

The Power of Prayer



Sabbath Bible Lessons

Senior Division

July–September 2003

- 5 Our Need of Prayer
- 10 The Early Patriarchs
- 15 Intercessory Prayer
- 20 Seeking Guidance
- 26 Strength for Service
- 31 David's Prayer Life
- 36 In Times of Crisis
- 41 The Prayers of the Righteous
- 46 Spiritual Light and Strength
- 52 In Times of Sickness
- 57 The Prayers of Christ
- 62 The Early Church
- 67 The Final Remnant

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.

Cover illustration: Photo Disc on pp. 1, 72.

Sabbath Bible Lessons (USPS 005-118), Vol. 78, No. 3, July–September 2003. Published quarterly by the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement General Conference, Sabbath School Department. Copyright © 2003, printed and distributed by Reformation Herald Publishing Association, 5240 Hollins Road, Roanoke, Virginia 24019-5048, USA. Periodical postage paid at Roanoke, Virginia 24022-9993. Telephone 540-366-9400 * USA and Canada 1888-712-1234 * Fax 540-366-2814 * Internet <http://www.sdarm.org> * E-mail: gc@sdarm.org

Annual subscriptions: U.S.A. \$9.95. Other countries \$13.00, or by AIRMAIL \$17.00. Single copies \$4.50. Please send subscription requests and payments (in U.S. currency only) to the address below. Prices subject to change without notice.

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

Foreword

During the next three months, Sabbath school students around the world will be focusing on *The Power of Prayer*. What is prayer, and why is it so powerful? “Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 93).

Prayer was instrumental in the rise and progress of Seventh-day Adventism. Light, truth, and unity came to the early believers through prayer and fasting. And in March 1865, after the United States had suffered four demoralizing years of civil war, the scattered Advent brethren set apart four days to earnest and importunate prayer that those winds of strife should be restrained. By April, the end of the war had come. God’s people had not armed themselves with weapons of warfare, but had contributed to the public good in far greater measure by intensely beseeching the God of heaven.

“What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. What can the angels of heaven think of poor helpless human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God’s heart of infinite love yearns toward them, ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so little and have so little faith? . . . Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 94, 95.

“Among God’s people there should be at this time frequent seasons of sincere, earnest prayer. The mind should constantly be in a prayerful attitude. In the home and in the church let earnest prayers be offered in behalf of those who have given themselves to the preaching of the Word. Let believers pray as did the disciples after the ascension of Christ.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 93.

“The Lord desires us to improve in prayer and to offer our spiritual sacrifices with increased faith and power” (*Ibid.*, p. 78). Brethren, sisters, and friends: the next three months could change the course of history. Let these goals be foremost in the minds of Sabbath school students everywhere!

The General Conference Sabbath School Department

First Sabbath Offering Philippines

The work of Reform in the Philippines began in the 1950's. Starting in the southern city of Davao, the message soon spread across the archipelago. By 1959 the efforts of missionaries and Bible workers were rewarded with the creation of the Philippine Union. Today this Union has the largest membership of any unit in the Asian Region.

Over the years the Philippine Union has engaged in a large number of public outreach efforts and programs. To facilitate this missionary work a missionary school has been functioning, and this school has been instrumental in training gospel workers to fulfill the gospel commission. The Union and the missionary school have also trained many colporteurs; these have been a leading force in spreading the gospel. Many books have been printed by the Union's publishing house in order to supply the workers with materials. Among the books published is *Plants and Health*, a popular herb and plant guide.

These efforts have resulted in many souls being converted to the Lord. Now these souls need places to worship. Over the last 50 years the brethren have been constructing small chapels throughout the country to fill these needs. But the economic situation in the Philippines, and amongst many of the members, is very poor. For this reason we are appealing to you to assist the Philippine Union in its church planting missions. Please remember us in your prayers and on July 5 give generously in the Sabbath school offering.

PROJECT 04B

Your brethren from the Philippines



VITAL STATISTICS

- **Area:** 300,000 sq km (115,830 sq mi)
- **Population:** 84,525,639 (2002 est.)
- **Capital:** Manila (pop. 12,000,000)
- **Literacy Rate:** 94% (2000 est.)
- **Languages:** Filipino (based on Tagalog), English, many regional dialects
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 83%, Protestant 9%, Muslim 5%

ECONOMY

- **Monetary Unit:** Peso
- **GDP/PPP:** \$335 billion; \$4,000 per capita (2001 est.)
- **Inflation:** 6% (2001 est.)
- **Major Trading Partners:** United States, Japan, European Union

Our Need of Prayer

“Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

“Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 254.

Suggested Readings: *Steps to Christ*, pp. 93–104.
Testimonies, vol. 1, pp. 120, 121.

Sunday

June 29

1. THE GULF BRIDGED

- a. **How and why has direct communication with our Creator been cut off? Genesis 3:6–10. What has Jesus explained to us about the only way it is restored? John 14:6; 16:19–28.**

“The distance from earth to heaven may seem very great, for sin has fixed a great gulf; it has separated man from God, and has brought woe and misery upon the human race. But Christ throws Himself into the gap. He it is that opens communication between man and God.”—*Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1889.

“This earth because of transgression had been struck off from the continent of heaven. Communication had ceased between man and his Maker; but the way has been opened, so that he may return to the Father's house. Jesus is ‘the way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6). The gate of heaven has been left ajar, and the radiance from the throne of God shines into the hearts of those who love Him, even though they dwell in the sin-cursed earth. The light that encircled the divine Son of God will fall upon the pathway of all those who follow in His footsteps.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 28, 1888.

“We are to pray in the name of Christ, our Mediator. Our petitions are of value only as they are offered in His name. He has bridged the gulf that sin has made. By His atoning sacrifice He has bound to Himself and His Father those who believe in Him. His is the only name under heaven whereby we may be saved.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1903.

2. “THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS”

- a. What should be our attitude in prayer? Matthew 6:7; Luke 18:9–14.

“There are two kinds of prayer—the prayer of form and the prayer of faith. The repetition of set, customary phrases when the heart feels no need of God, is formal prayer. . . . We should be extremely careful in all our prayers to speak the wants of the heart and to say only what we mean. All the flowery words at our command are not equivalent to one holy desire. The most eloquent prayers are but vain repetitions if they do not express the true sentiments of the heart. But the prayer that comes from an earnest heart, when the simple wants of the soul are expressed just as we would ask an earthly friend for a favor, expecting that it would be granted—this is the prayer of faith. The publican who went up to the temple to pray is a good example of a sincere, devoted worshiper. He felt that he was a sinner, and his great need led to an outburst of passionate desire, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’”
—*The Signs of the Times*, August 14, 1884.

- b. What characteristic of Jesus should always bring us hope? Luke 15:1, 2. How did Jesus respond to what was intended as a charge against Him? Luke 5:30–32.

“It was taught by the Jews that before the favor of God is extended to the sinner, he must first repent. In their view, repentance is a work which men are to accomplish of themselves, by which to earn the favor of heaven. And it was this thought that moved the Pharisees to exclaim in astonishment and anger, ‘This man receiveth sinners.’ According to their ideas He should permit to approach Him those only who had repented of their sins. But Jesus teaches that salvation does not come through our seeking after God, but through God’s seeking after us. Repentance is born in the heart by beholding the love of Christ, who gave His life to save the sinner. It is the goodness of God, manifested in Christ, that softens the heart. It is the virtue that goes forth from Jesus that inspires the purpose of the soul to turn away from sin. We do not repent in order that God may love us, but God reveals His love to us that we may repent. Thus repentance is not the ground of God’s love toward us, but the fruit of that love.”—*The General Conference Bulletin*, December 1, 1895.

3. ALL ARE INVITED

- a. As we see our sinfulness, what comfort comes in seeking Heaven’s blessing? Hebrews 4:15, 16.

“We are not to be so overwhelmed with the thought of our sins and errors that we shall cease to pray. Some realize their great weakness and sin, and become discouraged. Satan casts his dark shadow between them and the Lord Jesus, their atoning sacrifice. They say, It is useless for me to pray. My prayers are so mingled with evil thoughts that the Lord will not hear them. These suggestions are from Satan. In His humanity Christ met and resisted this temptation, and He knows how to succor those who are thus tempted. In our behalf, He ‘offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears’ (Hebrews 5:7).

“Many, not understanding that their doubts come from Satan, become fainthearted and are defeated in the conflict. Do not, because your thoughts are evil, cease to pray. If we could in our own wisdom and strength pray aright, we could also live aright, and would need no atoning sacrifice. But imperfection is upon all humanity. Educate and train the mind that you may in simplicity tell the Lord what you need. As you offer your petitions to God, seeking for forgiveness for sin, a purer and holier atmosphere will surround your soul.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1903.

“Jesus receives and welcomes you as His own friend. He loves you. He has pledged Himself to open before you all the treasures of His grace. He says, Make use of My name, and it will be your passport to the heart of My Father, and to all the riches of His grace.”—*Ibid.*, February 28, 1906.

- b. What type of prayer is always answered positively—and immediately? Psalm 51:1–12; 1 John 1:9; 5:14, 15.

“When we pray for earthly blessings, the answer to our prayer may be delayed, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so when we ask for deliverance from sin. It is His will to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. Christ ‘gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father’ (Galatians 1:4).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 266.

4. GETTING RESULTS

- a. What makes prayer effective? Mark 11:22–26; James 1:6.

“The life of the soul depends upon habitual communion with God. Its wants are made known, and the heart is open to receive fresh blessings. Gratitude flows from unfeigned lips; and the refreshing that is received from Jesus is manifested in words, in deeds of active benevolence, and in public devotion. There is love to Jesus in the heart; and where love exists, it will not be repressed, but will express itself. Secret prayer sustains this inner life. The heart that loves God will desire to commune with Him, and will lean on Him in holy confidence.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 22, 1884.

- b. How often are we to pray? 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Psalm 16:8.

“We may speak with Jesus as we walk by the way, and He says, I am at thy right hand. We may commune with God in our hearts; we may walk in companionship with Christ. When engaged in our daily labor, we may breathe out our heart’s desire, inaudible to any human ear; but that word cannot die away into silence, nor can it be lost. Nothing can drown the soul’s desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the noise of machinery. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 258.

- c. What assurances does God give us concerning prayer? Jeremiah 29:12, 13; James 5:16.

“That prayer which comes forth from an earnest, believing heart is the effectual, fervent prayer that availeth much. God does not always answer our prayers as we expect, for we may not ask what would be for our highest good; but in His infinite love and wisdom He will give us those things which we most need.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 531.

- d. How are we invited to pray? Luke 18:1–8.
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5. STRENGTH FROM ON HIGH

- a. How can prayer boost weary laborers? Isaiah 40:31.

“[Many] workers can never attain the highest success until they learn the secret of strength. They must give themselves time to think, to pray, to wait upon God for a renewal of physical, mental, and spiritual power. They need the uplifting influence of His Spirit. Receiving this, they will be quickened by fresh life. The wearied frame and tired brain will be refreshed, the burdened heart will be lightened.”—*Education*, pp. 260, 261.

“Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Well-spring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience.”—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 254, 255.

- b. In what sense does a victorious heavenly atmosphere encompass the soul that has been praying? Isaiah 26:3.

“If we keep the Lord ever before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him, we shall have a continual freshness in our religious life. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. He will speak His mysteries to us personally.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 129.

“Go forward, the Lord says; I understand the case, and I will send you help. Continue to pray. Have faith in Me. It is for My name’s glory that you ask, and you shall receive. I will be honored before those who are watching critically for your failure. They shall see the truth triumph gloriously.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 127.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When was prayer first needed, and how long will this need continue?
2. How can we be sure that Heaven welcomes our prayers?
3. What are some benefits to be gained from prayer?
4. How can we know our prayers are heard?
5. What encouragement can we find in the Bible?

The Early Patriarchs

“The Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous” (Proverbs 15:29).

“The patriarchs were men of prayer, and God did great things for them.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 14, 1884.

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 329–331.
Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 195–203.

Sunday July 6

1. PRAYER IN ANCIENT TIMES

- a. In the words of the apostle Peter, to whom do “all the prophets witness”? Acts 10:36–43. Name some of the patriarchs who knew Christ as a Saviour. Romans 5:12–15.

“All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel. They looked for salvation through man’s Substitute and Surety. These holy men of old held communion with the Saviour who was to come to our world in human flesh; and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 366.

- b. What characterized the prayer life of Adam after his fall? 2 Corinthians 7:10. How did God renew his faith, not only for eternity, but even in this temporal life? Genesis 3:15.

“Adam’s life was one of sorrow, humility, and continual repentance. . . . He entreated pardon from God through the promised Sacrifice.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 50, 51.

Monday July 7

2. ENOCH

- a. What is noteworthy about Enoch? Genesis 5:23, 24.

“Pray in your closet, and as you go about your daily labor let your heart be often uplifted to God. It was thus that Enoch walked with God. These silent prayers rise like precious incense before the throne of grace. Satan cannot overcome him whose heart is thus stayed upon God.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 98, 99.

“Enoch’s walk with God was not in a trance or a vision, but in all the duties of his daily life. He did not become a hermit, shutting himself entirely from the world; for he had, in the world, a work to do for God. In the family and in his intercourse with men, as a husband and father, a friend, a citizen, he was the steadfast, unwavering servant of God.

“His faith waxed stronger, his love became more ardent, with the lapse of centuries. To him prayer was as the breath of the soul. He lived in the atmosphere of heaven.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 329, 330.

- b. What distinguished Enoch’s prayer life? Hebrews 11:5.

“Righteous Enoch was so distressed with the increasing wickedness of the ungodly, that he would not daily associate with them, fearing that he should be affected by their infidelity and that he might not ever regard God with that holy reverence which was due his exalted character. His soul was vexed as he daily beheld them trampling upon the authority of God. He chose to be separate from them, and spent much of his time in solitude, giving himself to reflection and prayer. He waited before God, and prayed to know His will more perfectly, that he might perform it. God communed with Enoch through His angels, and gave him divine instruction. He made known to him that He would not always bear with man in his rebellion—that it was His purpose to destroy the sinful race by bringing a flood of waters upon the earth.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 20, 1879.

“The men of [Enoch’s] generation mocked the folly of him who sought not to gather gold or silver, or to build up possessions here. But Enoch’s heart was upon eternal treasures. . . .

“[Hebrews 11:5 quoted.] To such communion God is calling us. As was Enoch’s must be their holiness of character who shall be redeemed from among men at the Lord’s second coming.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 330, 331.

3. INQUIRING OF GOD

- a. What comprised Noah's witness to the world? Hebrews 11:7. Why was his life preserved? Proverbs 15:29.
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- b. What major domestic trial did Abraham face? Genesis 21:9–11. How did prayer reward him? Genesis 21:12, 13.
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“Abraham was greatly distressed. Ishmael was his son, beloved by him. How could he send him away? He prayed to God in his perplexity, for he knew not what course to take. The Lord, through His angels, directed Abraham to listen to the voice of Sarah his wife, and not to let his affection for his son, or for Hagar, prevent his compliance with her wishes. For this was the only course he could pursue to restore harmony and happiness again to his family. Abraham had the consoling promise from the angel, that Ishmael, although separated from his father's house, should not die, nor be forsaken of God; he should be preserved because he was the son of Abraham. God also promised to make of Ishmael a great nation.”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 27, 1879.

- c. What was the greatest trial of Abraham's life? Genesis 22:1, 2. How did he wisely respond?
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“Stricken with grief, [Abraham] bowed before God, and prayed as never before for a confirmation of this strange command, for greater light if he must perform this terrible duty.”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 27, 1879.

- d. How was Abraham's worthy example later imitated by his faithful servant? Genesis 24:42–52.
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“[Abraham's servant] prayed earnestly to God to direct him in his choice of a wife for Isaac. He asked that certain evidence might be given him, that he should not err in the matter.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 109.

4. JACOB

- a. What encounter with God did Jacob experience early in life? Genesis 28:10–22. How did Christ later explain the meaning of this ladder to prayerful Nathanael? John 1:51.
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“Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, whose base is upon the earth, and whose topmost round reaches the throne of God.”—*The Signs of the Times*, April 11, 1895.

- b. How did Jacob pray in a crisis hour? Genesis 32:24–30.
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“Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His experience testifies to the power of importunate prayer. It is now that we are to learn this lesson of prevailing prayer, of unyielding faith. The greatest victories to the church of Christ or to the individual Christian are not those that are gained by talent or education, by wealth or the favor of men. They are those victories that are gained in the audience chamber with God, when earnest, agonizing faith lays hold upon the mighty arm of power.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 203.

- c. How are we blessed by Jacob's victory? Psalm 46:10, 11.
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“Go to your closet, and there alone plead with God: ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me’ (Psalm 51:10). Be in earnest, be sincere. Fervent prayer availeth much. Jacob-like, wrestle in prayer. Agonize. Jesus in the garden sweat great drops of blood; you must make an effort.”—*Messages to Young People*, p. 131.

“A formal religion, a feeble faith, does not correspond to the truth we profess. It demands living energy and fervency of spirit. It must be heartfelt with us, if we would urge it to the hearts of others. . . . He who feels his weakness and wrestles with God, as did Jacob, and like this servant of old cries, ‘I will not let thee go except thou bless me,’ will go forth with the fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit. The atmosphere of Heaven will surround him. He will go about doing good. His influence will be a positive force acting upon others. He will be a living epistle, known and read of all men. He will know that the Captain of his salvation expects him to do his very best, and he will do it with cheerfulness.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 24, 1888.

5. EFFECTIVE COMMUNION WITH GOD

- a. What results come from deep communion with God, as experienced by men such as Moses? Exodus 33:11–23; 34:35.

“Moses was hidden in the cleft of the rock when the glory of the Lord was revealed to him, and it is when we are hidden in Christ that we obtain some view of the majesty and love of God.”—*The Signs of the Times*, April 25, 1892.

- b. How can we share in the glory manifested to Moses on Mount Sinai? 2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:6–10.

“If we keep the Lord ever before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him, we shall have a continual freshness in our religious life. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Often there will come to us a sweet joyful sense of the presence of Jesus. Often our hearts will burn within us as He draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. When this is in truth the experience of the Christian, there is seen in his life a simplicity, a humility, meekness, and lowliness of heart, that show to all with whom he associates that he has been with Jesus and learned of Him.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 129, 130.

“God help us to have a knowledge of the truth, and if you have seen the truth of God, press right to the light and put up the bars behind you. Make not flesh your arm; but have a living experience for yourselves, and then your countenance will shine with the glory of God. You have walked with Him, and He has upheld you. You have wrestled with Him and pleaded with Him, and He has let His light shine upon you.”—*Faith and Works*, p. 78.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who promised Adam and Eve salvation?
2. Name some key points in Enoch’s experience with God.
3. How did the prayers of the patriarchs affect others?
4. Why is it important to understand the life of Jacob?
5. How is the experience of Moses to be repeated today?

Intercessory Prayer

“Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?” (Jeremiah 13:20).

“Are you watching for souls as they that must give an account, or are you yourselves drowsy, ease-loving, and lukewarm?”—*The Signs of the Times*, October 4, 1883.

Suggested Readings: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 315–330.
Testimonies, vol. 1, pp. 397–405.

1. ABRAHAM’S INTERCESSION

- a. What should we learn from the attitude of Abraham toward the Sodomites? Genesis 18:20–33; Galatians 6:1.

“There was no self-confidence, no boasting of [Abraham’s] own righteousness. He did not claim favor on the ground of his obedience, or of the sacrifices he had made in doing God’s will. Himself a sinner, he pleaded in the sinner’s behalf. Such a spirit all who approach God should possess. Yet Abraham manifested the confidence of a child pleading with a loved father. He came close to the heavenly Messenger, and fervently urged his petition. . . .

“Love for perishing souls inspired Abraham’s prayer. While he loathed the sins of that corrupt city, he desired that the sinners might be saved. His deep interest for Sodom shows the anxiety that we should feel for the impenitent. We should cherish hatred of sin, but pity and love for the sinner. All around us are souls going down to ruin as hopeless, as terrible, as that which befell Sodom. Every day the probation of some is closing. Every hour some are passing beyond the reach of mercy. And where are the voices of warning and entreaty to bid the sinner flee from this fearful doom? Where are the hands stretched out to draw him back from death? Where are those who with humility and persevering faith are pleading with God for him?

“The spirit of Abraham was the spirit of Christ. The Son of God is Himself the great Intercessor in the sinner’s behalf. He who has paid the price for its redemption knows the worth of the human soul.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 139, 140.

2. MOSES' STRENGTH AND TENDERNESS

- a. **Why did God spare Israel after the gross idolatry at the foot of Mount Sinai? Exodus 32:7-14, 30-32.**

“Moses realized how dreadful would be the fate of the sinner; yet if the people of Israel were to be rejected by the Lord, he desired his name to be blotted out with theirs; he could not endure to see the judgments of God fall upon those who had been so graciously delivered. The intercession of Moses in behalf of Israel illustrates the mediation of Christ for sinful men. But the Lord did not permit Moses to bear, as did Christ, the guilt of the transgressor.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 326.

- b. **Name two more examples of the power of Moses' intercessory prayers. Numbers 11:2; 21:7.**
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- c. **Who had helped to mold the character of Moses in such a way for him to manifest such intense fervor in intercessory prayer? Exodus 2:1-10; Hebrews 11:23-25.**

“Jochebed was a woman and a slave. Her lot in life was humble, her burden heavy. But through no other woman, save Mary of Nazareth, has the world received greater blessing. Knowing that her child must soon pass beyond her care, to the guardianship of those who knew not God, she the more earnestly endeavored to link his soul with heaven. She sought to implant in his heart love and loyalty to God. And faithfully was the work accomplished. Those principles of truth that were the burden of his mother's teaching and the lesson of her life, no after influence could induce Moses to renounce.”—*Education*, p. 61.

“The mother should feel her need of the Holy Spirit's guidance, that she herself may have a genuine experience in submission to the way and will of God. Then, through the grace of Christ, she can be a wise, gentle, loving teacher. To do her work as it should be done requires talent and skill and patient, thoughtful care. It calls for self-distrust and earnest prayer. Let every mother strive by persevering effort to fulfill her obligations. Let her bring her little ones to Jesus in the arms of faith, telling Him her great need, and asking for wisdom and grace.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 128.

3. PRAYING FOR OUR CHILDREN

- a. **What can parents learn from Job's example? Job 1:1-5.**

“Parents should meet their grave responsibilities with fear and trembling. Fervent prayers should be offered for divine strength and guidance in this task.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 200.

- b. **Why is prayer especially important at times when wayward children need to be corrected? Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21.**

“Some parents correct their children severely in a spirit of impatience, and often in passion. Such corrections produce no good result. In seeking to correct one evil, they create two. Continual censuring and whipping hardens children and weans them from their parents. Parents should first learn to control themselves, then they can more successfully control their children. Every time they lose self-control, and speak and act impatiently, they sin against God. They should first reason with their children, clearly point out their wrongs, show them their sin, and impress upon them that they have not only sinned against their parents, but against God. With your own heart subdued and full of pity and sorrow for your erring children, pray with them before correcting them. Then your correction will not cause your children to hate you. They will love you. They will see that you do not punish them because they have put you to inconvenience, or because you wish to vent your displeasure upon them; but from a sense of duty, for their good, that they may not be left to grow up in sin.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 398.

- c. **What prayer was in the heart of Hannah as she would prepare coats for her son, Samuel? 1 Samuel 2:18, 19.**

“Every fiber of the little garment had been woven with a prayer that [Samuel] might be pure, noble, and true. She did not ask for her son worldly greatness, but she earnestly pleaded that he might attain that greatness which Heaven values—that he might honor God and bless his fellow men.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 572.

4. IN OUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

- a. Explain some key elements in winning our associates to Christ. 1 Timothy 4:16.

“If believers associate with unbelievers for the purpose of winning them to Christ, they will be witnesses for Christ, and having fulfilled their mission, will withdraw themselves in order to breathe in a pure and holy atmosphere. They will draw near to God, and send up earnest petitions to Christ in behalf of their friends and associates.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 300.

- b. How did Sister White respond when told that Vermont was “a hard field” for the gospel? Jeremiah 13:20. Describe her early experience with unbelieving friends.

“We know there is earnest work to be done, requiring patience, perseverance, and untiring effort. Let the work be done by unselfish, humble men; let them work and pray, and pray and work. Labor by the fireside, brethren. Come close to hearts. Let unbelievers see that you care for their souls; search the Scriptures with them; weep and pray with them. In your earnest efforts, represent the love of Christ. Oh! this love, if we have it, is too much inclosed in our hearts, and does not appear in words or deeds as it should. How will you meet your relatives, your friends, and your neighbors in the Judgment, if you have not labored in every way possible to bring them to the truth? My prayer is that the Lord may so impress the minds of men and women in Vermont that they cannot rest until they commence in earnest to labor for souls. When they do this it will no longer be said, Vermont is a hard field.”—*The Review and Herald*, November 20, 1883.

“I arranged meetings with my young friends, some of whom were considerably older than myself, and a few were married persons. A number of them were vain and thoughtless; my experience sounded to them like an idle tale, and they did not heed my entreaties. But I determined that my efforts should never cease till these dear souls, for whom I had so great an interest, yielded to God. . . . At every one of our little meetings I continued to exhort and pray for each one separately, until every one had yielded to Jesus, acknowledging the merits of His pardoning love. Every one was converted to God.”—*Life Sketches*, pp. 41, 42.

5. CHRISTLIKE INTERCESSION

- a. How are we encouraged to imitate the greatest Example of intercessory prayer? Luke 22:31, 32; John 17:20.

“The Son of God is Himself the great Intercessor in the sinner’s behalf. He who has paid the price for its redemption knows the worth of the human soul. With an antagonism to evil such as can exist only in a nature spotlessly pure, Christ manifested toward the sinner a love which infinite goodness alone could conceive. In the agonies of the crucifixion, Himself burdened with the awful weight of the sins of the whole world, He prayed for His revilers and murderers, ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do’ (Luke 23:34).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 140.

- b. Why must we redouble our efforts in praying for others? Romans 13:10, 11; 1 Corinthians 15:34.

“We must be much in prayer if we would make progress in the divine life. When the message of truth was first proclaimed, how much we prayed. How often was the voice of intercession heard in the chamber, in the barn, in the orchard, or the grove. Frequently we spent hours in earnest prayer, two or three together claiming the promise; often the sound of weeping was heard and then the voice of thanksgiving and the song of praise. Now the day of God is nearer than when we first believed, and we should be more earnest, more zealous, and fervent than in those early days. Our perils are greater now than then. Souls are more hardened. We need now to be imbued with the spirit of Christ, and we should not rest until we receive it.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 161, 162.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did Abraham plead so fervently for the Sodomites?
2. What factors motivated the prayers of Moses?
3. How can parents improve their relationship with their children?
4. How can we be more effective witnesses in our communities?
5. Why is prayer so important in the divine life?

Seeking Guidance

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

“We are to seek to know ‘What saith the Lord,’ yielding our lives to His guidance.”—*This Day With God*, p. 140.

Suggested Readings: *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 325–328.
That I May Know Him, pp. 249–252, 268.

Sunday

July 20

1. PRAYING FOR WISDOM

- a. **When called to lead the army of Israel, how did Gideon obtain the extra guidance he desired? Judges 6:36–40.**

“Gideon dared not place himself at the head of the army without still further evidence that God had called him to his work, and that He would be with him. . . . [Judges 6:36, 37 quoted.] In the morning the fleece was wet, while the ground was dry. But now a doubt arose, since wool naturally absorbs moisture when there is any in the air; the test might not be decisive. Hence he asked that the sign be reversed, pleading that his extreme caution might not displease the Lord. His request was granted.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 548.

- b. **How does our own attitude affect how much guidance we can expect from God? Psalms 25:9; 32:8–10; James 1:5–8.**

“[James 1:5–7 quoted.] This petition for wisdom is not to be a meaningless prayer, out of mind as soon as finished. It is a prayer that expresses the strong, earnest desire of the heart, arising from a conscious lack of wisdom to determine the will of God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 131.

Monday

July 21

2. GUIDANCE FOR HEALTH

- a. **When Manoah’s wife was told she would bear a son, how were the couple’s prayers for guidance rewarded? Judges 13:8–23. What can we learn from their example?**

“The Lord regarded instruction to the mother of such importance that He sent an angel, who veiled his glory, in order to give a direct message to the wife of Manoah, and prescribe the course of action which she should pursue. The instruction given to the wife of Manoah is the instruction that all mothers should follow in order that the prenatal influence may be of a right character.”—*The Signs of the Times*, April 9, 1896.

“Christian parents should begin the education of their children in their infancy. They should, in view of their God-given responsibilities, pray most earnestly to know the will of God, and for strength to do it. . . . [Judges 13:8, 12 quoted.] If this prayer should go forth from the unfeigned lips of mothers, they would find that help would be given them from God.”—*The Health Reformer*, April 1, 1880.

“The words spoken to the wife of Manoah contain a truth that the mothers of today would do well to study. In speaking to this one mother, the Lord spoke to all the anxious, sorrowing mothers of that time and to all the mothers of succeeding generations. Yes, every mother may understand her duty. She may know that the character of her children will depend vastly more upon her habits before their birth and her personal efforts after their birth than upon external advantages or disadvantages.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 26, 1902.

- b. **What is revealed in God’s Word concerning health and temperance? 1 Corinthians 3:19; 9:27; 10:31.**

“In the selection of our food, we should not seek merely to please the taste, but should choose that which is most healthful. In dress, we should seek that which is simple, comfortable, convenient, and appropriate.

“He who will observe simplicity in all his habits, restricting the appetite and controlling the passions, may preserve his mental powers strong, active, and vigorous, quick to perceive everything which demands thought or action, keen to discriminate between the holy and the unholy, and ready to engage in every enterprise for the glory of God and the benefit of humanity.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 270.

3. A DEPENDABLE PILOT

- a. What prayer of David reveals how he recognized the source of his only hope of success? Psalm 31:1-3.

“Every ship sailing the sea of life needs to have the divine Pilot on board; but when storms arise, when tempests threaten, many persons push their Pilot overboard, and commit their bark into the hand of finite man, or try to steer it themselves. Then disaster and wreckage generally follow, and the Pilot is blamed for running them into such dangerous waters. Do not commit yourselves into the keeping of men, but say, ‘The Lord is my helper’; I will seek His counsel; I will be a doer of His will. All the advantages you may have cannot be a blessing to you, neither can the highest class education qualify you to become a channel of light, unless you have the cooperation of the divine Spirit. It is as impossible for us to receive qualification from man, without the divine enlightenment, as it was for the gods of Egypt to deliver those who trusted in them. Students must not suppose that every suggestion for them to prolong their studies is in harmony with God’s plan. Let every such suggestion be taken to the Lord in prayer, and seek earnestly for His guidance—not only once, but again and again. Plead with Him, until you are convinced whether the counsel is of God or man. Do not trust yourself to men. Act under the divine Guide.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 348.

- b. What is the main way that God can guide us? John 5:39. Why is our cooperation essential? Matthew 13:13.

“Let the Word be your guide, your rule of conduct. It will teach you refined manners, godly conduct, and unerring judgment. Study the Word. When you are in perplexity, search the Word for instruction that is suited to your case. Seek the Lord for guidance. Never entertain that which the Lord forbids in His Word, and that which His Word requires, ever seek to do.”—*The Upward Look*, p. 87.

“In the service of God there is no middle ground. Said Christ, ‘He that is not with me is against me’ (Matthew 12:30). Let none expect to make a compromise with the world, and yet enjoy the blessing of the Lord. Let God’s people come out from this world, and be separate. Let us seek more earnestly to know and do the will of our Father in heaven.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 15, 1886.

4. A GUIDE FOR LIFE

- a. What assurances are we given that God hears our prayers for guidance? Proverbs 3:5-8; 28:5.

“We need not walk stumblingly, or in uncertainty. If we ask guidance of the Lord, the promise is, ‘Ye shall receive.’ The promise is yea and amen in Christ Jesus. ‘Seek and ye shall find.’ This is what we need to do every hour of our life; for if we seek the right way in sincerity, we shall find it. We must feel the need of help from the Lord, and seek for it in humble prayer.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 15, 1892.

- b. When we pray for guidance, what kind of blessings can we count on receiving? Psalm 34:10; Isaiah 33:15, 16.

“In God you can do valiantly. Tell it to the Lord in prayer, talk it to the Lord by the way. ‘Thee I seek; Thee I will follow; Thee I will serve. Under the shadow of Thy wings will I abide. Command me as Thou wilt; I will obey Thy voice.’ Yield always to the heavenly guidance. When trials come, possess your soul in patience. Wait on the Lord and have one purpose in view, to seek the eternal good of all those with whom you are connected, holding fast your integrity in the strength of your God.”—*That I May Know Him*, p. 268.

“If we do not feel immediate answers to our prayers, we should hold fast our faith, not allowing distrust to come in, for that will separate us from God. If our faith wavers, we shall receive nothing from Him. Our confidence in God should be strong; and when we need it most, the blessing will fall upon us like a shower of rain.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 121.

- c. How does continual prayer for God’s leading affect our overall state of mind? Isaiah 26:3.

“Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331.

5. CONTINUAL GUIDANCE

- a. When faced with perplexity, what are we ever to keep in mind? John 15:1-5.

“There are many who get above the simplicity of Jesus Christ, supposing that they must do some great thing in order to work the works of God. Things of a temporal nature absorb the attention of others, and they have little time or thought for eternal realities. Wearied out with cares that draw their minds from spiritual things, they cannot find time for communion with God. Constantly they ask themselves the question, How can I find time to study and practice the Word of God? . . .

“Our first and highest duty is to know that we are abiding in Christ. He must do the work. We are to seek to know ‘What saith the Lord,’ yielding our lives to His guidance. When we have the Spirit of an abiding Christ, everything will take on a changed aspect. The Saviour alone can give us the rest and peace we so much need. And, in every invitation He gives us to seek the Lord that He may be found of us, He is calling us to abide in Him. This is an invitation, not merely to come to Him, but to remain in Him. It is the Spirit of God that moves us to come. When we have this rest and peace, our daily worries will not lead us to be coarse and rough and uncourteous. We shall no longer follow our own way and will. We will want to do the will of God, abiding in Christ as the branches in the vine.

“Christ declares Himself [to be] ‘the way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6). The way to heaven is represented as a narrow path, cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. But truth illuminates this path at every step. . . .

“Salvation means to us complete surrender of soul, body, and spirit. Because of the unruly elements of our nature our passions often gain the mastery. The only hope for the sinner is to cease from sin. Thus his will will be in harmony with the will of Christ. His soul will be brought into fellowship with God.”—*This Day With God*, p. 140.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What can we learn from Gideon’s attitude in prayer?
2. How must we follow the example of Manoah and his wife?
3. Why do we need to cooperate with God?
4. How can God’s promises help the moody person?
5. What are the keys to consistent guidance from God?

First Sabbath Offering

for the missionary schools



“The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.”—*Education*, p. 57.

Even before the organization of the Reform Movement in 1925, missionary schools have been a fundamental aspect in the completion of the gospel commission for this church. As early as 1920 a small missionary school was opened in Rama (near Würzburg), Germany.

In 1931 the General Conference decided to open an international missionary school with the aim of sending missionaries to foreign lands. On April 1, 1932, this school began operations in Schwaebisch Hall, Germany.

Today, missionary schools continue to be an important part of spreading the present truth. Workers for the Lord’s cause need to be trained to complete the commission given to them by the Saviour of souls.

On August 2, please remember this important work. Your offerings will be used to support missionary schools around the globe.



M. Natarajan,
GC Education
Secretary

Bethel Missionary School in Colombia

PROJECT 01A

Strength for Service

“For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth” (Luke 22:27).

“Our prayers are not to be a selfish asking, merely for our own benefit. We are to ask that we may give.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 142.

Suggested Readings: *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 139–149.
The Ministry of Healing, pp. 497–502.

Sunday

July 27

1. PRAYING TO SERVE

- a. **How did the longing of Hannah reflect a desire to serve? 1 Samuel 1:1–11.**
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- b. **In what ways are we all to learn and be encouraged by God’s answer to Hannah’s prayer? 1 Samuel 1:19, 20, 27, 28; 2:18–21, 26.**

“During the first three years of the life of Samuel the prophet, his mother carefully taught him to distinguish between good and evil. . . . Though Samuel’s youth was passed at the tabernacle devoted to the worship of God, he was not free from evil influences or sinful example. The sons of Eli feared not God, nor honored their father; but Samuel did not seek their company nor follow their evil ways. His early training led him to choose to maintain his Christian integrity. What a reward was Hannah’s! And what an encouragement to faithfulness is her example!”—*The Review and Herald*, September 8, 1904.

“When separated from her child, the faithful mother’s solicitude did not cease. He was the subject of her prayers. . . . She did not ask that he might be great, but earnestly pleaded that he might be good. Her faith and devotion were rewarded. She saw her son, in the simplicity of childhood, walking in the love and fear of God. She saw him growing up to manhood in favor with God and man, humble, reverent, prompt in duty, and earnest in the service of his divine Master.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 3, 1881.

Monday

July 28

2. LEARNING FROM SOLOMON

- a. **Why was Solomon’s desire for wisdom rewarded by God? 1 Kings 3:5–15.**

“Solomon realized that he lacked discernment. It was his great need that led him to seek God for wisdom. In his heart there was no selfish aspiration for a knowledge that would exalt him above his brethren.”—*The Review and Herald*, October 26, 1905.

- b. **How did Solomon’s attitude contrast with that of the rich young ruler to whom Jesus presented a practical test? Luke 18:18–23.**

“The Lord said, because [Solomon] had not asked for temporal riches or for worldly honor, he should have not only the blessing of wisdom, but riches and honor also. One who has heavenly wisdom is prepared to make a right use of the talents and means which God has given him. All the talents and ability he may possess will not lead him to forget the Giver. There is danger of some . . . being self-deceived, as was the young man [Luke 18:18, 21, 22 quoted]. . . . This practical test unfolded to the deceived young man his supreme selfishness. His deficiency of character spoiled all his virtues.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 14, 1878.

- c. **What can all kinds of leaders learn from Solomon? Proverbs 20:28.**

“All who occupy responsible positions need to learn the lesson that is taught in Solomon’s humble prayer. They are ever to remember that position will never change the character or render man infallible. The higher the position a man occupies, the greater the responsibility he has to bear, the wider will be the influence he exerts and the greater his need to feel his dependence on the wisdom and strength of God and to cultivate the best and most holy character. Those who accept a position of responsibility in the cause of God should always remember that with the call to this work God has also called them to walk circumspectly before Him and before their fellow men. Instead of considering it their duty to order and dictate and command, they should realize that they are to be learners themselves. When a responsible worker fails to learn this lesson, the sooner he is released from his responsibilities the better it will be for him and for the work of God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 282, 283.

3. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

- a. **What was the theme of Christ's life on earth? Isaiah 50:4; Matthew 20:28.**

“Not for Himself, but for others, [Christ] lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 139.

- b. **What do we learn from Christ's aim to maintain a sanctified life? John 17:19.**

“Christ's lessons in regard to prayer should be carefully considered. There is a divine science in prayer, and His illustration brings to view principles that all need to understand. He shows what is the true spirit of prayer, He teaches the necessity of perseverance in presenting our requests to God, and assures us of His willingness to hear and answer prayer. . . .

“The principle of Christ's life must be the principle of our lives. . . . Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we are to glorify God by cooperating with Him to save sinners. We are to ask blessings from God that we may communicate to others. The capacity for receiving is preserved only by imparting. We cannot continue to receive heavenly treasure without communicating to those around us.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 142, 143.

“We are engaged in a great work, and there are many opportunities for service in various lines. Let all pray earnestly that God may guide them into the right channels of service. God's workmen should not neglect any opportunity to help others in every possible way. If they seek God unselfishly for counsel, His word, which bringeth salvation, will lead them.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 497.

“God's servants are to stand as minutemen, ready for service at a moment's notice. My brethren, from hour to hour opportunities to serve God will open before you. These constantly come and go. Be ever ready to make the most of them. That chance to speak in the hearing of some needy soul the word of life may never again offer itself.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 195.

4. BREAD OF LIFE TO SHARE

- a. **With what parable does Christ teach of perseverance in prayer? Luke 11:5-8.**

“In the parable [of the friend calling at midnight] the petitioner was again and again repulsed, but he did not relinquish his purpose. So our prayers do not always seem to receive an immediate answer; but Christ teaches that we should not cease to pray. Prayer is not to work any change in God; it is to bring us into harmony with God. When we make request of Him, He may see that it is necessary for us to search our hearts and repent of sin. Therefore He takes us through test and trial, He brings us through humiliation, that we may see what hinders the working of His Holy Spirit through us.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 143.

“Many have not a living faith. This is why they do not see more of the power of God. . . . They take themselves into their own keeping. They plan and devise, but pray little, and have little real trust in God. They think they have faith, but it is only the impulse of the moment. Failing to realize their own need, or God's willingness to give, they do not persevere in keeping their requests before the Lord.

“Our prayers are to be as earnest and persistent as was the petition of the needy friend who asked for the loaves at midnight. The more earnestly and steadfastly we ask, the closer will be our spiritual union with Christ. We shall receive increased blessings because we have increased faith.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 145, 146.

- b. **How much is promised us when our desire is to serve others? Luke 6:38.**

“In the parable, he who asks bread for the stranger, receives ‘as many as he needeth.’ And in what measure will God impart to us that we may impart to others? ‘According to the measure of the gift of Christ’ (Ephesians 4:7). Angels are watching with intense interest to see how man is dealing with his fellow men. When they see one manifest Christlike sympathy for the erring, they press to his side and bring to his remembrance words to speak that will be as the bread of life to the soul. . . . Your testimony in its genuineness and reality He will make powerful in the power of the life to come. The word of the Lord will be in your mouth as truth and righteousness.

“Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 148, 149.

5. ASKING FOR THE BEST

- a. What prayer request will bring us the greatest happiness? Luke 11:11–13.

“There is one blessing that all may have who seek for it in the right way. It is the Holy Spirit of God, and this is a blessing that brings all other blessings in its train. If we will come to God as little children, asking for His grace and power and salvation, not for our own uplifting, but that we may bring blessing to those around us, our petitions will not be denied.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 113.

- b. As we pray to serve, what are some key points to keep in mind? Acts 5:30–32; Philippians 4:19.

“As Christ lived the law in humanity, so we may do if we will take hold of the Strong for strength. But we are not to place the responsibility of our duty upon others, and wait for them to tell us what to do. We cannot depend for counsel upon humanity. The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Our hearts will often burn within us as One draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. Those who decide to do nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to pursue. And they will receive not only wisdom, but strength. Power for obedience, for service, will be imparted to them, as Christ has promised. Whatever was given to Christ—the ‘all things’ to supply the need of fallen men—was given to Him as the head and representative of humanity. And ‘whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight’ (1 John 3:22).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do the goals of today’s Christian parents differ from Hannah’s?
2. Why should we consider Solomon’s attitude?
3. How can we be ready and equipped to stand as minutemen for God?
4. Why should we continue to ask for the same things?
5. What might be an example of the most important prayer of our entire day?

David’s Prayer Life

“Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us” (Psalm 62:8).

“David’s prayer was continually directed to God. His trust was in God, and he walked before Him in a perfect way.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 17, 1888.

Suggested Readings: *Messages to Young People*, pp. 247–252.
Testimonies, vol. 4, pp. 533–537.

1. EARNEST CONSISTENCY

- a. What habit can we learn from David—and why? Psalm 55:16, 17.

“Our only sure defense against besetting sins is prayer, daily and hourly prayer. Not one day zealous and the next careless, but through watchfulness and earnestness becoming vitalized by intercourse with God. Prayer is necessary, and we should not wait for feeling, but pray, earnestly pray, whether we feel like it or not. Heaven is open to our prayers. Prayer is the channel that conducts our gratitude and yearnings of soul for the divine blessing to the throne of God, to be returned to us in refreshing showers of divine grace. With very many, this channel is allowed to freeze up, and then the connection with heaven is interrupted. . . . Oh, that we would spend more time upon our knees and less time in planning for ourselves and in thinking we may do some great thing.”—*This Day With God*, p. 277.

- b. Describe the depth of spiritual experience we are to learn from David’s example. Psalms 38:9–15; 42:1, 2, 5; 84:2.

“True prayer engages the energies of the soul and affects the life. He who thus pours out his wants before God feels the emptiness of everything else under heaven.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 535.

2. BEHOLDING GOD'S CHARACTER

- a. **How did David gain a clearer view of God through prayer? Psalm 77:1–14.**

“The psalmist David in his experience had many changes of mind. At times, as he obtained views of God’s will and ways, he was highly exalted. Then as he caught sight of the reverse of God’s mercy and changeless love, everything seemed to be shrouded in a cloud of darkness. But through the darkness he obtained a view of the attributes of God, which gave him confidence and strengthened his faith. But when he meditated upon the difficulties and danger of life, they looked so forbidding that he thought himself abandoned by God because of his sins. He viewed his sin in such a strong light that he exclaimed, ‘Will the Lord cast off for ever? will he be favorable no more?’

“But as he wept and prayed, he obtained a clearer view of the character and attributes of God, being educated by heavenly agencies, and he decided that his ideas of God’s justice and severity were exaggerated. He rejected his impressions as being the result of his weakness, ignorance, and physical infirmities, and as dishonoring to God, and with renewed faith he exclaimed, ‘This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High’ (Psalm 77:10).” —*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1149.

- b. **What tragic hour in David’s life confirms how outward circumstances do not necessarily reflect whether or not God accepts our prayers? Psalm 3:1–8.**

“Our heavenly Father is never unmindful of those whom sorrow has touched. When David went up the Mount Olivet, ‘and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot’ (2 Samuel 15:30), the Lord was looking pityingly upon him. David was clothed in sackcloth, and his conscience was scourging him. The outward signs of humiliation testified of his contrition. In tearful, heartbroken utterances he presented his case to God, and the Lord did not forsake His servant. Never was David dearer to the heart of Infinite Love than when, conscience-smitten, he fled for his life from his enemies, who had been stirred to rebellion by his own son. The Lord says, ‘As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent’ (Revelation 3:19). Christ lifts up the contrite heart and refines the mourning soul until it becomes His abode.” —*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 11.

3. DEEP REPENTANCE

- a. **Despite the greatest sin of David’s life, what attitude had enabled him to be restored as a man after God’s own heart? Psalms 32:1, 2; 51:1–14; 103:13.**

“The prayer of David after his fall, illustrates the nature of true sorrow for sin. His repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his guilt; no desire to escape the judgment threatened, inspired his prayer. David saw the enormity of his transgression; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. He longed for the joy of holiness—to be restored to harmony and communion with God.” —*Steps to Christ*, pp. 24, 25.

“Great had been David’s fall, but deep was his repentance, ardent was his love, and strong his faith. He had been forgiven much, and therefore he loved much (Luke 7:48).” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 754.

“David often triumphed in God, and yet he dwelt much upon his own unworthiness and sinfulness. His conscience was not asleep or dead. ‘My sin,’ he cried, ‘is ever before me’ (Psalm 51:3). He did not flatter himself that sin was a matter with which he had nothing to do, and that should not concern him. As he saw the depths of deceit in his heart, he was deeply disgusted with himself, and prayed that God would keep him back by His power from presumptuous sins, and cleanse him from secret faults.” —*The Youth’s Instructor*, July 5, 1894.

- b. **What assurances are given to repentant souls? Jeremiah 3:22; Matthew 5:4.**

“In pronouncing a blessing upon those who mourn, Jesus did not design to teach that there is any virtue in living under a perpetual cloud, nor that selfish sorrow and repining has any merit of itself to remove a single stain of sin. The mourning spoken of by Christ is a godly sorrow for sin, that works repentance unto eternal life.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 205.

“Have you fallen into sin? Then without delay seek God for mercy and pardon. When David was convicted of his sin, he poured out his soul in penitence and humiliation before God. He felt that he could endure the loss of his crown, but he could not be deprived of the favor of God. Mercy is still extended to the sinner.” —*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 177.

4. RESTORATION TO PURITY

- a. **What must we always remember about God? Psalm 145:8, 9; 1 John 4:16.**

“The one thing essential for us in order that we may receive and impart the forgiving love of God is to know and believe the love that He has to us (1 John 4:16). Satan is working by every deception he can command, in order that we may not discern that love. He will lead us to think that our mistakes and transgressions have been so grievous that the Lord will not have respect unto our prayers and will not bless and save us. In ourselves we can see nothing but weakness, nothing to recommend us to God, and Satan tells us that it is of no use; we cannot remedy our defects of character. When we try to come to God, the enemy will whisper, It is of no use for you to pray; did not you do that evil thing? Have you not sinned against God and violated your own conscience? But we may tell the enemy that ‘the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin’ (1 John 1:7). When we feel that we have sinned and cannot pray, it is then the time to pray. Ashamed we may be and deeply humbled, but we must pray and believe. ‘This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief’ (1 Timothy 1:15). Forgiveness, reconciliation with God, comes to us, not as a reward for our works, it is not bestowed because of the merit of sinful men, but it is a gift unto us, having in the spotless righteousness of Christ its foundation for bestowal.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 115, 116.

- b. **On what theme did David often focus his prayers? Psalms 19:12–14; 51:10.**

“One of the most earnest prayers recorded in the Word of God is that of David when he pleaded, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God’ (Psalm 51:10). God’s response to such a prayer is, A new heart will I give you. This is a work that no finite man can do. Men and women are to begin at the beginning, seeking God most earnestly for a true Christian experience. They are to feel the creative power of the Holy Spirit. They are to receive the new heart, that is kept soft and tender by the grace of heaven. The selfish spirit is to be cleansed from the soul. They are to labor earnestly and with humility of heart, each one looking to Jesus for guidance and encouragement. Then the building, fitly framed together, will grow into a holy temple in the Lord.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 159.

5. THE REWARD OF FERVOR

- a. **How can we enjoy a rich spiritual life? Psalm 119:10, 145.**

“In sincerity, in soul hunger, cry after God. Wrestle with the heavenly agencies until you have the victory. Put your whole being into the Lord’s hands, soul, body, and spirit, and resolve to be His loving, consecrated agency, moved by His will, controlled by His mind, infused by His Spirit.

“Tell Jesus your wants in the sincerity of your soul. You are not required to hold a long controversy with, or preach a sermon to, God, but with a heart of sorrow for your sins, say, ‘Save me, Lord, or I perish.’ There is hope for such souls. They will seek, they will ask, they will knock, and they will find. When Jesus has taken away the burden of sin that is crushing the soul, you will experience the blessedness of the peace of Christ.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 131.

- b. **What characterizes all who truly take God at His word? Psalms 50:23; 51:15.**

“The joy of Christ is a pure, unalloyed cheerfulness. It is not a cheap gaiety, that leads to vanity of words or lightness of conduct. No, we are to have *His* joy, and His greatest joy was to see men obeying the truth. . . . Plead with God, saying, ‘I make an entire surrender. I give myself away to Thee.’ Then be joyful. The Word is in you, purifying and cleansing your character. God does not want His children to go about with anxiety and sorrow expressed in their faces. He wants the lovely expression of His countenance to be revealed in every one of us who are partakers of the divine nature; for we have power to escape the corruptions of the world.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 148. [Author’s italics.]

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **What does true prayer involve?**
2. **How can you gain a clearer view of God?**
3. **What should you do if you fall into sin?**
4. **How can you receive a new heart?**
5. **How can my prayer life be more like David’s?**

In Times of Crisis

“Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me” (Psalm 50:15).

“In every emergency, in every time of need, men and women may receive God’s grace and power, and yet there will be no lessening of the supply.”—*The Signs of the Times*, July 26, 1905.

Suggested Readings: *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 349–366.
Testimonies, vol. 3, pp. 570–575.

Sunday

August 10

1. JONATHAN

- a. **In battle against the Philistines, how did God honor the prayer of Jonathan and his armor-bearer? 1 Samuel 14:1–23.**

“God had permitted matters to be . . . brought to a crisis that He might rebuke the perversity of Saul and teach His people a lesson of humility and faith. Because of Saul’s sin in his presumptuous offering, the Lord would not give him the honor of vanquishing the Philistines. Jonathan, the king’s son, a man who feared the Lord, was chosen as the instrument to deliver Israel. . . .

“The armor-bearer, who also was a man of faith and prayer, encouraged the design, and together they withdrew from the camp, secretly, lest their purpose should be opposed. With earnest prayer to the Guide of their fathers, they agreed upon a sign by which they might determine how to proceed. . . .

“Angels of heaven shielded Jonathan and his attendant, angels fought by their side, and the Philistines fell before them. The earth trembled as though a great multitude with horsemen and chariots were approaching. Jonathan recognized the tokens of divine aid, and even the Philistines knew that God was working for the deliverance of Israel. Great fear seized upon the host, both in the field and in the garrison. In the confusion, mistaking their own soldiers for enemies, the Philistines began to slay one another.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 623.

Monday

August 11

2. GROWTH THROUGH TRIAL

- a. **For what did the youthful Joseph pray when sold into slavery? Genesis 37:23–28.**

“[When taken as a slave] Joseph believed that the God of his fathers would be his God. He then and there gave himself fully to the Lord, and he prayed that the Keeper of Israel would be with him in the land of his exile.

“His soul thrilled with the high resolve to prove himself true to God—under all circumstances to act as became a subject of the King of heaven. He would serve the Lord with undivided heart; he would meet the trials of his lot with fortitude and perform every duty with fidelity. One day’s experience had been the turning point in Joseph’s life. Its terrible calamity had transformed him from a petted child to a man, thoughtful, courageous, and self-possessed.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 214.

- b. **How was his prayer answered? Genesis 39:2, 3, 21; 41:39–41; 42:6.**

“Joseph’s religion kept his temper sweet and his sympathy with humanity warm and strong, notwithstanding all his trials. There are those who if they feel they are not rightly used, become sour, ungenerous, crabbed and uncourteous in their words and deportment. They sink down discouraged, hateful and hating others. But Joseph was a Christian. No sooner does he enter upon prison life, than he brings all the brightness of his Christian principles into active exercise; he begins to make himself useful to others. He enters into the troubles of his fellow prisoners. He is cheerful, for he is a Christian gentleman. God was preparing him under this discipline for a situation of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness, and he was willing to learn; he took kindly to the lessons the Lord would teach him. He learned to bear the yoke in his youth. He learned to govern by first learning obedience himself. He humbled himself, and the Lord exalted him to special honor.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1097.

- c. **What action did Esther take when the Jewish people were faced with a death decree? Esther 3:12–14; 4:10–17. What was the final result? Esther 8:12–17.**

3. JEHOSEPHAT

- a. **What serious crisis endangered Judah during the reign of Jehoshaphat, and how did the monarch respond? 2 Chronicles 20:1–13.**

“With confidence Jehoshaphat could say to the Lord, ‘Our eyes are upon Thee.’ For years he had taught the people to trust in the One who in past ages had so often interposed to save His chosen ones from utter destruction; and now, when the kingdom was in peril, Jehoshaphat did not stand alone; ‘all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children’ (2 Chronicles 20:13). Unitedly they fasted and prayed; unitedly they besought the Lord to put their enemies to confusion, that the name of Jehovah might be glorified.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 200.

- b. **What did God promise through the prophet Jahaziel? 2 Chronicles 20:14–17.**

- c. **How was this promise fulfilled in a marvelous way? 2 Chronicles 20:20–30.**

“It was a singular way of going to battle against the enemy’s army—praising the Lord with singing, and exalting the God of Israel. This was their battle song. They possessed the beauty of holiness. If more praising of God were engaged in now, hope and courage and faith would steadily increase. And would not this strengthen the hands of the valiant soldiers who today are standing in defense of truth? . . .

“God was the strength of Judah in this crisis, and He is the strength of His people today. We are not to trust in princes, or to set men in the place of God.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 202.

- d. **What does God expect of all who rely on His help? Psalms 34:17–19; 50:14, 15.**

“Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish and a plain path before their feet.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 481.

4. DEALING WITH SARCASM

- a. **What did Hezekiah do with the taunting letter from Sennacherib, king of Assyria? Why was this crisis so serious? 2 Kings 19:14–19; Isaiah 52:4, 5.**

“Judah’s only hope was now in God. All possible help from Egypt had been cut off, and no other nations were near to lend a friendly hand.

“The Assyrian officers, sure of the strength of their disciplined forces, arranged for a conference with the chief men of Judah, during which they insolently demanded the surrender of the city. This demand was accompanied by blasphemous revilings against the God of the Hebrews. Because of the weakness and apostasy of Israel and Judah, the name of God was no longer feared among the nations, but had become a subject for continual reproach.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 352.

- b. **How did God uplift the penitent and cut off the proud? 2 Kings 19:20–22, 32–37.**

- c. **In Nehemiah’s day, what did the rebuilders of the wall face? Nehemiah 4:1–9.**

“The experience of Nehemiah is repeated in the history of God’s people in this time. Those who labor in the cause of truth will find that they cannot do this without exciting the anger of its enemies. Though they have been called of God to the work in which they are engaged, and their course is approved of Him, they cannot escape reproach and derision. They will be denounced as visionary, unreliable, scheming, hypocritical—anything, in short, that will suit the purpose of their enemies. The most sacred things will be represented in a ridiculous light to amuse the ungodly. A very small amount of sarcasm and low wit, united with envy, jealousy, impiety, and hatred, is sufficient to excite the mirth of the profane scoffer. And these presumptuous jesters sharpen one another’s ingenuity, and embolden each other in their blasphemous work. Contempt and derision are indeed painful to human nature; but they must be endured by all who are true to God. It is the policy of Satan thus to turn souls from doing the work which the Lord has laid upon them.”—*Christian Service*, pp. 173, 174.

“If we feel our dangers we shall feel the need of prayer, as did Nehemiah, and like him we shall obtain that sure defense that will give us security in peril.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 572.

5. A PRAYER FOR TODAY

- a. What prayers are to be uttered today, and why? Psalm 119:126; Joel 2:17, 18.

“The world has gone astray from God, and its lawless state should strike terror to the heart, and lead all who are loyal to the great King to work for a reformation. The papal power has thought to change the law of God by substituting a spurious sabbath for that of Jehovah; and all through the religious world the false sabbath is revered, while the true one is trampled beneath unholy feet. But will the Lord degrade His law to meet the standard of finite man? Will He accept a day possessing no sanctity, in the place of His own Sabbath, which He has hallowed and blessed? No; it is on the law of God that the last great struggle of the controversy between Christ and His angels and Satan and his angels will come, and it will be decisive for all the world. This is the hour of temptation to God’s people; but Daniel saw them delivered out of it, every one whose name is written in the Lamb’s book of life.”—*The Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1884.

“God has always wrought for His people in their greatest extremity, when there seemed the least hope that ruin could be averted. The designs of wicked men, the enemies of the church, are subject to His power and overruling providence. He can move upon the hearts of statesmen; the wrath of the turbulent and disaffected, the haters of God, His truth, and His people can be turned aside, even as the rivers of water are turned, if He orders it thus. Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence. He who marshals the stars in order in the heavens, whose word controls the waves of the great deep, the same infinite Creator will work in behalf of His people if they call upon Him in faith. He will restrain the forces of darkness until the warning is given to the world and all who will heed it are prepared for the conflict.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 452, 453.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How was Jonathan used to deliver Israel?
2. What must we remember about how God has delivered His people in times of crisis?
3. How had Jehoshaphat prepared the people to face crisis?
4. How can we deal with worldly rebuke?
5. How can we keep our work for God in focus, with an eye single to His glory?

The Prayers of the Righteous

“Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience” (James 5:10).

“The sincerity of our prayers can be proved only by the vigor of our endeavor to obey God’s commandments.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 504.

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 273–288.
The Sanctified Life, pp. 42–52.

1. EXAMPLES FOR US

- a. What can we learn from the prayers of godly men? Nehemiah 1:4–11; Daniel 9:3–5.

“Nehemiah humbled himself before God, giving Him the glory due unto His name. Thus also did Daniel in Babylon. Let us study the prayers of these men. They teach us that we are to humble ourselves, but that we are never to obliterate the line of demarcation between God’s commandment-keeping people and those who have no respect for His law.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1136.

- b. How did God open the way for Nehemiah’s work? Nehemiah 2:1–6.

“[Nehemiah] had a sacred trust to fulfill, in which he required help from the king; and he realized that much depended upon his presenting the matter in such a way as to win his approval and enlist his aid. ‘I prayed,’ he said, ‘to the God of heaven’ (Nehemiah 2:4). In that brief prayer Nehemiah pressed into the presence of the King of kings and won to his side a power that can turn hearts as the rivers of waters are turned.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 631.

“Nehemiah did not regard his duty as done when he had mourned and wept and prayed before the Lord. He did not only pray. He worked, mingling petition and endeavor.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 346.

2. ELIJAH

- a. **Why did Elijah's prayer so effectively alter the course of nature? James 5:17.**

“Viewing [Israel's] apostasy from his mountain retreat, Elijah was overwhelmed with sorrow. In anguish of soul he besought God to arrest the once-favored people in their wicked course, to visit them with judgments, if need be, that they might be led to see in its true light their departure from Heaven. He longed to see them brought to repentance before they should go to such lengths in evil-doing as to provoke the Lord to destroy them utterly.

“Elijah's prayer was answered. Oft-repeated appeals, remonstrances, and warnings had failed to bring Israel to repentance. The time had come when God must speak to them by means of judgments. Inasmuch as the worshipers of Baal claimed that the treasures of heaven, the dew and the rain, came not from Jehovah, but from the ruling forces of nature, and that it was through the creative energy of the sun that the earth was enriched and made to bring forth abundantly, the curse of God was to rest heavily upon the polluted land. The apostate tribes of Israel were to be shown the folly of trusting to the power of Baal for temporal blessings. Until they should turn to God with repentance, and acknowledge Him as the source of all blessing, there should fall upon the land neither dew nor rain.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 120.

- b. **Relate Elijah's experience at Mount Carmel. 1 Kings 18:17–45; James 5:18.**

“[Elijah] reminds the people of their degeneracy, which has awakened the wrath of God against them, and then calls upon them to humble their hearts and turn to the God of their fathers, that His curse may be removed from them. . . .

“He then reverentially bows before the unseen God, raises his hands toward heaven, and offers a calm and simple prayer, unattended with violent gestures or contortions of the body. No shrieks resound over Carmel's height. A solemn silence, which is oppressive to the priests of Baal, rests upon all. In his prayer, Elijah makes use of no extravagant expressions. He prays to Jehovah as though He were nigh, witnessing the whole scene, and hearing his sincere, fervent, yet simple prayer. Baal's priests have screamed, and foamed, and leaped, and prayed, very long—from morning until near evening. Elijah's prayer is very short, earnest, reverential, and sincere.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 284, 285.

3. GOD'S WISDOM IN ANSWERING

- a. **Why didn't the rain come immediately after Elijah's first prayer? Psalm 26:2.**

“Important lessons are presented to us in the experience of Elijah. When upon Mount Carmel he offered the prayer for rain, his faith was tested, but he persevered in making known his request unto God. Six times he prayed earnestly, and yet there was no sign that his petition was granted, but with strong faith he urged his plea to the throne of grace. Had he given up in discouragement at the sixth time, his prayer would not have been answered, but he persevered till the answer came. We have a God whose ear is not closed to our petitions; and if we prove His word, He will honor our faith. He wants us to have all our interests interwoven with His interests, and then He can safely bless us; for we shall not then take glory to self when the blessing is ours, but shall render all the praise to God. God does not always answer our prayers the first time we call upon Him; for should He do this, we might take it for granted that we had a right to all the blessings and favors He bestowed upon us. Instead of searching our hearts to see if any evil was entertained by us, any sin indulged, we should become careless, and fail to realize our dependence upon Him, and our need of His help.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 9, 1891.

- b. **What were Isaiah's concerns when he was called by God, and how was he strengthened by communion with the Almighty? Isaiah 6:5–7.**

“The prophet [Isaiah] was nerved for the work before him. The memory of this vision was carried with him throughout his long and arduous mission.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 751.

- c. **During the time Jonah was neglecting his duty to God, what serious warning must we heed from his experience? Jonah 1:1–12.**

“The prayers of the man [Jonah] who had turned aside from the path of duty brought no help.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 267.

- d. **What does Jonah's history also teach of God's delight in the prayers of the penitent? Jonah 2:1–10; 3:4–10.**

4. DANIEL

a. How important was prayer to the prophet Daniel? Daniel 6:4–10.

“The decree goes forth from the king. Daniel is aware of all that has been done. . . . But he does not change his course in a single particular.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 8, 1881.

“Have a set time, a special season for prayer at least three times a day. Morning, noon, and at night Daniel prayed to his God, notwithstanding the king’s decree, and the fearful den of lions. He was not ashamed or afraid to pray, but with his windows opened he prayed three times a day.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, October 1, 1855.

b. What can we learn from Daniel’s prayer for apostate Israel? Daniel 9:4–19.

“The man of God was praying, not for a flight of happy feeling, but for a knowledge of the divine will. And he desired this knowledge, not merely for himself, but for his people. His great burden was for Israel, who were not, in the strictest sense, keeping the law of God. He acknowledges that all their misfortunes have come upon them in consequence of their transgressions of that holy law. . . . They had lost their peculiar, holy character as God’s chosen people. [Daniel 9:17 quoted.] Daniel’s heart turns with intense longing to the desolate sanctuary of God. He knows that its prosperity can be restored only as Israel shall repent of their transgressions of God’s law, and become humble, and faithful, and obedient.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 8, 1881.

“Daniel’s heart was burdened for the people of God, for the city and temple that were laid waste. His deepest interest was for the honor of God and the prosperity of Israel. It was this that moved him to seek God with prayer and fasting and deep humiliation. Brethren in responsible positions in the Lord’s work for this time, have not we as great need to call upon God as had Daniel? I address those who believe that we are living in the very last period of this earth’s history. I entreat you to take upon your own souls a burden for our churches, our schools, and our institutions. That God who heard Daniel’s prayer will hear ours when we come to Him in contrition. Our necessities are as urgent, our difficulties are as great, and we need to have the same intensity of purpose, and in faith roll our burden upon the great Burden-bearer. There is need for hearts to be as deeply moved in our time as in the time when Daniel prayed.”—*Ibid.*, February 9, 1897.

5. IN THE LAODICEAN ERA

a. What should characterize our prayers today, and why? 2 Corinthians 6:2.

“In the early stages of this work, there were but few friends of the cause. These servants of God wept and prayed for a clear understanding of the truth. They suffered privations and much self-denial, in order to spread a knowledge of it; and although as the result of much labor but few received the precious message, yet step by step they followed as God’s opening providence led the way. They did not study their own convenience or shrink at hardships. God, through these men, prepared the way, and the truth has been made very plain; yet some who have since embraced the truth have failed to take upon themselves the burden of the work.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 12, 1880.

“God has loaded us with His benefits. Immortal blessings have been poured upon us in great measure. Messengers have been sent with warnings, reproofs, and entreaties. God’s servants have wept and prayed over the lukewarm state of the church. Some may arouse, but only to fall back into unconsciousness of their sin and peril. Passion, worldliness, malice, envy, pride, strife for supremacy, make our churches weak and powerless. . . . It is still thy day, O church of God, whom He has made the depositary of His law. But this day of trust and probation is fast drawing to a close. The sun is fast westering. . . . It is time to seek God earnestly, saying with Jacob, ‘I will not let thee go except thou bless me.’ It will be of no avail to make a spasmodic effort, only to fall back into spiritual lethargy and lukewarmness. The past, with the slighted mercies, the admonitions unheeded, the earthly passions uncorrected, the privileges unimproved, the soul temple filled with desecrated shrines—all is recorded in the books of heaven. But most solemn moments are still before you. Because of past neglect, the efforts you make must be the more earnest.”—*The Review and Herald*, November 2, 1886.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did Nehemiah win the favor of the king?
2. What should we learn from the prayers of the men discussed in this lesson?
3. Why was there a delay before the answer came?
4. Why did Daniel include himself in prayer for Israel?
5. What may be hindering our prayers from being heard?

Spiritual Light and Strength

“I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee” (Psalm 22:22).

“Prayer gives strength to renew the conflict with the powers of darkness, to bear trials patiently, and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 323.

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 523–537.
Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 577–582.
Counsels on Diet and Foods, pp. 185–191.

Sunday

August 24

1. OPENING THE HEART IN SINCERITY

- a. **What invitation does God extend to each of us? Jeremiah 29:11–13. How are we warned against accepting this offer in an artificial manner? Hosea 7:13–16.**

“Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. The eye of faith will discern God very near, and the suppliant may obtain precious evidence of the divine love and care for him. But why is it that so many prayers are never answered? Says David: ‘I cried unto Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me’ (Psalm 66:17, 18). By another prophet the Lord gives us the promise: ‘Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart’ (Jeremiah 29:13). Again, he speaks of some who ‘have not cried unto Me with their heart’ (Hosea 7:14). Such petitions are prayers of form, lip service only, which the Lord does not accept.

“The prayer which Nathanael offered while he was under the fig tree came from a sincere heart, and it was heard and answered by the Master. Christ said of him: ‘Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!’ (John 1:47). The Lord reads the hearts of all and understands their motives and purposes. ‘The prayer of the upright is His delight’ (Proverbs 15:8). He will not be slow to hear those who open their hearts to Him, not exalting self, but sincerely feeling their great weakness and unworthiness.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 533, 534.

Monday

August 25

2. NATHANAEL’S PRAYER

- a. **How are we ourselves—as well as those with whom we labor—often like Nathanael? John 1:45–50.**

“[Nathanael] was one of the number who heard John proclaim, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world’ (John 1:29). He felt deeply convicted, and retired to a grove, concealed from every human eye, and there meditated upon the announcement of John. . . . He bowed before God and prayed that if the person whom John had declared to be the Redeemer of the world was indeed the promised deliverer, that it might be made known to him.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 21, 1873.

“Philip knew that his friend was searching the prophecies, and while Nathanael was praying under a fig tree, Philip discovered his retreat. They had often prayed together in this secluded spot hidden by the foliage.

“The message, ‘We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write,’ seemed to Nathanael a direct answer to his prayer. But Philip had yet a trembling faith. He added doubtfully, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’ Again prejudice arose in Nathanael’s heart. He exclaimed, ‘Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?’

“Philip entered into no controversy. He said, ‘Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!’ In surprise Nathanael exclaimed, ‘Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee’ (John 1:45–48).

“It was enough. The divine Spirit that had borne witness to Nathanael in his solitary prayer under the fig tree now spoke to him in the words of Jesus. Though in doubt, and yielding somewhat to prejudice, Nathanael had come to Christ with an honest desire for truth, and now his desire was met. His faith went beyond that of the one who had brought him to Jesus.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 140.

- b. **What assurance is given to all those who cherish the prayerful spirit of Nathanael? Psalm 91:1.**

3. HONEST SEEKERS REWARDED

- a. What assurances are given to all who genuinely, wholeheartedly seek after truth and righteousness? John 7:17; Matthew 5:6.

“Do not entertain the thought that because you have made mistakes, because your life has been darkened by errors, your heavenly Father does not love you and will not hear you when you pray. He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out’ (John 6:37). ‘The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy’ (James 5:11). His heart of love is touched by our sorrows, and even by our utterance of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear; for He holds up worlds, He rules over the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, that they can not find deliverance in Christ. The demoniacs of Gadara, in the place of prayer could utter only the words of Satan; but yet the heart’s unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need is unheeded.”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 18, 1902.

- b. Why is it sometimes helpful to fast as well as to pray? Mark 9:17–29.

“For certain things, fasting and prayer are recommended and appropriate. In the hand of God they are a means of cleansing the heart and promoting a receptive frame of mind. We obtain answers to our prayers because we humble our souls before God.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 187, 188.

- c. What do the prayers of the Ethiopian eunuch and Philip teach? Acts 8:26–39.

“If the Lord desires us to bear a message to Nineveh, it will not be as pleasing to Him for us to go to Joppa or to Capernaum. He has reasons for sending us to the place toward which our feet have been directed. At that very place there may be someone in need of the help we can give. He who sent Philip to the Ethiopian councilor, Peter to the Roman centurion, and the little Israelitish maiden to the help of Naaman, the Syrian captain, sends men and women and youth today as His representatives to those in need of divine help and guidance.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 473.

4. PUBLIC PRAYER

- a. What instructions are we given with regard to praying in public? Psalms 22:22–25; 35:18; 40:10.

“Both in public and in private worship it is our privilege to bow on our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 48.

“Do not fall into the habit of praying so indistinctly and in such a low tone that your prayers need an interpreter. Pray simply, but clearly and distinctly. To let the voice sink so low that it cannot be heard is no evidence of humility.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 383.

“All should feel it a Christian duty to pray short. Tell the Lord just what you want, without going all over the world. In private prayer all have the privilege of praying as long as they desire and of being as explicit as they please. They can pray for all their relatives and friends. The closet is the place to tell all their private difficulties, and trials, and temptations. A common meeting to worship God is not the place to open the privacies of the heart.

“What is the object of assembling together? Is it to inform God, to instruct Him by telling Him all we know in prayer? We meet together to edify one another by an interchange of thoughts and feelings, to gather strength, and light, and courage by becoming acquainted with one another’s hopes and aspirations; and by our earnest, heartfelt prayers, offered up in faith, we receive refreshment and vigor from the Source of our strength. These meetings should be most precious seasons and should be made interesting to all who have any relish for religious things.

“There are some, I fear, who do not take their troubles to God in private prayer, but reserve them for the prayer meeting, and there do up their praying for several days. Such may be named conference and prayer meeting killers. They emit no light; they edify no one. Their cold, frozen prayers and long, backslidden testimonies cast a shadow. All are glad when they get through, and it is almost impossible to throw off the chill and darkness which their prayers and exhortations bring into the meeting. From the light which I have received, our meetings should be spiritual and social, and not too long. Reserve, pride, vanity, and fear of man should be left at home. Little differences and prejudices should not be taken with us to these meetings. As in a united family, simplicity, meekness, confidence, and love should exist in the hearts of brethren and sisters who meet to be refreshed and invigorated by bringing their lights together.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 578, 579.

5. A KEY ELEMENT

- a. How did Jesus emphasize our need of earnest faith? Matthew 21:18-22.

“There is no excuse for anyone growing weak, inefficient, and faithless. The promise is to us: ‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering’ (James 1:5). Are there not some of us too much like the man who came to the minister, complaining that he had not been blessed, that he felt no joy; God did not answer his prayers although he had prayed again and again for a blessing. ‘Well,’ said the minister, ‘let us kneel right down here and tell the Lord just how the matter stands.’ After both had prayed, the minister asked him if he felt better. The man answered, ‘I feel no better than I did before I prayed. I did not expect to be blessed, and I am not blessed.’ He had made a mockery of prayer. He did not believe the Lord would answer him, and he received just what his faith had claimed. Is it any wonder that such prayers are not answered? ‘Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.’ Do you consider this, when you offer up your faithless petitions? Do you stop to consider how you are dishonoring God, and impoverishing your own soul? If you could but realize the wrong you are doing, you would cease to make mockery by meaningless devotions.

“Come to God in faith and humility. Plead with Him till the break of day, if necessary, till your soul is brought into such close relationship with Jesus, that you can lay your burden at His feet, and say, ‘I know whom I have believed’ (2 Timothy 1:12). The Lord is ‘able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think’ (Ephesians 3:20). Our cold, faithless hearts may be quickened into sensibility and life, till we can pray in faith, preach in faith, and say, ‘The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God’ (Galatians 2:20). Let us seek for the fullness of the salvation of Christ. Follow in the footsteps of the Son of God, for His promise is, ‘He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life’ (John 8:12).”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 24, 1888.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Do you open your heart to God as a friend?
2. Why is the experience of Nathanael recorded for our instruction?
3. What is the promise to the earnest seeker?
4. How has fasting proven beneficial when it accompanies prayer?
5. How can our prayer meetings be more effective?

First Sabbath Offering

El Salvador



For many years El Salvador was a country rocked by civil war and social unrest. Under these conditions it was very difficult for the few believers to spread the gospel message. But the Lord saw that His people were eager to fulfill the gospel commission and He opened the way. In the early 1990’s the civil war was ended and the doors and hearts of the people opened to hear the message of salvation.

In the last decade the work here has grown in leaps and bounds. Originally a Mission, and then a Field attached to the General Conference, El Salvador is now an integral part of the Central American Union. In order to continue the work in this country we need to construct another chapel for souls. This chapel will serve as a lighthouse to the entire district, and we pray that all God’s sheep will see the presence of God in this place.

We thank you in advance for your generous support for the work in El Salvador and pray that God will bless the work in your corner of the world as well.

Your brethren from the Central American Union

VITAL STATISTICS

- **Area:** 21,040 sq km (8,260 sq mi)
- **Population:** 6,353,681 (2002 est.)
- **Capital:** San Salvador (pop. 456,142)
- **Literacy Rate:** 71% (2002 est.)
- **Language:** Spanish
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 83%, many Protestant groups

ECONOMY

- **Monetary Units:** Colon; US dollar
- **GDP/PPP:** \$28.4 billion; \$4,600 per capita (2001 est.)
- **Inflation:** 3.8% (2001)
- **Major Trading Partners:** United States, Guatemala, EU, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, Japan

In Times of Sickness

“And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (James 5:15).

“When you neglect to offer prayer for the sick, you deprive them of great blessings; for angels of God are waiting to minister to these souls in response to your petitions.”—*Medical Ministry*, p. 195.

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 145–150.
The Ministry of Healing, pp. 225–233.
Selected Messages, bk. 2, pp. 53–61.

Sunday

August 31

1. LOOKING TO THE MASTER HEALER

- a. What should we learn from the main difference between the cases of Hezekiah and Asa when they were sick? 2 Kings 20:1–7; 2 Chronicles 16:12, 13.
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- b. Name one important element in full restoration to good health. James 5:14, 15; Matthew 9:2–8. What was Ellen White’s overall experience in helping the sick?

“You can speak often to the sick of the Great Physician who can heal the diseases of the body as verily as He heals the sickness of the soul. Pray with the sick, and try to lead them to see in Christ their Healer. Tell them that if they will look to Him in faith, He will say to them, ‘Thy sins be forgiven thee’ (Matthew 9:2). It means very much to the sick to learn this lesson.”—*Medical Ministry*, pp. 196, 197.

“Multitudes have heard me speak, and have read my writings, but no one has ever heard me claim to work miracles. I have at times been called upon to pray for the sick, and the word of the Lord has been verified. [James 5:14, 15 quoted.] Christ is the great miracle worker. To Him be all the glory.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 54.

- c. What interesting example shows that even when Christ lived on earth, He did not always heal people instantly, in only one step? Mark 8:22–25.

Monday

September 1

2. AVOIDING A REAL TEMPTATION

- a. Of what must we be aware when praying about disease? Matthew 7:15–23; 24:23–25; Proverbs 28:9.

“Men under the influence of evil spirits will work miracles. They will make people sick by casting their spell upon them, and will then remove the spell, leading others to say that those who were sick have been miraculously healed. This Satan has done again and again.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 53.

“The apostles of nearly all forms of spiritism claim to have power to heal. They attribute this power to electricity, magnetism, the so-called ‘sympathetic remedies,’ or to latent forces within the mind of man. And there are not a few, even in this Christian age, who go to these healers, instead of trusting in the power of the living God and the skill of well-qualified physicians. The mother, watching by the sickbed of her child, exclaims, ‘I can do no more. Is there no physician who has power to restore my child?’ She is told of the wonderful cures performed by some clairvoyant or magnetic healer, and she trusts her dear one to his charge, placing it as verily in the hand of Satan as if he were standing by her side. In many instances the future life of the child is controlled by a satanic power which it seems impossible to break.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 211.

“Satan gives his power to those who are aiding him in his deceptions; therefore those who claim to have the great power of God can only be discerned by the great detector, the law of Jehovah. The Lord tells us if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. The sheep’s clothing seems so real, so genuine, that the wolf can be discerned only as we go to God’s great moral standard and there find that they are transgressors of the law of Jehovah.”—*The Review and Herald*, August 25, 1885.

“The way in which Christ worked was to preach the Word, and to relieve suffering by miraculous works of healing. But I am instructed that we cannot now work in this way, for Satan will exercise his power by working miracles. God’s servants today could not work by means of miracles, because spurious works of healing, claiming to be divine, will be wrought.

“For this reason the Lord has marked out a way in which His people are to carry forward a work of physical healing, combined with the teaching of the Word. Sanitariums are to be established, and with these institutions are to be connected workers who will carry forward genuine medical missionary work. Thus a guarding influence is thrown around those who come to the sanitariums for treatment.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 54.

3. CONDITIONS TO FULFILL

- a. **What conditions are attached to God's promises of healing? Isaiah 58:6–11.**

“In the case of Sister F, there needed to be a great work accomplished. Those who united in praying for her needed a work done for them. Had God answered their prayers, it would have proved their ruin. In such cases of affliction, where Satan has control of the mind, before engaging in prayer there should be the closest self-examination to discover if there are not sins which need to be repented of, confessed, and forsaken. Deep humility of soul before God is necessary, and firm, humble reliance upon the merits of the blood of Christ alone. Fasting and prayer will accomplish nothing while the heart is estranged from God by a wrong course of action. [Isaiah 58:6, 7, 9–11 quoted.]”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 145, 146.

- b. **What factors are essential in praying for the sick? James 5:16.**

“In the word of God we have instruction relative to special prayer for the recovery of the sick. But the offering of such prayer is a most solemn act, and should not be entered upon without careful consideration. In many cases of prayer for the healing of the sick, that which is called faith is nothing less than presumption.

“Many persons bring disease upon themselves by their self-indulgence. They have not lived in accordance with natural law or the principles of strict purity. Others have disregarded the laws of health in their habits of eating and drinking, dressing or working. Often some form of vice is the cause of feebleness of mind or body. Should these persons gain the blessing of health, many of them would continue to pursue the same course of heedless transgression of God's natural and spiritual laws, reasoning that if God heals them in answer to prayer, they are at liberty to continue their unhealthful practices and to indulge perverted appetite without restraint. If God were to work a miracle in restoring these persons to health, He would be encouraging sin.

“It is labor lost to teach people to look to God as a healer of their infirmities, unless they are taught also to lay aside unhealthful practices. In order to receive His blessing in answer to prayer, they must cease to do evil and learn to do well. Their surroundings must be sanitary, their habits of life correct. They must live in harmony with the law of God, both natural and spiritual.”—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 215, 216.

4. A WISE AND JUST LIFEGIVER

- a. **What must be considered by all who are blessed with health? Luke 12:47, 48.**

“If, after so much light has been given, God's people will cherish wrong habits, indulging self and refusing to reform, they will suffer the sure consequences of transgression. If they are determined to gratify perverted appetite at any cost, God will not miraculously save them from the consequences of their indulgence. They ‘shall lie down in sorrow’ (Isaiah 50:11).

“Those who choose to be presumptuous, saying, ‘The Lord has healed me, and I need not restrict my diet; I can eat and drink as I please,’ will ere long need, in body and soul, the restoring power of God. Because the Lord has graciously healed you, you must not think you can link yourselves up with the self-indulgent practices of the world. Do as Christ commanded after His work of healing—‘go, and sin no more’ (John 8:11). Appetite must not be your god.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 164.

- b. **What should we keep in mind even when death is imminent? Revelation 14:13.**

“We know that God hears us if we ask according to His will. But to press our petitions without a submissive spirit is not right; our prayers must take the form, not of command, but of intercession.

“There are cases where God works decidedly by His divine power in the restoration of health. But not all the sick are healed. Many are laid away to sleep in Jesus. . . . [Revelation 14:13 quoted.] From this we see that if persons are not raised to health, they should not, on this account be judged as wanting in faith.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 230.

“I was shown that in case of sickness, where the way is clear for the offering up of prayer for the sick, the case should be committed to the Lord in calm faith, not with a storm of excitement. He alone is acquainted with the past life of the individual and knows what his future will be. He who is acquainted with the hearts of all men knows whether the person, if raised up, would glorify His name or dishonor Him by backsliding and apostasy. All that we are required to do is to ask God to raise the sick up if in accordance with His will, believing that He hears the reasons which we present and the fervent prayers offered. If the Lord sees it will best honor Him, He will answer our prayers. But to urge recovery without submission to His will is not right.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 147, 148.

5. ESSENTIAL POINTS WHEN PRAYING

- a. What key thoughts should be always remembered in our prayers for the sick? 1 John 2:1; Lamentations 3:33; Psalm 103:13, 14.

“Present these thoughts to the persons who come asking for your prayers: We are human; we cannot read the heart or know the secrets of your life. These are known only to yourself and God. If you now repent of your sin, if any of you can see that in any instance you have walked contrary to the light given you of God and have neglected to give honor to the body, the temple of God, but by wrong habits have degraded the body which is Christ’s property, make confession of these things to God. Unless you are wrought upon by the Holy Spirit in special manner to confess your sins of private nature to man, do not breathe them to any soul.

“Christ is your Redeemer; He will take no advantage of your humiliating confessions. If you have sin of a private character, confess it to Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man. [1 John 2:1 quoted.] If you have sinned by withholding from God His own in tithes and offerings, confess your guilt to God and to the church, and heed the injunction that He has given you: ‘Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse’ (Malachi 3:10). . . .

“Praying for the sick is a most solemn thing, and we should not enter into this work in any careless, hasty way. Examination should be made as to whether those who would be blessed with health have indulged in evilspeaking, alienation, and dissension. Have they sowed discord among the brethren and sisters of the church? If these things have been committed, they should be confessed before God and the church. When wrongs have been confessed the subjects for prayer may be presented before God in earnestness and faith, as the Spirit of God may move upon you.”—*Counsels on Health*, pp. 373, 374.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Where should we direct the thoughts of the sick?
2. Are all healings from God?
3. What are the conditions for healing?
4. How can we maintain health?
5. Name some essential points in prayer for the sick.

The Prayers of Christ

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared” (Hebrews 5:7).

“As a man [Jesus] supplicated the throne of God, till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that connected humanity with divinity. Receiving life from God, He imparted life to men.”—*Education*, pp. 80, 81.

Suggested Readings: *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 102–122.
The Desire of Ages, pp. 419–425, 685–697.
Testimonies, vol. 4, pp. 528–530.

1. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

- a. What should we realize about Christ’s life on earth, and how can it encourage and strengthen us in our daily struggles? Hebrews 5:1–10; 4:14–16.

“The Majesty of heaven, while engaged in His mission, was often in earnest prayer. He did not always visit Olivet, for His disciples had learned His favorite retreat, and often followed Him. He chose the stillness of night, when there would be no interruption. Jesus could heal the sick and raise the dead. He was Himself a source of blessing and strength. He commanded even the tempests, and they obeyed Him. He was unsullied with corruption, a stranger to sin; yet He prayed, and that often with strong crying and tears. He prayed for His disciples and for Himself, thus identifying Himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings, which are so common with humanity. He was a mighty petitioner, not possessing the passions of our human, fallen natures, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points even as we are. Jesus endured agony which required help and support from His Father.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 508, 509.

“The groves and mountains were [the Redeemer’s] places of retreat for prayer, and frequently whole nights were spent in communion with His Father.”—*Lift Him Up*, p. 32.

2. THE LORD'S PRAYER

- a. **What deep spiritual mystery were the disciples eager to understand more fully, and how did Jesus gratify their request? Matthew 6:5-13; Luke 11:1-4.**

“[Luke 11:1 quoted.] The prayer that Christ gave to His disciples in answer to this request is not made in high-flown language, but expresses in simple words the necessities of the soul. It is short and deals directly with the daily needs.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 278.

“Christ impressed upon His disciples the idea that their prayers should be short, expressing just what they wanted, and no more. He gives the length and substance of their prayers, expressing their desires for temporal and spiritual blessings, and their gratitude for the same. How comprehensive this sample prayer! It covers the actual need of all. One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer. There may be instances where prayer is in a special manner indited by the Spirit of God, where supplication is made in the Spirit. The yearning soul becomes agonized and groans after God. The spirit wrestles as did Jacob and will not be at rest without special manifestations of the power of God. This is as God would have it.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 581.

- b. **With what illustration does God want us to view His tender regard for us, even in our sinful, erring condition? Matthew 7:7-11.**

“God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. Parents love their children, but the love of God is larger, broader, deeper than human love can possibly be. It is immeasurable. Then if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?

“Christ’s lessons in regard to prayer should be carefully considered. There is a divine science in prayer, and His illustration brings to view principles that all need to understand. He shows what is the true spirit of prayer, He teaches the necessity of perseverance in presenting our requests to God, and assures us of His willingness to hear and answer prayer.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 142.

3. PRAYERS IN SOLITUDE

- a. **Why did Christ pray after feeding the five thousand? Matthew 14:21-23.**

“The Saviour knew that His days of personal ministry on earth were nearly ended, and that few would receive Him as their Redeemer. In travail and conflict of soul He prayed for His disciples. They were to be grievously tried. Their long-cherished hopes, based on a popular delusion, were to be disappointed in a most painful and humiliating manner. In the place of His exaltation to the throne of David they were to witness His crucifixion. This was to be indeed His true coronation. But they did not discern this, and in consequence strong temptations would come to them, which it would be difficult for them to recognize as temptations. Without the Holy Spirit to enlighten the mind and enlarge the comprehension the faith of the disciples would fail. It was painful to Jesus that their conceptions of His kingdom were, to so great a degree, limited to worldly aggrandizement and honor. For them the burden was heavy upon His heart, and He poured out His supplications with bitter agony and tears.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 379.

- b. **For what did Jesus pray at the mount of transfiguration? Mark 9:1-9.**

“Stepping a little aside from [the disciples], the Man of Sorrows pours out His supplications with strong crying and tears. He prays for strength to endure the test in behalf of humanity. He must Himself gain a fresh hold on Omnipotence, for only thus can He contemplate the future. And He pours out His heart longings for His disciples, that in the hour of the power of darkness their faith may not fail. . . . Now the burden of His prayer is that they may be given a manifestation of the glory He had with the Father before the world was, that His kingdom may be revealed to human eyes, and that His disciples may be strengthened to behold it. He pleads that they may witness a manifestation of His divinity that will comfort them in the hour of His supreme agony with the knowledge that He is of a surety the Son of God and that His shameful death is a part of the plan of redemption.

“His prayer is heard. While He is bowed in lowliness upon the stony ground, suddenly the heavens open, the golden gates of the city of God are thrown wide, and holy radiance descends upon the mount, enshrouding the Saviour’s form.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 419-421.

4. PRAYERS MOST POIGNANT

- a. For what does our Saviour continually plead in our behalf, and why must we cultivate a deep appreciation of it? Luke 22:31; John 17:1–26.

“Think of Christ, the adored of angels, in the attitude of a suppliant. He was a mighty petitioner, seeking at the hands of the Father fresh supplies of grace, and coming forth invigorated and refreshed, to impart His lessons of assurance and hope. . . . His prayer rises to all heaven in our behalf. . . .

“The disciples often witnessed Christ kneeling in prayer, their hearts broken and humbled. As their Lord and Saviour arose from His knees, what did they read in His countenance and bearing? That He was braced for duty and prepared for trial. Prayer was a necessity of His humanity, and His petitions were often accompanied with strong crying and with agony of soul as He saw the necessities of His disciples, who, not understanding their own dangers, were often, under Satan’s temptations, led away from duty into wrongdoing.

“Christ’s life was pure and undefiled. He refused to yield to the temptations of the enemy. Had He yielded on one point, the human family would have been lost. Who can tell the agony that He endures as He sees Satan playing the game of life for the souls of those who claim to be His disciples, and sees them yielding point after point, allowing the soul’s defenses to be broken down? We can form no conception of the agony that He endures at this sight. One soul lost, one soul given up to Satan’s power, means more to Him than the whole world.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 76.

“The hosts of God are interested in the humble, praying man, who dares not make a move without first coming in prayer into the presence of God to counsel with the Omnipotent. True missionary work can be done only in the spirit of the first Missionary who visited our world. He was often in prayer to His Father, and at times presented His petitions with strong crying and tears, pleading that the power of God might save those who knew not that they needed salvation. We must have the spirit that actuated Christ, that led Him to entreat and persuade the rebellious to come unto Him. Even when men turn away from us in hardness of heart, refusing the gift of eternal life, we are to imitate the example of Christ. He did not look with indifference upon those who slighted and rejected Him.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 4, 1893.

5. GETHSEMANE AND THE CROSS

- a. What decisive prayers near the end of Jesus’ life should deeply influence our life, and why? Matthew 26:36–46; Luke 22:39–46; 23:33, 34.

“How often was [Christ] alone in fervent prayer, on the mountainside or in the retirement of the garden, pouring out His supplications with strong crying and tears. How perseveringly He urged His petitions in behalf of sinners! Even on the cross He forgot His own sufferings in His deep love for those whom He came to save. How cold our love, how feeble our interest, when compared with the love and interest manifested by our Saviour! Jesus gave Himself to redeem our race; and yet how ready are we to excuse ourselves from giving all that we have for Jesus. Our Saviour submitted to wearing labor, ignominy, and suffering. He was repulsed, mocked, derided, while engaged in the great work which He came to earth to do.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 385.

“With strong crying and tears [Christ] sent His petitions to heaven, that His human nature might be strengthened, that He might be braced to meet the wily foe in all his deceptive workings, and fortified to fulfill His missions of uplifting humanity. To His workers He says, ‘I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done’ (John 13:15).”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 500.

“The value of a soul, who can estimate? Would you know its worth, go to Gethsemane, and there watch with Christ through those hours of anguish, when He sweat as it were great drops of blood. Look upon the Saviour uplifted on the cross. Hear that despairing cry, ‘My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?’ (Mark 15:34). Look upon the wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet. Remember that Christ risked all. For our redemption, heaven itself was imperiled. At the foot of the cross, remembering that for one sinner Christ would have laid down His life, you may estimate the value of a soul.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 196.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What example did Christ give us while on earth?
2. What fresh thoughts can we gain from reexamining the Lord’s Prayer?
3. What were the main themes of the prayers which our Saviour uttered?
4. What continual petition does Christ plead for us?
5. How can we cultivate greater earnestness at the foot of the cross?

The Early Church

“Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer” (Romans 12:12).

“We are to find our strength just where the early disciples found their strength: ‘These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication’ (Acts 1:14).”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 140.

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 9–29.
The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 9–16.

Sunday

September 14

1. THE UPPER ROOM EXPERIENCE

a. **What was the last thing Jesus promised His disciples before ascending to heaven? Acts 1:6–9.**

b. **What, then, was the first thing the disciples did before starting their mission? Acts 1:10–14. Describe the results. Acts 2:1–4, 41.**

“In obedience to the word of their Master the disciples assembled in Jerusalem to wait for the fulfillment of God’s promise. Here they spent ten days, days of deep heart searching. They put away all differences and drew close together in Christian fellowship. At the end of ten days the Lord fulfilled His promise by a wonderful outpouring of His Spirit.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 15.

“Would it not be well for you to seek the Lord as the disciples sought Him before the day of Pentecost? After Christ’s ascension, His disciples—men of varied talents and capabilities—assembled in an upper chamber to pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit. In this room ‘all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication’ (Acts 1:14). They made thorough work of repentance by confessing their own sins. Upon them was laid no burden to confess one another’s sins. Settling all differences and alienations, they were of one accord, and prayed with unity of purpose for ten days.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 368.

Monday

September 15

2. UNCTION FROM ON HIGH

a. **What can we learn from the disciples’ action when the chief priests and rulers threatened Peter and John because of their powerful witness for Christ? Acts 4:24–33.**

“By the grace of Christ the apostles were made what they were. It was sincere devotion and humble, earnest prayer that brought them into close communion with Him. They sat together with Him in heavenly places. They realized the greatness of their debt to Him. By earnest, persevering prayer they obtained the endowment of the Holy Spirit, and then they went forth, weighted with the burden of saving souls, filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. And under their labors many souls were brought from darkness to light, and many churches were raised up.

“Shall we be less earnest than were the apostles? Shall we not by living faith claim the promises that moved them to the depths of their being to call upon the Lord Jesus for the fulfillment of His word: ‘Ask, and ye shall receive’ (John 16:24)? Is not the Spirit of God to come today in answer to earnest, persevering prayer, and fill men with power? Is not God saying today to His praying, trusting, believing workers, who are opening the Scriptures to those ignorant of the precious truth they contain: ‘Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?’ (Matthew 28:20). Why, then, is the church so weak and spiritless?

“As the disciples, filled with the power of the Spirit, went forth to proclaim the gospel, so God’s servants are to go forth today. Filled with an unselfish desire to give the message of mercy to those who are in the darkness of error and unbelief, we are to take up the Lord’s work. He gives us our part to do in cooperation with Him, and He will also move on the hearts of unbelievers to carry forward His work in the regions beyond. Already many are receiving the Holy Spirit, and no longer will the way be blocked by listless indifference.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, pp. 32, 33.

b. **How did the early church cooperate with God’s plan to miraculously keep His messengers of truth on active duty? Acts 12:1–17.**

“Only the sense of God’s presence can banish the fear that, for the timid child, would make life a burden. . . . Let him read how to Peter, in prison and condemned to death, God’s angel appeared; how, past the armed guards, the massive doors and great iron gateway with their bolts and bars, the angel led God’s servant forth in safety.”—*Education*, pp. 255, 256.

3. THANKFULNESS AND REVERENCE

- a. **With what kind of attitude did Paul and Silas pray when rudely cast into prison at Philippi, and how did this touch the heart of the jailer? Acts 16:16–34.**

“Paul and Silas suffered the loss of all things. They suffered scourging, and were in no gentle manner thrown upon the cold floor of a dungeon in a most painful position, their feet elevated and fastened in the stocks. Did repinings and complaints then reach the ear of the jailer? Oh, no! From the inner prison, voices broke the silence of midnight with songs of joy and praise to God. These disciples were cheered by a deep and earnest love for the cause of their Redeemer, for which they suffered.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 406.

- b. **How did Peter’s attitude promote God’s glory in Joppa? Acts 9:36–42.**

“Directing that the weeping friends be sent from the room, [the apostle] kneeled down and prayed fervently to God to restore Dorcas to life and health.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 132.

- c. **What did God impress Ellen White to state regarding our attitude in prayer?**

“Where have our brethren obtained the idea that they should stand upon their feet when praying to God? One who has been educated for about five years in Battle Creek was asked to lead in prayer before Sister White should speak to the people. But as I beheld him standing upright upon his feet while his lips were about to open in prayer to God, my soul was stirred within me to give him an open rebuke. Calling him by name, I said, ‘Get down upon your knees.’ This is the proper position always.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 311.

- d. **Of what did the apostle Paul see fit to remind us, and why? Hebrews 12:28, 29.**

“Some think it a mark of humility to pray to God in a common manner, as if talking with a human being. They profane His name by needlessly and irreverently mingling with their prayers the words, ‘God Almighty’—awful, sacred words, which should never pass the lips except in subdued tones and with a feeling of awe.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 176.

4. THAT TRUTH MAY BE SPREAD

- a. **How far-reaching were the answers to the prayers of Cornelius and Peter? Acts 10:1, 2, 9–16, 25–35.**

“From the case of Cornelius we may learn a lesson that we would do well to understand. The God of heaven sends His messengers to this earth to set in operation a train of circumstances which will bring Peter into connection with Cornelius, that Cornelius may learn the truth. Through angel ministration Peter is brought into cooperation with the inquiring souls who have all things in readiness to hear the truth and receive advanced light. . . .

“The conversion of Cornelius and his household was only the first fruits of a harvest to be gathered in from the world. From this household a widespread work of grace was carried on in a heathen city.”—*Evangelism*, p. 558.

- b. **What did the apostles in Jerusalem do when they heard that God’s word had been received in Samaria? Acts 8:14–17.**

“We are no more secure from false teachers now than they were in the apostles’ days; and, if we do no more, we should take as special measures as they did to secure the peace, harmony, and union of the flock. We have their example, and should follow it. Brethren of experience and of sound minds should assemble, and following the Word of God and the sanction of the Holy Spirit, should, with fervent prayer, lay hands upon those who have given full proof that they have received their commission of God, and set them apart to devote themselves entirely to His work. This act would show the sanction of the church to their going forth as messengers to carry the most solemn message ever given to men.”—*Early Writings*, p. 101.

- c. **What specific duty do we all have toward our ministers, evangelists, and Bible workers who labor in the Lord’s vineyard? Ephesians 6:18–20.**

“Those who do not go from place to place to labor, can take hold of the arm of God by living faith. They can pray that the God of heaven will help those who are carrying the truth to others.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 29, 1886.

5. KEEPING THE CONNECTION

- a. What sums up the prayer life of the early church, and how is this to encourage us? Romans 12:12.

“When we read the lives of men who have been eminent for their piety we often regard their experiences and attainments as far beyond our reach. But this is not the case. Christ died for all; and we are assured in His word that He is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. The prophets and apostles did not perfect Christian character by a miracle. They used the means which God had placed within their reach; and all who will put forth the same effort will secure the same results.”—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 83.

- b. What does Peter imply as a hindrance to men’s prayers? 1 Peter 3:7. How else are we warned of prayers hindered? Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 28:9; Isaiah 58:1–5.

“[Isaiah 58:1–3 quoted.] A people are here addressed who make high profession, who are in the habit of praying, and who delight in religious exercises; yet there is a lack. They realize that their prayers are not answered; their zealous, earnest efforts are not observed in heaven, and they earnestly inquire why the Lord makes them no returns. It is not because there is any neglect on the part of God. The difficulty is with the people. While professing godliness, they do not bear fruit to the glory of God; their works are not what they should be. They are living in neglect of positive duties. Unless these are performed, God cannot answer their prayers according to His glory. In the case of offering prayer for Sister F, there was confusion of sentiment. Some were fanatical and moved from impulse. They possessed a zeal, but not according to knowledge.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 147.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What should be the first thing we do before going to witness?
2. How did John and Peter become so powerful in Christ?
3. Are you thankful in all things?
4. How can we help our ministers in their work?
5. What elements in the prayers of the early believers are still lacking in our own?

The Final Remnant

“The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer” (1 Peter 4:7).

“We need to pray as we never have prayed before for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for if there was ever a time when we needed this baptism, it is now.”—*The Upward Look*, p. 346.

Suggested Readings: *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 711–718.
The Great Controversy, pp. 613–634.

1. A SUBJECT OF PRAYER

- a. What is truly our most pressing need at the present hour? 1 Peter 4:7; Zechariah 10:1.

“It is a part of God’s plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 525.

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. While the people are so destitute of God’s Holy Spirit, they cannot appreciate the preaching of the Word; but when the Spirit’s power touches their hearts, then the discourses given will not be without effect. Guided by the teachings of God’s Word, with the manifestation of His Spirit, in the exercise of sound discretion, those who attend our meetings will gain a precious experience, and returning home, will be prepared to exert a healthful influence.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 121.

2. PERILS OF TODAY

- a. **As we near the end, why must we pray for ourselves and others to be fortified against the deadly deceptions of spiritualism? Revelation 13:11–14; 18:21–23.**

“There are few who have any just conception of the deceptive power of spiritualism and the danger of coming under its influence. Many tamper with it merely to gratify their curiosity. They have no real faith in it and would be filled with horror at the thought of yielding themselves to the spirits’ control. But they venture upon the forbidden ground, and the mighty destroyer exercises his power upon them against their will. Let them once be induced to submit their minds to his direction, and he holds them captive. It is impossible, in their own strength, to break away from the bewitching, alluring spell. Nothing but the power of God, granted in answer to the earnest prayer of faith, can deliver these ensnared souls.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 558.

- b. **How are we to escape today’s intense dangers? 2 Corinthians 3:18; 11:3, 4.**

“We are in continual danger of getting above the simplicity of the gospel. There is an intense desire on the part of many to startle the world with something original, that shall lift the people into a state of spiritual ecstasy, and change the present order of experience. There is certainly great need of a change in the present order of experience; for the sacredness of present truth is not realized as it should be, but the change we need is a change of heart, and can only be obtained by seeking God individually for His blessing, by pleading with Him for His power, by fervently praying that His grace may come upon us, and that our characters may be transformed. This is the change we need today, and for the attainment of this experience we should exercise persevering energy and manifest heartfelt earnestness. We should ask with true sincerity, ‘What shall I do to be saved?’ We should know just what steps we are taking heavenward.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 187, 188.

- c. **How does God illustrate His help to us? Exodus 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:11, 12.**

3. OPPRESSION SOON TO COME

- a. **How are we to prepare for the coming crisis? Revelation 7:1–3; 13:11, 13–17.**

“We are not ready for the issue to which the enforcement of the Sunday law will bring us. It is our duty, as we see the signs of approaching peril, to arouse to action. Let none sit in calm expectation of the evil, comforting themselves with the belief that this work must go on because prophecy has foretold it, and that the Lord will shelter His people. We are not doing the will of God if we sit in quietude, doing nothing to preserve liberty of conscience. Fervent, effectual prayer should be ascending to heaven that this calamity may be deferred until we can accomplish the work which has so long been neglected. Let there be most earnest prayer, and then let us work in harmony with our prayers. It may appear that Satan is triumphant and that truth is overborne with falsehood and error; the people over whom God has spread His shield, and the country which has been an asylum for the conscience-oppressed servants of God and defenders of His truth, may be placed in jeopardy. But God would have us recall His dealings with His people in the past to save them from their enemies. He has always chosen extremities, when there seemed no possible chance for deliverance from Satan’s workings, for the manifestation of His power. Man’s necessity is God’s opportunity. It may be that a respite may yet be granted for God’s people to awake and let their light shine. If the presence of ten righteous persons would have saved the wicked cities of the plain, is it not possible that God will yet, in answer to the prayers of His people, hold in check the workings of those who are making void His law? Shall we not humble our hearts greatly before God, flee to the mercy seat, and plead with Him to reveal His mighty power?”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 713, 714.

“Especially should we, with unwavering faith, seek God for grace and power to be given to His people now. We do not believe that the time has fully come when He would have our liberties restricted. . . . [Revelation 7:1, 3 quoted.] This points out the work we have now to do. A vast responsibility is devolving upon men and women of prayer throughout the land to petition that God will sweep back the cloud of evil and give a few more years of grace in which to work for the Master. Let us cry to God that the angels may hold the four winds until missionaries shall be sent to all parts of the world and shall proclaim the warning against disobeying the law of Jehovah.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 717, 718.

4. THE TIME OF TROUBLE

- a. **How will God's people experience the time of trouble? Jeremiah 30:5-7.**

“The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God's promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 621.

“Though God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth's sake; they fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Saviour's promise: I 'will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world' (Revelation 3:10). If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture or death; but should they prove unworthy, and lose their lives because of their own defects of character, then God's holy name would be reproached.

“On every hand they hear the plottings of treason and see the active working of rebellion; and there is aroused within them an intense desire, an earnest yearning of soul, that this great apostasy may be terminated and the wickedness of the wicked may come to an end. But while they plead with God to stay the work of rebellion, it is with a keen sense of self-reproach that they themselves have no more power to resist and urge back the mighty tide of evil. They feel that had they always employed all their ability in the service of Christ, going forward from strength to strength, Satan's forces would have less power to prevail against them.

“They afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past repentance of their many sins, and pleading the Saviour's promise: [Isaiah 27:5 quoted]. Their faith does not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 619, 620.

5. POINTS TO REMEMBER

- a. **When will prayer no longer be needed? 1 Corinthians 13:12. Until then, what should we always keep in mind? John 15:14-16; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5.**

“Those who, through faith in the merits of the blood of Christ, have clean hands and a pure heart, will receive the white robe, the crown of righteousness, and the life that will run parallel with the life of God. There is no limit to the blessings that we may receive in answer to sincere, fervent prayer. The love of God to fallen man is measureless, and if our Father sees that we will not be lifted up with the blessings He has power to bestow upon us, but will receive them with humble and grateful hearts, He will abundantly grant unto us our requests. He says: 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened' (Matthew 7:7, 8).”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 23, 1888.

“We are sometimes tempted to think that the promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,' is not fulfilled unless the answer comes immediately when the request is made. It is our privilege to ask for special blessings, and to believe that they will be given us. But if the blessings asked for are not immediately granted, we are not to think that our prayers are not heard. We shall receive, even if the answer is delayed for a time. In carrying out the plan of redemption, Christ sees enough in humanity to discourage Him. But He does not become discouraged. In mercy and love He continues to offer us opportunities and privileges. So we are to rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.”—*The Youth's Instructor*, April 6, 1899.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **What is necessary in order to receive the promised Holy Spirit in fullness?**
2. **Why do we need to pray about some dangers intensifying in these last days?**
3. **How can prayer make a difference with regard to the inevitable Sunday crisis?**
4. **What do the remnant's prayers in the time of trouble reveal about priorities?**
5. **Is there a time when prayer is not necessary?**

FIRST SABBATH OFFERINGS



JULY 5
Philippines
(See p. 4.)

AUGUST 2
for the Missionary
Schools (See p. 25.)



SEPTEMBER 6
El Salvador
(See p. 51.)