God’s glory. They should be up with the sun, and have plenty of time to prepare for Sabbath school without getting into a rush, and perhaps losing self-control. If the proper preparations have been made the previous day, there will be abundance of time to review the lesson studied during the week; and both parents and children can go to the school with the assurance that they have the lessons well learned.”—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 54.

“Let not the precious hours of the Sabbath be wasted in bed. On Sabbath morning the family should be astir early. If they rise late, there is confusion and bustle in preparing for breakfast and Sabbath school. There is hurrying, jostling, and impatience. Thus unholy feelings come into the home. The Sabbath, thus desecrated, becomes a weariness, and its coming is dreaded rather than loved.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 530.

1. **What forms of employment should God’s people shun? What should we consider when seeking employment in the medical field?**
2. **What should we consider about traveling on the Sabbath?**
3. **How much effort and planning should we place upon providing our children with means to interest them in the Sabbath? Is it only parents who are responsible for this?**
4. **Explain the searching of our heart in relation to others that must be done before we can commune with God on the Sabbath day.**
5. **How long will the Sabbath be kept? Where must we learn to keep the Sabbath? What kind of work in our heart must be done before this will be accomplished?**

FIRST SABBATH OFFERINGS



OCTOBER 4
South India Mission
(See p. 4.)

NOVEMBER 1
Literature for poor
countries (See p. 33.)



DECEMBER 6
Moldova
(See p. 69.)