

**INSTRUCTION MANUAL**  
for the  
**NEW "PICTORIAL AID"**

# **INSTRUCTION MANUAL for the NEW “PICTORIAL AID”**

60 Study Guides which explain the charts, and may be used for individual or family Bible studies; for group discussions, and for training classes in person-to-person evangelism.

**by  
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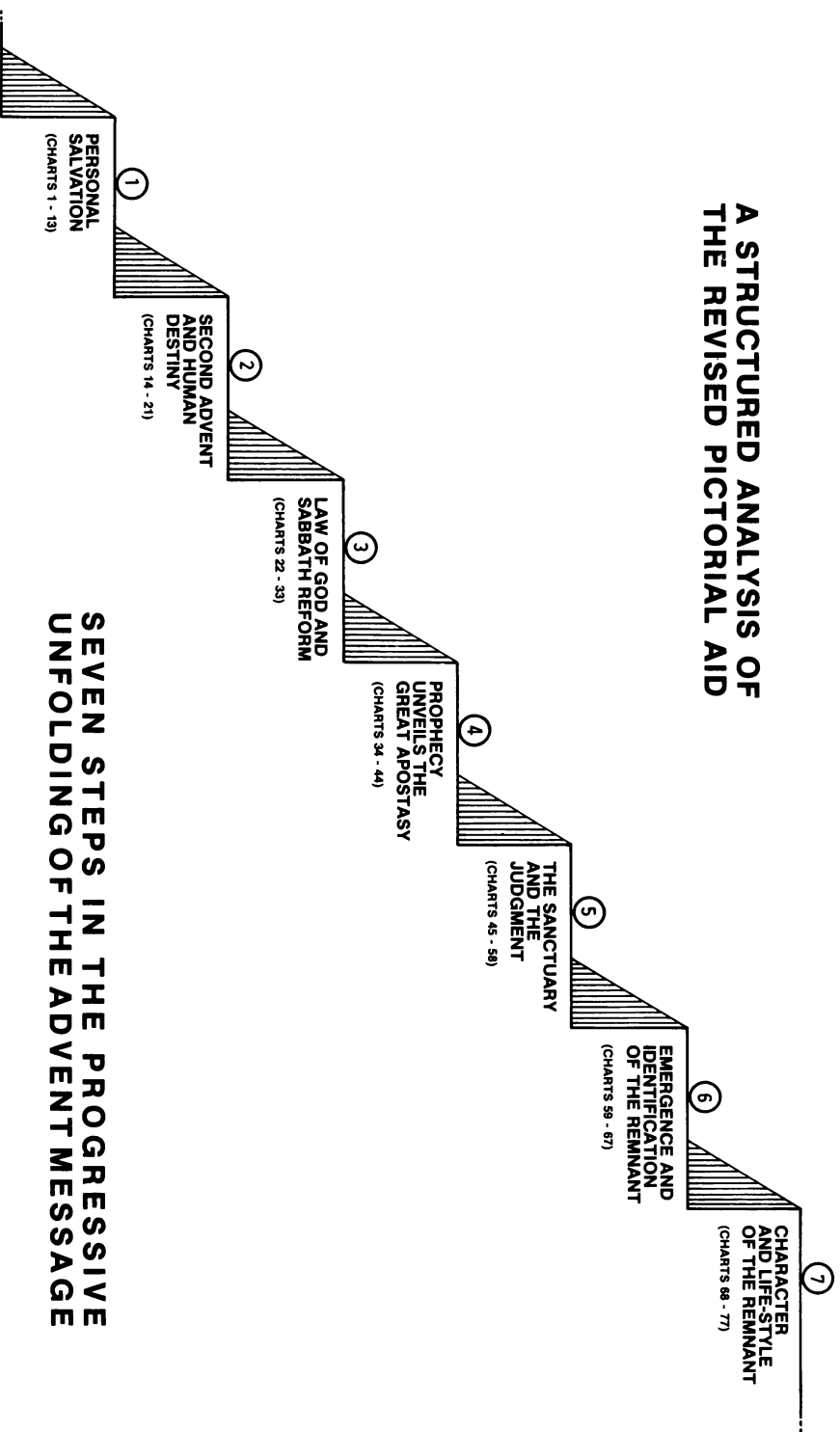
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**Note:** Because some lessons are illustrated by more than one chart (eg Daniel 2—three charts; Daniel 7—six charts), it is not possible for the lesson numbers to coincide exactly with the chart numbers. Accordingly, to make it easier for users of the Pictorial Aid to match the lessons with the appropriate charts, this comprehensive guide-sheet is provided.

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# A STRUCTURED ANALYSIS OF THE REVISED PICTORIAL AID



## SEVEN STEPS IN THE PROGRESSIVE UNFOLDING OF THE ADVENT MESSAGE



## FROM AUTHOR TO USER

THE NEW PICTORIAL AID is designed to assist in opening missionary conversations and in giving freshness and impact to Bible studies under all conceivable circumstances. **It is, first and foremost, a tool for face-to-face, person-to-person evangelism.**

The author recognises that there is no one ideal method of presenting the beautiful features of the Seventh-day Adventist faith. There is no one perfectly-tailored order of subjects. It is neither desirable nor possible to follow a stereotyped series of Bible studies that fits all cases. Our presentations should be flexible enough to allow adaptation to a wide variety of situations and personalities.

However, it is good to have a **general working strategy** which will ensure:

- (1) That our presentation of the Message will unfold logically and coherently, like the development of a living, growing plant.
- (2) That no important doctrine shall be omitted.
- (3) That **the big decision points**—such as decision for Christ; for the Sabbath; and for Baptism and Church membership—shall be carefully thought out well beforehand.
- (4) That the prospect's heart and mind will be **tactfully conditioned and buttressed** before being confronted with any major test and, most of all—
- (5) That each prospect will be led, as early as possible, into **intelligent, personal union with Jesus Christ as his Saviour.**

The following explanation of the contents of the Pictorial Aid will help users to see more clearly into the author's mind when he designed the charts and arranged them in their present order. The main **stages** or "**plateaus**" in the progressive unfolding of the Message should be easily discernible. It is recommended that this "**Introduction**" be given a careful reading before the Pictorial Aid is used in missionary visitation. It is also strongly recommended that, wherever possible, **laymen and youth attend training-classes in evangelism** before attempting to give Bible studies with the aid of this handbook. Finally, it is recommended that users **firmly restrain any urge to display all the charts at one sitting.** It pays to keep plenty of surprise-power up one's sleeve!

### Chart 1 — Creation Speaks of God

This is a logical starting point for positive Christian witness to a generation that has largely lost its vision of God as Creator. It helps to reinforce the Christian answer to the current "Humanistic" philosophy. Creation is the ultimate foundation for the authority of God; for the whole scheme of Biblical revelation; and specifically for the threefold message of Revelation 14:6-12!

### Chart 2 — The Fireproof Book

The Bible is the "Miracle book of the Ages." No book has ever been exposed to such concentrated and sustained attacks, over so many centuries of time. Yet it rises repeatedly from the flames of prejudice and hate, and today is the world's "Best Seller." What is the secret of its immortality? **The indestructible life of God is in it!** There is no other satisfying explanation.

### Chart 3 — The Evidence of Prophecy

Another conclusive evidence that the Bible has come from God, is its uncanny power to read the future! Its hundreds of predictions, many of them made centuries in advance of fulfilment, are obviously beyond the wisdom or power of unaided man!

### Chart 4 — The Spade Confirms the Bible

In an age when false science has dethroned the authority of the Bible in the lives of millions,

God has raised up a new and formidable champion—Archaeology, armed with indisputable and up-to-date scientific credentials—to illuminate and confirm the historical accuracy of His Word.

#### Chart 5 — Old Testament Prophets Witness to Christ

One of the most amazing things about Jesus Christ, and therefore one of His most impressive credentials, is the fact that He stepped out of a background of prophecy. **He appeared in response to hundreds of specific Old Testament predictions, all of which were written at least 400 years before His birth!** No miracle that He ever performed placed on Him so unmistakably the seal of God. Certain it is that no other religious leader or historical figure ever stepped out of such a background of miracle. It is therefore not surprising that the early Christian heralds used this fact - **“To Him give all the prophets witness”** (Acts 10:43) - as the spearhead of their evangelistic testimony.

#### Chart 6 — Christ Our Sin-Bearer

The Christian religion is like a tree with three massive roots. These indispensable supporting truths are: **The Existence of God; The Super-human Origin of the Bible; The Deity and Saviourhood of Jesus Christ.** We build strongly when we establish these three fundamentals early in our programme of indoctrination. To assist in so doing, a lesson entitled **“Was Jesus God?”** is included at this stage. Especially should we focus attention upon Jesus as **“the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”**

Says Ellen G. White:

**“The very first and most important thing is to melt and subdue the soul by presenting our Lord Jesus Christ as the Sin-bearer, the sin-pardoning Saviour, making the Gospel as clear as possible.”** (*Evangelism*, p 264)

**“Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world... The great centre of attraction, Christ Jesus, must not be left out.”** (*Gospel Workers*, pp 156, 157)

**“Christ crucified—talk it, pray it, sing it, and it will break and win hearts.”** (*Review and Herald*, June 2, 1903)

**“The theme that attracts the heart of the sinner is Christ, and Him crucified... Beholding Jesus upon the cross of Calvary arouses the conscience to the heinous character of sin as nothing else can do.”** (*Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892)

**“The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster.”** (*Gospel Workers*, p 315)

**“To remove the Cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky.”** (*Acts of the Apostles*, pp 209, 210)

**“Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer! Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to the Lamb of God.”** (*Gospel Workers*, p 160)

To show the reality of sin, and man's desperate need of a Saviour, a lesson on **The Origin of Evil** is also included here.

#### Chart 7 — Jesus - the Way to Heaven

This is a simple, pictorial summary of the main steps in the saving work of Christ. It helps to identify us instantly as **Christians**, whose supreme objective is to introduce men and women to Jesus Christ. It strikes the keynote and establishes the pattern for the presentation of all later doctrines of the Advent Message, e.g., The Second Coming; the Sabbath; the State of the Dead; the Sanctuary and the Judgment; the Home of the Saved. **A full series of positive, Christ-centred Bible studies can be built around this Gospel Ladder.** Coupled with **Christ our Sin-bearer**, it should appear in our presentations again and again. **These two charts provide an ideal opportunity for the first direct appeal to our prospects to receive Christ as Saviour.** Our aim must ever be to secure an early and overwhelming verdict for Jesus Christ!

Says God's Messenger: "The mystery of the incarnation of Christ, the account of His sufferings, His crucifixion, His resurrection and His ascension, open to all humanity the marvellous love of God. **This imparts a power to the truth.**" (**Review and Herald**, June 18, 1895)

"Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high, is **the science of salvation** that we are to learn and teach... **It is through the gift of Christ that we receive every blessing.**" (**Testimonies**, Vol. 8, p 287)

"Jesus is **the living centre** of everything." (**Review and Herald**, March 19, 1895)

"**Christ is Christianity.**" (**Gospel Workers**, pp 282, 283)

"**Christ**, His character and work, is **the centre and circumference** of all truth. He is **the chain** upon which the jewels of doctrine are linked. In Him is found **the complete system of truth.**" (**Review and Herald**, August 15, 1893)

### Charts 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 — Three Miracles of Saving Grace , etc.

Now begins a series of Charts which explain in closer detail the practical, operative aspects of the Gospel - the "How" of personal salvation. These charts afford yet another opportunity to lead prospects to "surrender heart and mind and will to God" (**Evangelism** p 228), before being confronted with any testing truth. "**Three Miracles of Saving Grace**" (No. 8) outlines the three great milestones or "steps" in applied salvation. "Justified" has been described as "**IN CHRIST**," "Sanctified" as "**LIKE CHRIST**," and "Glorified" as "**WITH CHRIST**." It is important to note that **the benefits of Justification do not cease with our initial act of believing - they are needed, and they continue, as we keep on believing, throughout our entire Christian Pilgrimage.** The whole salvation-process is "under-written" by Christ's supreme redemptive act on Calvary's Cross.

"**Guilty!**" (No. 9) illustrates "conviction" - the soul's awakening to its defilement and deep need, which is the first step to forgiveness and healing. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:20) It is only in the presence of the Law of God that man sees himself as he really is. "**Cleansing at the Cross**" (No. 10) focuses directly upon God's remedy for sin, which climaxes in Christ's death, and draws its power from that Divine act of sacrifice.

"**Forgiven**" (No. 11) illustrates the complete effectiveness of God's remedy, as "**Christ's character stands in place of our character, and we are accepted in the sight of God, just as if we had never sinned**" (**Steps to Christ**, p 62). Amazing Grace! The sinner's innocence is so completely restored that he can stand uncondemned in the presence of the Law of God, which one hour ago condemned him as guilty, but which now testifies to his innocence in Christ!

### Chart 12 — "The Fruit of the Spirit,"

This reminds us that while Christ's **sacrificial** work was finished on the Cross, His total work of **renewal and transformation** was not yet complete. The purchased soul must now be possessed, and the lost image of God restored, by a further indispensable Divine work, which the Bible calls "**Sanctification.**" In this work of progressive inward renewal, the Divine Agent is the Holy Spirit. "The Fruit of the Spirit" - the supernatural reproduction of God-like qualities in the consenting human soul - is the supreme masterpiece of Divine grace, and the ultimate goal of Redemption! "**Christ is sitting for His portrait in every disciple**" (**Desire of Ages**, p 827).

NOTE: *By far the most urgent and challenging question confronting Seventh-day Adventists is this: IS ADVENTIST CHRISTIANITY A MERE HUMANISTIC STRIVING TO "BE GOOD," OR TO "KEEP GOD'S COMMANDMENTS," OR TO "IMITATE CHRIST" IN THE ENERGIES OF THE FLESH: OR IS IT THE REPRODUCTION OF CHRIST'S LIFE OF PERFECT OBEDIENCE WITHIN US, THROUGH THE SUPER-HUMAN ENERGY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?*

*If the first position is right, then Adventism is just ANOTHER FORM OF BANKRUPT HUMANISM. If the second position is right, Adventist Christianity is THE "POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION."*



*It is at this point*—THE POINT OF THEIR APPLICATION TO HUMAN LIFE—*that all our theories of the Gospel must ultimately be tested. Hence, THE MOST CRITICAL QUESTION in our explanation of the saving work of Christ is: HOW IS ALL THIS TO BE APPLIED TO COMMON, RUN-OF-THE-MILL HUMAN LIVES LIKE OURS? THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD'S COMPLETE ANSWER!*

*Accordingly, Ellen G. White counsels: "These are our themes—Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ our intercessor before God, and CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH THESE IS THE OFFICE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT."* (EVANGELISM, p 187)

*"When the truth is received as truth by the heart, it has passed through the conscience, and has captivated the soul by its pure principles. IT IS PLACED IN THE HEART BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, who reveals its beauty to the mind, that its transforming power may be seen in the character."* (EVANGELISM, p 291)

### Chart 13 — The Roots of the Healthy Christian Life

No tree is stronger than its roots, and no Christian can remain strong and healthy whose "root-life" is neglected. In sharp focus here is the fact that **the initiative in caring for our spiritual "roots" is entirely in our own hands**. Obviously, it is important to know how to **become** a Christian, but it is equally important to know how to **remain** a Christian - and that's where the "roots" come in!

The first great "plateau" in the unfolding of the Advent Message is **the plateau of personal salvation**—where the foundations of genuine saving faith are laid. Up to this point we have been dealing largely with **non-controversial subjects**, where we have **much common ground** with almost all conservative Christians. The presentation of more distinctive Seventh-day Adventist doctrine now begins with this initial emphasis upon **the closing events of history, or "the last things."**

### Charts 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 — Daniel 2, Second Advent, Signs, etc.

In this group of charts the prophetic spotlight swings to **our own day**, and sheds reassuring light, not only upon the meaning of current world conditions, but upon **the big and exciting plans that God has for the future of our planet**, and—what is most exciting of all—**our place** in those plans!

Great care must be exercised at this point to stress continually the **winsome, positive, cheering aspects** of our Saviour's promise to come again. The key-words of New Testament "Adventism" are not "doom" but "**dawn**;" not "gloom," but "**gladness**;" not "midnight," but "**morning**;" not "horror," but "**hope**;" not "the end," but "**the beginning!**"

Says Ellen G. White: "**Do not strike one dolorous note.**" (Evangelism, p 180)

At the same time, the faithful Bible instructor will remind men that the separation described in Matt. 25:31-46 does not begin at the Second Advent—**it begins now!** It is **now** that we take sides for or against King Jesus. It is **now** that we place ourselves among the lost or the saved. The Second Advent does not **decide** our destiny, it only **declares** it, on the basis of the choices that we are making **now!**

Accordingly, these charts provide a unique background for earnest and repeated appeals to make **personal preparation** to meet the Lord in peace. "**In such an hour as ye think not**" (Matt. 24:44). "**And take heed to yourselves**" (Luke 21:34). "**Be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace**" (2 Pet. 3:14). "**Blessed is he that watcheth**" (Rev. 16:15).

### Chart 19 — The Millennium

The Millennium is a **key-doctrine** of the Bible, providing a secure anchorage for many others, and helping to counter false ideas about the return of the Jews, the thousand years of peace, the false hope of a second probation, etc. However, this subject needs to be presented with unusual tact, because **Seventh-day Adventists stand alone among modern Christians in their understanding of Revelation 20**. It is not wise to throw down too-abrupt a challenge to men and women who have a strong sentimental attachment for the hope of an earthly millennium. **Sometimes it is better to defer our presentation of this subject until minds are**

**more fully prepared to receive it.** The inspired counsel applies here: “The truths that we hold in common should be dwelt upon first.” (**Evangelism**, p 164). “Speak upon points of doctrine on which you can agree;” and “The education of a lifetime is not to be readily counteracted.” (**Evangelism**, pp 200, 288)

#### **Chart 20 — Eden Restored**

The instinctive longing for a life beyond death is a **powerful ally** that God has placed in the heart of every man. However, the Bible says: “**Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him**” (1 Corinthians 2:9). Accordingly no attempt is made here to portray conditions in the Earth made new. We have simply chosen a scene of beauty and tranquillity from this present world, on the understanding that however beautiful and satisfying this is, the New Earth will be **infinitely more so!**

#### **Chart 21 — The Nature of Man in Life and Death**

Contrary to popular belief, the Bible does not teach the natural immortality of the human soul. It teaches that the “**soul**” - resulting from the union of “**body**” and “**breath of life**” (Genesis 2:7) - is the “**self**,” the “**person**,” the **total conscious personality, as it functions in life**. Accordingly, in Biblical teaching, **death is the simple reversal of that process whereby God originally gave life to man.** (Psalms 146:3, 4).

Because this Bible truth runs counter to popular belief and sentiment, it too, will need to be **presented with great tact and sensitiveness**. What we have observed concerning the needs and religious backgrounds of our prospects will help us to determine when it is best to introduce Man's Condition in Death.

#### **Chart 22 — God's Commandments—Our Protection**

One of the prime reasons for the existence of Seventh-day Adventists is to champion the claims of the down-trodden Law of God. Accordingly, we are committed to devise the best means of disarming prejudice and opposition towards the Ten Commandments. This chart is an attempt to develop a positive, disarming and logical presentation of the enduring relevance and authority of God's Holy Law. Its central idea is that **the most precious elements in our civilised society are guaranteed to us and preserved for us by the precepts of Jehovah**. By stressing the practical and utilitarian nature of God's Law, this chart effectively draws the teeth of common anti-nomian quibblings and objections.

Here we begin to move from **distinctive truth** to **testing truth**. **This is the foundation of our whole message of Sabbath Reform**. The unforgettable picture of God's massive protecting wall prepares the way for warnings about the “**breach**” in the wall, and ultimately for God's call to assist in the “**repairing of the breach**.” Great care should be taken at this point to explain the true relation between the Law and the Gospel, so that **obedience is seen, not as our own unaided work, but as the overflow of Christ's life within us**.

#### **Charts 23, 24, 25 — Creation Week, the Sabbath Shrine and the Sunday Temple**

This series of charts emphasises how completely and irremovably the Seventh-day Sabbath is anchored to Creation, to the Holy Scriptures, and to Jesus Christ. By contrast, they show how utterly destitute of Scriptural support is the Sunday institution. **To change or destroy the Sabbath we would have to dismantle the whole Creation, the whole Bible, and the life-long example and teaching of Christ!** These charts also reveal the **profound seriousness of the change of the Sabbath**. It is not merely a trivial or marginal issue. We cannot afford to be casual or flippant about it. **It is a challenge to the very foundation of God's authority!**

#### **Charts 26, 27, 28 — The Breach in the Wall, etc.**

Now the Bible spotlight focuses squarely on the Message of Sabbath Reform. **This is the**

**point at which the authority of God as Creator has been most openly and continuously challenged by man - professedly religious man - and specifically by the leaders and members of the Christian Church!**

The integrity of the literal **Creation Week** (Chart 23); the Biblical "roots" of the Seventh-day Sabbath (Chart 24); and the total absence of Biblical authority for Sunday (Chart 25), have all been made plain. Now, to assist in tactfully pressing home the full implications of the Sabbath truth, three charts are used to illustrate: "**The Breach in the Wall**" (No. 26); "**The Repairing of the Breach**" (No. 27); and "**The Breach Repaired**" (No. 28). These charts tie in closely with the Bible's own picture of God's great protecting "wall" (see Chart No. 22), which has been "breached" by what has now become **an act of universal, racial vandalism**. The issues are pin-pointed so simply and graphically that it becomes easy for the viewer to identify with them, and almost impossible for him to forget them!

While these three charts are designed to give maximum impact to the message of Sabbath Reform, they are not intended to harshly incriminate or ruthlessly expose any one religious personage or organization. They show simply that **the responsibility for the change of the Sabbath - and therefore for its reformation - rests upon the whole of Christendom!**

#### **Charts 29, 30, 31, 32 — The Two Categories of Divine Law, etc.**

These charts are all supplementary to the Sabbath Reform series. No. 29 pin-points the unmistakable elements of distinction between the permanent "**Moral**" precepts of the Divine Law, and the temporary, "**Ceremonial**" precepts of the Old Testament period, which were exhausted at Calvary's Cross. No. 30 focuses on "**The Three Days at Crucifixion Weekend**," which assist in clearly locating the Bible Sabbath, and establishing the fact that no change in the Fourth Commandment was made - or intended - when Jesus died. Chart 31 provides a historical overview of changes in, or revisions to the Calendar, during the past two thousand years, and demonstrates conclusively that **no Calendar changes have disturbed the normal free running of the days of the week**. Chart 32 explains Colossians 2:14-17, the one New Testament text that is quoted most frequently against the abiding Christian obligation of the Seventh-day Sabbath. Once the distinction is clearly seen between the Creation Sabbath (weekly), and the "Shadowy" Sabbaths (yearly), this passage ceases to present a difficulty.

#### **Chart 33 — Truth or Tradition**

This is a major decision-page. It focuses **the second great crisis** in the acceptance of Present Truth. It represents **the climax of our initial presentation of the Bible Sabbath**. It places the alternatives of **Truth or Tradition—Christ or Custom**—simply and squarely before men. However, it should not be introduced until our prospects have had a fair opportunity to hear and consider the Bible evidence. It is designed to show that the Sabbath issue is bigger than a day, bigger than a Church, bigger than public opinion—**It concerns our personal relationship to the authority of Jesus Christ, and involves a decision for or against Him!**

#### **Charts 34, 35, 36, 37 — The Seven Seals**

The Seals are introduced here because they illustrate so forcibly the ideas of **change, apostasy, and inexcusable departure from the faith**—all of which cry out for a message of reform.

But the Seals portray the Great Apostasy in general terms only. Thus they prepare the way for Daniel 7, which discloses **the specific apostasy—the Change of the Sabbath**—which stirs the indignation of heaven to its depths, calls out the Remnant, and precipitates the final world-embracing test of loyalty to God. The presentation of the Seals **before Daniel 7** makes it possible for the prospect to become acquainted with the origin and development of the Great Apostasy **without being confronted with any major test**.

The varying backgrounds of these symbols help to locate securely each Seal in its correct historical context, while portraying the course of **ever-deepening apostasy**. Accordingly, the White Horse emerges from a **dawn** background, indicative of the Church in the first flush of its

youth; the ominous **storm-clouds** surrounding the Red Horse bespeak controversy and impending disaster; the **sunset tints** framing the Black Horse signify a day of glorious opportunity for the Church, which is about to close; whilst the **flaming faggots**, the **desolation** and the **darkness** surrounding the Pale Horse are starkly reminiscent of the **Dark Ages**, the Inquisition, and their attendant nightmare of horrors.

#### Chart 38 — Seven Keys to Bible Symbolism

A thorough understanding of the major prophetic symbols is as indispensable to a correct interpretation of Daniel and the Revelation as is the A.B.C. to the skills of reading and writing! We could never understand the **nature, development and thrust** of the Great Apostasy without a knowledge of these symbolic “keys.” They enable the Bible student to quickly and easily decipher the puzzling code-language of Scripture, thus initiating him into what would otherwise be a complex and baffling mystery. **In laying a secure foundation for the mastery of Bible prophecy, these “keys” will need to be referred to again and again.**

#### Charts 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 — Daniel 7 Series

These graphic symbols and diagrams speak for themselves, making the interpretation of this key-prophecy a fascinating and unforgettable adventure. All are related to **the focal point of Daniel 7**—the rise and development of the Papal apostasy and the change of the Sabbath. **The full impact of testing truth is now beginning to be felt.** To help ensure a right decision, every detail of Daniel 7 needs to be explained carefully and reviewed thoroughly. Yet, as the mask is stripped from the face of “the man of sin,” **it should not be done with malice, bigotry, or bitterness, but with regret and tenderness.**

“Jesus did not suppress one word of truth,” says God’s Messenger, “**but He uttered it always in love...** He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief and iniquity; but **tears were in His voice** as He uttered His scathing rebukes.” (*Steps to Christ*, p 12)

#### Chart 41 — Identification of the Little Horn

By devoting a full page to the head and horns only of the Fourth Beast, this chart enables the Bible instructor to focus attention upon the most intriguing feature of this prophecy: **“Who is the Little Horn?”** With the aid of these ten plain identification marks, the interpretation becomes simple and unmistakable.

#### Chart 44 — A Key to the Year-day Principle

This chart summarises the way this “code language” is used in the great time-prophecies of both Daniel and Revelation. It does not apply to Biblical time in the general sense, but **to time only as used in symbolic prophecy.** It fully meets the most searching, pragmatic test, for the time-periods of Bible prophecy work out with amazing accuracy on this “day-for-a-year” basis.

#### Charts 45 to 58 — The Sanctuary Series

With the introduction of the Sanctuary Truth, we move to **another great “plateau”** of distinctive Adventist teaching. This doctrine is **the chief instrument whereby God has created the Seventh-day Adventist movement.** The Sanctuary Truth provides our doctrinal and prophetic “roots;” it justifies our separate existence; it explains our past; it illuminates our future; it outlines our specific task; it identifies our allies; it strips the mask off our foes; it floodlights our resources; it buttresses our faith; it forecasts our destiny; it guarantees our success! According to Ellen G. White, the Sanctuary Truth is **“the foundation of our faith”** (*Evangelism*, p 221), and **“the very message that makes us a separate people, and gives character and power to our work”** (*Ibid.*, p 225) Take this doctrine away, and we have no distinctive message or mission; no reason whatever for existence as a separate people.

Ours is not a **different** message from that preached by the great Reformers. It is a **fuller** message—a message of **greater depth**—and it is the Sanctuary Truth, especially, which gives it this added richness, depth and fullness. To use a familiar metaphor, the Reformers possessed

the “film” of Bible truth, but by comparison with our greater advantages, they could only run it through an **old-fashioned magic lantern**. That was the best equipment they had. Seventh-day Adventists have the **same Gospel film**, but our message is like a **modern electric movie projector**. The stronger lamp of fulfilled and fulfilling prophecy, and the **powerful focusing lens of the Sanctuary Truth**, make it possible for us to appreciate the **beauty and depth and detail** of the film in a way that the Reformers could never do!

Speaking of the heavenly sanctuary service, Ellen G. White says: “There the light from the Cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a **clearer insight** into the mysteries of redemption” (**Great Controversy**, p 489). Also, “The subject of the Sanctuary **was the key which... opened to view a complete system of truth**, connected and harmonious” (Ibid., p 423).

Accordingly, to assist in making the major features of this doctrine crystal-clear, fourteen charts are included in the Sanctuary series.

#### **Charts 45, 46 — Earthly Sanctuary, Exterior and Interior**

By simplifying the details of the Earthly Sanctuary and its services, these charts floodlight the Everlasting Gospel—God’s original, unchanged way of salvation—and establish the indivisible unity of Holy Scripture. They help to lay a firm foundation for the study of the entire Sanctuary doctrine.

#### **Chart 47 — Parallels Between the Two Sanctuaries**

Once we have grasped the parallels between the Earthly and Heavenly services, we have the **master-key that opens up the wider aspects of the Sanctuary truth**. This is the key to the nature and scope of the present work of Christ; to the major issues of the Judgment; to God’s final solution of the problem of evil; to the main thrust of the Great Apostasy; to the prophecies of Daniel 8 and Revelation 14; to the character and mission of the Remnant, etc.

This diagram enables the Bible instructor to establish these parallels quickly and convincingly and to review them conveniently as often as needed.

Ellen G. White repeatedly emphasises the key-importance of this theme:

“The Sanctuary in heaven is the **very centre** of Christ’s work in behalf of men.” (**Great Controversy**, p 488)

“The correct understanding of the ministration in the Heavenly Sanctuary is the **foundation of our faith**.” (**Evangelism**, p 221)

“We should not rest until we have **become intelligent** in regard to the subject of the Sanctuary.” (Ibid., pp 222, 223)

“The subject of the Sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be **clearly understood** by the people of God.” (**Great Controversy**, p 488)

“God’s people are now to **have their eyes fixed on the Heavenly Sanctuary**, where the final ministration of our Great High Priest in the work of judgment is going forward.” (**Evangelism**, p 223)

“**Satan hates the great truths** that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful Mediator.” (**Great Controversy**, p 488)

#### **Chart 48 — Christ our Advocate**

This chart highlights our individual part in the Judgment, and shows that because of the services of our all-powerful Advocate, we may face the Judgment without fear.

The Judgment marks the **climax of the whole Sanctuary revelation**, and of God’s dealings with the problem of evil. By means of the Judgment, God’s name is publicly and eternally cleared from the false accusations of Satan; God’s people are publicly and eternally vindicated; the problem of evil is eternally solved, and the universe is made eternally secure.

**Charts 49, 50, 51, 55 — Symbols of Daniel 8, and the 2,300 Days**

The prophecy of Daniel 8 is **the massive taproot of distinctive Seventh-day Adventist prophetic teaching**. It is absolutely essential to a correct understanding of the **character, main thrust, and final doom** of the great Papal Apostasy. Verse 14 is the bridge between Daniel and the Revelation; the master-key to the whole scheme of latter-day prophecy, and the infallible yardstick by which we locate unmistakably the hour of God's judgment and of the appearing of the Remnant. Says Ellen G. White: "The Scripture which **above all others** had been **the foundation and central pillar** of the Advent faith, was the declaration, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed.' " (*Great Controversy*, p 409)

**Chart 51 — The Little Horn Wars Against Christ**

This chart focuses the fact that **the Person of Christ** is the real target of Satanic attack, and that the essential thrust of the Great Apostasy is to **dethrone Christ as man's only Mediator**, and thus sabotage the plan of salvation. The "taking away of the daily," in its simplest definition, is **the perversion and obscuring of the saving work of Christ**.

In the light of Daniel 8, Satan is unmasked as the real Anti-Christ, and the symbolic warfare of this chapter is seen as an earthly miniature or echo of the great controversy between Christ and Satan in the larger, cosmic sense.

**Chart 52 — The Seventy Weeks**

This prophetic time-period is an integral part of the vision of Daniel 8, and the 2,300 days. But its presentation need not be deferred until we come to the explanation of Dan. 8:14. **The wise Bible instructor will introduce the "70 weeks" as a prophecy in its own right long before he deals with the 2,300 days as a whole**. A topic such as "**Old Testament Prophecies of Christ**," which can be introduced quite early in our series, affords an excellent opportunity to explain this most amazing of all time prophecies. If prospects already understand the "70 weeks" before they are confronted with Dan. 8:14, the calculation of the 2,300 days will be greatly simplified.

**Chart 53 — Five Links that Tie Daniel 8 to Daniel 9**

In order to understand the full import of the "2,300 days" prophecy of Daniel 8:14, (Chart 55) it must be shown quickly and clearly that the "70 weeks" prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 is **the resumption of Gabriel's interrupted explanation of the vision of Daniel 8**. The five clear links between these chapters establish conclusively that Daniel 8 and Daniel 9 are actually **two instalments of the one vision!**

**Chart 54 — Parallels Between Daniel 7 and 8**

Likewise, to grasp the true significance of Daniel 8:14, it must be shown that "**The Cleansing of the Sanctuary**" is a **parallel term to "the Judgment" of Daniel 7**. The surest way to demonstrate this parity is to place the events of Daniel 7 side-by-side with those of Daniel 8. It then becomes crystal-clear that "**the Judgment**" of Daniel 7, and "**the Cleansing of the Sanctuary**" of Daniel 8, **both belong in the same time-slot** and, for all practical purposes, are **synonymous terms!**

**Chart 56 — The Change-over from B.C. to A.D. Reckoning**

To simplify our explanation of the 2,300 years prophecy, which began in the "B.C." era and extends for centuries into "A.D." time, it is imperative to note that the restoration decree of Artaxerxes went into effect when **three-quarters of B.C. 457 had expired**. (That is, at 456 ¼ B.C.!) This means that **the full 2,300 years projects beyond the end of 1843 to a point three-quarters-way down into 1844**. Chart 56 clarifies this point, and also explains how there have to be **two years bearing the number "1"** (B.C. 1 and 1 A.D.).

**Chart 57 — Jewish Feasts in Type and Antitype**

This pictorial diagram affords another means of testing and verifying the significant elements of the Sanctuary-revelation, which are spelled out in Charts 45 to 58. It provides a graphic and revealing overview of God's saving programme between the First and Second Advents, and shows how the key-events of that programme were foreshadowed in miniature by the seven great typical "feasts" of the ancient Hebrew religious year.

Like the links in a chain, or the tumblers in a combination-lock, these predicted key-events have successively fallen into place, as the scroll of the centuries has unrolled.

**Chart 58 — The Sanctuary - The "Hub" of Bible Truth**

This chart, which concludes the Sanctuary series, provides a graphic and unforgettable overview of the wider dimensions of the Sanctuary Truth, which binds the whole Bible together, and focuses supremely on Calvary's Cross. Take the Sanctuary-theme out of the Bible, and the Book would literally fall to pieces in our hands!

**Charts 59, 60, 61 — Revelation 14, 10, 12**

Each of these prophecies is inseparably linked with the Book of Daniel, and each one is like a powerful searchlight-beam, piercing the darkness and confusion of the last days, and focusing directly upon God's prophetic "Remnant."

**Revelation 14:** Highlights the specific timing, character and message of the "Remnant."

**Revelation 10:** Focuses upon the birth-hour and commissioning of the "Remnant."

**Revelation 12:** Reveals the spiritual ancestry and identification marks of the "Remnant."

**At the point where these three prophetic beams converge, stands the Seventh-day Adventist Church,** illuminated with such stabbing clarity that it can be recognised unmistakably as God's true prophetic "Remnant" in the last days.

**The third big decision point** in our programme of indoctrination has now come—the **decision to ally oneself openly and publicly with God's Remnant people,** and the Bible instructor will be labouring prayerfully and purposefully to secure this momentous decision.

**Chart 62 — The Abiding Gift of Prophecy**

When describing the prophetic "Remnant" of the last days, Revelation 12:17 gives two clear marks of identification: (1) **The keeping of the commandments of God,** and (2) **The possession of "The testimony of Jesus"** (i.e. The gift of prophecy, see Revelation 19:10 and 22:9). This pointed prophetic forecast climaxes the overall Biblical teaching concerning the Prophetic Gift. It is on the basis of this broad Biblical foundation, linked with Revelation 12:17, that Seventh-day Adventists acknowledge the ministry of Ellen G. White as an authentic latter-day manifestation of the ancient Gift of Prophecy.

**Charts 63 to 67 — Beasts of Revelation 13, and Scarlet Woman of Revelation 17**

The last four charts have helped to identify God's last-day "Remnant." The prophetic spotlight now moves to **the chief agencies Satan will use in his final, desperate efforts to destroy the Church of God.** These agencies are clearly unmasked in the prophetic chapters illustrated here.

Though the symbols are new, no essentially new truth is revealed in Revelation 13 and 17. There is, however, a sharper focusing and more urgent and forceful application of truth which is already familiar. For example, the Leopard-beast is a continuation and amplification of the "Little Horn" of Daniel 7. The contrast between the Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast is the repetition, enlargement and climax of the message of Sabbath Reform. The Scarlet Woman is the final incarnation of the age-old apostasy of Cain, Babel, Jezebel and the Medieval Church.

These chapters reach their climax in God's final, urgent, clarion summons: **"COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE!"** (Rev. 18:4), which is addressed to those of His exiled children who are still found within the dark confines of modern Babylon.

**Charts 65, 66 — The Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast**

These charts introduce the most urgent and challenging of all aspects of present truth. Yet bigotry, harshness, or rough-handedness have no place here. The tact and tenderness of the True Shepherd are needed. The tension between the Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast focuses the central issues of the Everlasting Gospel. This is far more than a mere clash of days, or doctrines, or denominations. It is a clash between two fundamental life-philosophies; two comprehensive world-views. **This is the religion of God-dependence and the religion of self-dependence grappling in their final mortal test of strength.** Everything that the Christian Gospel stands for—everything that God stands for—is at stake!

This is a crisis-point in the history of true worship, which matches and exceeds Mount Carmel with its thunderous challenge: **“HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?”** (1 Kings 18:21). Obviously, this challenge should be presented in the spirit of deep humility and earnest prayer. **Only God can give to us the wise mingling of tenderness and severity that is so urgently needed here.** To assist in making the subject crystal-clear, it is illustrated by four graphic charts.

**Charts 68 to 73 — The Character and Life-style of God’s “Remnant.”**

No portrayal of the character and life-style of God’s “Remnant” would be complete without focused presentations of **“The Christian’s Armour”** (No. 68); **“Christian Standards”** (No. 69); **“The Christian Home and Family”** (No. 70); **“The Wheel of Health”** (No. 71); **“Christian Ordinances”** (No. 72), and **“Christian Stewardship”** (No. 73). Accordingly, these six charts illustrate the ideals; the values; the worship-patterns; the resources and the defences of those people who are seriously preparing for translation when Jesus comes!

To round out the expanded Pictorial Aid series, four further valuable charts are now included:

**Chart 74 — The Tri-Unity of God**

This chart is designed to illustrate the Bible’s revelation of the Tri-une God - as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is true, of course, that no man-made diagrams or definitions can encompass or explain the nature of the Eternal God. His Being is infinite. He occupies a different dimension of existence from all created beings. He “dwells in a light which no man can approach unto.” It is written: “No man hath seen, nor can see” Him (1 Timothy 6:16). All that we seek to do here is to show that **the concept of “Three-in-one” is not demonstrably irrational, even on the level of created things**, and that it is in full harmony with what the Bible reveals about the three expressions or manifestations of the “God-head.” Deny the Tri-unity of God, and a hundred puzzling threads of Scripture are left untied. As shown in the accompanying Study Guide (No. 56), the Bible does not attempt to “explain” or “prove” the Tri-unity of God, it simply takes it for granted, and declares it!

**Chart 75 — Five Levels of Church Administration.**

According to the New Testament, God’s “church” is a tangible, recognizable, findable entity. Jesus declared that He Himself was its Builder and Defender, and that it would be indestructible in the face of all Satanic attacks (Matthew 16:18). Also, the picture that emerges from the pages of the New Testament reveals the Church as an organized, disciplined, Divinely-commissioned “body” (1 Corinthians 12:12-27), with clear-cut objectives, and with its earthly resources and personnel marshalled, mobilized and focused for effective soul-winning action!

**Chart 76 — The Gifts of the Holy Spirit**

As God’s “Remnant” Church girds itself for its last, world-wide evangelistic thrust, **its greatest and most urgent need is for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit such as came at Pentecost.** The Church’s true Power-source is not on earth, but in Heaven. The symbolic



"woman" of Revelation 12 is pictured as having **no earthly support!** **"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts"** (Zechariah 4:6).

Accordingly, we include here a chart on the **"Gifts of the Spirit."** These unbelievably-rich Divine endowments - introduced in the Old Testament, and amplified in the New - are given primarily for **practical purposes**. They are not magical "toys," or private luxuries, given for purely personal enjoyment, but are given **expressly to assist the whole Church in the fulfilment of its global task**.

The familiar **"Cornucopia"** or **"Horn of Plenty"** - classic symbol of Heaven's inexhaustible bounties - depicts the overflowing abundance of God's Gifts to His Church. **More important than money, or learning, or talent, or genius, they are the church's superlative, indispensable equipment for service!**

#### Chart 77 — Christian Baptism

Baptism is the public climax of our whole programme of indoctrination. It is the outward sign of an inward decision to follow Christ in death, burial and resurrection, not merely upon the day of one's baptism, but on each succeeding day of one's earthly life. It is the formal adoption ceremony of another child into the family of God. It is the door-way to church membership.

When the prospect has made his decision to be baptised, **the Bible worker will carefully instruct him on the meaning and solemnity of this sacred ordinance**. This instruction will involve a threefold emphasis: firstly, upon the **responsibilities** he assumes as he becomes a member of God's Church; secondly, upon the **renunciations** he must make of all that is unworthy of a child of God; and thirdly, upon the boundless **resources** of Divine Grace which are now at his disposal as God's acknowledged son and heir!

\* \* \*

THE PICTORIAL AID was first proposed as a concept in Melbourne, Victoria, in 1947, and almost forty years have been required to bring it to its present form. During those years it has been supported by a tall column of helping hands. Church administrators, fellow ministers and lay-members, as well as valued technical assistants, have helped to build that column.

The project has developed in three main stages: 1. The initial printing was undertaken by the Review and Herald in 1956 (22 Charts). 2. An all-new and expanded PICTORIAL AID was sponsored by the Australasian Division in 1968, and passed through four printings, 1970, 1973, 1978, 1981 (50 Charts). 3. The current, revised and greatly enlarged edition is appearing this year (80 Charts).

Warm tribute is paid to the South Pacific Division Committee, whose evangelistic vision, financial backing, and sub-committee assistance have made the two Australian PICTORIAL AID ventures possible. Appreciation is expressed also to the Wishing Printing Company and the Signs Publishing Company for their indispensable help in production. Above all, grateful thanks are given to God for His unfailing faithfulness and providence. The PICTORIAL AID really belongs to Him. It now goes out into the field with the prayer that He will use it for the speedy finishing of His work in the earth.

—FRANK BREADEN,  
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January 31, 1987.

## PREPARING AND PRESENTING BIBLE STUDIES

### I.—PREPARATION

(a) **Choosing your topic.** This will be determined by factors such as:

- (1) **The immediate point of interest of your prospects,** as indicated by their conversation or questions; e.g., World conditions. Questions about the existence of God. Life after death. Doubts about the truth of the Bible. Problem of suffering, etc. Philip, in his first Bible study with the Ethiopian eunuch, "**Began at the same scripture**" that his prospect was puzzled about (Acts 8 : 35). A good cue for us!
- (2) **The special needs or circumstances of your prospects;** e.g., A recently bereaved family would need comfort, assurance and hope from the Bible. A man battling with the drink habit and longing for freedom would need the positive gospel assurance: "**Christ can break the grip of this evil habit!**"
- (3) **The stage your prospects have reached in hearing the Advent message;** e.g., We are instructed to "melt" the prospects' hearts with "the love of God", to teach them the gospel and lead them to surrender their hearts to Jesus, **before confronting them with testing truths,** such as the Sabbath, the Tithes, or the Mark of the Beast. This procedure is always best. Otherwise, we put the cart before the horse! See "Evangelism", pp 230, 231.
- (4) **The Church connections or religious background of your prospects.** Obviously there would be somewhat different approaches for Anglicans, Catholics, Baptists, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.

*NOTE: Do not be stereotyped in your selection of topics. There is no one set order or pattern of Bible studies, to be followed rigidly in all cases. Adapt your approach to the individual circumstances of your prospects.* **ADVANCED DOCTRINES OR TESTING TRUTHS SHOULD NOT COME BEFORE THEIR TIME!**

(b) **Collecting your material.**

- (1) "**Pray yourself teachable!**" Maintain a constant attitude of dependence upon the Holy Spirit.
- (2) "**Think yourself empty!**" Exhaust your own knowledge of the Bible first and, when you have done this, go to other sources.
- (3) "**Read yourself full!**" Consult Adventist books and printed Bible study outlines that are available. Use your concordance. In extremity, get help from your Pastor.

(c) **Constructing your study.**

- (1) **Have a definite AIM in view** (i.e., concerning what you want your prospects to understand, believe, or do).
- (2) **Analyse your subject by asking questions about it, such as:** "How?" "When?" "Where?" "Why?" "What?" "Who?" "What are the common opinions about this subject?" "What are the common objections?" "What is my responsibility concerning it?" etc.
- (3) **Prepare your main steps, headings, or divisions.**
- (4) **Avoid rambling or disconnectedness.** Strive for a logical sequence or order of arrangement, so that your study grows naturally and persuasively, like a plant: "**First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.**" The above-mentioned questions will help greatly in achieving this logical development.

*NOTE: Each of the Bible Lessons issued with the Pictorial Aid is designed as a model of simplicity, coherence and orderly arrangement. Each one consists of three main parts: (a) INTRODUCTION, (b) DISCUSSION, (c) CONCLUSION. These are not intended to bind users to slavish conformity, but they illustrate how to build an orderly, logical, well-connected Bible Study.*

- (5) **Avoid using too many texts.** Three or four plain, pertinent texts under each heading are usually sufficient.

*NOTE: In the accompanying Bible Lessons, more texts have been listed in some cases than may be required for a particular Bible Study This has not been done to encourage the use of too many texts, but to provide a RESERVE FUND of pertinent Bible references, to be used as needed.*

- (6) **Avoid long Bible studies.** About 45 minutes is sufficient for the average Bible study.
- (7) **Plan introduction and conclusion.** Think out some novel, interesting or timely introduction. The reading of the newspaper, or close observation of the happenings of daily life can often provide this. A summary of the main points provides a good conclusion. Be sure to ask, "Is it all clear?" Make personal application of the truth explained and, when appropriate, make a direct appeal. Example of a personal application: At close of Bible study, ask, "Why do you think God has given US a chance to hear these things, Mrs. Brown?" Example of a direct appeal: After a full presentation of studies on the Sabbath truth, say: "Well, Bill, I suppose the day is not far distant when you will be keeping your first Sabbath! . . . Am I right?"
- (8) **Master your subject thoroughly.** If possible, do this in such a way that your notes can be discarded.
- (9) **Make every Bible study Christ-centred.** Help your prospects to see the face of Christ in every doctrine and prophecy (see "Evangelism", pp 142, 163, 164, 169, 170, 184-193, 223, 232, 248, 264, 298, 299, 300, 350, 484-486).

## II.—PRESENTATION

- (a) Be guarded and prudent in your preliminary conversation. Let your conduct show that you have come to study God's Word, not just for a social visit.
- (b) Commence and close with a brief, simple, sincere prayer.
- (c) Avoid formality, and sustain interest by employing novelty, variety, surprise features, suspense. Do not let your prospects know all that is coming next. "Satisfy curiosity and you kill interest."
- (d) The wise use of visual aids, music (recorded or live), tape-recorded talks, film-strips or slides, can add stimulus and variety to your visits.
- (e) In manner and deportment be as friendly, human and approachable as possible. Be relaxed and natural. Avoid stiffness, starchiness, or austerity. Never underestimate the value of a chuckle. It relaxes tension; it disarms prejudice; it dispels hostility; it wins trust.
- (f) Adopt conversational rather than lecturing manner. Talk with, not at your prospects. Act as a friend, not a superior.
- (g) **Let the Bible speak.** Make it a settled practice to offer the Bible's answer to questions asked. Keep the Bible central in your whole programme of indoctrination.

- (h) Encourage your prospects to participate by taking their turn at reading texts from the Bible; by asking questions and entering into discussion, and, as you gain their confidence, by **learning to offer short prayers for themselves.**
- (i) After the study, do not linger. Avoid exerting an influence that may detract from your message. Aim always to leave the **message** paramount in your prospects' minds.

**INSPIRED GUIDANCE ON SELECTION AND ORDER OF BIBLE STUDY TOPICS FROM  
"EVANGELISM", BY ELLEN G. WHITE**

Pages

- 164, 200: **Speak first on points of doctrine on which you can agree. Give "milk" before "strong meat" to babes!**
- 164, 165: **Win prospect's confidence before presenting unfamiliar, advanced, or testing truth (see also pp 246, 485).**
- 226: **Best plan is to present subjects that arouse the conscience; that teach practical godliness . . . i.e., How to come to Jesus. How to pray. How to receive the assurance of sins forgiven. How to take hold of God's help.**
- 264: **The very first and most important thing is to melt and subdue the soul by presenting our Lord Jesus Christ as the Sin-bearer.**
- 228, 442: **Do not feel it your duty to present the Sabbath question immediately you meet people. Tell them this is not your burden now. Reserve the Sabbath truth till they have surrendered heart and mind and will to God.**
- 230, 231: **Do not present the Law of God as a test until prospects have been warned, melted and subdued with the presentation of Christ, and have given themselves to the Lord.**
- 247: **If the heart of the unbeliever is not softened, to try to impress him is "like striking upon cold iron."**
- 248, 272: **There is always perfect safety in talking of the hope of eternal life. And when the heart is melted and subdued, the enquiry will be: "What must I do to be saved?" (see also pp 125, 126, 142, 143, 163).**



## FOOTPRINTS OF GOD IN CREATION

**Introduction** Acts 14 : 15-17: "God hath not left Himself without witness."

Though God has not revealed Himself to our **senses**; for we cannot **see** Him, or **hear** Him, or **touch** Him, He has not left us to grope blindly in confusion and doubt, without any evidence of His existence.

The writer of the well-known book "**Steps to Christ**", puts it this way: "God never asks us to believe without giving sufficient **evidence** upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His Word, are all established by **testimony that appeals to our reason**, and this testimony is abundant." (p 105)

What are some of these evidences of God's existence, and where do we find them?

In this lesson we will study three of the plainest evidences for God, which we will call "**Footprints of God in Creation**". These evidences are readily available to every man who is willing to use his eyes, ears and rational powers.

**Discussion** 1.—FOOTPRINTS OF GOD IN THE EARTH

Job 12 : 7-10: "Ask now the beasts, the fowls, the earth, and the fishes and they shall teach thee."

Matt. 6 : 28, 29: "Consider the lilies of the field."

Rom. 1 : 19, 20: "The invisible things of God may be understood by the visible things which He has made."

All around us, in earth and sea and sky, there are countless evidences of **order, beauty, accuracy, adaptation and intelligent planning**. Consider these marvels of creative design: **The beauty and perfume of the flowers. Snowflake crystals. A butterfly's wing. A spider's web. A bird's feather. A cob of corn. The marvellous instincts and mechanisms of the honey-bee. The annual miracle of bird migration. The bat's ingenious "radar" system.**

*(See Chart No. 1—Creation Speaks of God)*

Now let us ask: **Could these wonders of creation have made themselves?**

2.—FOOTPRINTS OF GOD IN THE HEAVENS

Ps. 19 : 1: "The heavens declare the glory of God."

Gen. 15 : 5: "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars."

Neh. 9 : 6: "Thou hast made the heavens, and Thou preservest them all."

Isa. 40 : 26: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things."

In the heavens above us there are the same evidences of **pattern, order, beauty, accuracy and apparent purpose** which we see in our own world—only magnified to a breath-taking degree. Consider these wonders of the starry heavens: **The enormous sizes, weights, speeds, numbers, distances and temperatures of the billions of planets and stars. The precise calculation and co-ordination of their weights, motions, speeds, temperatures and orbits. The fine balancing of attractions and repulsions. The split-second timing. The perfect synchronisation. The clock-like regularity. All maintained in a state of harmony by constantly-operating laws and controls.**

Now let us ask again: **Could these marvels of creation have made themselves?**

3.—FOOTPRINTS OF GOD IN OUR BODIES

Exodus 4 : 11: "Who hath made man's mouth? Have not I the Lord?"

Ps. 94 : 9: "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?"

Ps. 94 : 9: "He that formed the eye, shall He not see?"

Ps. 139 : 14: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

In the human body there are the same amazing evidences of **ingenious design, coordination, adaption and creative forethought** which we see in the earth and in the heavens. Consider these wonders of the body-temple: **The living cell. The heart. The brain. The eye. The ear. The hand. The senses of touch, taste and smell. The nervous system. The digestive system. The prolonged and intricate miracle of reproduction and growth. The glands. The body's marvellous defence and healing mechanisms.**

What shall we do with these countless evidences of intelligent planning and forethought in the earth, in the heavens and in our bodies? We cannot ignore them. They demand a rational explanation. They have come into existence either by **design, or by accident.** They are the product of **God, or of chance.** There is no neutral ground.

So, let us ask, for the third time: **Could these marvels of creation have made themselves?**

Did you ever hear the story of **the watch that made itself?** It goes like this: Late one night Joe Brown woke up with an uneasy feeling that something unusual was going on in his bedroom. He lay very still, listening and wondering. Presently he heard faint scratching and clicking noises from the direction of the dressing table. Reaching for his torch, he shone the beam towards the mysterious noises . . . Joe's eyes bulged. **What seemed like a miracle was happening on top of the dressing table!** Scattered about its surface were the parts of a watch. But the curious thing was that they were not lying still. Like actors in a play, they were all dancing about as if they were alive! The case of the watch was lying face downwards, and the other parts were scrambling into the case and snuggling down into their correct positions, as if directed by some invisible intelligence!

While Joe watched, open-mouthed, the mainspring, hairspring and balance wheel jumped in, and adjusted themselves with perfect precision. Then sundry minor cogs, wheels and plates appeared, all in correct order, took their places, and lay still. Next a swarm of screws danced up, hopped in, and screwed themselves deftly and snugly into place. The back cover clicked itself on with a sharp snap. Then, with incredible ease, the whole watch flipped itself over on its back. Face, hands and glass fitted themselves expertly into position. Finally, the winding staff appeared, slid smoothly into place, gave itself a few brisk winds, and the watch began a rhythmic Tick-tick! Tick-tick! Tick-tick! . . .

Do you believe this story? It doesn't make sense, does it? Yet such a fantastic impossibility as a watch that made itself would be a small miracle, indeed, compared with an **Eye, or an Ear, or a Heart, or a Brain, or a Universe** that made itself!

*Conclusion* In the book of Hebrews, Paul sums up the evidence for God in these decisive words:

**Heb. 3 : 4: "For every house is builded by some man, but He that built all things is God."**

Honestly, now: **Can you find any fault with this conclusion?**

It is the only rational explanation for the marvels of creation which we have studied in this lesson.

### SUPPLEMENT TO "FOOTPRINTS OF GOD"

Chart No. 1, **Creation Speaks of God**, presents some of the simplest and plainest evidences of God's creative wisdom and power that are available to us in the natural world.

#### BUTTERFLY BEAUTIES

Many of the butterflies are of such breath-taking beauty that they have been called "animated flowers," "visual lyrics," or "living rainbows." Fragile, colourful, elusive, dainty, they have always had a hypnotic fascination for man. Yet, while their delicate structure and exquisite colouration are awe-inspiring, even to the naked eye, it is only under the microscope that their richest glory unfolds. Then it is seen that, in many cases, their wing-colour is not "pigmented colour," but "structural colour." Their wing-surfaces are composed of myriad, tiny, overlapping scales, like tiles on a roof, whose surfaces are grooved or "striated." Thus, each scale is a miniature spectroscopy, with the power to "refract" or "splinter" light, i.e. to break light up into its colour-components, or "spectrum." This "splintered light" registers on our eyes as vivid colour, ranging over a wide variety, and often glowing as if it were luminous, or phosphorescent. Small wonder, then, that butterflies have been called "living rainbows." The microscope shows that they are that, in very fact!

Who but God could design, create and perpetuate these "living rainbows?"

#### A BIRD'S FEATHER

Everyone who picks up a bird's flight-feather, or "pinion," holds in his hand a matchless miracle of creative engineering. It is a miracle of lightness; strength; flexibility; ingenuity and adaptability. It is composed basically of a long, hollow, tapering "shaft," or "mid-rib." Jutting from this shaft on either side are the main branches, called "barbs." These "barbs" are composed of smaller fronds, known as "barbules," and these, in turn, have rows of tiny, hook-like twigs called "barbicels," which cling tenaciously to the "barbules."

What is the purpose of this intricate structure which, when closed, is like a tight "web," or fabric, but which can open instantly, like a miniature venetian-blind, to let air through? As well as providing covering and insulation for the bird, the pinion-feather's main function is to make flight possible.

As the wings make their strong, downward-forward thrust to propel the bird, the flexible feather - web or mesh remains tightly closed, but as the wing is raised swiftly for the next downward beat, the feather-mesh automatically opens, so that resistance to the air is minimized. This rhythmic operation has been called "one of the most fantastic and ingenious 'valve-actions' in the whole of nature." Obviously, the flight-feather has been designed by a Divine Craftsman of infinite skill!

#### SNOW-CRYSTALS

Another fabulous natural wonder is the snow-crystal, whose exquisite beauty and intricacy are also revealed by the microscope. Composed of minute, frozen water-particles in the remote heights of the upper atmosphere, the snow-crystal is not a formless, haphazard, unstructured ice-shard - it is a miniature crystal cathedral of classic beauty!

The primary structure of this crystal, when fully formed, is always a hexagonal or six-pointed star, and the angles are always precise and unvarying. However, the secondary design details vary through what seems to be an almost infinite range, for no two snow-crystals, with their delicate, lace-like feathery fronds, have ever been found alike. Wilson Bentley, who, with the aid of microscope and camera, probably did more than any other man to research and popularize the snow-crystal, photographed many thousands of individual specimens - but found no two exact duplicates!

Where could this exquisite miracle of amazingly consistent, geometric design have come from - but from God?

#### BIRD MIGRATION

William Cullen Bryant, in his sensitive poem: "**To a Waterfowl**," is not the only man who has been moved to admiration and wonder by the mysterious, purposeful, orderly migrations of the birds. Few natural wonders have such power to set the imagination on fire!



Without charts, or maps, or clocks, or compasses, or sextants, or obvious navigational equipment - and apparently without schooling - the birds find their way, instinctively, over tens of thousands of miles of land or ocean, in their daring seasonal flights to feeding or breeding grounds.

Who, or what guides them with such unerring precision, and with such unfailing regularity? What uncanny powers do young birds have, whose migratory flights begin long after those of their parents, yet who, denied the opportunity for experienced guidance, follow their parents' uncharted path, and arrive unerringly at the same destination?

Scientists have many theories about these majestic migratory rhythms - the triggering of the migratory impulse; the consistent timing; the impeccable navigation - but no one really understands them. The sun; the stars; air-currents; geographical land-marks; sensitivity to the earth's magnetic fields - all have been suggested, and all could be involved, but no scientist has yet come near to solving all aspects of the complex and baffling migratory puzzle.

However, once we acknowledge an all-wise and all-powerful Creator, the mystery of migration is instantly solved.

### **BEEHIVE MARVELS**

From the dawn of time, man has been fascinated by the bee-hive. Symbol of industry, persistence, thrift, and single-minded dedication to duty, the honey-bee is an endless source of wonder to young and old. Such precision, orderliness, group-loyalty and focused, tireless effort is manifest among the bees that the hive has been called an insect "city," or an insect "civilization!"

Two phenomenal honey-bee skills that have captured the public imagination are associated with direction-finding and cell-building. Both of these operations require superlative mathematical and geometric skills, neither of which need to be learned by the honey-bee.

Direction finding - and giving - takes the form of the intriguing "waggle-dance" of the scout bee - involving an elaborate and sustained "wagging" of the abdomen while the bee is in motion on the surface of the comb. The vigour, frequency, direction and overall pattern of the "waggle-dance," especially in relation to the sun's position, conveys accurate information to the hive concerning the distance, direction, quantity and quality of the new-found nectar supply. Factors such as wind-direction and velocity, plus obstacles to be encountered, appear to be indicated by this means, also. So intricate and precise is this communicative ritual that it seems to require the employment of some of the more highly-sophisticated forms of mathematics!

An incredible degree of geometric and engineering skill is also employed in cell-designing and building. The materials, shape, size and angles of the paper-thin cell walls are such that maximum strength, lightness, capacity, durability and insulating quality are secured, yet with minimum use of building materials and hive-space.

Who taught the busy worker-bee her mathematics and geometry - and her economics?

### **A SPIDER'S WEB**

The familiar, industrious, and omnipresent spider is the artisan-extraordinary of the natural world. Not only is he a design-engineer of superlative skill in field and garden, but, in one species, he is also a marine engineer of fantastic ability!

For conventional, above-water web-building, the average spider has web-producing mechanisms and construction skills of the highest order. The familiar orb-web, whether large or small, is a miracle of complicated geometry, precise engineering and amazing tensile strength.

For unconventional, **under-water** web manufacture, the same type of production glands and mechanisms must be present - this time in the **water-spider** - but a very significant plus must be added. Instinctive abilities must now come into play that will impel and enable the spider to live in an unnatural environment. First, a closely woven bell-like "tent" of web must be built under the water, and anchored there. Second, water bubbles must be caught on the surface, and carried down and released under the "bell tent," until it is filled with air. Then the spider must set up house and rear its family in a submarine environment!

Yet the water-spider does all this with the orderliness and expertise of a professional, who carries a set of detailed, step-by-step instructions in his pocket!

#### **THE BAT'S "SONAR"**

Bats have been called: "Mystery Mammals of the Twilight." "Mammals" is the right word, for though bats can fly, they are not birds. They bring forth their young alive, and their wings are made of thin membrane. Unfeathered, they are nevertheless admirably equipped for flight. Indeed, so great is their agility in the air, that they are worthy rivals for the birds!

The element of "mystery" about the bats is related especially to their ability to fly with the utmost dexterity and confidence in complete darkness. This they do, not only in the outer world at night, but inside the earth, through miles of subterranean caverns, which they negotiate in total darkness, without collision, and with the greatest of ease!

It is only in more recent years, since the advent of sophisticated electronic devices, that much of the mystery of the bats phenomenal navigational prowess has been cleared up. It is now known that they do not need to depend to any great degree upon sight. **Bats "see" and find their way with their ears!** When in flight, they rely upon inbuilt "sonar," or "echo-location" equipment. Continually, as they fly, they are emitting high-frequency sounds, or squeaks. These sounds travel out rapidly, strike objects, and rebound. From the time it takes from emission to rebound (i.e. reception), the bat can tell how near, or how far, an adjacent object or obstacle may be.

Who built this amazing "sonar" equipment into the bat? Who endowed him with the instinctive ability to use it with such dexterity?

It could not possibly have been a slow, piece-by-piece development, over long ages of time. It had to be a complete "package" from the beginning. **To make possible the bat's survival, all parts of its complex array of precision equipment must have been fully-developed and fully-operable - from the first moment of this amazing creature's existence!**

These are just a few of the thousand marvels and mysteries of the natural world, whose only satisfying explanation is "GOD." They cannot rationally be attributed to "Chance."



## THE FIREPROOF BOOK!

*Introduction* One daring claim that the Bible makes is that **it cannot be destroyed**. This claim is made with the same finality as the claim that God is its Author. By this claim of indestructibility, the Bible makes **an irreversible committal**. It “burns its bridges” behind it. It risks its all. At this point its truth — or its false-hood — can easily be demonstrated.

**Isaiah 40:9:** “The Word of our God shall stand forever.”

**Matthew 24:35:** “My words shall not pass away.”

**John 10:35:** “The Scripture cannot be broken.”

**Hebrews 4:12:** “The Word of God is living and powerful.”

(See Chart No. 2 – *The Fireproof Book*)

*Discussion* What answer does history give to this bold claim to indestructibility?

### 1.—RUNNING THE GAUNTLET

In old American pioneer days, when a white man was captured by the Red Indians, the savage warriors would sometimes play with their victim as a cat plays with a mouse. The captive would be told that he could have his freedom if he could run between two rows of Indian braves, all of whom were poised and ready to beat him with stout sticks. This meant almost certain death, but on rare occasions a man might escape by running like the wind, or dodging like a hare. The grim ordeal was called “**running the gauntlet**.” It is a graphic picture of the hazards through which the Bible has passed during the centuries of the Christian era!

Consider a few notable examples:

**A.D. 303. Diocletian**, emperor of Pagan Rome, concentrated all the wealth and power of his empire against the Bible. Christianity was outlawed. Diocletian's persecution was probably the most devastating onslaught ever made against a single book. All meeting-places of the Christians were demolished; their property was confiscated and their Bibles committed to the flames. A systematic attempt was made to destroy every single copy of the Scriptures in existence. Death was decreed for any person who owned a copy of the Word of God. After years of ruthless persecution, in which thousands of Christians and their Bibles perished, Diocletian struck a medal to commemorate the complete destruction of the Scriptures, and erected a column of triumph bearing the boastful inscription: “EXTINCTO NOMINE CHRISTIANORUM” (The name of the Christians has been extinguished).

**A.D. 1530. The State-Church of the Middle Ages**, in the days before the beginning of the Reformation in the 16th Century, waged a relentless warfare against the free use of the Bible by the common people, in almost all parts of Europe. When her efforts to keep the Bible locked away in a dead language (Latin) proved futile, the Church did not hesitate to confiscate and burn the Book. In 1530, the Bishop of London burned William Tyndale's printed English Testaments outside St. Pauls. Tyndale himself was strangled and burned on the Continent. In the same century, Martin Luther's translations of the Scriptures into the tongue of the common German people were publicly committed to the flames.

**A.D. 1750. Voltaire**, the brilliant and witty French literary genius, was one of a group of writers who helped prepare the soil and sow the seeds of the French Revolution. Voltaire boasted that he, alone, could demolish the Bible! “**I am weary**,” he is reported to have said, “**of hearing people repeat that twelve fishermen founded Christianity. I will show the world that one Frenchman is sufficient to overthrow it!**” Voltaire was a prodigious writer. The flood of infidel works that flowed from his pen absorbed the full capacity of a printing-press. He rashly predicted that in one hundred years the Bible would have ceased to exist, except for a few copies to be found in museums!

**A.D. 1795. Thomas Paine**, the notorious English Free-thinker, fought the Bible with sarcasm and ridicule. **The Age of Reason** is one of his best-known books. This arrogant boast from page 127 of Paine's book, still finds an echo in some publications of the present day: "I have now gone through the Bible, as a man would go through a wood with an axe on his shoulder, and fell trees. Here they lie, and the priests, if they can, may replant them. They may, perhaps, stick them in the ground, but **they will never make them grow.**"

## 2.—MODERN EFFORTS TO DESTROY THE BIBLE

**A.D. 1925. Modern Atheism** perpetuates the age-old tradition of malicious opposition to the Bible. Since 1925, there has existed in New York a regularly-chartered organization whose sworn purpose is to promote Atheism in the United States. This is the "**American Association for the Advancement of Atheism.**" (otherwise known as "The 4-A's"). The following is a statement of their aims: "The 4A is here to ensure a complete job in the wrecking of religion. We offer no apology for our tactics. Religion was born of fear, reared by fraud, and kept alive by lies. Falsehood cannot be refined into truth. The supernatural does not exist. There is no God. Religion deserves no more respect than a pile of garbage. It must be destroyed." The "4A's" is but one of the many energetic groups which exist in every land for the express purpose of undermining faith in, and eventually destroying, the religion of the Bible. High schools, colleges, and universities are deliberately chosen as the special targets for such organizations. The announced purpose of one of these groups of godless militants is, "to destroy and mutilate Bibles in hotels, distributed by the Gideon Society."

**A.D. 1935. Nazi Germany**, a mortal enemy of the Bible, focused all the brains of its shrewdest thinkers, and all the resources of its vast monopoly in a prolonged attack upon Christianity and all that it stands for. Said Adolf Hitler: "Providence has ordained that I should be the greatest liberator of humanity. I am freeing man from the dirty and degrading self-mortification of a chimera called conscience and morality.... The religions are all alike, no matter what they call themselves. They have no future.... Fascism if it likes, may come to terms with the Church. So shall I. Why not? That will not prevent me from tearing up Christianity root and branch, and annihilating it in Germany... **Do you really believe the masses will ever be Christian again? Nonsense! Never again. That tale is finished. No one will ever listen to it again.**"

**A.D. 1950. International Communism**, militant, atheistic, is another sworn enemy of the Bible. It stands at the head of the forces of organized atheism today. Vladimir Lenin, high-priest of Communism, coined the slogan: "Religion is the opiate of the people." Lounatcharski, one-time Soviet Commissar of Education, stormed: "We hate Christians. Even the best of them must be regarded as our worst enemies. They preach love to one's neighbour and pity, which is contrary to our principles. Christian love is a hindrance to the development of the Revolution. Down with love for one's neighbour. What we want is hatred. We must know how to hate, for only at this price can we conquer the universe. We have done with kings of the earth; let us deal now with the kings of the skies. All religions are poison. They intoxicate and deaden the mind, the will and the conscience. A fight to the death must be declared upon religion. Our task is to destroy all kinds of religion, all kinds of morality."

**A.D. 1750 - 1980. Modern Scientific Criticism.** For the past two hundred years, the Bible has been exposed to the most sustained barrage of hostile, scholarly criticism that has ever occurred in its history. No other book has ever been subjected to such merciless dissection and analysis. Its text; its transmission; its history; its chronology; its scientific allusions; its miracles; its doctrines; its authorship; its composition; its world-view; its Christ, have all been subjected to microscopic examination by expert, critical minds.

## 3.—THE BIBLE RISES UNSCATHED FROM THE FIRE!

In their search for a symbol of immortality, men have repeatedly chosen the Phoenix - the indestructible bird of ancient mythology. From the ashes of every blazing bonfire that was built for its destruction, this legendary creature rose up again with renewed youth and vigour.

**The Phoenix belongs to the realm of fiction - but the Bible belongs to the realm of fact.** After every fiery ordeal it rises, unharmed, from the flames of prejudice and hate. It is the

most durable Book on this planet. It outlives its most implacable foes. Diocletian is dead. Voltaire and Paine are forgotten. Lenin and Hitler have followed them into the mists of oblivion. But the Bible lives. Said one astonished observer: "The Bible's obituary has been written hundreds of times, but **this Book has an uncanny habit of turning up at its own funeral!**"

In our own century, in spite of all the past and present hammer-blows of hate, the Bible has broken all records in book-production and distribution. No competitor comes within sight of its **translation into 1808 languages** (1984 total) - twice as many as in 1920 - and this number is increasing steadily. The Wycliffe Bible Translators, for example, have a staff of missionary linguists working among almost 800 different tribes, reducing their previously unwritten languages into written form, in order to give them the Bible in their own languages.

It is unrivalled, also, in sheer volume of output. Its world-circulation has now reached the staggering total of **over 36,000,000 copies (i.e. complete Bibles) per year**. That's a Bible every second! And when Scripture "portions" or "selections" are added, the total swells to **almost 500,000,000 items per year**. Indeed, if all the Bibles and portions that were printed in one recent year (1984) were gathered together and laid flat on each other, they would make a pile many times higher than Mount Everest!

**And this is the Book that Voltaire said would be extinct - a dusty, mildewed museum-relic - in one hundred years after his day!**

*Conclusion* Suppose there should come to live in our community a man who had been alive for 1900 years - nearly twice as long as Methusaleh lived! And suppose we knew of this man that he had been cast into the sea many a time, but could not be drowned. He had been thrown to the wild beasts, but they never could devour him. He had been made to drink deadly poisons of different kinds, but they never did him any harm. He had been bound with strong chains, and locked up in prisons and dungeons, but he always managed to shake off the chains and get out of the dungeons. He had often been hung till his enemies thought him dead, but when they cut him down he sprang to his feet, and walked away again, as fit and well as ever! Hundreds of times they had burnt him at the stake, till there seemed to be nothing left of him; but the fires were no sooner out than he leaped up from the ashes, as strong and vigorous as he was before. He had been shot at, and stabbed, and cut to pieces, but the pieces came together again, like little drops of quick-silver. His wounds healed up at once, and he was none the worse for all this hacking and cutting. How amazing it would be to look on such an indestructible man! Would it not be a great wonder to find him alive and unharmed after all that he had passed through? It would be a great wonder, indeed! Yet this is just the way in which the Bible has been treated. **It has been burned, and chained, and put in prison, and buried alive, and torn to pieces, and thrown into the sea, and yet it has never been destroyed.** Here it is still, the same pure and precious Bible that it was nineteen hundred years ago!

What is the secret of the Bible's immortality? There is only one rational answer: The Bible has survived the storms of the ages **because the indestructible life of God is in it**, just as it claims!



## THE EVIDENCE OF PROPHECY

*Introduction* Another of the Bible's most breath-taking claims is that **it has power to read the future.**

**Isaiah 46:9, 10:** "Declaring the end from the beginning."

**2 Peter 1:19:** "A more sure word of prophecy."

**Amos 3:7:** "God reveals His secrets to His servants the prophets."

**John 14:19:** "I have told you before it come to pass."

This is an audacious, dramatic claim, and obviously, at this point, the Bible "burns all its bridges" behind it. There is no "backing out" from a claim as emphatic and final as this. At this point, the Bible openly submits itself to a practical, historical test. If its prophecies come true, its claims to super-human authorship are thereby **vindicated**. If its prophecies fail to come true, the Bible's claims to Divine inspiration are thereby **demolished**. It is as simple as that.

(See Chart No. 3 – *The Evidence of Prophecy*)

*Discussion* To give us some conception of the magnitude and importance of the Prophetic element in Scripture, we have included, at the end of this Chapter, **A Summary of Major Bible Prophecies.**

From this larger group, we will select four outstanding prophecies, to whose exact fulfilment History gives a decisive witness.

### 1.—THE UTTER DESOLATION OF ANCIENT BABYLON

**Over one hundred details** are included in the many Bible passages which foretold the doom of Babylon, whose empire rose to the height of its glory about 600 B.C. One of the most magnificent cities of antiquity, Babylon appeared to have "everything going for it." It was built astride the Euphrates river, in the fabulously fertile Mesopotamian plain. It boasted a population of over a million people. It was surrounded by a vast and ingenious system of irrigation canals - providing an apparently inexhaustible food supply. Its legendary "Hanging Gardens" were one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. Four-horse chariots could pass abreast along the tops of its massive walls. Its ponderous gates were the pride of its inhabitants, and the astonishment of its enemies.

If ever a city seemed impregnable and indestructible, it was Babylon. Yet God's prophet, Isaiah, who lived about 200 years before Babylon's downfall, predicted its irreparable and final doom. "**Babylon,**" he wrote, "**shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah!**" (Isaiah 13:19).

Other prophecies filled out the picture of **total and irreversible desolation:**

**Isaiah 13:20:** "It shall never be inhabited." (Repeated in Jeremiah 50:13, 39).

**Isaiah 47:1, 5, 7:** "Come down, thou lady of kingdoms, and sit in the dust!"

**Jeremiah 51:26, 62:** "Thou shalt be desolate forever."

**Jeremiah 51:63, 64:** "Babylon shall sink, and not rise."

**Jeremiah 50:13:** "It shall be wholly desolate."

Not one of these prophetic specifications has failed in its fulfilment. H. V. Moreton, well known English author, is just one of a multitude of modern travellers who have visited the ruins of ancient Babylon, and marvelled at the uncanny accuracy of the Biblical prophecies:

"The ruins are sixty miles south of Baghdad," writes Moreton, in his book, "**Middle East,**" and the journey takes three to four hours. The road begins well enough, but soon becomes rough and uneven. I knew we were drawing near when we crossed a single railway track running



over the sand, and I saw a notice-board bearing, in English and Arabic, the words: Babylon Halt' ....

"The flat country stretches to the sky, featureless, bare, and arid, except to the west, where the Euphrates flows in a narrow belt of palm-trees. You see no river, but you see this line of foliage running for miles, like a green snake on the sand. Even the 'waters of Babylon' have deserted the city, for in ancient times the river ran along the west side of the Kasr, bringing with it the happy sound of water and the scent of flowers. As if obeying a command that no touch of life should remain anywhere near Babylon, the Euphrates has carved a new channel for itself and has departed, taking all life with it....

"As we wandered over the lonely mounds, silent except for the hum of the wild bee and the hornet, I thought how literally Isaiah's prophecy of the fall of Babylon has been fulfilled. **It is, indeed, overthrown as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.**" (pp 173-184).

## 2.—THE HUMILIATION AND DECAY OF ANCIENT EGYPT

One of the most glamorous and romantic names in all history is that of "**EGYPT.**" No piece of real-estate on earth is invested with more excitement, mystery, or magic. Land of the Pyramids, the Sphinx, and the Nile; home of the arts from distant antiquity; unequalled in luxury and magnificence - Egypt has continued throughout the ages as a realm of deathless wonder. But the foundation of her ancient greatness was not her military might - **It was the inexhaustible wealth of her soil.** "**The Gift of the Nile,**" and "**The Granary of the World,**" Egypt became the symbol of limitless abundance and enviable prosperity. Fat-bellied grain-ships carried Egyptian wheat and barley to all the nations of the Mediterranean sea-board. Papyrus reeds - raw materials of ancient paper - grew in abundance in the marshes of the Nile, and the "papyrus-scroll," an Egyptian invention, became one of its principal exports to the surrounding nations.

Also, in terms of natural defences, the Egyptians were uniquely favoured. On the South they were protected by the Cataracts of the Nile; on the East and West by the sands of the desert, and on the North by the sea. Both militarily and economically they seemed invincible. Nevertheless, a succession of bitter humiliations brought this once-proud nation down to the dust, so that today's Egypt is a pallid and anaemic shadow of its former magnificence.

With uncanny pre-vision, the Bible prophets foretold Egypt's descent from majesty to mediocrity. Two major characteristics mark these prophecies: (1) **DECLINE**, to the point of virtual non-entity, yet (2) **SURVIVAL** - a stubborn clinging to the tattered remnants of national existence - even at radically-reduced status! Whereas Babylon and Assyria would be **destroyed utterly and sink into oblivion, Egypt would persist as a nation** - though in age-long humiliation and weakness. From these prophecies we select the following significant details:

**Ezekiel 30:14-16.** Two of its proudest cities, **Thebes** (the Biblical "No") - the ancient capital of Egypt - and **Memphis** (the Biblical "Noph"), would be brought to ruin.

**Ezekiel 36:6, 18.** "**The pride of her power shall come down .... The pomp of her strength shall cease.**"

**Isaiah 19:7, 9.** "**The paper (papyrus) reeds shall wither and be no more .... They that work in flax (linen) shall be confounded.**" Two staple industries - built up over two millenniums of history - would collapse. (Note: One recent visitor to Egypt (1985) testifies that **the papyrus reed has virtually disappeared.** In a long journey up the Nile, he saw scarcely a trace of the legendary plant. Apart from a few small plots of cultivated papyrus - used for the manufacture of inscribed souvenirs for tourists - **he saw no more papyrus in Egypt than can be found in many botanical gardens around the world!**)

**Ezekiel 30:13.** "**No more a prince in the land of Egypt.**" Not only has Egypt's original monarchy vanished without leaving a trace, but, since the final, decisive conquest by Persia in 341 B.C., no native prince or ruler has arisen possessing power that even approaches the power of the ancient Pharaohs.

**Ezekiel 30:12.** "I will make the land waste by the hand of strangers." Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantine Greeks, Saracens, Turks, French and English have been among the long succession of "strangers" who have pillaged or ruled Egypt during the past 2,500 years. Although today (1986) Egypt has achieved political independence, it is not as a monarchy with a line of hereditary native rulers, but as a republic.

**Ezekiel 29:14, 15.** "A base kingdom .... The basest (lowliest) of kingdoms ..... They shall no more rule over the nations."

Once the luxurious and fabled home of the Pharaohs, modern Egypt has become a vast open-air museum; a dusty, sweaty show-case for the whole world; a gazing-stock for the curious of all nations. No longer a world-power - or even a great power - its best-known industry is "Tourism," and its chief claim to international recognition consists of its ponderous, time-worn tombs and monuments - mute relics of its long-departed glory!

**Take away this fabulous wealth of unique antiquarian treasures, and what significant role would modern Egypt play in world affairs?**

### 3.—THE DELAYED JUDGMENT OF ANCIENT TYRE

In the sixth century B.C., Tyre, the proud Phoenician merchant-city, was one of the wealthiest and most powerful sea-ports in the world. (For a description of Tyre's prosperity and grandeur see Ezek. 27:1-25; Isa. 23:3, 8, 11).

Situated in a strongly-fortified and strategic position, a few miles north of Palestine on the Syrian coast, Tyre was the "London of the East," the "Mistress of the Seas," and the commercial centre of the ancient world. The nearby forests of Lebanon furnished her with excellent building timber for her galleys. Ships from all nations anchored in her harbours, and she wielded an immense influence throughout Palestine, Asia Minor, and the entire Mediterranean sea-board. She fringed the larger islands and the shores of the Mediterranean with her trading stations. "Tyrian purple" - the dye used for the robes of kings and nobles - was a household-word in those days. For our modern alphabet we are largely indebted to the Phoenician merchants. The alphabet, it has been well said, was their chief export. The Phoenicians were missionaries of culture. It was their function not to create civilization, but to spread it.

Tyre flourished for three thousand years. In the time of Joshua it was a "strong city." In the days of Solomon it was one of the wonder-cities of the world. But because of its pride, avarice, and wickedness, the Lord foretold Tyre's sure destruction. Ezekiel 26:1-21 contains a marvelously-detailed prophecy of the downfall of Tyre:

(verse 3) Many nations would have a part in her destruction.

(verse 7) Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is expressly named.

(verse 9) Engines of war would break down her towers.

(verse 12) Her stones and timber would be buried in the sea.

(verse 4, 14) Even her dust would be scraped up. Her site would be made bare as the top of a rock.

(verse 5, 14) She would become a place for the spreading of fishermen's nets.

(verse 19, 20) Never to be inhabited again.

(verse 21) So completely destroyed that she would never be found again.

(verse 14) **"THOU SHALT BE BUILT NO MORE."**

The fact that spoilers of "many nations" would be involved suggests that this is a multiple prediction - containing allusions to several sieges. History shows that the prophecy was fulfilled in two main stages: first by Nebuchadnezzar, of Babylon, and later - 250 years later - by Alexander the Great, of Greece.

After a long and exhausting siege lasting thirteen years, Nebuchadnezzar captured and destroyed the City. However, no great spoil fell into his hands, for the rulers of Tyre had transported their riches to an island about half a mile out in the sea. Frustrated - and probably

disgusted -Nebuchadnezzar made no attempt to throw Tyre's ruins into the sea, or to scrape up her dust! (See Ezekiel 29:18-20)

So, for the next 250 years, the ruins of mainland Tyre stood - an enduring challenge to the accuracy of God's prophetic Word. Meanwhile, a flourishing new city grew up on the island, half a mile from the shore. Then Alexander the Great, with his invincible Greek legions, swept southward on his campaign into Egypt, in 322 B.C. He called upon the island-city to surrender. She refused, and Alexander promptly ordered his soldiers to take the ruins of the original, mainland Tyre and with them build a cause-way, 200 feet wide, from the mainland to the island-city. So urgent was the demand for materials, that **the very dust of the old city was scraped up and dumped into the sea!**

Alexander then marched his legions over the solid roadway; captured the island city, and left it half-burned, ruined, and almost depopulated. The island Tyre is now a peninsula, made by the drifting of sand against the causeway. But every vestige of the great mainland city, destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and cast into the sea by Alexander, has disappeared.

**"THOU SHALT BE BUILT NO MORE!"** said God, and these daring, forthright, final words stand as an abiding challenge to the enemies of the Bible. In spite of the natural advantages of an abundant water-supply (the nearby springs of Ras-el-Ain pour out 10,000,000 gallons of water daily), and the fertile plains stretching away to the mountains, Tyre has never been rebuilt.

#### **4.—THE AGE-LONG CRUCIFIXION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE**

The Jewish race is at once a prodigy and a tragedy. A prodigy - because it has survived the batterings of thousands of years, while its most powerful foes have dropped into oblivion. A tragedy - because its footprints through history have been stained perpetually with its own blood.

The plundered pyramids of Egypt lift their stony summits to the stars, and the Nile whispers of false gods forgotten - but the Jew remains. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon are a tumbled ruin - but the Jew remains. The palaces of the Roman Caesars lie gaunt and desolate - but the Jew remains. And yet - in every generation, and in every land - the Jew has been feared, and hated; despised and persecuted.

##### **Wherein lies the key to this baffling historical enigma?**

In the writings of Moses, God clearly foretold the turbulent political and religious history of the Jewish people, for over three thousand years ahead -from 1400 B.C. to the present. But these prophecies contain **one totally unexpected and uncanny ingredient**. The fate of the Jews would not be like the overwhelming desolation of Babylon. It would not be like the piecemeal humiliation and destruction of Tyre. Nor would it be like the slicing up of Rome's empire among a group of lesser nations. (Daniel 2:40-43) The future of the Jews was to be more like **an agonizing death-in-life — an age-long crucifixion!**

Both Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 contain detailed forecasts of the appalling consequences of turning away from God. By disease; by drought; by famine; by pestilence, an outraged nature would turn upon the disobedient Jews. By siege; by starvation; by conquest, by captivity, the human enemies of the Jews would join in the grim debauch of humiliation and degradation. In days of siege, the chosen people would turn cannibal, and eat their own children. In days of captivity, their sons and daughters would be sold into slavery. They would be scattered among the nations. They would become an astonishment; a proverb; a hissing; a byword. They would have no ease; no rest; no refuge. They would become "wanderers among the nations" (see Hosea 9:17). Jesus, in His day, predicted new dimensions of humiliation and anguish for the Jewish people (Luke 21:22-24).

And yet - incredibly - they would survive, and **maintain their distinct, national identity, through all time, as a separate people!**

Just as the Gulf Stream, in the North Atlantic, remains a "blue river in the sea" - preserving its individual quality and temperature, unmingled with the surrounding ocean - so, the Jewish people would always remain a solidarity. They would preserve the national characteristics that they had centuries ago. They would always be recognizable as **Jews!**

History contains no more baffling phenomenon than this unique example of national survival. But the transcendent marvel is this: **it was all foretold, with uncanny accuracy, thousands of years in advance!**

Small wonder, then, that a Christian witness at a European court, when challenged by his Emperor to give one incontestible proof of the truthfulness of the Bible, replied: **“The Jew, Sire! The Jew!”**

*Conclusion*      Prophecy is History written in advance, and history is simply the **echo** of the voice of prophecy!

David Hume, the notorious English skeptic, once declared: **“A fulfilled prophecy is the greatest of all miracles!”** He recognised that an authentic prophecy is a type of utterance that is obviously beyond the wisdom or power of unaided man.

Kautsch, a celebrated German critic of the Bible, confessed that after years of patiently sifting the evidence, his doubts about the trustworthiness of the Old Testament had “shrivelled up into nothingness.” When asked to name the one argument that had banished his doubts forever, he put his finger on what he called: **“The overmastering phenomenon of Prophecy!”**

No internal feature of the Bible stamps upon it more conclusively the signature of God than fulfilled prophecy. Consequently, in the presence of this “overmastering phenomenon,” we are compelled to ask: **“If God did not produce the Bible - who did? Who could?”**

\*      \*      \*

## SUPPLEMENT TO “THE EVIDENCE OF PROPHECY”

### THE PROPHETIC ELEMENT IN THE BIBLE

“Some people may have the impression that the predictive element of the Bible is small or limited, when compared with the total content of the Bible. But an investigation of the predictive material contained in Scripture shows that this is not the case. It has been suggested that out of the total of 31,124 verses of the Bible, 8,352 are predictions - 5,457 straight-forward predictions, and 2,895 typological predictions. **This means that almost 27 percent of the Bible is predictive in nature.**” (Dr. Gerhard F. Hasel)

### A SUMMARY OF MAJOR BIBLE PROPHECIES

1. **Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ’s First Advent, Ministry and Death:** Gen. 3:15; Gen. 49:10; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6, 7; Isa. 53; Isa. 61:1-3; Micah 5:2; Dan. 9:24-27.
2. **Prophecies concerning the Jews and Jerusalem:** Gen. 12:1-3; Lev. 26; Deut. 28; Matt. 24:2; Luke 21:20-24.
3. **Prophecies concerning ancient heathen rulers, nations and cities:** Pharaoh and Egypt - Gen. 41:25, 28; Cyrus - Isa. 45:1-5; Nebuchadnezzar - Dan. 4:19-33; Babylon - Isa. 13: 19-22; Tyre - Eze. 26:1-21; Sidon - Eze. 28:21-23; Egypt - Eze. 29 - 32.
4. **Prophecies concerning the rise and fall of world kingdoms:** Daniel 2, 7, 8 and 11.
5. **Prophecies concerning the Church and the Christian Age:** Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:29, 30; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4; Revelation chapters 2 and 3 (the Seven Churches); chapters 5 and 6 (the Seven Seals); chapters 8 and 9 (the Seven Trumpets); also chapters 10, 11, 12 and 14.

6. **Prophecies concerning the Great Apostasy and the Anti-Christ:** Daniel 7 and 8; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; Rev. 13 and 17.
7. **Prophecies concerning the Last Things** (Latter-day Signs; the Second Advent; the Resurrection; the Judgment; the Millennium and the End of the World): Dan. 12; Matt. 13, 24 and 25; Mark 13; Luke 17 and 21; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Thess. 4:16-18; 2 Tim. 3:1-3; James 5:1-8; 2 Peter 3; Rev. 16, 18, 19 and 20.
8. **Prophecies concerning the final triumph of righteousness, and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth:** Isa. 11, 35 and 65; Rev. 11:15-19; Rev. 21 and 22.

#### **FULFILLED PROPHECY - A PROOF OF INSPIRATION**

Prophecy is made "more sure" by its fulfilment. Fulfilled prophecy is a proof of inspiration because **the Scripture predictions of future events were uttered so long before the events took place that no mere human wisdom or foresight could have anticipated them.** Also, these predictions are so detailed, minute, and specific as to exclude the possibility that they were simply fortunate guesses.

Hundreds of predictions concerning Israel; the land of Canaan; Babylon; Assyria; Egypt; Tyre, etc., are recorded in the Bible, as well as predictions concerning numerous individual personages. So ancient, so singular, so seemingly improbable are these forecasts, and so detailed and definite are they that no unaided mortal could have devised them. **And yet they have been fulfilled by the elements, and by men who were ignorant of them, or who utterly disbelieved them, or who struggled with frantic desperation to avoid their fulfilment.** It is certain, therefore, that the Scriptures which contain them are inspired. There is no other rational explanation.

**"DESPISE NOT PROPHECYINGS. PROVE ALL THINGS;  
HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."**

(1 Thess. 5:20, 21)

## THE SPADE CONFIRMS THE BIBLE

*Introduction* Though the Bible claims to be **true from beginning to end** (Psalms 119:160), its historical accuracy has long been challenged by doubters and skeptics. As a matter of fact, **the last two hundred years have witnessed the most vigorous and sustained attacks ever made against the authority and integrity of the Bible.** These attacks have been made in the name of "Science." Yet, the same two centuries have witnessed **history's most dramatic vindication of the Bible** - also in the name of "Science." Strangely enough, God's latest champion of the truth of His Word is a most unexpected and unscientific instrument - **the spade!**

This surprising development led one discerning observer to say:  
**"I believe in the spade. It has fed the tribes of mankind. It has furnished them with water, coal, iron, and gold. And now it is giving them truth - historic truth - the mines of which have never been opened until our time."** (Oliver Wendell Holmes)

(See Chart No. 4 - *The Spade Confirms the Bible*)

*Discussion* The story of how the spade has become the latest champion of God's Word, divides into four parts:

### 1.—THE CLAIMS OF MODERN SCIENTIFIC CRITICISM

Modern attacks on the Bible date from about 1750, when European Rationalism began to flex its muscles in the days immediately before the French Revolution. Some of the principal claims of the so-called "Higher Critics" were:

- (1) That early Bible characters such as Abraham and Joseph were only legendary or mythical heroes, who never had any real historical existence.
- (2) That the Bible blundered badly when it ranked the "Hittite" nation with the power of ancient Egypt. The Hittites, claimed the critics, were at the most only a second-rate power.
- (3) That the book of Daniel does not give a true picture of the customs or history of ancient Babylon; hence it must be a fictitious story, of much later composition than it claims.
- (4) That the New Testament does not give an accurate picture of the Graeco-Roman world of the first century A.D. Therefore it, too, must have been produced much later than it claims.

A hundred and fifty years ago, it was impossible to answer these charges effectively. Reliable, ancient historical records - paralleling the Bible records - were virtually non-existent. However, due to the development of the modern science of Archaeology, the situation has dramatically changed. One by one, during the past one hundred and fifty years, the teeth of these premature criticisms have been effectively drawn - chiefly by the spade of the excavator, and the patient skill of the decipherer!

### 2.—THE BIRTH OF ARCHAEOLOGY - THE BIBLE'S LATEST CHAMPION

Archaeology — the scientific study of the material remains of the ancient past — is one of the youngest of the sciences, being only about 180 years old. It was born on the banks of the Nile in 1798, when Napoleon included a large group of French artists and scholars in his expeditionary force to Egypt. In that year the restless, curious, modern world came face to face with the faded but still majestic world of the ancient past. Napoleon's companions stood awed and wondering in the presence of mummies and monuments which rose to greet them from the dust of antiquity. Their fingers itched to unravel the story of Egypt's vanished greatness.

Many years were to pass before the scattered remnants of that story could be patiently pieced together and read, but the antiquarian fever was a road. English, German and American scholars were soon to come under its spell, and Modern Archaeology was on the way!

### 3.—THE KEYS THAT UNLOCKED THE TREASURES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

The major obstacle to the success of the Archaeologists was the language problem. Ancient Egyptian, Babylonian and Persian had not been spoken or written for over 2,000 years. They were "dead" languages. So, before modern scholars could decipher the records of the ancient world, they had to find the "keys" to these long-forgotten languages. The story of how the keys were found has all the excitement of a modern detective thriller!

The first key was the famous Rosetta Stone, which is now preserved in the British Museum. This slab of black basalt, with its neat rows of writing, was discovered at Rosetta, near the western mouth of the Nile, by a French military engineer named Broussard, in 1799. It contains one decree, promulgated in 196 B.C., and written in three languages — Egyptian picture-writing (hieroglyphics); common Egyptian (demotic); and Greek. The Greek inscription provided the clue to the other two panels. Aided by this key, scholars were enabled to unlock the priceless historical and literary treasures of the ancient Pharaohs.

The second key was the great Behistun Rock, located in Kurdistan, Northern Persia, beside the ancient road from Ecbatana to Babylon. Henry Rawlinson, a young English army officer serving in India, was the discoverer of this key. For centuries travellers had known of the peculiar inscription, carved 200 ft. up on the sheer face of this massive cliff, which juts upward 1,700 ft. out of the surrounding plain. In 1835, Rawlinson, at great personal risk, climbed the precipitous cliff-face and began to copy the inscription. Four years of the most arduous and dangerous work were required to copy the writing, and another eighteen years to decipher it. It proved to be a memorial proclamation made by Darius the Great, of Persia, and inscribed in 516 B.C. Three languages were employed — Old Persian, Elamitic and Babylonian. This key unlocked the hitherto mysterious Cuneiform (wedge-shaped) writing of ancient Babylon and Assyria.

The keys discovered, a host of European and American scholars began to delve eagerly into the long-forgotten literary treasures of the ancient world!

### 4.—HOW THE SPADE HAS CONFIRMED THE BIBLE

It would be impossible to report adequately on a century and a half of archaeological triumphs within the limits of one brief Study Guide. We will therefore concentrate on just a few of the specific discoveries that have broken the force of the criticisms mentioned in Section 1.

#### (1) **The Hittites Resurrected from Oblivion**

The Bible mentions "the Hittites" over forty times, and ranks their power with that of Egypt. But up to about 1860, the Bible record stood as the solitary witness to Hittite greatness. They are never mentioned in classical historical sources. They disappeared so completely from history that 150 years ago some critics of the Bible declared boldly that the Hittites never existed. Then, by means of Egyptian and Babylonian inscriptions, and more recently by painstaking research among the ruined Hittite cities of Asia Minor, this long-forgotten empire has been dramatically rescued from oblivion.

Fully a score of Hittite cities have been excavated since 1892, when Dr. A. H. Sayce published his revolutionary book: "**The Hittites — The Story of a Forgotten Empire.**" Dr. O. R. Gurney's more recent book: "**The Hittites,**" first published in 1952, provides a graphic and detailed account of the virtual resurrection of this ancient nation. So great has been the volume of Hittite inscriptions unearthed, that there are now 20,000 Hittite tablets in the Berlin Museum alone!

From this exciting epic of discovery, the Hittites have emerged as one of the most powerful empires of antiquity, ruling over large parts of Asia Minor and Syria, and rivalling the might of Assyria and Egypt, just as the Bible says!

#### (2) **Striking Illuminations and Confirmations of the Book of Daniel**

Many of the bricks taken from the ruins of ancient Babylon are stamped with the initials of Nebuchadnezzar, echoing the proud boast of this powerful warrior-builder-king: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?" (Dan. 4:30)

Assyrian inscriptions from the era immediately preceding the book of Daniel, prove that "The Fiery Furnace" and "The Lions' Den" were common forms of punishment meted out to rebels in those days. (Dan. 3 and 6)

The finding of the famous "Cylinder of Nabonidus" at Ur of the Chaldees, in 1854, and subsequent discoveries of a similar nature, have established the identity of Belshazzar, son of Nabonidus, as crown-prince of Babylon at the time of its downfall. Finally, in 1924, the co-regency of Nabonidus and Belshazzar, so long questioned by scholars, was confirmed by the publication of the "Persian Verse Account" which clearly states that Nabonidus "entrusted the kingship" to his eldest son. (Dan. 5)

Cuneiform tablets, found among the ruins of Babylon, dated between 595 and 570 B.C., contain ration lists of foods distributed to Jewish captives. One tablet even mentions "Jehoiachin, King of Judah," thus confirming Daniel's testimony that the Jews were indeed captives in Babylon!

### (3) Dramatic Corroboration of New Testament History

An unfriendly critic of the Book of Acts once described it as "a tissue of blunders of the worst kind." The man who probably did most to reverse such ill-considered opinions was the English scholar, Sir William Mitchell Ramsay. Beginning his investigations as a convinced and powerfully-fortified sceptic, Ramsay decided to go personally to Asia Minor and attempt to follow in the footsteps of Paul, expecting to find that the New Testament historian was mistaken at point after point. **To his astonishment, he found that Luke was invariably right!** The more closely Ramsay pursued his investigations, the more the evidence accumulated, so that Ramsay was compelled to abandon his scepticism and, after almost half a century of patient, first-hand investigation, published these personal convictions:

"The narrative (concerning Paul's visit to Athens - Acts 17) **never makes a false step** amid all the many details." (**St. Paul the Traveller and Roman Citizen**, p. 238)

"I take the view that Luke's history is **unsurpassed in regard to its trustworthiness**...you may press the words of Luke in a degree beyond any other historians, and **they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment**" (**Luke the Physician**, pp. 177, 179).

A more recent scholarly witness to the remarkable historical accuracy of the Book of Acts, is Dr. A. N. Sherwin-White, in his book, **Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament** (1963). Dr. White was a foremost British specialist in Roman history and Roman law, and his book is sprinkled with unequivocal endorsements of the Book of Acts, such as the following:

"At Philippi, when Paul is first brought before a Roman tribunal, **Acts is remarkably precise.**" (p. 101).

"In that part of Acts which is concerned with the adventures of Paul in Asia Minor and Greece, one is aware all the time of the Hellenistic and Roman setting. **The historical framework is exact. In terms of time and place the details are precise and correct.**" (p. 120).

"**For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming**....Any attempt to reject its basic historicity, **even in matters of detail**, must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted." (p. 189).

Many more scholars such as Ramsay and Sherwin-White have been obliged by the weight of evidence to write in similar vein. What a long, long way the stream of Bible knowledge has flowed in the past one hundred and fifty years!

### *Conclusion*

One immensely-significant lesson that emerges from our study of Biblical Archaeology relates to **the amazing precision with which God times His moves!**

The era of so-called "scientific criticism" of the Bible began about A.D. 1750. The era of Modern Archaeology began about A.D. 1800. **No sooner had the "epidemic" of criticism appeared, than God produced His antidote!** To meet the sophisticated scepticism of this scientific age, He has reserved an armoury of tangible, indisputable, contemporary evidence for the truthfulness of His Word, whose force and relevance increase with each passing year.





**SUPPLEMENT TO "THE SPADE CONFIRMS THE BIBLE"**

This chart presents just a few of the significant Archaeological discoveries that illuminate or confirm the Bible.

**THE ROSETTA STONE**

In August, 1799, in the little town of Rashid (Rosetta) in the Nile Delta, Egypt, French soldiers making repairs on Fort St. Julien unearthed a curious, flat, basalt stone, measuring 2 feet 4 ½ inches by 3 feet 9 inches. Its smooth face was covered with peculiar markings in some unknown language or languages, unreadable to the workmen who found it.

When scholars first saw this stone, they noted that its message was divided into three sections. The upper third was covered with the same type of unreadable markings, i.e. hieroglyphs, or picture-writing, as could be seen on the hundreds of thousands of tombs and temples all over Egypt. The second section was in demotic Egyptian, a form of "people's language" used in Egypt from about 600 B.C. to A.D. 400. The third panel was in Greek, and could easily be read by students of that language.

The Greek version revealed that this was a report of the exploits and adventures of the teen-age Ptolemy V (Epiphanes), a Pharaoh in 196 B.C. The Scholars correctly guessed that the three panels were parallel versions of the same account, but it remained for two enterprising scholars in two different countries to unlock the mystery of the forgotten writing.

Thomas Young, a physician of England, discovered that the royal names written in the Egyptian hieroglyphs were surrounded by ovals (called "cartouches"). With this as a clue, he made a beginning by identifying the sounds of six of the thirteen signs found in the royal proper names, but it was a young Frenchman who worked out the clues that finally de-coded the ancient Egyptian language.

Only nine years old when the Rosetta stone was discovered, Jean Francois Champollion had dreamed from childhood of being able to read the strange Egyptian hieroglyphs. He collected every book he could lay his hands on that had to do with ancient Egypt. By the time he was 21 years old he was a professor at the University of Grenoble, and when copies of the Rosetta-stone inscriptions appeared in France, young Champollion was among the first European scholars to examine them.

After years of painstaking labour, he was able to announce in 1822 that he had not only deciphered the inscription on the Rosetta stone, but had found the key to the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs!

**THE MOABITE STONE**

This ancient inscribed monument, also known as "The Stone of Mesha," is of unique importance because it is the only royal inscription written in Hebrew yet discovered. Originally inscribed about 847 B.C., it was found in possession of some Arab tribesmen at Dibon, east of the Dead Sea, by F. A. Klein, in 1868. The over-eager interest of Europeans caused the Arabs to destroy the stone by heating it, and dashing cold water over it, thus cracking it to pieces. Fortunately, skilled rubbings and squeezes of the inscription had previously been taken, and with the help of these the fragments were pieced together. The stone now stands, virtually intact, in the Louvre, Paris.

The monument is about 3 ½ feet in height, 2 feet wide, and 2 feet thick. It was written in the Phoenician script, which was also used by the Hebrews of this period, and differs only a little from the Biblical Hebrew. It contains a boastful inscription by Mesha, King of Moab, in which he records his successful rebellion against Omri, King of Israel (father of Ahab), after years of subjection and tribute (See 2 Kings 3:4, 5).

While it has no particular value as a "key" to ancient languages, the Moabite Stone has great significance as a direct and explicit corroboration of certain details of Old Testament history. It is the oldest Hebrew inscription of any length in existence.

### THE CYLINDER OF NABONIDUS

In Daniel chapter 5, "Belshazzar the king" is declared to be the last ruler of Babylon, on the night of its downfall. However, no pre-Christian secular historian, either Greek or Babylonian, mentioned Belshazzar. Accordingly, Biblical critics of the early 1800's declared that there was no such person. In their view, he was just the product of some pious fiction-writer's overheated imagination. Then, in 1854, Sir Henry Rawlinson discovered at Ur of the Chaldees the famous "Cylinder of Nabonidus," upon which Belshazzar's father, Nabonidus, king of Babylon, inscribed his prayer, invoking the preserving mercy of the Moon God upon himself and upon his eldest son, "**Bel-sar-ussur**" (**Belshazzar**)!

Not to be beaten, the critics promptly fell back upon a second line of defence, and now claimed that Belshazzar had most certainly never been "King" of Babylon - so the Bible was patently in error, after all! Eventually, in 1924, Sydney Smith, later supported by Professor R. P. Dougherty, produced conclusive evidence that Belshazzar was indeed King of Babylon, on a **co-regency** basis. A cuneiform tablet, now in the British Museum, tells how Nabonidus, in the third year of his reign, entrusted the kingship to his eldest son, Belshazzar. A great deal more cuneiform evidence, collected by Dougherty and published in 1929, contains many references to Belshazzar, and shows that for probably the greater part of the long co-regency of Nabonidus and his son, Nabonidus lived at Tema, in Arabia, and not at Babylon. It seems that Nabonidus had more interest in restoring ancient temples than in ruling a kingdom, so, in order to be free to pursue his antiquarian studies, he left the control of Babylon in the hands of his eldest son. So the spade demonstrated again, with emphatic finality, that the Biblical historian was **right**, after all!

### THE TELL-EL-AMARNA TABLETS

About 320 clay tablets, written in Babylonian "cuneiform" (wedge-shaped) script, were found accidentally by an Egyptian peasant woman at Tell-el-Amarna, 200 miles south of Cairo, in 1887. The earliest of these tablets appears to have been written about 1380 B.C. They proved to be a collection of urgent letters from Canaanitish vassal kings, imploring help from Pharaoh Amenhotep III, and his dreaming successor Akhnaton. Obviously, at the time, Palestine was seething with intrigue within, and under attack from without, while Egyptian power and prestige in the region was seriously on the decline. Obviously, also, the vassal kings of Canaan were abandoned to their enemies, for their appeals for help were not even answered. The supine policy of the Pharaohs left the Palestinian portion of their empire more and more a prey to any enterprising invader.

If the encroaching "HABIRU," who are repeatedly named in the Amarna letters, were indeed the **Hebrews**, as many archaeologists believe, the jittery state of Palestine would have afforded Joshua and his successors just the opportunity that was needed for the unimpeded reduction of the cities of Canaan.

### THE "DEAD-SEA SCROLLS"

No archaeological discovery of this century has caused such a sensation as the finding of the world-famous "Dead-Sea Scrolls" in 1947, and in the years that followed. Dr. W. F. Albright has described these scrolls as "the greatest manuscript find of all time."

The epic of discovery began on a Spring morning in 1947, when three young Arab goat-herds, exploring a newly-opened cave in a desert hillside at Ain Feshka, near Khirbet Qumran, close to the north-western end of the Dead Sea, in Palestine, found the first group of the long-hidden "Scrolls." This initial discovery sparked a prolonged treasure-hunt in the region and, in the years that followed, forty of these desert caves have been explored, and hundreds of additional manuscripts and fragments have been found. Many are portions of Biblical books, and some are of ancient non-Biblical writings.

What is amazing and gratifying is the fact that the ancient, hand-written text of every Old Testament book is represented in these fragments, some of which are dated by scholars as early as the first Century B.C. It is now generally agreed that many of the scrolls were hidden in the caves by Jews of the first century A.D., particularly by members of the sect known as the

"Essenes," in the period of turmoil that led up to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies in A.D. 70.

The prize exhibit among these manuscripts is the famous "Isaiah Scroll" - comprising the complete book of Isaiah - written in the Hebrew Script of the first century B.C.

Of course, our general knowledge of Bible times and events has been greatly enriched by the Dead-Sea Scrolls, but their chief contribution has been to demonstrate **the almost meticulous accuracy with which the Hebrew text of the Old Testament has been copied, and transmitted to us over thousands of years.** For example, in spite of countless intermediate copyings and handlings during the intervening centuries, our present day Hebrew text of Isaiah agrees in all major particulars with the text of the "Isaiah scroll!"



## OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS WITNESS TO CHRIST

*Introduction* Suppose an authentic, 1,000 year-old-prophecy was found, containing intimate details of the life of a famous American President.

Imagine the news-reports of this discovery reading like this: "The Smithsonian Institution announces that an ancient scroll has been found in a New Hampshire cavern, near the remains of an early Viking settlement. The scroll was sealed up in a stone jar, and has been kept in a remarkably good state of preservation. After the most rigorous scientific testing, Smithsonian archaeologists are agreed that the scroll is from the Viking period, and contains an authentic prophecy of the life and labours of Abraham Lincoln."

What a gasp of astonishment would echo around the world!

Suppose details of Lincoln's birthplace; early years of poverty; inauguration; character; achievements; popularity; opposition; betrayal; assassination, etc, were all spelled out in the scroll with remarkable fidelity - **even to the exact year, month, day and hour of the President's death!** And all this one thousand years in advance!

That news-story, of course, is fiction, but this one is fact: **THE CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST ARE SUPPORTED BY JUST SUCH A SERIES OF PREDICTIONS AS WE HAVE DESCRIBED!**

The Old Testament writings, all of them completed hundreds of years before Christ's birth, contain **over three hundred prophecies of Jesus Christ** - amounting to a remarkably detailed "biography" of the Man of Nazareth - written centuries in advance. This cumulative prophetic witness has been called "**The 'Assembly-line' of Old Testament Prophecy.**" Like an automobile - in-the-making - built up, piece-by-piece, as it passes slowly through the production plant - the image of the promised Deliverer, or 'Messiah," gradually takes shape and definition as the pages of the Old Testament are turned.

Described by one eminent scholar as "the overmastering phenomenon of Bible prophecy," **this combined prophetic testimony provides Jesus Christ with unique credentials.** No other religious leader - and no other personality in all history - ever stepped out of such an incredible background!

*(See Chart No. 5 - Old Testament Propets Witness to Christ)*

*Discussion* From the hundreds of intriguing Old Testament prophecies which focus on Jesus Christ, we select the following significant examples:

### 1.—SPOKEN PROPHECIES

**Genesis 3:15:** The promised "Seed of the woman" who would "bruise the serpent's head."

**Genesis 49:10:** The coming of "Shiloh," the "Peace-bringer."

**Numbers 24:17:** The coming of the "Star out of Jacob."

**Deuteronomy 18:18, 19:** The coming of the "Prophet," like unto Moses.

**Micah 5:2:\*** Bethlehem identified as His birthplace.

**Isaiah 7:14:** Born of a virgin. To be called "Immanuel," meaning "God with us."

**Isaiah 9:6, 7:** The Prince of Peace; The Mighty God.

**Isaiah 61:1-3:** The preaching and healing ministry of Christ.

**Isaiah 53:4-9:** The sufferings and death of Christ.

\* NOTE ON MICAH 5:2: *The amazing precision of this prophecy might easily be missed, for there were TWO "Bethlehems" in ancient Palestine - one in the north, known as "Bethlehem in Zebulun," or "Bethlehem in Galilee" (See Joshua 19:15), and one in the south, known as "Bethlehem in Judah," or "Bethlehem Ephraim" (See Judges 17:7), to distinguish it from the northern Bethlehem. The fact that the southern Bethlehem is specifically singled out in Micah 5:2 gives added significance to this remarkable prophecy.*

## 2.—ACTED PROPHECIES

**Genesis 3:21:** The coats of skins, in Eden. These Divinely-provided garments, obviously taken from slain animals, foreshadowed Christ's death, and symbolized His robe of righteousness. (Compare Revelation 3:5, 18).

**Genesis 28:12:** Jacob's mystic ladder (Compare John 1:51).

**Exodus 12:3-14:** The Passover Lamb (Compare 1 Corinthians 5:7).

**Numbers 21:9:** The Brazen Serpent (Compare John 3:14, 15).

**Numbers 20:8-11:** The Smitten Rock - "That Rock was Christ" (Compare 1 Corinthians 10:4).

**Leviticus, Chapters 1-4:** The whole Sacrificial Service of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary was a dramatized prophecy of Christ's sacrificial death and heavenly priesthood (Compare John 1:29; Hebrews 3:1; 4:14-16; 8:1, 2).

## 3.—"PEOPLE" PROPHECIES

The life-stories of several Old Testament characters contain so many points of resemblance between these men and the Redeemer, that we cannot but regard them as **typical characters - prophetic anticipations** - who fore-shadowed Christ in various aspects of His Messianic character and work. Each of these Old Testament personages is like a **living prophetic finger-post**, pointing forward to a larger, richer, future Personality.

- (1) **ABRAHAM.** Called to sacrifice his beloved son, on Mount Moriah (Genesis 22:2-12).
- (2) **MELCHIZEDEK.** Combining the functions of King and Priest. (Genesis 14:18).
- (3) **JOSEPH.** The parallels between Joseph and Jesus are almost breath-taking. Beloved of his father, Joseph is an exceptionally beautiful and upright character. He is gifted with prophetic insights. Yet he is despised, rejected and betrayed by his own brothers, and finally sold for a paltry sum. Tempted, he sins not. Falsely accused, he is condemned and imprisoned. Out of his deep shame and sorrow, he is dramatically exalted to the pinnacle of power. Sent before his kinsfolk to preserve life, he becomes the saviour of his people and of Egypt. To him every knee is ultimately bowed, including his former tormentors and betrayers, who are forgiven by him (Genesis 37-50).
- (4) **MOSES.** Condemned to death in infancy, yet miraculously spared, he becomes God's instrument of deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and the Prophet, Leader, and Lawgiver of his people. Willing to sacrifice himself for his people's salvation (Exodus 32:21, 32).
- (5) **BOAZ.** The "Kinsman-Redeemer" (Ruth 4:9, 10).
- (6) **JONAH.** Sacrificed for the salvation of the ship's crew; for three days he is carried down into the depths, and then thrown out upon the land. A typical foreshadowing of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Jonah Chapters 1 and 2. Compare Matthew 12:39, 40 and 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4).

## 4.—TIME PROPHECIES

**Genesis 49:10:** The promised "Messiah," here called "Shiloh" (meaning "Peace-bringer"), would "come" before the sceptre of rulership was finally snatched forever from the tribe of Judah. History shows that when Jesus was about twelve years of age, Archelaus, the king of Judaea, was removed by the Roman power, and replaced by Coponius, the Procurator. Thus the Kingdom of Judah, the last vestige of the greatness of Israel, was reduced to the status of a mere province of Syria. But Christ had been born in Bethlehem - "Shiloh" had come while Judah still held the sceptre, and thus the prophecy met its exact fulfilment.

**Malachi 3:1:** The Messiah, here called the "Messenger of the Covenant," would come while the Temple in Jerusalem still stood in its grandeur. Christ fulfilled this prediction, also. But, forty years after His death, the Roman soldiers under Titus destroyed that magnificent Temple, not leaving one stone upon another. (See Matthew 24:1, 2).

**Daniel 9:24-27:** The most amazing and explicit of all the time-prophecies of the Old Testament is that of the "Seventy" prophetic "weeks" - symbolizing 490 literal years - which were to reach from the Persian restoration of the Jewish nation (457 B.C.) to the appearance and death of "Messiah the Prince." When this prophecy and the annual Passover ritual are studied together, it will be seen that the precise **YEAR, MONTH, DAY, AND HOUR** of Christ's death were signified before-hand - hundreds of years in advance! **The "Seventy Weeks" prediction is the "keystone" of the arch of Messianic prophecy.** Christ Himself used this amazing prediction as the "launching pad" for His public ministry on earth! (Mark 1:15).

*Conclusion*      Imagine a house with three hundred doors and three hundred locks. The locks are so novel and so complicated that there is not a locksmith in the country who can make a key to fit any one of them. Then imagine a man who arrives on the scene with a master-key that fits all the baffling locks, and opens all the three hundred doors. Could you doubt that his was, indeed, the master-key?

As we have seen in this Study Guide, the Old Testament prophecies are like a series of baffling locks, waiting for the arrival of the Man with the master-key. **One Man - and only one, in all history - fits these uncanny predictions, and that Man is Jesus of Nazareth!**

Some of the Old Testament prophecies are sharply-focused and explicit, almost to the point of hair-line precision. Some are less-focused - more like hints, or pointers. Some are even cryptic. Some, standing alone, can be argued about. **It is their combined testimony that is so irresistible!** Like the spokes of a wheel, they all converge on One historical Figure, and the cumulative "weight of evidence" that they bring to bear in support of His claims is simply overwhelming!

"To Him give all the prophets witness" (Acts 10:43).

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27).

"We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45).





## WAS JESUS GOD?

### *Introduction* Matt. 22 : 41, 42: "What do you think of Christ?"

World opinion is divided about the true identity of Jesus Christ. He is easily the most controversial figure of history. To millions of Christians, He is God made manifest in human flesh. To millions of non-Christians, He is just an ordinary man, perhaps the best man who ever lived, but nothing more. To millions of others He is just a name, a legend, a vague, mythical figure whose identity means nothing more than that of Santa Claus.

Those who worship Jesus believe that they have the best of reasons for doing so. They are eager to share with others the evidence that has convinced them of His Deity. The purpose of this lesson is to consider some of the chief reasons why millions of Christian people believe in Jesus as their Saviour, and worship Him as their God.

### *Discussion* 1.—THE CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST

We cannot hope to exhaust His claims in one brief Bible lesson. We will therefore select just a few examples:

He claimed eternal pre-existence, and equality with God (John 17 : 5; 10 : 30).

He claimed complete freedom from personal sin (John 8 : 46).

He claimed to be the only means of saving access to God (John 14 : 6; 8 : 24; 10 : 9)

He claimed power to forgive sins against God (Mark 2 : 5-10).

He claimed power to foretell the future (John 14 : 29).

He claimed power to conquer death, and to raise the dead (John 11 : 25; 6 : 47, 51).

He claimed power to judge men, and decide their eternal destinies at the last day (Matt. 25 : 31-45).

As we consider these claims, three questions arise:

**If God were to come to earth today, what higher claims could He make?**

**How much further could He go?**

**What shall we do with these stupendous claims of Jesus Christ?**

There are only three ways in which we can classify Jesus, in view of His claims.

Either:

He was utterly **self-deceived**,

or, He was utterly **dishonest**,

or, He was utterly **truthful**.

This is by far the greatest trilemma that ever confronted the human heart. How shall we solve it?

The claims of Jesus, standing alone, are not proofs. We must therefore ask: What **evidence** is there in support of these claims?

### 2.—THE CREDENTIALS OF JESUS CHRIST

By "credentials" we mean proofs of genuineness; evidences of good faith.

When Ulysses, the ancient Greek hero, returned home in disguise after many years of wandering, he proved his identity in an instant by a single feat of incomparable strength. In the presence of his rivals, he bent with ease his own great war-bow, which had lain idle during the years of his absence, and which could not be drawn by any weaker hand.

How does Jesus Christ prove His identity as God? **By performing works that are worthy of God**—works of incomparable strength—works that are obviously beyond the wisdom and power of man!

Consider these seven credentials of Jesus:

He lived a sinless life (**Heb. 4 :15**).

He fulfilled scores of Old Testament prophecies (**Luke 24 : 25-27**).

He made predictions of His own, many of which have already been fulfilled (**Matt. 24 : 2; 14, 35**).

He performed many miraculous works, even raising the dead (**Matt. 11 : 2-5; John 11 : 43, 44**).

He rose from the dead (**Matt. 28 : 1-8; Acts 2 : 24**).

He has broken the chains of sinful habit in countless millions of lives (**II Cor. 5 : 17**).

He allowed Himself to be addressed as "God", and accepted the worship which belongs only to God (**John 20 : 28**).

As we examine these credentials of Jesus, three further questions arise:

**What better credentials could He offer?**

**If God were to come and dwell among men today, could He give more conclusive proof of His Deity?**

**Is there any other personality in all history who has a better claim to Deity than Jesus Christ?**

### 3.—THE CHALLENGE OF JESUS CHRIST

His challenge is logical, direct, winsome and personal. He says to each one of us: **"You have heard My claims. You have examined My credentials. What are you going to do with this evidence? What are you going to do with ME?"**

If Jesus was just an ordinary man, we could afford to treat Him with indifference, flippancy, or contempt. But if **He is GOD**—this changes everything! **He becomes our King!** Indifference to Him becomes treason and we owe Him the undivided worship of our hearts.

*Conclusion*     **Matt. 27 : 22: "What then shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?"**

Our eternal destiny depends upon the answer we give to this question. Pilate, the Roman governor, wrestled with it in days of old, and it challenges every man who comes face to face with Jesus Christ today.

Only two courses are open to us. We can **accept** Jesus, or we can **reject** Him. We can **crucify** Him afresh, or we can **crown** Him as the undisputed Master of our lives. There is no middle ground.

**Romans 10 : 9: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."**

## THE LIFE-CHANGING POWER OF CALVARY'S CROSS

*Introduction* Pointing to Christ, hanging on the Cross, Paul says: "**CHRIST, THE POWER OF GOD.**" (1 Corinthians 1:24)

At first reading, this may seem to represent a complete misunderstanding of the meaning of "**power**". It seems incredible that the "**POWER OF GOD**" could somehow be embodied in the Person of a penniless, crucified Jewish teacher, wrapped in the gloom of that awful day of torture and rejection. It seems unthinkable that the true image of the Omnipotent God could really be the pale figure of a broken man, dying in the dark!

Calvary looks more like the symbol of **abandonment by God** - a picture of total impotence and irreparable defeat.

And yet — **which has changed more lives?** All the wars in the world? All the threats and blusterings of military power? All the conferences; all the political speeches; all the newspaper articles? All the resolutions of all the societies under the sun — or **that one sublime deed, when God, in Jesus Christ, for love's sake, went to the Cross?**

For it is a fact of history that, by an incredible miracle of transmutation, **CHRIST'S CROSS HAS BECOME HIS THRONE!** From it, in generation after generation, He rules a spiritual empire of millions of devoted followers.

*(See Chart No. 6 – Our Sin bearer)*

What is the secret of the compelling power of the Cross? What is the reason for its drawing, melting, softening, subduing power? Why has it become an irresistible spiritual magnet for great masses of mankind?

*Discussion* Many reasons could be given, but three are outstanding:

### 1.—THE CROSS PRESENTS A NEW PICTURE OF GOD

**2 Corinthians 5:19: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."**

Calvary is God suffering, weeping, bleeding, agonizing - God stretching Himself upon a felon's cross - God the smitten Servant of His creation. Calvary is God the Reject; God the Outcast; God humiliated; God in disgrace! It is God coming so close to man that He shares his shame; accepts his handicaps, and endures his pain. It is God feeling for man; taking man's place; receiving man's punishment; enduring the consequences of man's folly and sin.

To the Greeks and Romans, the "gods" were remote and "untouchable" - preoccupied with fighting, and hunting, and lusting and feasting - totally indifferent to the needs and sufferings of ordinary men. The pagan "gods" were friends only to the strong, the successful, the beautiful, the wealthy, or the wise.

But Calvary is God taking the initiative in reconciliation with a race of rebels; God going the whole way; God paying the whole price. **Calvary is God; so incredibly disciplined; so meek; so emptied of self, that He will accept abuse and insult - shame; spitting; thorns; nails; flogging - without retaliation!**

History has many marvels, but none to compare with this!

### 2.—THE CROSS PRESENTS A NEW PICTURE OF SIN

**Romans 8:7: "The carnal mind is ENMITY AGAINST GOD, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be."**

In the light of the Cross, "SIN" is not just "ignorance," or "weakness" or "moral sag." **IT IS BRUTAL, IRON-FISTED REBELLION AGAINST GOD!**

"Sin is a raised hand; a clenched fist, and **A BLOW IN THE FACE OF GOD!**"

"Man is not an angel-in-the-making, who is lifting himself to perfection. **HE IS A REBEL WHO MUST LAY DOWN HIS ARMS!**"

According to Scripture, sin resides in the undisciplined will, that has become **PRE-OCCUPIED WITH ITSELF**, and alienated from God (Romans 6:16). Sin is an insane passion for independence; a maniacal determination to prove that the creature can "run on its own juice," without any assistance from God. **Sin is the demon-spirit that would dethrone God!**

What sin did to Christ on the Cross, is a revelation of what it would do to God - and everything God stands for - if it had a chance.

### **3.—THE CROSS PRESENTS A NEW PICTURE OF MAN**

**Luke 15:7: "Joy shall be in heaven, over ONE sinner who repents."**

Calvary is a revelation of **THE VALUE GOD PLACES UPON MAN; THE POSSIBILITIES HE SEES IN MAN, AND THE PRICE HE IS WILLING TO PAY FOR MAN'S RECLAMATION — EVEN THE WORST, THE VILEST, THE MOST DEPRAVED MAN!**

From the Cross, Christ is saying to man: "You are debased, defiled, depraved, and fallen. You are preoccupied with hating God, and hating and exploiting one another. You are a temple in ruins - the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. But I can expel those evil spirits. I can lift you, and heal you, and restore in you the image of my own beauty!"

**Calvary is a revelation of the price that God would have been willing to pay for the redemption of EVEN ONE HUMAN SOUL!**

### *Conclusion*

The story of Tokichi Ishii, a transformed Japanese murderer, is a shining example of the life-changing power of Calvary's Cross!

Tokichi Ishii was one of the most notorious and dangerous criminals of Japanese history, and the story of his conversion has been called "the strangest story in the world." It is certainly one of the outstanding religious classics of our time. The story, which consists of Ishii's own "confessions," written between his final imprisonment and his execution, was first published in English in 1923, under the title "**A Gentleman in Prison**," and he would be of cold heart and unimaginative soul who could read it without emotion. Dr. John Kelman, who wrote the foreword to the book, describes it as "the most realistic vision I have ever seen of Jesus Christ finding one of the lost." And Dr. Frank Boreham, who has woven the story of Tokichi Ishii into one of his inimitable essays, declares: "**If I knew a man who had any doubt about the reality of religion, or about the existence of God, or about the eternal Deity of Jesus Christ, I would rather hand him a copy of 'A Gentleman in Prison' than any volume of argument or of divinity that has ever been published. If 'A Gentleman in Prison' did not shatter his skepticism, nothing would.**"

The book is dedicated "**To all in every land who never had a chance.**" Ishii certainly never had. He was born in heathenism; his father was an inveterate drunkard; his mother was the daughter of a Shinto priest. Up to the time of his death he knew only two Christians, whom he met during his last imprisonment, **after he himself had avowed faith in Christ.**

Between the ages of thirteen and forty-seven, Ishii had been in prison more than ten times, and for a total of over twenty years. Stealing, burglary, prison-breaking, assault, murder, were commonplace crimes for him. He was described as "an unequalled, incomparable scoundrel." Then, suddenly, through the influence of Jesus Christ, this "human tiger" was tamed and softened, repenting of his sins and becoming a completely changed man.

After almost thirty-five years of crime, Ishii was tried for the murder of a geisha girl in a tea-house near Tokyo, and sentenced to death. Carolyn Macdonald, a Scotch missionary who was living in Tokyo at the time of Ishii's final imprisonment and trial, sent New Year gifts of food and a

New Testament to the condemned man. In his written confessions, Ishii tells of his unforgettable experience with that New Testament. Twice he picked it up, read it briefly and casually, and laid it down again. The third time, however, he chanced to read how Jesus was handed over to Pilate by His enemies, was tried unjustly, and put to death by crucifixion. "As I read this," confessed Ishii, after his conversion, "I began to think. Even I, hardened criminal that I was, thought it a shame that His enemies should have treated Him in that way. I went on, and my attention was next taken by these words: 'And Jesus said, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.' **I stopped. I was stabbed to the heart as if pierced by a five-inch nail.** What did the verse reveal to me? Shall I call it the love of the heart of Christ? Shall I call it His compassion? I do not know what to call it. I only know that, with an unspeakably grateful heart, I believed. **Through that simple sentence I was led into the whole of Christianity.**"

"I wish to speak," he says again later, "of the greatest favour of all - the power of Christ - which cannot be measured by any of our standards. I have been more than twenty years in prison since I was nineteen years of age, and during that time I have known what it meant to endure suffering. I have passed through all sorts of experiences, and have often been urged to repent of my sins. In spite of this, however, I did not repent, but became more and more hardened. And then, **by the power of that one word of Christ's, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,'** my unspeakably hardened heart was changed, and I repented of all my crimes. **Such power is not in man.**"

"Today," he writes, when death was very near, in the wonderful journal he kept all through the last days of his imprisonment, "today I am sitting in my cell with no liberty to come and go, and yet I am far more contented than in the days of my freedom. In prison, with only poor, coarse food to eat, I am more thankful than I ever was out in the world when I could get whatever food I wanted. In this narrow cell, nine feet by six, I am happier than if I were living in the largest house I ever saw. The joy of each day is very great. These things are all due to the grace and favour of Jesus."

When the morning of execution came, on August 17, 1918, Ishii met his death with remarkable serenity and fortitude. In the words of the prison chaplain: "He faced death rejoicing greatly in the grace of God, and with steadiness and quietness of heart." His written confessions are accompanied by the testimonials of Japanese prison officials who bore witness to the genuineness of his remarkable conversion.

**Truly, Tokichi Ishii had been transformed by the power of Calvary's Cross!**



## IS GOD TO BLAME FOR PAIN AND EVIL?

**Introduction** When we considered the marvels of creation which point to an all-wise and all-powerful Creator (Lesson 1), we called these evidences "The Footprints of God". In this lesson we are going to study the other side of the picture, for the world abounds with "footprints" of a vastly different kind! Consider these examples: **Fear; pain; poverty; waste; filth; ugliness; cruelty; accidents; hatred; war; disease; death.**

Are these the footprints of God? If not, whose footprints are they? And why are they present in a world that is supposed to be governed by a wise and loving God?

Does the Bible shed any light on these questions? It certainly does. It explains how evil began, why God has permitted evil, and how it will end. The Bible's answer is concentrated in two verses found in the 13th chapter of Matthew.

Verse 28: "An enemy hath done this."

Verse 39: "The enemy is the devil!"

The Bible traces all the evil in the world to a malignant, super-human personality called the Devil, or Satan, who was originally created as a perfect angel, but fell from his high position, and now lives in a state of hardened rebellion against God.

### *Discussion* 1.—THE HISTORY OF SATAN

Here is a brief summary of the Bible's history of Satan:

Lucifer created perfect (Ezek. 28:12-15).

Lucifer's heart lifted up (Ezek. 28:17).

Coveted the throne of God (Isa. 14:12-14).

Lied about God. Deceived angels (John 8:44).

War in Heaven. Lucifer cast out (Rev. 12:7-9).

Invaded this world. Usurped man's kingdom (Gen. 3:1-6; I John 5:19).

Final victory over evil promised (Gen. 3:15).

Satan's doom sealed at Calvary (John 12:31).

Great wrath in last days. Knows he has only a short time (Rev. 12:12).

Arrested and chained for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3).

Destroyed in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

### 2.—THE MYSTERY OF SATAN

The mystery of Satan can be summed up in four puzzling questions:

(a) How could a perfect, sinless angel become a devil?

**Answer:** Lucifer made himself into a devil by the wrong use of his freewill. There was no external tempter. He became his own tempter. Honoured and loved by God and his companions, with every incentive to do right and with no excuse for sinning, Lucifer chose to withdraw his affections from God and focus them upon himself. Little by little, by welcoming these selfish thoughts and repeating these selfish actions, he at length became infatuated with himself. His whole existence became self-centered instead of God-centered. He came to live in one narrow dimension—"I". Thus, by a long succession of selfish choices, Lucifer, the Archangel, debased himself into Satan, the Devil.

(b) Why didn't God make Lucifer without freewill, so that he could not sin?

**Answer:** God could have made Lucifer without freewill—like a piece of clockwork, a puppet, or a machine. In this case, Lucifer would have been incapable of choosing evil, but he would also have been incapable of choosing good. Voluntary worship and obedience, and the development of character, would have been impossible. God did not want mechanical angels, any more than we would want mechanical children. God wanted beings who could give Him spontaneous, chosen love and affection. This could be possible only among creatures endowed with freewill.



(c) **Why didn't God kill Lucifer at the very beginning of his sin?**

**Answer:** If God had done this, He would have nipped Lucifer's sin in the bud, but **He would have been misunderstood** by the other angels. No satisfying explanation of sin and its consequences could have been given to them **at that early stage**. They loved and trusted Lucifer, and his sudden and unexplained disappearance would have given rise to uneasiness, suspicion and alarm. Other angels would have asked: **"Who will be the next to disappear without explanation?"** God would have killed one rebel, but He would have aggravated the spirit of distrust and discontent. So He chose the wiser course—to give sin time to grow, like a seed, and produce its own baleful harvest. Thus Lucifer would publicly expose his true character and condemn himself.

(d) **When Satan is finally destroyed, can we be sure that sin will never rise up again?**

**Answer:** Yes, we can be absolutely sure. At the final judgment day, when Satan is about to be cast into the lake of fire, **the universe will be in a totally different position from what it was at the beginning**. Then, sin was a masked intruder—a dark, inscrutable mystery—and even God could not fully explain its nature or consequences. But at the judgment day, **the universe will have seen sin develop, mature, produce its fearful harvest, and thus unmask itself**.

Every question concerning the love and justice of God will have been finally answered. Every false accusation of Satan's will have been successfully met. Every shadow of suspicion will have been allayed. Every doubt will have been dispelled. Sin will have given birth to its own antidote—Calvary's Cross—and Calvary will have proved the monstrous cruelty of Satan, on the one hand, and the boundless love of God on the other.

**Because of this public demonstration of the true nature of sin, in stark contrast with the true nature of God, the universe will be forever secure.**

3.—**THE MASTERY OF SATAN**

One question remains to be answered—an urgent, personal question: **"What about US? Has God left us to fight the battle with Satan single-handed?"**

We have been born without option into a world where Satan is master. What chance have we got against such a crafty, super-human foe? Are we just helpless pawns on the Devil's chessboard?

No, thank God! He has provided us with a **supernatural armour** which makes us impregnable against the assaults of Satan.

**Eph. 6 : 10-17:** "The whole armour of God."

**Luke 10 : 19:** "Over all the power of the enemy."

**1 John 4 : 4:** "Greater is He that is in you."

*Conclusion* In view of what we have learned in this lesson, our deepest concern should be: **"Have we got the armour on? The whole armour? Have we availed ourselves to the full of God's provision?"**

No Christian author has written more wisely or positively on this subject of personal victory over Satan than Ellen G. White, in her well-known book, **"The Desire of Ages"**. Her words are worth memorising:

"There are Christians who think and speak altogether too much about the power of Satan. They think of their adversary, they pray about him, they talk about him, and he looms up greater and greater in their imagination. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but **thank God, we have a mighty saviour, who cast out the evil one from heaven**. Satan is pleased when we magnify his power. **Why not talk of Jesus? Why not magnify His power and His love?"** (p 493).

**Rev. 12 : 11:** "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."

## WHY JESUS CAME TO THE WORLD

*Introduction* When Adam and Eve sinned, they created a great gulf of separation between man and God. The sins of succeeding generations have widened and deepened that gulf.

**Isaiah 59:1, 2:** "Your sins have separated between you and your God" (See also Romans 5:12).

In this emergency, there were several possible solutions that God could provide for the sin problem. For example:

1. **He Could Destroy Sinners.** This would have wiped out the human race, but it would not have solved the sin problem. In fact, it would have created a far more widespread and serious problem. Angels would have asked: "**Why?**" and perplexity would have grown into fear, suspicion, distrust and deep insecurity.

2. **He could Abolish or Relax His Laws.** This would have removed the possibility of sin, but it would also have removed the possibility of goodness. There would be no absolute moral values any more. There would be no means of telling right from wrong. Truth, honesty and justice would become as changeable as the wind. Since God's law is the reflection of His character, to abolish His law would be to deny Himself - to abdicate as God. His government would become a farce.

3. **God Could Force Men to Obey Him.** He could have established a "Police-State," where obedience to His laws was secured by threats and penalties. Such coercion would have resulted in outward obedience, but it would have been only a mask - a veneer. Rebellion would have seethed even more fiercely in men's hearts.

4. **He Could Deprive Men of Free Will.** The risk of sin would thereby be eliminated, for men would become like puppets, robots, or clockwork toys, incapable of choosing either to obey or disobey. But their seeming "obedience" or "conformity" would be worthless, for it would be purely mechanical, programmed, and loveless.

5. **He Could Soften and Change Man's Attitude Towards Him.** While God could not violate man's freedom of choice, He could display His deep love for man so as to arouse his interest and win His trust. God might devise a plan of salvation so appealing, so persuasive that, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the enslaved sinner might perceive his true condition, and reach out to God for help. Such a person might come to realize that submission to God's authority is genuine freedom, in contrast to the slavery imposed by Satan and sin. Divine love might woo the sinner!

**God has chosen to take the fifth alternative, and this is the supreme reason why Jesus came to the world.** Christ's work for man's salvation is beautifully summarised in Luke 19:10: "**THE SON OF MAN HAS COME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST.**"

*Discussion* In this Study Guide, we will trace seven great steps in the saving work of Christ. We will compare His work to the rungs of a ladder reaching from earth to heaven. (See John 1:51). All the rungs in this ladder are equally indispensable - much like the stones of an arch; the piers of a bridge, the colours of a rainbow or the links of a chain. Let any one rung be neglected or removed, and the whole ladder is marred.

(See Chart No. 7 - *Jesus - the Way to Heaven*)

(1) **HE CAME** (John 1:14; Philippians 2:5-7).

His coming into the world is often called His "**INCARNATION,**" which means "**to take flesh,**" or "**to become human.**"

**Why was the Incarnation necessary?**

The Son of God laid aside His Divine powers and took human flesh to **restore the broken relationship caused by man's sin**. By so doing, he revealed the true nature of God; proved God's unquenchable love for fallen man, and provided a perfect illustration of God's ideal for Adam and his descendants. By the Incarnation He also disproved Satan's claims that the Divine law could not be kept in human flesh, and that a holy God had no option but to destroy all who had transgressed His law. Finally, the Incarnation made it possible for Christ to sympathise fully with fallen man, and to experience death on man's behalf (Heb. 2:14-18).

**(2) HE LIVED** (Hebrews 4:15; John 8:46).

Wonderful though the Incarnation was, it was not sufficient in itself to save man. It was only the first step towards a complete redemption. In order to be our "Sin-Bearer," Christ must live a human life without sin.

**Why was the Sinless Life of Jesus Necessary?**

To prove that the Law of God could be kept in human flesh, by total dependence upon Divine power.

To provide a sinless Substitute who could die in the place of guilty man.

To make it possible for Christ to impute, or credit, His life of perfect obedience to believers today.

If Christ had once yielded to temptation, He Himself would have become a sinner, standing under the condemnation of God's Law, needing a Saviour. He would have had to die for His own sins; the plan of salvation would have failed; and mankind would have been hopelessly lost.

**(3) HE DIED** (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).

The death of Christ as our Sin-Bearer is the central provision - the very heart - of the Gospel. Without the Cross, His sinless life, as an example of perfect obedience, would have only served to increase our condemnation, and would have stood as an eternal barrier between us and acceptance with God.

**Why was the Death of Jesus Necessary?**

To answer this question we must first realise **the nature and consequences of sin**.

**1 John 3:4:** "Sin is the transgression of the law."

God's law is the reflection of His character. Sin is deliberate rebellion against God. The broken law of God condemns every soul in the world to death, because everyone has transgressed God's commandments.

**Romans 6:23:** "The wages of sin is death."

Because His nature is love, God could not abandon man to perish without hope. Yet, since the Divine law is as sacred as God Himself, **only One who was equal with God could make amends for its transgression**. Such was the love of Christ for guilty man that He said: **"I cannot stand back and see them perish. I will take the full responsibility for their sin and its penalty. I will die for them!"**

**Hebrews 2:9:** "Christ tasted death for every man."

**Isaiah 53:6:** "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

God could devise no greater means of demonstrating His love, and thus winning man's trust and allegiance. It is only by love that love is awakened.

**(4) HE ROSE** (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4).

After Christ had lived for us and died for us, He must conquer death for us, and rise triumphantly from the grave.

**Why was the Resurrection of Jesus Necessary?**

By His own resurrection Jesus demonstrated His right to forgive the sins of His people and to bring them forth in triumph from the grave.

**John 14:19:** "Because I live, you shall live also."

If Christ had not risen from the dead we would still be eternally lost, in spite of His Incarnation, Sinless life and Crucifixion. Imprisoned forever in a sin-cursed world, burdened with diseased and dying bodies, we would have no prospect whatever of life beyond the grave.

**1 Cor. 15:17:** "If Christ be not raised, you are yet in your sins."

**1 Cor. 15:18:** "Those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished."

If Jesus had not risen, both His claim to personal sinlessness and to Saviourhood would have been left forever in doubt. His mission to earth would have been a total failure. He would have remained History's most baffling enigma. Mankind would have lived forever under the shadow of this mocking question-mark: "**Was Jesus really the Son of God after all?**"

**(5) HE ASCENDED** (John 20:17).

But Christ must not only rise from the dead. He must ascend to heaven. He who came from God must return to God.

**Why was the Ascension of Jesus Necessary?**

To receive the seal of divine approval upon His earthly mission.

To testify before the universe that His former place at the Father's side was His by right.

To bestow the gift of the Holy Spirit upon His waiting Church.

To guarantee our ascension to the presence of God at the last day.

To make possible the next phase of His saving work - His priesthood.

**(6) HE INTERCEDES** (Hebrews 7:25).**Why was the High Priesthood of Jesus Necessary?**

Many people ask: "**Was not Christ's death all-sufficient? Did He not cry: 'It is finished!' on the cross? How then can His work in heaven add anything to the benefits of His finished work on earth?**"

These questions introduce us to the innermost heart of present and personal salvation. By His life, death and resurrection, Jesus made **full and complete provision** for the salvation of all mankind. He established an inexhaustible fund of saving merit. There was nothing lacking in this provision. **His sacrifice was a finished and adequate sacrifice.** However, in order to qualify for its benefits, we must **individually accept** this saving provision, and its benefits must be **applied** directly to our individual lives.

By His present work in heaven Jesus is **not adding to the merit of His redeeming work on the Cross.** He is **making application** of the benefits of that redeeming work to the lives of those who come to God by Him. He does this in two ways:

- (a) **By His personal intercession**, whereby He shares with us the benefits of His sinless life and atoning death, before the throne of God (Romans 8:31, 34).
- (b) **By His gift of the Holy Spirit**, whereby He shares with us the power of His risen life, in our daily struggle with temptation (Acts 2:33; Romans 5:10; 8:13).

**(7) HE COMES AGAIN** (Hebrews 9:28).

In order to build the final "rung" in the great Ladder of Salvation, Christ must come again, to bring the long, dark night of evil to an end, and to complete the redemption of His people.

### Why is the Second Coming of Jesus Necessary?

One of the prime responsibilities of a righteous ruler and judge is that wrong should be rectified, and right vindicated **publicly**. A ruler's judgment must not only **be** just, but it must also **be seen** to be just in the eyes of all His subjects. If Jesus never returned to this world, **a million wrongs would never be righted, a million virtues would never be vindicated, and a million questions about the justice of God would never be answered.**

**Revelation 6:10:** "How long, O Lord, do you not judge and avenge?"

**Luke 18:7, 8:** "Shall not God avenge His own elect?"

By the Second Coming of Christ, God will begin the **public** exposure and condemnation of evil, and the **public** vindication of truth and righteousness.

**Matt. 25:31-34:** "When the Son of man shall come in His glory."

When Jesus comes, He will raise the dead. He will judge the world. He will destroy forever the power of Satan, sin and death. He will reverse the tragic story of Genesis 3. He will cleanse the stricken earth, and restore it to its original loveliness. Thus He will complete the great Ladder of Redemption. Then He will say to His faithful servants: **"Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"** (Matt. 25:34).

*Conclusion* Why do you think God has given **US** a chance to hear this wonderful Gospel story?

**Because He wants each of us personally, to take the step of faith that will put our feet firmly on to the Gospel Ladder!**

How do we do this? By reading our own names into the promises of God, and making a personal application of these seven great facts to our own lives. This is what it means to receive Christ as our personal Saviour.

## THREE MIRACLES OF SAVING GRACE

*Introduction*    **“For by grace you are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8, 9).**

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, once wrote: “I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I want to know one thing - the way to Heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God has written it down in a Book. Oh, give me that Book!” (**Forty-four Sermons**, preface, p 6).

This is the heart-cry of millions of men and women today - including ourselves. We are all hungry for simple, understandable teaching about the Way of Salvation.

What is God's answer?

When we studied **“Why Jesus came to the world”** (Lesson No. 9 ), we found that God's way of salvation is **through a Person - the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**John 14:6: “I am the Way”**

But how does God's “Way” operate? How does Jesus save? How does His saving work benefit us personally? This lesson is designed to answer these questions.

*Discussion*    The first work of the Spirit of God is **to convict us of sin** - John 16:8 (See Chart No. 9 **“Guilty!”**). When this work of conviction has been done, there are **three miracles of saving grace** that every sinner needs, to fit him for heaven.

- (1) **CLEANSING from the guilt of past sin.**
- (2) **POWER to overcome sin, and keep God's commandments.**
- (3) **RESCUE from a world of disease, decay and death.**

If these three needs could be met, we would have a **complete salvation**. All the ruin wrought by sin would be repaired, and man would be restored to the position from which Adam fell.

Can Jesus meet these needs? Let us open the Bible and see.

*(See Chart No. 8 – Three Miracles of Saving Grace)*

### 1.—THE FIRST MIRACLE - “IN CHRIST” (“Justification”)

**Romans 5:1: “Justified by Faith.”**

To be “JUSTIFIED” means to be **“put right” with God**; to be cleared of blame; to have one's innocence restored; to be accepted in God's sight just as if we had never sinned. This means **complete release from guilt, and restoration to peace and fellowship with God.**

**Romans 5:8: “Christ died for us.”**

**1 John 1:9: “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.”**

**Isalah 1:18: “Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow.”**

*(See Chart No. 10 – Cleansing at the Cross)*

**2 Corinthians 5:17: “If any man be IN CHRIST, he is a new creature.”**

To be “IN CHRIST” means to be **covered with His robe of righteousness**. (See Chart No. 11, **“Forgiven!”**). It means the beginning of a new, God-governed life. Just as Noah and his family were safe when they were “IN” the ark (Genesis 7:1), and the Hebrew man-slayer was safe when he was “IN” the City of Refuge (Numbers 35:9-28), so we are safe from the condemnation of God's broken Law when we are **“IN CHRIST.”**

**Romans 8:1:** "No condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

**Colossians 2:13:** "Having forgiven you all trespasses."

This release from the burden of guilt is unspeakably precious, but deep in our hearts we know that **something more than forgiveness is needed**. The **past** has been cared for, but what about the **present**, and the **future**? We need power to overcome sinful cravings and sinful habits - power to keep God's holy commandments. The Gospel would be a tragic failure if it provided **only forgiveness for the past**, and left us helpless victims of indwelling sin. What we need is a **second mighty miracle of Grace**, to set us free from sin's enslaving power!

## **2.—THE SECOND MIRACLE - "LIKE CHRIST" ("Sanctification")**

**1 Thessalonians 5:23:** "Sanctified wholly." "Preserved blameless."

"Sanctification" means "**separation unto God**," or "**setting apart for a holy use**" ("Holiness" has the same meaning, for it is translated from the same word in the original Greek). "Sanctification" is **the progressive breaking of sin's dominion in the consenting, believing life**. It is the writing of God's law in the heart, and the restoration of the lost image of God in man.

**Romans 6:14:** "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

**John 8:36:** "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."

**Hebrews 8:10:** "I will write My law in their hearts."

**2 Corinthians 7:1:** "Cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."

The Divine goal in Sanctification is **the transformation of our characters into the likeness of Christ**.

**2 Corinthians 3:18:** "Changed into the same image."

The Divine Agent in Sanctification is **the Holy Spirit**.

**Ezekiel 36:27:** "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My Statutes." (See also Ephesians 3:16, 17).

But supposing the Gospel made all this marvellous provision for forgiveness and victory, and left us **still the victims of disease and death**? Christianity would be like a bridge broken at one end. Obviously, **a third miracle of Grace is needed**, to rescue us permanently from our sin-cursed environment, and to put us forever beyond the reach of death!

## **3.—THE THIRD MIRACLE - "WITH CHRIST" ("Glorification")**

**Romans 5:2:** "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

**Romans 8:17:** "That we may be glorified together."

"Glorification" is **the miraculous and complete change from "mortality" to "immortality"** that takes place in our physical bodies when Jesus comes again.

**1 Corinthians 15:51, 52:** "Changed in the twinkling of an eye."

**1 Corinthians 15:53:** "This mortal must put on immortality."

**Philippians 3:20, 21:** Our mortal bodies changed.

**Revelation 2:7; 22:14:** Restored to the tree of life.

When this last great renovation of our physical bodies takes place at the Second Advent, **we will be fully restored to the position from which Adam fell**. In body, mind and character we will reflect the image of our Creator. We will be delivered forever from our sin-cursed environment, and restored to face-to-face communion with God. **Our salvation will be gloriously complete!** (See Romans 8:18-23).

*Conclusion* When we are sick, and call the doctor, there are three steps towards recovery: (1) **Diagnosis**; (2) **Prescription**; (3) **Application**. Each step is indispensable.

In this lesson we have learned God's **Diagnosis** of our sickness - **sin**; and we have discovered His **Remedy** for sin - **the saving power of Jesus Christ**. The third step - the **Application** - is **our part**. We must dare to **read our own names** into the promises of God. We must **take** the Gospel medicine for ourselves! **Psalms 116:13** "I will take the cup of salvation."

\* \* \*

### SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE TO CHART NO. 8

This chart, which depicts the Christian life as a series of ascending steps, is designed to illustrate what the Bible calls "**GROWTH IN GRACE**" (2 Peter 3:18). Just as there is continual growth, or progression, in normal, healthy thriving plants - so there will be **continual advancement towards maturity in the new-born, healthy Christian life**. The initial experiences of "**Conversion**," "**Forgiveness**," or "**Justification**" are not presented in the Bible as **ends** in themselves, but as **means to an end** - namely, **the developing of a Christlike character**, and the restoration of the lost image of God in the believing soul (See Lesson 12, The Fruit of the Spirit).

However, this chart is not intended to give the impression that the Christian life can be divided up into **sealed-off "compartments,"** or **segments that have no connection with each other**. The Christian life, like other forms of God-given life, is a **continuity**, an **organic unity**, from beginning to end. **God is the Author of every part; every part is 100% gift, and every part is 100% miracle**. It is like Jesus' description of a living, growing plant: "**First the blade; then the ear; after that the full corn in the ear.**" (Mark 4:28)

The ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in "Sanctification" - the progressive inward transformation of the character - has been described as "the work of a lifetime," and **this element of continuity in Sanctification is shown by the arrows on the chart**.

But it is also true that "**Justification**" **must be experienced on a continuous basis**. Through neglect, the personal realization and validity of Justification can be lost. While one act of believing puts us "in Christ," we do not **stay** "in Christ" automatically, nor are we **held** "in Christ" arbitrarily, against our will. It is imperative to note that **the benefits of Justification do not cease with our initial act of believing**. They are needed, and they continue, only as we keep on believing, throughout our entire Christian experience.

Thus, while the whole salvation-process is "**under-written**" by Christ's redemptive act on the Cross, **its benefits continue to avail for us only as we continue to "abide" in Christ**. Hence the series of arrows following "Justification."

The vital element of **perseverance** or **sustained continuity** in the Christian life is shown unmistakably in the New Testament by the consistent use of the "**present continuous**" tense, in the original Greek, when describing the moment-by-moment relationship of the Christian believer to his Lord. In scores of passages, "**Coming**" (John 6:37); "**Hearing**" (John 5:24); "**Believing**" (John 3:16); "**Taking**" (Revelation 22:17); "**Receiving**" (John 20:22); "**Walking**" (Colossians 2:6, 7); "**Continuing**" (John 8:31); "**Abiding**" (John 15:4, 5); and "**Enduring**" (Matt. 24:13), are used in the "present continuous" tense - the tense that denotes "**keeping on**" - **sustained, continuous, habitual action** - to teach the absolute necessity of Christian **perseverance**, if we are to be saved. **Nowhere does the New Testament teach that we are automatically and irreversibly "locked" into salvation by one initial act of believing**. Our continued acceptance, assurance, peace, and fruitfulness depend, not upon our **initial reception**, but upon our **sustained retention** of God's free Gift.





## THE PERSONALITY AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**Introduction** One Sunday afternoon at a seaside resort, a Christian evangelist was out on the beach, using a "Bible Bee-hive" device to explain the Gospel to a group of boys and girls. Each cardboard "Bee" that he pulled out of the model hive bore a short, printed exhortation from the Bible: "Be patient"; "Be kind"; "Be honest"; "Be truthful"; "Be sober"; "Be vigilant"; "Be pure". He must have had at least a dozen of these "Bible Bees".

As he drew them out one by one, he contrasted the wages of sin with the sure rewards of a life of virtue. After some minutes of respectful attention, a hand shot up, and an unexpected challenge came from one young listener: "Please, sir, you've told us to be patient, pure and good, but you haven't told us **HOW** to be!"

All unwittingly, that youngster had put her finger squarely upon the most baffling and urgent of all religious questions: How can we bridge the gulf between knowing the Gospel and living the Gospel?

How can the beautiful ideals of Christianity be translated into corresponding actions? How does the saving power of Christ actually enter the soul of man?

The answer is: "Through the mighty agency of the Holy Spirit."

Thank God, He does not leave us staring in baffled hopelessness at what He asks us to do. Not only does He give us the facts of the Gospel, He gives us the power to live in harmony with these facts! He does this by the gift of His Spirit. It is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that makes Christianity a dynamic, supernatural, saving religion. Let us open the Bible and learn what it teaches about the Holy Spirit.

### *Discussion* 1.—WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND WHAT IS HIS WORK?

The Spirit of God is mentioned 350 times in the Bible (88 times in the Old Testament and 262 times in the New Testament). From these we select the following facts:

**His Deity.** The Bible everywhere ascribes the attributes of God to the Holy Spirit. He is all-powerful (Luke 1 : 35). He is eternal (Heb. 9 : 14). He is everywhere present (Ps. 139 : 7-12). He knows all things (I Cor. 2 : 10, 11). Such statements could be true only of One who was God in the fullest sense.

**His Personality.** Intelligence, emotions, and will are the three essential elements of a true personality, and the Bible ascribes all of these qualities to the Holy Spirit. He "knows" (I Cor. 2 : 10, 11). He "loves" (Rom. 15 : 30). He can be "grieved" (Eph. 4 : 30). He "bears witness" (Rom. 8 : 16). He "communes" with men (II Cor. 13 : 14). In John 14, 15 and 16, Jesus applied the personal pronouns "He" and "Him" to the Holy Spirit 24 times. Such statements could never apply to a vague, impersonal influence; they could be true only of a Person.

**His Work.** He convicts of sin (John 16 : 8). He sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts (Rom. 5 : 5). He brings about the new birth (John 3 : 3-8). He guides into all truth (John 16 : 13). He gives power for life and service (Acts 1 : 8).

All the close, personal, intimate work of God upon our hearts is performed by the Holy Spirit. He is the direct touch of the warm and gentle hand of God. Every stab of conviction; every impulse towards truth and righteousness; every noble resolve; every stumbling half-step that we take towards God is prompted and empowered by Him. We could not even begin to be Christians without some work of the Spirit of God within us, and from the first stirring of spiritual life until we draw our last breath, we are wholly dependent upon Him.

To deprive our souls of the Holy Spirit would be as disastrous as to deprive the earth of its atmosphere!

**2.—WHAT RICH PROMISES DID JESUS MAKE CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT?**

On the last night before His death, Jesus had more to say about the Holy Spirit than at any other time in His ministry (see John 14, 15 and 16). These chapters contain **the concentrated essence of Jesus' message to men—the rarest and richest treasure of the New Testament.** This is saving truth in its simplest and most accessible form.

Five rich promises concerning the Holy Spirit were made by Jesus in the upper room: He would be **"Another Comforter"**—Christ's Other Self (John 14 : 16).

He would actually dwell in men—not merely with them (John 14 : 17).

He would be to the disciples **all that Jesus had been**—and more (John 14 : 16; 16 : 7).

He would take the things of Christ, and **"show," or reveal them** to men (John 16:14, 15). He would enable Jesus to live and "dwell" in His disciples (John 14:18, 23).

In these chapters Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit would forge the **last, indispensable link** in the chain of human redemption. He would lift men out of the pit of baffled impotence and despair into a **new dimension of life, power and victory.** He would place the infinite resources of heaven at every believer's immediate disposal. **Through the Holy Spirit the saving life of God would actually enter and take possession of the souls of men!**

This completes the Gospel provision. It exhausts God's resources. It empties heaven. Beyond the gift of the Holy Spirit **there is nothing more that God can do** for our salvation.

**3.—HOW IS THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK RELATED TO THE SAVING WORK OF CHRIST?**

The work of the Spirit is never in competition with, or in opposition to, the work of Christ. **The Incarnation of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost are two parts of the one glorious transaction.** The indwelling of the Spirit is the **climax and consummation** of the Incarnation; the goal of redemption in this present life; the **supreme objective** towards which the earthly work of Jesus pointed. The saving work of the Spirit of God is simply the **continuation and completion** of the saving work of Christ. This is shown by the following chart:

JESUS	THE HOLY SPIRIT
<i>Begins the Salvation process</i>	<i>Continues and completes the Salvation process</i>
<i>God dwelling WITH men</i>	<i>God dwelling IN men</i>
<i>Handicapped by a human body</i>	<i>Not handicapped by a human body</i>
<i>Present only in one place at one time</i>	<i>Present everywhere at all times</i>
<i>Accessible to a few people only, in one land, in one generation</i>	<i>Accessible to all people, in all lands, in all generations</i>
<i>The PATTERN for victorious living</i>	<i>The POWER for victorious living</i>

From this comparison it is evident that the Christian life is something far more than a valiant struggle on our part to "build a Christlike character", brick by brick, in the energies of the flesh. It is more than a mere humanistic striving to "be good". It is more than a strenuous effort to "imitate the beauty of Christ". **It is the reproduction within us of His Divine character, by the superhuman energy of the Holy Spirit!**

**Eph. 3 : 16, 17: "Strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts."**

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to take the **facts** of the Gospel and translate them into **living deeds**. He makes the saving life and power of Christ directly available to men. Christ's work during His incarnation was the work of **provision**. As the Great Physician, He **prescribed** the Gospel medicine and **prepared** it. The Holy Spirit's work is the work of **application**. He is like the gentle Nurse who pours the Gospel medicine into a spoon and actually **administers** it!

S. D. Gordon expresses the same truth in this picturesque way: "**The Lord Jesus draws a cheque for my use. The Holy Spirit cashes the cheque and puts the money into my hands!**" (*Quiet Talks on Power*, p 64).

#### 4.—WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT MAKE IN OUR LIVES?

The difference can best be seen by studying the lives of those who have experienced His power. For example, Christ's disciples, before receiving the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2 : 1-4), were a group of cowardly, quarrelsome, defeated, despairing men. After Pentecost they were united, enthusiastic, bold, invincible. This dramatic change in the mood of the disciples is like **moving out of winter into spring!** The early chapters of the book of Acts are alive with buoyant phrases such as: "**Great joy**" (Acts 2 : 46; 5 : 41; 8 : 8; 13 : 52); **Great "boldness"** (4 : 13, 20, 29, 31); "**Great power**" (4 : 33); "**Great grace**" (4 : 33); and "**Great wonders**" (6 : 8). The indwelling and possession of the Spirit of God will produce the same results in our lives today!

Says Ellen G. White: "The work of the Spirit upon the soul will reveal itself in every act of him who has felt its saving power. When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility and peace take the place of anger, envy and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven" (*Desire of Ages*, pp 172, 173).

*(See Study Guide No. 12 – The Fruit of the Spirit)*

#### 5.—HOW DO WE RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

This is by far the **most critical point** in our personal knowledge of the Gospel! It is at the point of **their application to human life** that all our theories of Christianity must ultimately be tested.

Whilst the New Testament contains no neat, cut-and-dried formula, it does reveal a **pattern**. It shows that the method of receiving the Holy Spirit follows much the same course as what we call "**falling in love**". As a matter of fact, someone has aptly described the Christian life as "**a long falling in love with God**".

How do we "fall in love" on the human level?

Love begins with **mutual attraction**—a subtle magnetism; a deep, persistent "ache" for the society of one other person.

The second step is a **drawing near**. Nearness is the soul of love.

Nearness leads to **mutual self-surrender**. Nothing has been scrupulously weighed out or measured, but the barriers of reserve have been taken down, heart has been given to heart, and each knows that he or she belongs to the other person.

Out of this self-surrender **trust** emerges. Trust becomes the medium through which life and thought, ideals and enthusiasms, hopes and dreams and confidences can be communicated to each other.

Finally, trust develops into a **programme of continual adjustment**. The ultimate proof of love is a **willingness to "put self aside" on a life-long basis**, and "make room" habitually, for the wishes, tastes and preferences of the loved one.

These five stages can be traced in the experience of the men and women who passed through the life-changing miracle of Pentecost.

**Mutual Attraction.** The desire for God, planted and nurtured by Jesus, had become an overmastering obsession.

They were steadfastly in prayer for many days. Prayer brought a **drawing near to God.**

By that nearness, sin was unsparingly exposed. They found themselves renouncing one cherished indulgence after another until **self-surrender** was complete.

Out of that self-surrender came increasing **trust**; a trust that ventured all, and claimed all. Faith closed the circuit and became the medium whereby God and man were fused into one. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2 : 4).

Trust then merged into a **programme of continual adjustment.** From henceforth the Holy Spirit was consulted **first** in all areas of life, and His counsel was **obeyed.** "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts 15 : 28), was the phrase used to express the attitude of habitual deference to His wishes. Thus the will of man was married to the will of God, and out of this blending of the human and the Divine, there poured forth a torrent of winsome and irresistible goodness that changed the world!

*Conclusion* If we will follow the same pattern today, we will experience the same results. Says Ellen G. White: "There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, **putting self aside, makes room** in his heart for the working of the Holy Spirit, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God" (*Desire of Ages*, p 250).

## THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

*Introduction* When a farmer ploughs his field, and sows and fertilizes his seed, he has a definite goal in mind. He is supremely interested in the **harvest**. He bends every effort, and spares no expense, to secure a "bumper crop." Also, he is interested in **quality**, as well as quantity.

So, in the Bible, God is repeatedly pictured as the Divine "Husbandman," or Farmer (James 5:7). Over long centuries of time He, too, has prepared His field - the human race, and sowed His seed - the Word of God. He has watered it, and tended it - all with a view to the final harvest. All the vast and costly machinery of Redemption; all the pain and anguish of Gethsemane and Calvary; all the blood, the sweat, the tears, have been spent to achieve this coveted goal!

And God, too, is interested in quality. **He longs to see His own beautiful character-qualities mirrored in His people.** In the beginning, before man sinned, he was made "in the image of God" - capable of reflecting the beauty of God, like a clean, unblemished mirror (Genesis 1:26, 27). God's supreme objective in our salvation is to see that "image" restored (Romans 8:29; Galatians 1:15, 16; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

**This is the ultimate focal point - the final goal - of God's saving plan!**

To help keep this shining goal ever before us, and to pin-point the means of its achievement, God has given us a detailed picture of **what human life will be like - in terms of inward character and outward conduct - when the beautiful "Image of God" is restored.** This picture is drawn for us in Galatians 5:22, 23, where the "Fruit of the Spirit" is described:

**"BUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE, LONGSUFFERING, GENTLENESS, GOODNESS, FAITH, MEEKNESS, TEMPERANCE."**

*(See Chart No. 12 - The Fruit of the Spirit)*

"Fruit" is used here in the singular, to describe the "**fruitage**," or "**product**," or "**yield**," of the Holy Spirit's unobstructed working in surrendered human lives. Some modern versions read: "The **harvest** of the Spirit" - that which naturally appears in the life when the Holy Spirit has full control. The "fruit," or "harvest," of the Spirit is therefore **not the product of human power at all, but of a power that originates wholly outside of man.** This "Fruit" is not earned or achieved by us, but is **reproduced in us** - with our consent, of course - by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 36:27; Ephesians 3:16-19).

There is an ageless lustre about these beautiful character-qualities. Like a cluster of heavenly jewels, they belong to a better world than this. Merely to articulate them brings a hush over the heart.

*Discussion* As we ponder the "fruit of the Spirit" and our own relationship to it, three questions arise:

### 1.—WHY DOES THIS "FRUIT" MEAN SO MUCH TO GOD?

Because these are the **essential qualities of His own character.** They are the basic elements of His personal "value-system." These are His dearest treasures - shining, pearl-like threads from the fabric of His own innermost being. Galatians 5:22, 23 is a **photograph of the heart of God!**

And when you come to think about it, these are the only qualities that will last forever. They are the only qualities that **deserve** to last for ever. They are the only things that we have known in this world that God can touch with the dew of immortality. They will survive "the crash of matter, and the wreck of worlds."

## 2.—WHY DOES THIS “FRUIT” MEAN SO MUCH TO US?

Because, as Roy Hession so pointedly says: “The things that God is most concerned about are our coldness of heart concerning Himself, and our proud, unbroken natures.” Then he thrusts the point of the scalpel right home: “That is why there is scarcely a church; a mission station, or a committee undertaking a special piece of service for God, **that is without an unresolved problem of personal relationships eating out its heart, and thwarting its progress.**”

“This is because Christian service gives us opportunities of leadership and position that we could not attain in the secular world, and we quickly fall into pride, self-seeking, and ambition. With these things hidden in our hearts, we have only to work alongside others, and we find resentment, hardness, criticism, jealousy, and frustration issuing from our hearts. We think we are working for God, but the test of how little of our service is for Him is revealed by our resentment or self-pity, when the actions of others, or circumstances, or ill-health take it from us!”

**“In this condition,”** concludes Hession, **“we are trying to give to others an answer which we have not truly and deeply found for ourselves.”**

Galatians 5:22, 23 contains that answer. It is the ultimate formula for success in human relationships. Let these hallowed qualities be welcomed and enshrined in human hearts, and lived out in homes and churches, and schools, and factories, and heaven will have come to earth!

The Bible contains no more searching moral challenge to our individual consciences than this. **It is at this point - the point of their application to everyday human life - that all of our beautiful theories of the Christian gospel must ultimately be tested.** Hence the third question in our examination of the “fruit” of the Spirit, is the most personal, and the most critical:

## 3.—HOW CAN THESE BEAUTIFUL CHARACTER-QUALITIES BE REPRODUCED IN ORDINARY HUMAN LIVES LIKE OURS?

The answer is: **By a continual miracle of grace and power - on God's part, and a continual welcoming of that miracle - on our part.** The Bible teaches that there can be no “fruit” without antecedent life — in this case, **THE VERY LIFE OF GOD!** Let this vitalizing, energizing, invincible life of God be communicated to believing men, on an uninterrupted basis, and there is no limit to the beauty, strength, and victory that may be cultivated in the soul!

This was demonstrated in the earthly life of Jesus Christ. He displayed the beautiful “fruit of the Spirit” in a body of human flesh. And He took pains to explain, for our benefit, exactly how this miracle happened. **“I can of My own self do nothing,”** He said (John 5:30), **“The Father, who dwells in Me, He does the works”** (John 14:10).

In the days of His flesh, Jesus laid aside the independent exercise of His Divine powers, accepted our limitations, and drew on no spiritual resources that are not freely and abundantly available to us!

The testimony of Scripture is unanimous on this matter of how the “fruit of the Spirit” is produced:

**John 15:4:** “The branch cannot bear fruit of itself.”

**John 15:5:** “Without Me you can do nothing.”

**Philippians 2:13:** “It is God who works in you, both to will and to do His good pleasure.”

**Ephesians 3:16:** “Strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.”

**Galatians 2:20:** “Christ lives in me.”

**Philippians 4:13:** “I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.”

**Ephesians 3:19:** “Filled with all the fulness of God.”

*Conclusion*

As in Nature, so in Grace. How does the inert and helpless seed grow into the stripling tree? And how does the tree bear fruit? Not by striving and struggling - but by relaxing. Not by noisy demonstrations, or stern self-discipline, or perspiring toil. But by **yielding** - yielding continuously to the friendship of soil, and sun, and rain, and air!

In one of his marvellous books, Arthur Maxwell gives this graphic explanation of how the "Fruit of the Spirit" is produced:

"In every forest, there are usually a few trees that retain some of their leaves throughout the winter. Storms may rage; gales may blow; torrents of rain may fall; but still the leaves remain. You may take a stick and beat the branches with all your might, but you will not be able to dislodge them. But let a few weeks pass. LET SPRING COME! Some fine morning you will discover that the tree is bare. In a single night, every leaf has fallen to the ground!

"Why? **THE SAP HAS RISEN!** That's all. Life is flowing through the tree once more. Rushing up like a torrent from the roots, it is surging out into the farthestmost twigs with a power that makes all things new, causing a million lovely leaves to appear, and cover the naked branches with verdant beauty.

"Thus it is with the God-filled life. Without the aid of the Holy Spirit, you could wrestle with sin for a lifetime without success. But let Him flow in! Let the life of God rise like sap in a tree, and radiate through every part of your being! Instantly, old besetting sins will drop away. Conscience will awake. The will, now under Divine control, will express itself in a thousand gracious words and deeds."

Such is the new, God-ruled life the Bible portrays, and that God says you may live. You may not understand all its mysteries. He doesn't expect you to. All He asks is that you believe His promise, and accept His offer!





## THE ROOTS OF THE HEALTHY CHRISTIAN LIFE

*Introduction* A tree-lover once made the shrewd observation: **“A TREE IS A MOST WONDERFUL INVENTION, ONLY IT IS STANDING ON ITS HEAD!”**

Obviously, he was referring to the massive **root-system** which, though underground and out of sight, is so indispensable to the life, stability, and fruitfulness of a tree!

Paul, in the book of Colossians, reminds us that **no Christian believer - whether newly-born or mature - can afford to neglect his root-life.** If he is to be a fruitful and durable witness for Christ, his own faith must constantly be nourished and stabilized by strong and vigorous roots.

**“AS YOU HAVE THEREFORE RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, SO WALK IN HIM, ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN HIM, AND ESTABLISHED IN THE FAITH, AS YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT, ABOUNDING THEREIN WITH THANKSGIVING.”** (Colossians 2:6, 7)

*Discussion* The “roots” of the Christian life do not function by some magical process. **They must be diligently cultivated.** Though God is invisible and intangible, there are three concrete **“tangibles”** that He has appointed, to help to make Him more real to us. These are **three established religious habits**, or “exercises,” whereby we maintain spiritual health and vigour. **Our success, or failure, in the Christian life depends, to a great degree, upon the way we order our priorities in these three areas.** Just as we need food, drink, and exercise - on a regular basis - in order to maintain physical life and health at “peak-efficiency,” so do we need these three vital, God-appointed “Roots” to give strength and tone to our spiritual life.

*(See Chart No. 13 - The Roots of the Healthy Christian Life)*

### 1.—THE FIRST “ROOT” - PRAYER

**“Pray without ceasing”** (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Prayer has been described as **“The Breath of the soul”** and, for the healthy, virile Christian, it is as spontaneous and indispensable as breathing. As our physical bodies die quickly without **air**, so do our souls die quickly without **prayer**.

The Christian, for as long as he lives in this fallen world, is much like a deep-sea diver - immersed in an alien, hostile environment. **Prayer is the all-important “Life-line” that connects him with heaven!**

But prayer is not an automatic, self-regulating, mechanical exercise. It is not an arrangement where we play a passive role. God does not operate the prayer “Life-line” for us. **He leaves the controls of the “Life-line” in our hands.** By our own practice - or by our own neglect - of prayer, we regulate the supply of life-giving, spiritual “air” that comes to us!

Prayer, in its simplest form, means to cease all resistance; to abandon all self-dependence, and to **give God access to our needs.** That's just like breathing, isn't it? The air doesn't have to be forced or pumped into our lungs. It is there waiting - actually pressing - to come in! Even so, **to pray, in the Biblical sense, is to let God in -** to give Him permission to employ His omnipotent powers for the alleviation of our distress.

To pray is to open the heart's door and admit God. And this requires no human strength. It requires only the consent of our wills. Will we give God access - complete access - to our needs? That is the one great question to be settled in connection with prayer.

Prayer is something deeper than words. It is present in the soul before it has been formulated into words. Prayer is first of all a condition of our hearts; an attitude of our minds. **It is a silent admission of our helplessness and extremity.** It is the bowing of our wills in total submission to God.

God has designed prayer so that the weakest and most destitute among us may use it best. It is not our prayers that move God to save us. He is moved by His own great love. **Our acknowledged helplessness simply admits Him, and gives Him opportunity to grapple with the problems that exhaust and baffle us!**

## 2.—THE SECOND “ROOT” - BIBLE STUDY

**“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).**

Regular Bible study is one of the most urgent and vital means of soul-culture. It is one of the three “tangibles,” or “means of grace” that help to make God more real - more personal - to us.

If prayer is the “Breath” of our souls, **Bible study is our spiritual “Food and Drink.”** Both of these “roots” are equally indispensable.

As with prayer, however, **we have conscious and complete control over the time and effort we put into Bible study.** We ourselves determine the rewards that we derive from this exercise. We get out of Bible-study in direct proportion to what we put in. **Bible reading is not an automatic, involuntary, magical function for the Christian.** It is not arbitrarily dictated, programmed, or miraculously enforced. As far as this indispensable “root” is concerned, the success - or the failure - of the Christian is also **in his own hands.**

The systematic memorization of Scripture is one of the most beneficial forms of soul-nourishment. One dedicated Christian leader was recently heard to say, concerning his Bible: **“I want to know every word in this Book, before I die!”**

But no one else can do our in-depth Bible study for us - just as no one else can eat for us, or breathe for us. We are to build our convictions of Biblical truth for ourselves - as we are to answer for ourselves before God.

If we neglect personal, frequent Bible reading, we pay the inevitable price in spiritual anaemia, starvation, and stagnation. Spiritual realities lose their relevance and clarity for us, and inevitably fade.

## 3.—THE THIRD “ROOT” - SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

**“Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you.” (Mark 5:19)**

God’s message of salvation never becomes so precious or so meaningful as it does when we attempt to pass it on to others. That is one of the most well-established “laws” of the Christian life.

**If Prayer is the Christian’s vital “BREATH,” and Bible-reading is his “FOOD,” then Witnessing is his “EXERCISE!”**

The very first impulse of the renewed heart is to win others, also, to the Saviour. A Christian who is not making other Christians is as much a contradiction as a fire that gives no warmth, or a candle that gives no light. **We nourish and preserve our Christian faith by giving it away!**

How do we go about this work of sharing Christ? Where do we begin? There is no formal, stereotyped pattern, relative to time and place. Opportunities often come unexpectedly. But there is one, sovereign, “sure-fire” method, that even the most inexperienced Christian witness can use. It can be expressed in four words: **“TELL YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE!”**

We are to tell **what we, ourselves, have seen, and heard, and felt, of the transforming and enabling grace of God.** If we have been following Jesus, step by step, we will have something right to the point to say concerning the way He has led and helped us. We can tell how we, ourselves, have tested His promises, and found them true. And this is the witness for which our Lord calls, and for want of which the world is perishing.

*Conclusion* Someone has imagined a scene that may have taken place soon after Jesus went back to heaven. This writer pictured the Master walking down the golden street one day, arm in arm with Gabriel. The two are talking together intently, earnestly. Gabriel is saying:

“Master, you died for the whole world down there, didn’t you?”

“Yes.”

“You must have suffered terribly,” with an earnest look into the great face with its unremovable marks.

“Yes,” again comes the answer in that wondrous voice, very quiet, but full of the deepest feeling.

“And do they all know about it?”

“O no! Only a few in Palestine know about it so far.”

“Well, Master, **what’s your plan?** What have you done about telling the people you died for, that you **have** died for them? What’s your plan?”

“Well,” the Master answers, “I have asked Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, and some more of them down there just to make it the business of their lives to tell others, and the others are to tell others, and the others others, and yet others, and still others, until the last man in the farthest circle has heard the story and has felt the thrilling, transforming power of it.”

But Gabriel knows us folk down here pretty well. He has had more than one contact with the earth. He knows the kind of stuff that is in us. And he answers, with a sort of hesitating reluctance, as though he can see difficulties in the working of the plan. “Yes — but — suppose Peter fails. Suppose after a while John simply does not tell others. Suppose their descendents, their successors away off in the twentieth century, get so busy about other things — some of them proper things, some maybe not so proper — that they do not tell others, what then?”

And back comes that quiet, wondrous voice of Jesus, “**Gabriel, I haven’t made any other plans; I’m counting on them!**”



## GOD'S WINDOW INTO THE FUTURE

*Introduction* A famous English author once said: "A silent heaven is the greatest mystery of existence."

Why is God silent? Is He indifferent to human needs and sorrows? Will He remain silent forever? Or will He one day break the silence, burst in with awesome majesty upon the human scene, and actually do something to bring the long reign of evil to an end?

The Bible answers: God will break the silence. He will intervene. He has vast and wonderful plans in mind for the future of this planet. These plans are revealed in Daniel, chapter 2. This prophecy has been called: "God's Window into the Future". In this lesson we will take a look through this amazing prophetic window.

### *Discussion* 1.—NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S FORGOTTEN DREAM (vv 1-6)

Nebuchadnezzar II was the greatest king of the Second Babylonian Empire. He brought the power of ancient Babylon to the pinnacle of its glory, about 600 B.C. Daniel was a young Hebrew captive in Babylon, a worshipper of the true God, who had already earned a reputation for great wisdom (see Daniel 1). Verse 29 shows that before Nebuchadnezzar fell asleep on the night of his dream, he had been worrying about the future of his kingdom. This was probably the reason why he was so anxious to recall the dream. It might contain some kind of key to the future!

### 2.—THE FAILURE OF BABYLON'S WISE MEN (vv 7-13)

These men were members of a guild of magicians, soothsayers and astrologers, who claimed to be in direct contact with the Babylonian gods. This explains why Nebuchadnezzar became so angry with them. When put to the test, they confessed that they did not have contact with the gods, after all, so their hypocrisy was openly unmasked (v 11).

Because of his reputation for wisdom, Daniel was evidently classed among Babylon's "wise men". Therefore, he, too, was involved in the death decree.

### 3.—THE DREAM AND ITS MEANING REVEALED TO DANIEL (vv 14-30; 31-35)

Note the simplicity and childlike faith of Daniel and his companions. In their extremity they got down on their knees in an old-fashioned prayer meeting. And God heard their prayer. He will do the same for us today if we approach Him with Daniel's simple faith.

Note also the references to "the latter days" (v 28); "hereafter" (v 29) and "what shall come to pass" (v 29). God took the troubled mind of Nebuchadnezzar, filled with anxious thoughts about the future of his kingdom, and made it a channel through which to reveal the future history of the world!

### 4.—GOD'S WINDOW INTO THE FUTURE (vv 36-43)

A Divine Hand now turns the pages of world history in advance. The ages yet to be burst wide open before Daniel's astonished eyes. These eight amazing verses, containing only 213 words, foretell the major political changes in the world's future for 2,500 years.

(See Chart No. 14—The Great Image of Daniel 2)

Head of Gold (vv 37, 38)	BABYLON	605 B.C.—539 B.C.
Breast and Arms of Silver (v 39)	MEDO-PERSIA	539 B.C.—331 B.C.
Thighs of Brass (v 39)	GREECE	331 B.C.—168 B.C.
Legs of Iron (v 40)	ROME	168 B.C.—A.D. 476
Feet of Iron and Clay (vv 41-43)	DIVIDED NATIONS OF WESTERN EUROPE	A.D. 476—Second Advent

### 5.—ROME DIVIDED INTO FRAGMENTS (vv 41-43)

(See Chart No. 15—Map of European Kingdoms)

Whilst the year A.D. 476 has commonly been given for the downfall of Imperial Rome, the disintegration of the Empire was actually a long-drawn-out process which lasted for over 200 years. Between A.D. 350 and 550, Rome's territories were penetrated by successive hordes of Germanic invaders. Some of these barbarian tribes passed quickly into oblivion, leaving scarcely a trace. Others succeeded in carving out more definite and permanent territories from the body of the prostrate Empire. **Our map shows the approximate location of ten of the more representative and permanent of these barbarian kingdoms.** However, boundaries were continually fluctuating, and no single still map can give an accurate picture of the rapid succession of changes during this period of vast political upheaval. An adequate portrayal of the partition of the Roman Empire would require a motion picture of the events of two centuries.

The following chart lists the original kingdoms and their modern successors:

Anglo-Saxons .....	England	Visigoths .....	Spain
Franks .....	France	Suevi .....	Portugal
Alemanni .....	Germany	Ostrogoths .....	Disappeared from history
Burgundians .....	Switzerland	Vandals .....	Disappeared from history
Lombards .....	Italy	Heruli .....	Disappeared from history

**6.—ATTEMPTS TO CREATE A UNITED EUROPE (vv 42, 43)**

The Roman Empire has been described as "History's 'Humpty Dumpty' ". After Rome's downfall in A.D. 476, "all the king's horses and all the king's men"—the warriors and diplomats of fifteen centuries—have failed to "put Humpty Dumpty together again." Six notable rulers who have tried vainly to unite Europe were:

Charlemagne (of the Franks) ...	8th century	Napoleon (of France) .....	19th century
Charles V (of Spain) .....	16th century	Kaiser Wilhelm (of Germany)	20th century
Louis XIV (of France) .....	18th century	Adolf Hitler (of Germany) .....	20th century

Repeated efforts have also been made to weld the fragments of Europe by inter-marriage between ruling families, especially in the period between 1850 and 1914. These, too, have failed. Says historian Charles Downer Hazen: "Europe has always refused to be dominated by a single nation or a single man. It has run the risk several times in its history of passing under such a yoke, but it always, in the end, succeeded in escaping it" (*Modern European History*, p 229).

Why have all past efforts to unite Europe failed? **Because men have attempted to do what God has said never will be done!**

"The kingdom shall be divided" (v 41).

"They shall not cleave [cling, adhere] one to another" (v 43).

**7.—THE CLIMAX OF HISTORY—GOD STEPS IN (vv 44, 45)**

(See Chart No. 16—Stone Descending on Feet of Image)

For centuries the prayer, "Thy Kingdom Come", has been uttered by the lips of millions (see Matt. 6 : 10). Here is God's dramatic answer!

When this prayer is answered, the long, dark night of tragedy and sorrow will end forever. Time will melt into eternity. Heaven will touch earth in healing and beauty. Man's dream of eternal peace and security will be realised at last!

*Conclusion*

Before we conclude our study of Daniel 2, let us **put ourselves** into the prophetic picture.

**Why do you think God has given US an opportunity to hear these things?** Is it just an accident? Just a freak of chance?

Ah, no. This question was asked of a young Australian couple at the close of a Bible lesson like this. After some moments of thoughtful silence, the young woman replied: "I suppose it is because **He wants us!**"

He does indeed! And it is wonderful to be **wanted**—especially by **God!**

## THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

*Introduction* Whenever the subject of the Second Advent comes up for discussion, five questions are almost sure to be asked:

*Discussion* 1.—IS IT REASONABLE?

**James 5 : 7, 8:** "The husbandman [or farmer] waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth."

This is a farmer's text, and it agrees perfectly with farming practice. "The precious fruit" for which the farmer waits, is the **harvest**—the climax of the whole year's work.

Imagine a farmer who cleared and prepared his field, ploughed it, fertilised it, sowed it, harrowed it and tended it all through the year, and then, a few weeks before the harvest, suddenly lost all interest in his crop, went for a long holiday to the other side of the world, and made no provision whatever for the harvest! **Would that be reasonable?**

Now put Jesus in the place of the farmer. Suppose He went to all the expense of Bethlehem, Nazareth, Gethsemane and Calvary; preparing the soil, sowing the seed, watering it with His blood and His tears, patiently tending the field at such enormous cost, over centuries of time. But suppose He made no plans whatever to return to the world, and reap the harvest! **Would that be reasonable?**

2.—IS IT SCRIPTURAL?

The Bible thrills from beginning to end with the hope of Christ's Second Coming. The Old and New Testaments contain **well over 1,500 specific references** to our Lord's Return. If we were to remove these references from the Bible, the book would literally fall to pieces in our hands! From this vast body of evidence we select the following:

**John 14 : 1-3:** "I will come again."

**Heb. 9 : 28:** "He shall appear the second time."

**Titus 2 : 11-14:** "Looking for that Blessed Hope."

**Rev. 19 : 11-16:** "I saw Heaven opened."

**Rev. 22 : 20:** "Surely I come quickly. Even so come, Lord Jesus."

3.—IS IT LITERAL?

(See Chart No. 17—Second Advent of Christ)

Christian opinion is divided at this point. Some people say that the Second Coming takes place **at conversion**, or **at death**. Others say that Christ's coming is "**spiritual**", or "**symbolic**", but not real or personal. They insist that He "comes" in the form of **great movements for social reform, education, and world betterment**. Still others believe in what they call a "**Secret Rapture**", or an "**Invisible Presence**" recognised only by a favoured few.

But these are only human guesses, after all. Our chief concern is: **What does the Bible say?**

In the New Testament there are **more than 40 plain texts** which describe the manner of Christ's Second Coming. These texts unite in declaring that this event will be a **literal, visible, personal, public appearing**. It will be as real and recognisable an event as was His first coming, except that the marks of poverty, humiliation and suffering will be absent. The following are just a few examples:

**Acts 1 : 9-11:** "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go."

**Rev. 1 : 7:** "Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him."

**Matt. 24 : 24-27:** "As the lightning."

**Matt. 24 : 31:** "With a great sound of a trumpet."

**Luke 21 : 27:** "With power and great glory."

**Matt. 25 : 31:** "In His glory, and all the holy angels with Him."



**I Thess. 4 : 16:** "With a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God."  
**I Cor. 15 : 52:** "The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised."

If the words of the New Testament are to be take at face value, and we believe they are, Our Lord's Return will be a **stupendous public spectacle**, conducted in the open gaze of the world!

It would seem that Jesus has deliberately chosen words which give the impression of **unparalleled majesty and splendour** when describing His Second Coming. Consider these examples: "Clouds"; "Lightning"; "Trumpet"; "Shout"; "Power"; "Glory"; "Angels"; "Brightness"; "Flaming fire", etc.

Put these words together, and they make a scene of **incomparable grandeur and power**. It defies all attempts at description. It beggars all comparison. It will be the greatest spectacle of the ages!

#### 4.—IS IT NECESSARY?

Not only does the Bible make plain the **promise** of Christ's Coming, and the **pattern** of His Coming. Its testimony is equally plain concerning the **purpose** of His Coming.

**John 14 : 1-3:** To receive His people unto Himself.

**Rev. 14 : 14-16:** To reap the harvest of the earth, after centuries of sowing.

**Matt. 13 : 39-40:** To separate the wheat from the tares.

**I Thess. 4 : 14-18:** To raise the righteous dead.

**I Cor. 15 : 51-53:** To bestow the gift of immortality.

**II Thess. 1 : 7-10:** To punish the ungodly.

**Rev. 22 : 12:** "To reward every man according as his work shall be."

**I John 3 : 8:** "To destroy the works of the Devil."

**II Pet. 3 : 10-13:** To create a new heavens and a new earth.

#### 5.—IS IT NEAR?

Can we know anything about the **nearness** of our Lord's return, or is the matter veiled in secrecy?

**I Thess. 5 : 1-6:** God's people need not be "ignorant" of the "times and seasons" relative to the future programme of God. They are "**not in darkness**", that the day of Christ's Coming should overtake them "as a thief".

Whilst it is true that "no man knows the day nor the hour" (Matt. 24 : 36), God has given many, **unmistakable "signs"** by which we may know with certainty when the Coming of Jesus is near. We will consider these "signs" in Lesson 16.

*Conclusion* Everyone is naturally curious about the question: "**When will Jesus come?**" But there is another question that is far more personal and urgent: "**Are we ready for His Coming?**" The New Testament never mentions this subject without sounding an earnest call for personal preparedness:

**Luke 21 : 34-36:** "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

**Luke 12 : 35-40:** "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching."

Thank God, we are not left in doubt as to how to make this personal preparation:  
**I John 2 : 28:** "And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

## TWELVE GREAT SIGNS OF THE RETURN OF JESUS

*Introduction* In this lesson we will study "The Signs of Christ's Coming," and the obvious place to begin is with the **pointed question** which the disciples asked Jesus about this subject.

**Matt. 24:2: "What shall be the SIGN of Thy coming?"**

*(See Chart No. 18 – Signs of Christ's Coming)*

*Discussion* Think of the world as a giant clock-face. Call the hour-hand "**BIBLE SIGNS,**" and the minute-hand "**WORLD CONDITIONS.**" When we see "**WORLD CONDITIONS**" coming **nearer and nearer to the point of agreement** with the "**BIBLE SIGNS,**" we may **know** by that sure token that our Lord's return is near! Consider these **twelve great signs** of the return of Jesus that are being witnessed in our day:

**THE "SCOFFERS" SIGN** (2 Peter 3:3, 4)

Peter predicted that the prevailing mood of the "last days" would be one of open scepticism about the signs of Christ's coming. This is certainly true today. Every modern scoffer is a walking, talking sign of the coming of the Lord. The Christian can say to the scoffer: "Friend, Peter made a prediction about you. **You are the latest sign I've seen!**"

**THE "WAR" SIGN** (Matthew 24:6, 7)

The 20th Century has witnessed **the two most devastating wars of all history** (1914-1918, and 1939-1945). A total of over 70 million were killed, wounded, or missing. But none of the 40 haunted years since the close of World War II has been wholly free from conflict, somewhere in the world. It is an unpalatable but inescapable fact that war is "chronic" in our modern civilized society. **The years 1900-1985 have been the most blood-stained years on record.**

Apart from "World Wars I and II," the seemingly-endless series of "local wars" is heart-breaking. Said one observer: "**There has not been one day of genuine peace since the Armistice was signed in 1918!**" Spain; Hungary; Indonesia; Korea; Algeria; India and Pakistan; the Suez War; the Palestinian War; Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus; Vietnam; Chile; Lebanon; the Falklands; Afghanistan; South Africa; Inter-America; Ethiopia; New Caledonia; Iraq and Iran - all are grim reminders that our civilization seems to operate effectively only under the brutal stimulus of war!

**Add to all this the sinister fact that the "super-powers," while strenuously affirming their commitment to peace, have stockpiled enough intercontinental ballistic missiles in their "nuclear arsenals" to wipe out the human race many times over!**

**THE "FAMINE" SIGN** (Matthew 24:7)

Our century has already witnessed **four of the greatest famines of recorded history** (Russia, 1921 and 1933; China, 1928-1930; Bengal, 1943-1944. Total deaths estimated at over 20 million). Added to these disasters, as the 1970's merge into the 1980's, is the calamitous drought/famine of North and Central Africa, where the death-threat has already (1985) reached monumental proportions. Reliable statistics of total deaths are not yet available, but even in the early stages of the famine, a United Nations release estimated that **120 million lives were "at risk!"** The rocketing and apparently uncontrollable "population explosion" only serves to aggravate the threat of continued and escalating food-shortages.

Famine, like War, has become **a chronic world-circumstance of our time,** and the outlook is positively frightening. Unless the birth-rate can be drastically curbed, the threat of famine seems destined to swell to a calamity of global magnitude. Every morning there are well over 200,000 extra mouths to feed. From an estimate published by the United Nations, the world-population will have grown to five billion (5,000 million) by 1988, and to 6.25 billion by the

year 2,000. **Already over 1,000 million people in the world are grossly under-nourished, with almost half that number literally starving!**

**THE "PESTILENCE" SIGN** (Matthew 24:7)

The early years of our century witnessed **one of the greatest pestilences on record** (The "Spanish Influenza" epidemic of 1918, which claimed an estimated 21 million victims). And now, in the 1980's, as if in defiance of all the spectacular advances of the modern healing sciences, **a new, fast-acting, lethal, degenerative disease has leaped dramatically into the medical headlines.** With stunning rapidity AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), is devastating homo-sexual populations, and threatening to spread by way of bi-sexuals and drug-users into heterosexual society. From a handful of cases that first appeared in a few homosexual men in the summer of 1981, when the "killer disease" was first diagnosed, virus-caused AIDS has exploded into **the Number 1 serious communicable disease-problem of our age!**

Described as **"one of the most sinister infectious diseases of this or any century,"** AIDS annihilates the body's immune system. Multiplying 1,000 times faster than any known virus, it leaves its victim prey to a multitude of infectious agents. **No cure for the "Gay Plague" is yet known to medical science, and it has been branded "The New Leprosy" because of the paralysing fear of contamination it induces.**

**THE "EARTHQUAKE" SIGN** (Matthew 24:7)

Our century has witnessed **two of the greatest earthquakes** ever recorded. (China, 1920. Killed 180,000 people. Japan, 1923. Total casualties 1,500,000, of whom 200,000 perished). The Japanese earthquake was described at the time as **"The greatest single disaster since the Flood!"**

Never before have earth's subterranean forces wrought such wide-spread havoc as in our century. Admittedly, calamitous earthquakes have occurred sporadically down through history. But in our time major earthquakes and volcanic upheavals are rocking our planet with unprecedented fury.

The facts are overwhelmingly conclusive. From 1901 to 1944 - during more than forty years - only **three** earthquakes measured "Magnitude 7" or over. "Magnitude 7" can be defined as a major earthquake that causes wide-spread, heavy damage. Then, in just 10 years, from 1945 to 1954, the number leaped to **21** 'quakes measuring 7 or over. From then on, the number of major earthquakes has escalated alarmingly. For example: From 1955 to 1984 - in thirty years - **356** earthquakes have measured 7 or over (from 1955 to 1964, **87**, from 1965 to 1974, **136**, and from 1975 to 1984, **133**). In just one year, 1980, **14** earthquakes measured magnitude 7 or over. **Thirteen** earthquakes of similar magnitude were recorded in 1981; **10** in 1982; **12** in 1983; **8** in 1984. The Mexico City earthquake of September 19, 1985, which claimed more than 7,000 lives, was the worst 'quake in recorded North American history.

**THE "KNOWLEDGE" SIGN** (Dan. 12:4)

Today we are witnessing an unparalleled "knowledge explosion" - an **"epidemic of human inventiveness."** Man has made more spectacular advances in science, invention, medicine, transportation, communication, and in almost all other areas of knowledge in the past century, **than in all previous centuries put together!**

Try to assess the fabulous wonders that are locked up in these words: **"Motorised Transport;" "Aero-dynamics;" "Technological Warfare;" "Telecommunication;" "Satellites;" "Nuclear Fission;" "Electronics;" "Computerization."** Then reflect that **all these marvels belong uniquely to our time.** They are part of the incredible burgeoning of human knowledge that marks our century.

Never in all history was there such an unparalleled "running to and fro" as there is today. Never were there such amazing facilities for rapid and easy travel. Never was there such an obsession with speed. Never were such fantastic speeds achieved, or dreamed of.

**THE "PERILOUS TIMES" SIGN** (2 Tim. 3:1-3)

In spite of the most ingenious and costly equipment for fighting crime - violence, murder, robbery and rape are increasing at an alarming rate. Frustrated law-enforcement agencies can curb, but they cannot cure. **They are like people with brooms on the seashore, trying desperately to sweep back the incoming tide.** Most sinister among the criminal forces of our time is **the international drug-traffic**, which yearly claims its multitudes of victims, especially among youth. So powerful is the strangle-hold of this universal social "octopus," that many serious thinkers wonder if it can ever be broken.

The sins of Noah's day are being repeated, just as Jesus predicted (Matthew 24:37-39). In Noah's day advanced civilisation and great learning were handicapped by unbridled violence and scandalous immorality. So it is in our day. But the most alarming aspect of the current moral landslide is the fact that it is occurring **in spite of the most superb enlightening and civilising agencies ever available to man!**

**THE "POLLUTION" SIGN** (Revelation 11:18)

Since the 1950's, mankind has come suddenly awake to an insidious, new, global peril - **"ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION"** - the frightening price that is being exacted by galloping and irresponsible technological advance. **"Pollution" has become a second, mortal menace that ranks beside Nuclear War in its Apocalyptic magnitude and horror.** Atomic wastes; chemical wastes; pesticides; fungicides and defoliants are rapidly poisoning man's total environment beyond hope of repair. Vital inland lakes and streams are irreparably contaminated. Vast forests die from "acid rain." Our protective atmospheric shield of Ozone gas is being reduced alarmingly. Even the ocean, with its stupendous self-purifying power, and its teeming oxygen-producing plankton, is in peril. The collapse of our planet's basic life-support systems has now become an awesome and early possibility. **Unless the wholesale, wanton fouling of earth's water, soil, and air is quickly arrested and reversed, mankind faces the stark prospect of self-created doom!**

**THE "FEAR" SIGN** (Luke 21:25, 26)

With the advent of the Atomic Bomb, our dream of peace and security has turned into a chilling nightmare of horror. Since 1945, the world has lived nervously under the sinister shadow of a nuclear "mushroom." At the very time when man's mastery of his environment ought to guarantee freedom from fear: **"STARK FEAR HAS THE WORLD BY THE THROAT!"** says one candid observer.

But the fear of wholesale annihilation by nuclear war, or by environmental pollution, has now been compounded by another paralysing horror - **"INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM."** This is mass-blackmail in a new, unprecedented, and utterly callous form. Its disregard for human life and property is total. Without armies, navies, or air-forces, a handful of power-crazed fanatics, by means of threats, kidnappings, high-jackings, bombings and other indiscriminate acts of violence, can hold a whole community - or a whole nation - at gun-point!

**What is more hair-raising still is the fearsome possibility that the terrorists will "go nuclear," steal or manufacture an atomic bomb, and threaten the ultimate, desperate act of unbridled violence — INDISCRIMINATE MASS-SLAUGHTER!**

**THE "EXTREMITY" SIGN** (Luke 21:25, 26)

Jesus predicted that the "last days" would witness the development of a **crisis in human affairs that would be beyond man's power to remedy or to control.** He used the word **"PERPLEXITY"** (Greek APORIA, which means NO EXIT; NO WAY OUT). This final, incurable crisis is now upon us. Man has no permanent solutions for his rapidly-escalating problems - whether they be social, economic, political, environmental, or moral. He has reached the point of **"NO RETURN"** - the irreversible extremity. All our dazzling technological achievements have not brought us one millimetre closer to the elimination of war, famine, mass-starvation, crime, greed, terrorism, pollution, drug-abuse, or humanly-inflicted epidemics of self-destruction. **If anything, we are further from the solution of these mammoth problems than ever before.**

In terms of human resources, **no adequate salvaging mechanisms are available - or in sight** - that can halt humanity's headlong downward plunge, and lift the race back to sanity and peace. Indeed, so desperate has the international crisis now become, that one commentator has described our modern world as **"AN ELEPHANT HANGING OVER A CLIFF, WITH ITS TAIL TIED TO A DAISY!"**

**THE "GOSPEL" SIGN (Matthew 24:14)**

During the past 100 years, through the magic of the printing press, the aeroplane, radio, television, and—latest of all—Communications Satellites, **the preaching of the Gospel on a world-wide scale has become an actual possibility.** One man can now address an audience of tens— even hundreds of millions of people! The Bible is translated into over 1,800 languages, and is being distributed - in whole or in part - at the rate of hundreds of millions of copies every year. **THIS, SURELY, IS THE BRIGHTEST SIGN OF ALL!**

**THE "ALL THESE THINGS" SIGN (Luke 21:28-32)**

When confronted with this impressive list of Signs, some people argue: "But crimes, and wars, and earthquakes, and pestilences have ALWAYS been happening. There's **nothing abnormal** about these things; so how can we treat **them** as Signs? Besides, sincere people in the past have expected the Lord to return in their day, and been disappointed. They **misinterpreted the Signs.** Couldn't we be making the same mistake?"

Those who raise this objection overlook **one immensely significant difference** between our generation and all past generations. It is simply this: **Today, for the first time since the risen Lord ascended to Heaven, ALL the predicted major Signs of the end of the age are SYNCHRONISING! One or more of these Signs may have occurred in earlier generations, but never have they all occurred SIMULTANEOUSLY, as we see them today!**

**MANKIND HAS NEVER BEEN IN THIS POSITION BEFORE!**

Jesus has never asked us to believe in the nearness of His coming on the strength of **one sign alone.** One solitary snowflake does not make an avalanche. But when all the rapidly-multiplying Signs are allowed to bear their **accumulated testimony,** they make an avalanche of irresistible power. So unmistakable are the Signs of Christ's coming that no intelligent person should fail to recognise them. **They are as plain as if God were to speak in thundertones from heaven, or to write in giant, blazing letters on the skies!**

*Conclusion* **Why do you think God has given US a chance to hear these tremendous tidings? So that we might "discern the signs of the times" and be ready to welcome Jesus with eagerness and joy.**

**Luke 21:28: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh!"**

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER JESUS COMES ?

*Introduction* When we have learned what the Bible teaches about the Second Coming of the Lord, the next logical question is: "**What happens AFTER Jesus comes?**"

The simplest way to answer this question is to read from Revelation 19:11, which describes the Second Advent, right through to the end of chapter 20.

From these verses we learn that the Second Coming will be followed immediately by a **period of 1,000 years**, which is mentioned six times in Revelation 20:1-9, and is commonly known as "**The Millennium**". This word is not found in the Bible, but is an English word, made up by joining two Latin terms, "Mille" (1,000) and "Annus" (a year), and meaning simply—"one thousand years".

*Discussion* Our study of the Millennium will fall into three parts:

(See Chart No 19—*The Millennium Prophecy—First Part*)

### 1.—EVENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM

**The Return of Jesus:** Rev. 19:11. Compare I Thess. 4:16. This, as we have seen, is the obvious starting point.

**The Righteous Dead Raised:** Rev. 20:4, 6. Compare I Thess. 4:16.

**The Living Saints Caught Up:** I Thess. 4:17. See also Matt. 24:31; John 14:3; 13:36; 17:24; which show that all the righteous are gathered and return to heaven with Christ at the Second Advent.

**The Living Wicked Slain:** Rev. 19:11-16, 21. Compare II Thess. 1:7, 8.

**The Earth Desolated:** Rev. 16:17-21. See also Rev. 6:14-17; Jer. 25:30-33; Jer. 4:23-26; Isa. 24:1, 5, 6, 17-22, which describe the **stupendous changes** which will take place in the physical world at the Second Advent. Any suggestion that social life, industry, commerce, agriculture, education, sport, travel, etc., will continue as usual during the thousand years is unthinkable. This planet will be rendered completely uninhabitable when Jesus comes.

**NOTE: THE "BOTTOMLESS PIT"**—*These two puzzling words are translated from a single Greek word "ABUSSOS", which means a dark, waste, desolate region; a state of chaos. In the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, "ABUSSOS" is used to describe the earth in its original chaotic condition before light and vegetation appeared, when it was "without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the DEEP" (Greek "ABUSSOS") Gen. 1:2. Compare Jer. 4:23-26, which shows that at the Second Advent, the earth will again be reduced to a similar condition of chaos. The term, "bottomless pit" is not used in the Revised Versions of the Bible, or by most other modern translators. They use the more appropriate and understandable word, "ABYSS", which describes the earth as it lies completely devastated and emptied of human inhabitants after Christ comes. This will be Satan's dreary prison-house during the thousand years.*

**Satan Bound:** Rev. 20:1-3. Literal, material chains cannot be intended here. They could not bind a supernatural being. Satan will be bound by a **chain of circumstances**. The saints are in heaven, beyond his reach, and the wicked are all dead, to remain in that condition for a thousand years, so that the Devil has no one to tempt. No prisoner was ever more effectively chained!

### 2.—EVENTS AND CONDITIONS DURING THE MILLENNIUM

(Chart No. 19—*Second Part*)

**The Saints Reign in Heaven "with Christ":** Rev. 20:4, 6; 3:21.

**The Saints Assist in Judging Wicked Angels and Men:** Rev. 20:4; I Cor. 6:2, 3. Other translations of v 4 are illuminating—Weymouth: "To whom judgment was entrusted". Goodspeed: "Who were empowered to act as judges".

**The Wicked Remain Dead:** Rev. 20 : 5, first part; Jer. 25 : 33.

**Satan is Bound by a Chain of Circumstances:** Rev. 20 : 3.

**The Earth Lies at Rest:** Jer. 4 : 23-26.

### 3.—EVENTS AT THE END OF THE MILLENNIUM

( *Chart No. 19—Third Part* )

This earth now becomes the scene of the closing events in the long conflict between Christ and Satan.

**Christ, the Saints and the Holy City Descend:** Rev. 21 : 2, 10; 20 : 9.

“**The Beloved City**” ( v 9 ) is the heavenly—not the earthly—Jerusalem; for all earthly cities collapsed in ruins at the beginning of the Millennium (Rev. 16 : 19; Jer. 4 : 26). Up till that time, the Scriptures locate the Holy City in heaven (Gal. 4 : 26). Yet now, at the end of the Millennium, it is declared to be on earth. There is only one logical way in which a city which has been situated in heaven can be located on earth, and that is by being transported bodily thither by the power of God. And there is only one logical time for this re-location to occur—namely, at the end of the thousand years!

**The Wicked Dead are Raised:** Rev. 20 : 5, first part.

**Satan is Loosed:** Rev. 20 : 7-9.

As Satan was bound by the catching away of the righteous and the death of the wicked at the beginning of the thousand years, so now he is loosed by the resurrection of the wicked of all ages. Here again is his kingdom and again he plies his deceptions, taking up his stubborn and bitter warfare against God. Doubtless he finds it an easy task to persuade the wicked that it is by his power that they have been raised to life, and to inspire them with the hope that they may yet prevail against the Most High.

**The Last Judgment:** Rev. 20 : 11, 12.

Now, for the first and last time in the history of man, all who have ever lived upon this earth will stand alive before God and each other at the same moment. The godly will be safe inside the walls of the beloved city—redeemed, immortal. The ungodly will stand outside—in the devil’s army—awaiting the sentence of everlasting doom. There will be no third side on which to stand.

**Satan and Sinners Destroyed:** Rev. 20 : 9.

**The Earth Cleansed and Renewed:** II Peter 3 : 10-13; Rev. 21 : 1, 5.

*Conclusion* From our study of the Millennium, three challenging facts emerge:

1. Each one of us will spend the Millennium in either one of two places: **With Satan**, on this lifeless, silent earth, or **with Christ** amid the joys of a sinless heaven.
2. Each one of us will be alive on the earth at the end of the Millennium, in either one of two places: **With Satan**, outside the Holy City, or **with Christ**, inside the Holy City.
3. Which place it shall be depends upon our individual decision now.

It will be too late to delay our decision until Jesus comes. The line between Christ’s side and Satan’s side will then be sharply and unalterably drawn. No longer will it be possible to transfer from one side to the other at will.

These are solemn thoughts, indeed. And no Bible subject brings them home to our hearts with greater force than the Millennium.

Thank God! The transfer of allegiance from Satan to Christ is still possible today. “**Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.**” (Heb. 3 : 7, 8). Let us respond to this gracious invitation while there is still time.

## WHAT AND WHERE IS HEAVEN?

*Introduction* Some people regard "Heaven" as a childish fantasy, a mythical after-life which the imagination of man has conjured up to compensate himself for the disappointments and sorrows of the present life. Others think of it as a hazy, unreal existence, where white-robed "saints" sit on the edges of clouds or rainbows, dangling little golden harps. Still others rejoice in the assurance that "Heaven" is the home of reality and fulfilment—the place of eternal satisfaction and joy. What does the Bible say?

The Bible uses the word "Heaven" in three ways:

**The First Heaven:** The atmosphere. Where the birds fly (Gen. 1 : 6-8; Rev. 19 : 17).

**The Second Heaven:** The starry heaven. Where suns and planets race (Ps. 8 : 3; Rev. 6 : 13; Gen. 15 : 5).

**The Third Heaven:** Paradise. God's dwelling-place (II Cor. 12 : 2-4; I Kings 8 : 30; Matt. 6 : 9).

Obviously, if there is a "third" heaven, there must be a "second" and a "first". Once we have grasped this basic fact, we have the first important key to the Bible truth about Heaven.

In this lesson we will study about "Heaven" in the third sense—God's dwelling-place—which is to become the eternal home of His redeemed children.

*Discussion* When we open the Bible, we discover seven heart-warming facts about Heaven:

### FACT 1— HEAVEN IS A REAL PLACE

**John 14 : 1-3:** "I go to prepare a place for you."

**Matt. 5 : 12:** "Great is your reward in Heaven."

**Luke 15 : 7, 10:** "Joy shall be in Heaven in the presence of the angels of God."

**Luke 10 : 20:** "Rejoice, because your names are written in Heaven."

No Bible writer ever expresses any doubt about the reality of Heaven!

### FACT 2—HEAVEN IS A PREPARED PLACE

**John 14 : 1-3:** "I go to prepare a place for you."

**Matt. 25 : 34:** "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

**Heb. 11 : 13-16:** "He hath prepared for them a city."

Think of all the love, tenderness and imagination that are going into the preparation of our heavenly home!

### FACT 3—HEAVEN IS A FAMILIAR PLACE

Whilst the Bible promises God's children a home in "Heaven" (I Pet. 1 : 4), it also promises that the meek shall inherit "the earth" (Matt. 5 : 5). At first sight this seems like a contradiction, until we recall that at the end of the Millennium, after the cleansing fires have done their work, Heaven is actually going to come down to this earth! This familiar planet, restored to its original Edenic beauty, will thus become God's "tabernacle" or dwelling-place, and the eternal home of the saved (Rev. 21 : 3, 5).

**Rev. 21 : 1, 2, 10:** John saw the Holy City descending out of Heaven from God.

**Rev. 21 : 3:** "The tabernacle [dwelling-place] of God is with men."

**Rom. 4 : 13:** God promised Abraham that he would be the "heir of the world".



**Heb. 11 : 14, 16:** The home of the saved is called "a country", "a better country", a "heavenly country".

Because of their close similarity in character and conditions, the Bible mingles its description of the "Heaven" that now is, with its description of the "Heaven on earth" that will be. This is the second important key which, once grasped, widens immensely our understanding of the Bible truth about Heaven.

*(See Chart No. 20 - Eden Restored)*

#### **FACT 4—HEAVEN IS A CLEAN PLACE**

**Rev. 21 : 27:** "Nothing that defileth."

**Matt. 6 : 20:** No rust or pests.

**I Cor. 6 : 9, 10:** No drunkards, idolaters, blasphemers or unclean persons.

**Ps. 24 : 3-5:** "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

#### **FACT 5—HEAVEN IS A SAFE PLACE**

**Rev. 22 : 14:** All citizens will be commandment-keepers.

**Isa. 11 : 6-9:** "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb."

**Matt. 6 : 19, 20:** No thieves.

**Isa. 33 : 24:** No sickness.

**Isa. 35 : 9:** No ravenous beast.

**Rev. 22 : 3:** "No more curse."

#### **FACT 6—HEAVEN IS A HAPPY PLACE**

**Rev. 21 : 4:** All tears wiped away. No more sorrow, crying, pain or death.

**Luke 20 : 36:** "Neither can they die any more."

**Isa. 35 : 10:** "Songs and everlasting joy." (Also the whole of this chapter.)

**Isa. 65 : 17-25:** "Long enjoy the work of their hands."

**Ps. 16 : 11:** "Fulness of joy. Pleasures for evermore."

#### **FACT 7—HEAVEN IS A MEETING-PLACE**

**I Thess. 4 : 16-18:** The meeting in the air.

**Matt. 24 : 30, 31:** God's elect gathered from the four winds.

**Jer. 31 : 15, 16:** "They shall come again from the land of the enemy."

**I Cor. 13 : 12:** "We shall know, even as we are known."

**Conclusion** Why do you think God has given US a chance to hear these wonderful things about Heaven?

Because He wants us to have a share in the joys of His eternal home! God is not trying His hardest to keep people out of Heaven. He is trying His hardest to get people in!

**John 14 : 2:** "In My Father's house are MANY mansions."

"Many mansions", shows that Jesus is expecting a large number of people to respond to His invitation. Who could resist such a tremendous offer? We must decide to be among that happy company!

## CHRIST'S GUARANTEE OF VICTORY OVER DEATH

*Introduction* Christ's guarantee of victory over death is found in Rev. 1:18 "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell [Greek HADES = the grave] and of death."

This verse is a condensation of the whole message of the Bible concerning victory over death. The keys of the grave are in the hands of a Friend—our best Friend, Jesus Christ—One whom we can love and trust! What more positive, comforting assurance could ever be given to a grief-stricken world?

When Jesus says He has the "keys" of the grave, what does He mean? Firstly, that He alone can unlock the dark prison-house of death and set its captives free. Secondly, that He alone can unlock the dark mystery of death, and tell us what it means.

In this lesson we will study the seven "Keys of the Grave" which Jesus offers, to help us to understand the Bible truth about death.

(See Chart No. 21 – The Nature of Man in Life and Death)

### *Discussion* 1.—THE FIRST KEY — HOW LIFE BEGAN

Before we can understand what death is, and how it began, we must first know something of what life is, and how it began.

**Gen. 2:7:** "God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life."

Here, in a few simple words, is God's answer to the baffling questions that men have been asking about the "Origin of Life" for thousands of years. Life is a direct personal gift from God!

Once given, how was man's life to be sustained? Had man now become a source of life, independent of God?

**Gen. 2:9:** "The tree of life in the midst of the garden."

The Tree of Life was the abiding symbol of man's total and continuous dependence upon God. It was an enduring reminder that man did not have life in himself. He was not naturally immortal. His life was conditioned on obedience. Should he ever be cut off from access to the life-giving tree, his existence must inevitably cease.

### 2.—THE SECOND KEY — HOW DEATH BEGAN

**Gen. 2:15-17:** "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

This is the Bible's first mention of "death". What a baffling mystery God's warning must have been to Adam and Eve! They had known only a world filled with life!

**Gen. 3:1-4:** "Ye shall not surely die." Satan contradicts God's warning.

**Gen. 3:5-6:** Man believes Satan's lie, and disobeys God.

**Gen. 3:17-24:** The tragic result of disobedience: Separation from the tree of life.

**Rom. 5:12:** And so death passed upon all men.

*NOTE: In spite of these plain Bible facts, the idea persists in many minds that man, even as a sinner, is NATURALLY IMMORTAL, so that some part of him can NEVER DIE. Millions have been deceived by the Devil's false assurance: "YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE". This is the TAPROOT of all the widespread confusion about life, death, and immortality. Yet this confusion would never have existed if men had read, and believed, THE LAST FEW WORDS OF GENESIS 3. The one sure defence against Satan's lie is to recognise that SIN CUT MAN OFF FROM ACCESS TO THE TREE OF LIFE. This basic Bible fact makes an immortal sinner impossible!*

### 3.—THE THIRD KEY — WHAT HAPPENS TO THE BODY AT DEATH

**Gen. 3 : 19:** "Till thou return unto the ground . . . Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

This text requires no explanation. There is no element of mystery here. All human experience confirms this plain statement of the Bible.

### 4.—THE FOURTH KEY — WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SPIRIT AT DEATH

Because there is some confusion among Christian people at this point, we should consider the following Bible facts very carefully:

**Eccles. 12 : 7:** "The spirit shall return to God who gave it."

This text does not say that the "spirit" of good men only returns to God at death. No distinction is made here between good men or bad men. According to this passage, the "spirit" of all men returns to God at death.

#### What is the "spirit"?

According to the Bible, the "spirit" is the life principle, or "breath of life", which God originally gave to man (Gen. 2 : 7), and beast (Gen. 7 : 15, 21, 22). The common Hebrew word for "breath" (RUACH) is many times translated as "spirit". (See Job 33 : 4; 34 : 14, where "spirit" and "breath" are used interchangeably.)

**Eccles. 3 : 19-21:** The "spirit", or "breath of life", is a gift from God which man shares with the lower animals, so that in this respect man has no pre-eminence over the beasts.

**Job 27 : 3:** The "spirit" or "breath" from God resides in man's "nostrils".

**Ps. 146 : 3, 4:** Man's "breath goeth forth", and "he returneth to his earth". According to this passage, death is the separation of the breath of life from the body—the simple reversal of that process by which God originally gave life to man.

**James 2 : 26:** "The body without the 'spirit' [margin, 'breath'] is dead." Therefore, the simplest definition of the "spirit", when used in this sense, is: **That which keeps life in the body, and returns to God at death.**

*NOTE: A further significant fact should be observed here: Whilst life and consciousness RESULT from the union between the "spirit" (or breath) and the body, the Bible never suggests that the "spirit" is a kind of SECOND, LIVING PERSONALITY—AN INDEPENDENT CENTRE OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS—which can enjoy personal existence when SEPARATED from the body. Nowhere does the Bible teach that the human "spirit" has the power of INDEPENDENT CONSCIOUSNESS, INTELLIGENCE, EMOTIONS, SENSATIONS, MEMORY, OR WILL, prior to, or subsequent to, its union with the body. The recognition of this fact will also save us from a great deal of confusion.*

### 5.—THE FIFTH KEY — WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SOUL AT DEATH

**Gen. 2 : 7:** As a result of the union of the breath of life with the body, man "became" a living soul.

The text does not say that man was "given" a soul, or that he "had" a soul, but that he was a soul

#### What is a "living soul"?

According to the Bible, a "living soul" is a living being; a conscious person, or personality; an individual. (See Gen. 12 : 5; 36 : 6; Lev. 4 : 2; where "soul" obviously means "person".)

Compare **Matt. 16 : 26** with **Luke 9 : 25**, where the Bible uses the terms "soul" and "self" interchangeably. Obviously the "soul" means the "self"; the whole man, the total, conscious, living, breathing personality, as it functions normally in life.

It should be carefully noted that the body **alone** is not the total "self" or "soul". Nor is the "spirit" **alone** the total "self" or "soul". The "soul", or "self" exists only when the body and the "spirit" are **united!**

This "living soul" or "self" is the human organism which **does** have the power of consciousness, intelligence, memory, emotions, sensations and will, but **only so long as the breath and the body remain united**. At death the "soul" or "self", with all its wonderful powers simply ceases, for the time being, to exist. The "soul" does not "go" anywhere at death, it simply **lapses into non-being**, as a conscious entity.

**Eccles. 9 : 5, 6:** "The dead know not anything."

**Eccles. 9 : 10:** "No work, device, or knowledge in the grave."

**Ps. 6 : 5:** "No remembrance of God in death."

**Ps. 115 : 17:** "The dead do not praise God."

**Job 14 : 21:** The sons of the dead man come to honour, and he knows it not.

**Acts 2 : 29, 34:** David, though he had been dead for a thousand years, had "not ascended into the heavens".

Accordingly, the complete lapsing of consciousness and personality at death is called "the sleep of death" (**Ps. 13 : 3**). Over fifty times in the Bible, death is compared to a "sleep", because sleep is only a **temporary** condition, which carries with it the **promise of a certain awakening**. This is by far the simplest, most positive, most comforting way to think of death.

#### 6.—THE SIXTH KEY — WHEN DEATH'S POWER WILL BE BROKEN

Thank God, the Bible's teaching concerning the nature and destiny of man does not **end** with the temporary lapse of the "soul" or personality at death! God has the power, whenever He pleases, to repeat the miracle of **Gen. 2 : 7; to re-unite the body and the spirit**, and thus restore a dead man as a conscious "self", or "living soul". This is what the Bible calls "**the resurrection of the dead**".

**I Cor. 15 : 21, 22:** "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

**Job 14 : 12-15:** Job expected to "wait" in the grave for his "change", when God should "call", and "the heavens should be no more".

**Job 19 : 26:** "Though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

**John 5 : 28, 29:** "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and come forth."

**I Cor. 15 : 51-55:** "The dead shall be raised incorruptible."

**I Thess. 4 : 16-18:** The Lord descends, the dead in Christ rise.

**I Cor. 15 : 26:** "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

**Rev. 21 : 4:** "No more death, sorrow nor crying."

**Luke 20 : 36:** "Neither can they die any more."

#### 7.—THE SEVENTH KEY — WHAT DEATH MEANS FOR THE CHRISTIAN

For the Christian, death is compared to:

- (a) "**A sleep**" (**Acts 7 : 60**). A thousand years in the grave will seem like a moment of silence and darkness.
- (b) A "**shadow**" (**Ps. 23 : 4**). A shadow is powerless to harm anyone.
- (c) An **enemy with its "sting" plucked out** (**I Cor. 15 : 55**). Therefore, the Christian does not fear death, as if it were an all-powerful or eternal foe.

*Conclusion*     **Rom. 8 : 38, 39:** Death, even in its most dreadful form, cannot pluck us out of the hand of Christ.

With this confidence, we, like Paul, may look into the face of death without fear (**II Tim. 4 : 6-8**).



## THE BIBLE TRUTH ABOUT "HELL"

**Introduction** Certain ideas about Hell have been instilled into our minds from childhood. If we were to ask a hundred people in our neighbourhood: "What is your idea of Hell?" we would probably find that most people gave answers something like this: "A vast fiery pit, where sinners are kept burning for ever and ever, while demons, armed with pitch-forks, gloat over the torments of the damned."

Does the Bible endorse this conventional picture of Hell? Let us open the Book and see.

### **Discussion** 1.—WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN BY "HELL"?

Four different words from the original Bible languages are translated by the one English word "Hell":

- (a) **SHEOL** (Hebrew)—Has the general meaning of death, the state of death, the grave, the dominion of death and the grave. The sphere of death as opposed to the sphere of life. The after-world. The unseen or invisible realm to which all men go at death. In the Greek "Septuagint" version (the first translation from the Hebrew into Greek), the Hebrew SHEOL is commonly translated by the Greek word HADES. SHEOL does not carry with it intrinsically the idea of fire, or the conscious torment of the living, but simply death, the abode of the dead, both good and evil. The word occurs sixty-five times in the Old Testament. Example: Gen. 37 : 35.
- (b) **TARTAROS** (Greek)—Refers to the place of banishment of evil angels, and evidently means the regions of space surrounding this world, to which the rebellious angels were cast after their expulsion from Heaven. Does not concern the fate of ungodly men. Occurs only once in the New Testament: II Peter 2 : 4.
- (c) **HADES** (Greek)—Means literally that which is in darkness, hidden, invisible, obscure, and applies to the unseen world, or the abode of the dead. It is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew SHEOL, and therefore means the grave, or the dominion of death and the grave. HADES does not carry with it intrinsically the idea of fire, or the conscious torment of the living, but applies simply to the invisible world to which all men, good and evil alike, go at death. The word occurs eleven times in the New Testament. Example: Acts 2 : 27.
- (d) **GEHENNA** (Greek)—Applies literally to the Valley of Gehenna near Jerusalem, where in Christ's day all kinds of refuse were cast, including the carcases of beasts, and the unburied bodies of criminals. Fires were kept constantly burning to consume this waste material. GEHENNA is the Greek mode of spelling the Hebrew words which mean "the valley of Hinnom". However, the fires of GEHENNA were not for the torment of the living, but for the destruction of the dead. Jesus used the Valley of Gehenna as a symbol of the "second" or final death—the total, fiery destruction of the wicked at the end of the Millennium. The word occurs twelve times in the New Testament. Example: Matt. 5 : 22, 29, 30.

### 2.—WHY IS THE FIERY HELL OF THE BIBLE NECESSARY?

Because God is a clean God, and He wants to have a clean universe. His holy nature is the very opposite of evil, and therefore cannot tolerate wickedness in any form. The primary purpose of the fiery Hell is to disinfect the universe from everything that is evil and unclean.

I John 1 : 5: "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

Habakkuk 1 : 13: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil."

Heb. 12 : 29: "Our God is a consuming fire."

Fire is God's great antiseptic, and His use of it to destroy evil at the last day is not because He is vindictive, spiteful or cruel, but for surgical or cleansing purposes.

**Rev. 21 : 27:** Nothing that defileth can enter the New Jerusalem.

**I John 3 : 8:** God's object is to destroy the works of the Devil.

**Rev. 5 : 13:** God will eventually have a clean universe, in which every rational creature will praise and bless Him.

### 3.—HOW CAN WE RECONCILE THE BIBLE'S PICTURE OF HELL WITH THE LOVE AND JUSTICE OF GOD?

This reconciliation is not difficult if we keep three facts in mind:

(a) **God does not arbitrarily consign anyone to Hell.** He does not shut the door of Heaven against anyone. He wants all men to be saved, and has made abundant provision for this. **But some people shut the door of Heaven against themselves!** By persistently choosing evil they exclude themselves from Heaven and consign themselves to Hell. They are shut out from Heaven by their own unfitness for its society. Each man finally casts his own vote, either for Heaven or Hell. God simply endorses the sinner's own choice.

**Ezek. 18 : 30-32; 33 : 11:** "God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked."

**II Peter 3 : 9:** "He is not willing that any should perish."

**John 3 : 16:** His love provides a way for all to be saved—if they choose.

**Isa. 28 : 21:** Punishment is God's "strange act"—something that His whole nature recoils from.

(b) **God's withdrawal of the gift of life from the wicked is in kindness to them.** They would not be happy in a clean and sinless universe, any more than germs would be happy in sunlight, or in a strong antiseptic solution. They would welcome destruction in preference to the society of God and angels.

"The sinner could not be happy in God's presence. He would shrink from the companionship of holy beings. Could he be permitted to enter Heaven, it would have no joy for him. His thoughts, his interests, his motives, would be alien to those that actuate the sinless dwellers there. **Heaven would be to him a place of torture.** He would long to be hidden from Him who is its light, and the centre of its joy" (*Steps to Christ*, pp 17, 18).

**Prov. 8 : 36:** "All they that hate Me love death."

**Rev. 22 : 11:** "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still."

(c) **God's withdrawal of the gift of life from the wicked is in kindness to the universe as a whole.** God must safeguard the happiness and well-being of the universe at large—like a surgeon who cuts out a diseased organ, or amputates a poisoned limb, in order to "disinfect" the rest of the body, and set it free from the risk of disease or death.

It would not be love or justice for God to allow the cancer of evil to go on growing and spreading contamination forever, any more than it would be kindness for a doctor to spare a patient's gangrened foot or finger. **The admission of one incorrigible sinner into heaven would expose the whole universe to the threat of evil developing a second time!**

### 4.—ARE THE FIRES OF HELL BURNING NOW?

**Matt. 13 : 40-42:** The wicked will be cast into a furnace of fire at "the end of the world".

**II Peter 2 : 9:** The unjust are "reserved" unto the day of judgment to be punished.

### 5.—WHERE IN THE UNIVERSE WILL HELL BE LOCATED?

**Rev. 20 : 7-9:** "They went up on the breadth of the earth. Fire came down from God out of Heaven and devoured them."

**Prov. 11 : 31:** Sinners shall be recompensed "in the earth".

**6.—HOW LONG WILL THE FIRES OF HELL BURN?**

Until every unclean and evil thing has become "ashes". Then, when there is no more material to consume, the fires will subside of their own accord.

**Mal. 4 : 1-3:** The wicked will be "burned up", till they have become "ashes".

**Jude 7:** Sodom and Gomorrah suffered the vengeance of "eternal fire".

**II Peter 2 : 6:** Sodom and Gomorrah were reduced to "ashes".

**7.—WHY MUST THE DOCTRINE OF AN ETERNALLY BURNING HELL BE REPUDIATED?**

It contradicts the Bible.

It is a monstrous perversion of justice.

It makes God into a fiend.

It makes sin immortal.

It makes God lose, and the Devil win.

**8.—IF MEN AND WOMEN ARE FINALLY LOST, WILL THEY BE ABLE TO BLAME GOD?**

**Isa. 5 : 4:** "What more could I have done?"

**Matt. 23 : 37:** "How often would I have gathered thy children, but ye would not."

**John 5 : 40:** "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life."

*Conclusion*     **Rev. 22 : 17:** "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

The Gospel message is not "do", but "come"! It is not "try", but "come"! It is not "reform", but "come"! It is not "improve", but "come"! All through the Gospel, like the swell of silver trumpets or the echo of the bells of joy, is heard the Saviour's blessed invitation, "Come!" The feast is ready; come and eat it. The water is gushing; come and drink it. The pardon is proffered; come and take it. The love is free; come and enjoy it!

**John 6 : 37:** "And Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."





## THE WALL GOD BUILT TO SAFEGUARD CIVILISATION

**Introduction** Isa. 48 : 18: "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

(See Chart No. 24—*God's Commandments—Our Protection*)

The Bible presents a positive and practical picture of God's Ten Commandments. They are likened to a great protecting wall (Deut. 6 : 24). Inside this wall are the most precious elements of our civilised society. **The Home. The School. The Church. Just Government. Honourable Business Methods. Clean and Humane Sports.** Peace, Liberty, Health, Prosperity and Happiness are there, also. These most valuable of human assets are all guaranteed to us and safeguarded for us by this massive protecting wall. **But let the wall be broken down at any point and not one of these institutions is safe!**

The best way to test the value of the Ten Commandments is to ask two questions: **What sort of world would we have right now if everybody SCRAPPED the Ten Commandments?**

The Reign of Terror in Revolutionary France (1793), and the Police Strike in Melbourne (1923) are grim examples. Life, property, reputation, liberty, decency, the church, the home—no longer safe. The survival of the fittest! The law of the jungle! The weak to the wall! Every man for himself, and the Devil take the hindmost! **Would you like to live in a world like that?**

**What sort of world would we have right now if everybody KEPT the Ten Commandments?**

The Home, the School, the Church—all safe. Life, property, law and order, reputation, decency—all safe. Health, liberty, peace—all safe. No need for banks. No need for locks on our doors. No need for gaols. No need for a police force. No need for an army. We could push all our tanks and guns and warplanes and bombs into the sea. The world would be transformed into a suburb of Heaven overnight! **Would you like to live in a world like that?**

**God's Commandments have nothing to fear from these tests. What do you say?**

Yet, in spite of the indisputable value of these Commandments, there seems to be a suspicion lurking in some minds that somehow we have outgrown them, or that they were only for the Jews, or that Christ changed them. Do these suspicions have any foundation in the Bible? Let us open the Book and see.

### **Discussion** 1.—WERE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS GIVEN AS A MEANS OF SALVATION?

Perhaps the most serious misunderstanding about the Commandments arises at this point, so our first work must be to settle this question. The answer we give will determine whether we believe in salvation by **grace**, or salvation by **works**.

The Bible's answer is that God's Law was given as a **Teacher**, but never as a **Saviour!**

**Ps. 19 : 7-11:** "The Law of the Lord is perfect, making wise the simple."

**Prov. 6 : 23:** "The Commandment is a lamp."

**Rom. 3 : 20:** "By the Law is the knowledge of sin."

**James 1 : 23-25:** The Law is God's mirror.

A mirror can **reveal** stains, but cannot **remove** them. So God's Commandments can **expose** our sinfulness, but they cannot **cleanse** us from past guilt, or **provide strength** for future obedience. This is not their work. If we are to honour God by obedience, we **must first meet Him in true conversion, and experience His mighty saving power.**

**Ex. 20 : 2, 3:** "I am the Lord Thy God, which brought thee out . . . Thou shalt . . ." etc.

Note God's order. **Salvation first—then obedience.** Redemption first—then right conduct. David saw this clearly. So did Ezekiel. So did Jesus. So did Paul.

**Ps. 119 : 146:** "Save me, that I may keep Thy testimonies" (margin).

**Ps. 119 : 32:** "I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart."

**Ezek. 36 : 26, 27:** "A new heart will I give you, and I will cause you to walk in My statutes."

**John 14 : 15:** "If ye love Me, keep My commandments."

**Rom. 8 : 1-3:** "What the Law could not do . . . That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us."

**Eph. 2 : 8, 9, 10:** "By grace are ye saved. Not of works. Created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

According to the Bible, obedience is not the means of salvation, but the evidence of salvation. It is not the root, but the fruit of salvation. We are not saved by obedience—we are saved in order that we may obey. To teach any other gospel is to put the cart before the horse!

## 2.—WERE THE COMMANDMENTS GIVEN ONLY FOR THE JEWS, OR FOR ALL MEN IN EVERY AGE?

**Gen. 26 : 5:** "Abraham kept My commandments."

**Ecl. 12 : 13:** "Fear God, and keep His commandments . . . the whole duty of man."

**Matt. 19 : 17:** "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

**Rom. 3 : 31:** "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea we establish the law."

**James 2 : 8-10:** "He that shall offend in one point is guilty of all."

## 3.—DID JESUS CHANGE OR ABOLISH THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

**Matt. 5 : 17-19:** "I am not come to destroy. One jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law."

**John 15 : 10:** "I have kept My Father's commandments."

By His example of lifelong obedience and by His death on the cross, Jesus reinforced the unchangeableness and permanent authority of the Ten Commandments. The fact that He died to pay the penalty for man's sin is conclusive proof that the Divine Law could not be abolished, relaxed, or changed!

## 4.—WILL THE DAY EVER COME WHEN EVERYBODY IN THE WORLD WILL LOVE AND KEEP GOD'S COMMANDMENTS?

Not before Jesus comes. But afterwards—yes!

**Rev. 22 : 14:** "Blessed are they that do His commandments."

**Matt. 6 : 19, 20:** "Thieves will not break through nor steal."

**II Pet. 3 : 13:** "A new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

**Isa. 65 : 25:** "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain."

## 5.—HOW CAN WE MAKE SURE OF A PLACE IN THAT SAFE AND HAPPY WORLD?

**Heb. 10 : 15-17:** The New Covenant. "I will put My law in their minds, and write it in their hearts."

**Eph. 3 : 16, 17:** "Strengthened with might by His Spirit."

**Phil. 4 : 13:** "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

*Conclusion* Gal. 2 : 20: Christ liveth in me.

When Jesus truly lives in us today, what kind of life will He live? A commandment-keeping, or a commandment-breaking life?

There is only one rational answer. His life in us today will be manifested by the same joyous and eager obedience which He manifested during His earthly life (Ps. 40 : 7, 8). Our commandment-keeping is simply the overflow of His life within us!

## GOD'S SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

*Introduction* The most beautiful memorial shrine in the world is the Taj Mahal, at Agra, India, which was built by the great Mogul Emperor, the Shah Jahan, between 1631 and 1645, in memory of his favourite wife. Described by one visitor as "a dream in white marble", this stately tomb is still a shrine of remembrance for thousands of tourists who flock to it each year from all over the world.

God, also, has a "Shrine of Remembrance", built not of marble, but of time. It is the **Sabbath**, the weekly day of rest, which was appointed by God in Eden, before man sinned, and will be kept in Eden restored, when sin is forever past.

Since the days of Eden, man's thoughts concerning the Sabbath have often changed. The tide of human opinion has ebbed and flowed, but **God's thoughts have never changed concerning His Holy Day.**

**Isa. 55 : 8, 9: "My thoughts are higher than your thoughts."**

The purpose of this lesson is to ask: **"What are God's thoughts concerning the Sabbath?"**

*(See Chart No. 24 —God's Shrine of Remembrance)*

*Discussion* The entrance to the Sabbath Shrine is composed of ten pillars, and every pillar is a text.

### THE FIRST PILLAR — Gen. 2 :1-3

*(See Chart No. 23 —Creation Week)*

Three steps were involved in making the Sabbath:

- (1) **"Rested"** — Not the rest of exhaustion, but of achievement and satisfaction (see Isa. 40 : 28). Thus God set an example for man, and invited man to share His rest.
- (2) **"Blessed"** — To "bless" means to "speak well of", "to pronounce a blessing upon". Adam and Eve were the only members of the human family present in Eden, so God must have "spoken well" of the Sabbath to them!
- (3) **"Sanctified"** — To "sanctify" means to "separate" or "to set apart for a holy use".

These three Divine actions are equivalent to a command that man should keep the Sabbath holy. They put the Sabbath in a class by itself, for no other day was thus separated or set apart by God. Nor can anyone but the Creator Himself remove His blessing from the Sabbath, or transfer it to another day.

Some have asked: **"Was the Sabbath appointed at Creation, or at some later time?"**

The answer is found by comparing Gen. 1 : 28 with Gen. 2 : 3, where the word "blessed" is applied both to **marriage** and to **the Sabbath**. No doubt seems to exist in any mind that marriage was appointed at Creation, and was intended for the entire human species. The fact that the same word "blessed" is applied to the Sabbath, in the same context, proves that the Sabbath, also, was appointed at Creation and was intended by God for the whole human race.

### THE SECOND PILLAR — Ex. 20 : 8-11

**"Remember"** shows that the Sabbath was not a new institution at Mount Sinai, but was already well known.

**"Of the Lord thy God"** shows that the Sabbath does not belong to any race, or sect, or church. **It belongs to God.** This is the foundation plank of the entire Bible doctrine of the Sabbath. This is what makes the Sabbath **different**. This is what makes it **important**. This is what makes it **sacred**. **The Sabbath is God's property, not man's.** This means that if we wittingly take the Sabbath and put it to our own use, we are guilty of robbing God!

**THE THIRD PILLAR — Isa. 58 : 13, 14**

**“Turn away thy foot from the Sabbath.”** This means: **Take your foot off the Sabbath!** Cease to trample it under foot as if it were a common thing.

**“Call the Sabbath a delight.”** A “delight” is something that gives us intense and lasting pleasure; something that we think of with relish; something that makes our hearts glow; our faces shine; our eyes sparkle; our pulses leap. This is God’s ideal in the gift of the Sabbath. He never intended it to be a day of austerity and gloom, a hardship, a burden, or a yoke of bondage.

**THE FOURTH PILLAR — Ezek. 20 : 12, 20**

**“Hallow”** is a word which brings an instant hush over the heart. It means to treat the Sabbath with profound reverence and respect.

**“A sign between Me and you.”** Just as the wedding token worn by a bride is the visible sign of a unique relationship between her and her husband, so the Sabbath day is the sign of a special relationship between God and His people. **It is the visible badge of those who worship God as the Creator,** when the majority of men have allowed the fact of Creation to fade from their minds. If a woman loves her husband, she does not try to hide the token he gave her. She proudly and openly wears it.

**“The Lord that doth sanctify you.”** These words show that in the mind of God, the Sabbath is much more than the outward, formal observance of a particular day. Fundamentally, the Sabbath is **an experience of sanctification—a condition of heart—**whereby the believer himself is separated unto God—set apart for His use. **It is the marriage of the human will with the will of God.** This experience is not confined to a particular period of twenty-four hours. It overflows from the Sabbath day and extends to every other day in the week.

The Sabbath can therefore be truly loved and revered only by those who have come to know the power of God in “sanctification”. This is the Old Testament word for conversion, or re-creation, whereby **the life is voluntarily and permanently set apart as the property of God.** The outward observance of the Sabbath day is the God-appointed sign of this inward experience.

**THE FIFTH PILLAR — Matt. 24 : 20**

Here is proof from Jesus’ own lips that the sacredness of the Sabbath would continue unchanged into the Christian era. The Roman invasion of Judæa, which made it necessary for the servants of Christ to flee from Jerusalem and the surrounding districts, did not take place until A.D. 66-70, almost **forty years after this prediction was made.** It is evident, therefore, that Jesus’ attitude to the Sabbath did not change after the Cross, neither did He wish the attitude of His disciples to change.

**THE SIXTH PILLAR — Mark 2 : 27, 28**

**“Made for man.”** Man was created before the Sabbath, not after it. The Sabbath was then made **for man’s benefit—for his refreshment, rest and well-being.** “Man” is used here to mean “mankind” as a whole, not merely one section of the human race.

**“Lord also of the Sabbath.”** The Sabbath is the only day of the seven which Jesus claims as His own. It is therefore **the true “Lord’s Day”** of the Bible. As the Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus is its Maker, Owner, Interpreter and Defender.

**THE SEVENTH PILLAR — Luke 4 : 16**

**“As His custom was.”** A custom is a regular practice, a habit. Two lifelong customs of Jesus are mentioned in the Gospels. One was the custom of **prayer.** The other was the custom of **Sabbath observance.**

**"He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day."** On any other day of the week, if we passed by the carpenter's shop in Nazareth, we would hear the strokes of the axe, the tapping of the mallet, or the rasping of the saw. We would find Jesus there. But if we called at that shop on the seventh day, we would find the door closed, the shutters drawn, the tools hanging neatly in their places, the timber all stacked away, and no sign of the Carpenter. If it was the hour of public worship, we would find Him in the house of God. At other times we might find Him at the bedside of some sufferer, or in a quiet grove reading the Scriptures and communing with His Father.

At the beginning of this lesson, we set out to discover God's thoughts about the Sabbath, and the Scriptures have now led us into the presence of Jesus. **His lifelong example of reverence and obedience is the clearest possible revelation of the mind of God concerning the Sabbath!**

If Jesus were here today, would He still teach and practise according to His life-long custom?

**Heb. 13 : 8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever."**

#### **THE EIGHTH PILLAR — Luke 23 : 54-56**

**"The Sabbath according to the commandment."** This passage establishes beyond all question the true position of the Sabbath in relation to the other days of the week. The Bible Sabbath corresponds with our Saturday. We can establish this by comparing Luke's record with our modern calendar, especially in connection with the observance of Easter.

**"That day was the preparation."** This was the crucifixion day, the day before the Sabbath, corresponding with the modern sixth day, or **"Good Friday"**.

**"The Sabbath drew on."** This was the seventh day, during which the disciples rested, and Jesus lay lifeless in the tomb. We now call this day **"Easter Saturday"**.

**"The First day of the week"** (Luke 24 : 1). This was the day after the Sabbath and corresponds with **"Easter Sunday"**.

#### **THE NINTH PILLAR — Acts 16 : 13**

This incident in the ministry of Paul occurred about A.D. 52, twenty years after the resurrection of our Lord. The Sabbath is still given its original, sacred title. There is no hint that the mind of God has changed by a hair's-breadth concerning the Sabbath; or that the original Sabbath has been abolished; or that Paul and his companions knew of any other weekly day of rest for Christians, apart from the seventh day.

#### **THE TENTH PILLAR — Isa. 66 : 22, 23**

**"From one Sabbath to another."** The Sabbath greeted us first in Eden lost. It greets us now in Eden restored. There is no hint anywhere in the Bible that the passing of centuries has made the slightest change in the thoughts of God towards the Sabbath. Nor is there any suggestion that the passage of time should make any change in the minds of His people towards His Holy Day. Honoured and loved in Eden of old; trampled underfoot and forgotten by a rebellious world, the Sabbath will at last come into its own again in the earth made new. There it will fulfil the purpose for which God intended it, as if sin had never been.

**"All flesh."** The world to come will not be divided on the Sabbath question. There will be no discord or confusion there. **"All flesh"** will honour the Sabbath of God's appointment. If we are planning to keep the Sabbath **there**, is it not reasonable that we should begin to keep it **here**?

*Conclusion*    **Amos 3 : 3: "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"**

God wants us to be in full agreement with Him on the Sabbath question, as on all others. The simplest way to come into agreement with God on any subject is to ask: "**Where did Jesus stand on this question?**" It is always safe to follow where Jesus leads the way.

The strongest proof that the mind of God has never changed concerning the Sabbath is found in **the attitude of Jesus towards God's holy day**. No true Christian will ever enter into controversy with His Lord about the true Sabbath. His only question will be: "**Where did Jesus stand?**" Having found from the Gospels where Jesus stood, he will say: "**If the Sabbath was good enough for Jesus Christ, it is good enough for me!**"

## IS SUNDAY SACREDNESS TAUGHT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

*Introduction* A tempting fortune is waiting for the person who discovers a Bible text which records the Divine appointment of Sunday as a day of rest and worship for Christians, and commands the weekly observance of that day.

In spite of the fact that thousands of dollars have been offered for such a text, and in spite of the most painstaking research, this elusive passage cannot be found. Even the word "**Sunday**" does not appear anywhere in the Bible!

However, there are eight references in the New Testament to "**the first day of the week**", and one reference to "**the Lord's day**". Because serious claims for Sunday sacredness have been based upon these texts, they call for careful examination.

*(See Chart No. 25 —The Sunday Temple)*

### *Discussion*    **THE FIRST TEXT — MATT. 28 : 1**

This passage states that in the early hours of the first day of the week, after the Sabbath was past, the friends of Jesus came to visit His tomb. However, no sacred title is here given to the first day; no suggestion of sacredness is attached to it, nor is there any command for its observance.

### **THE SECOND TEXT — MARK 16 : 2**

This also is a straightforward historical narrative, not a command. Mark records the same visit to the tomb as Matt. 28 : 1, using slightly different words.

### **THE THIRD TEXT — MARK 16 : 9**

This, too, is a simple statement of fact, recording the resurrection of Jesus and His appearance to Mary Magdalene.

### **THE FOURTH TEXT — LUKE 24 : 1**

This passage adds little to the above, except that it explains the object of the disciples' visit to the tomb; namely, to anoint the body of Jesus. Obviously, they expected to find Him dead!

### **THE FIFTH TEXT — JOHN 20 : 1**

This verse also describes Mary's visit and her discovery that the tomb was open.

Obviously, these first five Scriptures need not detain us long in our search for New Testament evidence for Sunday sacredness. They simply record the fact that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, and that His empty tomb was visited by several of His disciples in the early morning of that day.

However, these passages record no Divine **example** of first-day observance. They contain no Divine **command** for such an observance. They apply no sacred **title** to the first day, nor do they give any **reason** for its observance. On the other hand, they show that Christ's disciples treated the first day as a **common working day**, for they were prepared to embalm His body on the first day, a task which they declined to perform on the Sabbath!



**THE SIXTH TEXT — JOHN 20 : 19**

Whilst this passage records a gathering of Christ's disciples on the evening of the resurrection day, it also explains the **reason** why they were assembled behind closed doors—"For fear of the Jews". Their motives were unbelief and fear, not faith and devotion.

Some have suggested that the disciples were gathered together to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, but Mark 16:14 and Luke 24:41 show that most of the disciples remained in a state of gloomy unbelief in the resurrection right up till the evening of that day!

**THE SEVENTH TEXT — ACTS 20 : 7**

This verse records one isolated meeting of one small-town congregation of Christians on the first day of the week. However, the context shows that it was a special meeting, called for the purpose of farewelling Paul. It was also a unique occasion because, due partly to the accidental death of a young man in the congregation, and his miraculous restoration, the meeting continued all night (vv 8-12).

There is no evidence here that this or any other Christian congregation met **regularly** for worship on the first day of the week. There is no evidence that these or any other Christians devoted the **whole** of each first day to religious exercises. The text shows rather that the all-night farewell meeting was followed, not by a day of rest and worship, but by common, everyday activities, such as travelling. No sacred title is given to the first day, and there is no evidence that the Christians at Troas, or anywhere else, were accustomed to celebrate the Lord's Supper every first day. As a matter of fact, it is impossible to prove from this text that the Communion service was celebrated on this occasion, for there is no mention of the wine, and the term, "the breaking of bread", is frequently applied in the New Testament to a common meal (Luke 24 : 30, 35; Acts 2 : 42, 46; 27 : 35).

So, in order to find in these verses an evidence for Sunday sacredness, we have to read into them a great deal that is not there. Besides, the meeting described began somewhere before midnight either on what we now call Saturday night, or on Sunday night. If it was Saturday night, the meeting began hours **before** our modern Sunday. If it was Sunday night, the meeting continued for hours **after** our modern Sunday, until daybreak on **Monday** morning. Nowhere does the Bible suggest that the conducting of one isolated religious meeting on a certain day, apart from any Divine act of sanctification, makes that day a Sabbath, or a regular weekly day of worship. If the mere holding of a religious meeting automatically sanctified a day, then **every day in the week** would qualify as the Sabbath!

**THE EIGHTH TEXT — I COR. 16 : 2**

In spite of a widespread misunderstanding, this passage does not refer to the **public** giving of offerings in regular church services on Sundays. The advice, "Let every one of you **lay by him in store**", refers rather to the **private** laying aside of sums at home, by individuals, for a special "Judaean Relief" appeal. These sums would presently be collected by Paul (or his deputy) on his way to Jerusalem (vv 3, 4).

There is no reference here to the giving of public offerings for the support of the local church or ministry, or for "Foreign Missions", as we think of them today. Nor is there any reference here to any universal or permanent Christian institution, or to any universal or permanent pattern of Christian worship. Paul is certainly not attempting to legislate for the whole Church, or for the entire Christian age. His appeal was prompted by a **local and temporary emergency**, namely, the current hardships of the Judaean believers due to famine and persecution; but this emergency affected only a small section of the Christian community at the middle of the first century.

To use this text as proof of regular Sunday-keeping by all the early Christians, or as legislation for Sunday observance by all future Christians, in all lands, for all time, is to go far beyond the evidence contained in the text.

This exhausts the eight New Testament references to the "first day of the week". We will now consider the lone reference to "the Lord's day" which some regard as the key-witness for Sunday sacredness.

#### THE NINTH TEXT — REV. 1 : 10

This passage refers to a literal **person**—John; a literal **place**—the isle of Patmos; a literal **condition**—"in the Spirit", and a literal **time**—"the Lord's day".

It proves beyond question that in the Christian age, **God still has a day which He claims as His own.** However, no number, such as **first, second, third,** etc., is linked with the "Lord's day" in this text. Nor is it safe for us to **guess** which day of the week it was. **The Bible alone must be allowed to decide this question.** To discover which day of the week God claims as His own, we must turn to other Scriptures, such as Ex. 20 : 8-11; Isa. 58 : 13, 14; Ezek. 20 : 12, 20; Mark 2 : 27, 28. These passages show that **the only day of the week which the Lord has ever claimed as His special property is the seventh day!** If we are resolved to let the Bible and the Bible only settle this question, then **the Sabbath alone qualifies as the true "Lord's day."**

*(Remove flap of pillars with texts, and reveal pillars bearing the word  
"T-R-A-D-I-T-I-O-N")*

**Conclusion** We now have positive proof that Sunday sacredness had no place whatever in the example or teachings of Jesus, nor was it part of "the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). The time-honoured custom of Sunday observance is thus shown to be **without one particle of Scriptural foundation!** The only foundation it has ever had is "Tradition", which is another name for "the commandments of men"! (Matt. 15 : 6, 9).

This conclusion will come as a great shock to many conscientious Sunday-keepers. How shall we relate ourselves to this challenging situation?

Only two courses are open to us:

**Matt. 12 : 30: "He that is not with Me is against Me."**

*(See Chart No. 33 —Truth or Tradition?)*

The only safe position is to stand where Jesus stands on this question. It is always safe to follow where Jesus leads the way!

**John 8 : 12: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."**



## THE REPAIRING OF THE BREACH

*Introduction* The fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah describes a religious crisis which bears a remarkably close resemblance to the situation in our modern Christian world.

Isaiah's imagery is graphic. He paints with a bold and vigorous brush. His exposure of evil is stark and urgent. He describes a time when the temple of truth lies in ruins; **when God's law is being trampled under foot by its professed champions**; when the Sabbath, particularly, is being treated like a door-mat, and when a bold group of reformers is raised up by God to do an urgently-needed work of repair and reformation.

The chapter climaxes with a pointed Divine appeal: **"TURN AWAY YOUR FOOT FROM THE SABBATH!"** (i.e. cease to trample the Sabbath underfoot), followed by a promise of unlimited blessing for obedience - one of the most extravagant promises in the Bible! (Read Isaiah 58, especially verses 1, 2, 12-14).

*Discussion* Isaiah 58 is the last of a series of three chapters, commencing with Chapter 56. The theme is more fully developed in Chapter 57, and climaxed in Chapter 58. As we study this prophecy in its wider implications, four graphic pictures emerge:

### 1.—THE STRIKING PARALLEL WITH OUR TIME

Isaiah 56:1, which introduces the majestic sweep of this prophetic appeal, describes a **fateful moment when a special intervention of God is impending - when His salvation is "near to come."** Doubtless these words had a primary application to the critical state of spiritual decline that existed in Israel in or near to Isaiah's own day - possibly during the reign of the wanton king Manasseh - but the prophet's words have a wider application also, because, regrettably, history has a habit of repeating itself!

Isaiah 58 carries on the theme of Chapters 56 and 57, picturing a scene of widespread, stony-hearted indifference to God's requirements, especially among people who profess to serve Him. **This description fits the state of modern Christendom as a hand fits a glove!**

Add to this the fact that, in our day, the fast-multiplying signs of the second Advent are trumpeting the tidings that God's salvation is, indeed, "near to come!"

### 2.—THE SPECIFIC APOSTASY

Among the many departures from God listed in Isaiah 58, one especially flagrant "transgression" is singled out for specific mention, namely, **the practice of trampling the Sabbath underfoot**, and treating it as a common thing. Hence God's urgent appeal: **"TURN AWAY YOUR FOOT FROM THE SABBATH!"** (vv 13, 14)

It is at this point, particularly, that a **great, gaping "breach" has been made in the protecting "wall" of God's Law - by Christian people, during the Christian Age!** The original Sabbath commandment has been torn out, and cast aside. Worse still, a pagan holiday - Sunday - has been substituted for the Sabbath - without a particle of Divine authority!

However, this audacious act of religious sabotage has not taken God by surprise. He predicted it long ago - centuries before the dawn of the Christian Era - in prophecies as specific as Daniel 7:25.

What is incredible is the fact that this daring substitution of error for truth **has been committed by leaders of the Christian Church!** If avowed enemies of God - atheists, or criminals, or idolators - had done it, there would be no occasion for surprise. But this open, public challenge to God's authority - **the boldest and most sustained challenge to God's authority in the whole history of man** - has been engineered and justified by the professed friends of Christ!

That is the stark, inescapable fact that almost defies belief!

(See Chart No. 26 – “The Breach in the Wall”)

### 3.—THE REPAIRING OF THE BREACH

From the scene of widespread and inexcusable apostasy, the prophetic spotlight now turns to **God’s remedial action, in the form of a bold group of reformers - identified as “the repairers of the breach”** - whose work is to “raise up the foundations of many generations” (v 12).

(See Chart No. 27– “The Breach being Repaired”)

Here is projected a **specific, organized, resolute programme of Sabbath Reform**. While the Protestant Reformation has made many gratifying forward moves since Martin Luther’s day - **on one conspicuous point the Reformation remains unfinished**. The vast majority of professed Christians - both Protestant and Catholic - still regard Sunday, the first day of the week, as the God-appointed day of rest and worship.

Hence the urgent need for a continuing - and completed - Reformation at this point.

(See Chart No. 28 – “The Breach Repaired”)

It is true, of course, that prominent religious personalities and councils of the past have taken initiatives to popularise or enforce Sunday observance, but **what emerges clearly in our time is the fact that no one person, and no one Church, is chiefly responsible**. Alternatively, the responsibility for the change of the Sabbath - and especially for the perpetuation of that change - rests upon **the whole Christian community!**

By the same token, the responsibility to “repair the breach,” and restore the true Bible Sabbath, is **a corporate Christian responsibility!**

### 4.—THE REWARD OF OBEDIENCE

Echoing the earlier promises of universal blessing to faithful Sabbath-keepers (Isaiah 56:2, 6, 7), the prophet now focuses attention on the sure rewards that always follow unqualified obedience. Notice these reassuring words: **“If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, (i.e. from trampling it underfoot), from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, honourable, and will honour Him, not doing your own works, or finding your own pleasures, or speaking your own words: then you will delight yourself in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it”** (vv 13, 14).

Can you think of a richer promise - a more expansive, lavish, even extravagant promise - anywhere else in the Bible?

Wouldn’t you like to qualify for that blessing?

### *Conclusion*

Inevitably, we each must ask: **“Where does my face appear in this picture? On which side do I stand?”**

To help us to put ourselves into the picture, try to **imagine what would happen if Peter and Paul came back to life today**. They walk down the street where these things are going on. They take in the situation with reference to the change of the Sabbath. They see the gaping breach in the wall. They ask questions. They learn how and when the breach was made. They see the progress that has been made towards repairing the breach. They make a decision. **Where would they stand?** With the Breach-makers or with the Breach-repairers? **“We ought to obey God rather than men”** (Acts 5:29) would be their unhesitating answer.

Or, imagine that **Jesus has come back to life today**. He, too, walks down "Main Street," and sees the breach and the work of repair. He, too, asks questions. He, too, gets answers. He, too, makes a decision. **Where would He stand?** With the Sabbath-breakers, or with the Sabbath-keepers?

Scripture doesn't leave this matter in any doubt at all. It says:

**"Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, and today, and forever"** (Hebrews 13:8).

Will we take our stand with Jesus? **It is always safe to follow where He leads the way!**



## HOW TO KEEP THE SABBATH

*Introduction*    **Isa. 58 : 13, 14: "Turn away thy foot from the Sabbath."**

When God's call: **"Take your foot off My Sabbath!"** first comes to us, we naturally ask: **"How does God want us to keep the Sabbath? In what way should our conduct on this day differ from our conduct on the other days of the week?"**

God has not left us in doubt on this question. He delights in positive, intelligent, spontaneous Sabbath keeping. He has, therefore, given us a **complete set of guidelines** to follow in our preparation for, and observance of, the Sabbath day. In this lesson we will study the Bible's code of Sabbath-keeping etiquette.

- Discussion*
1. To **"hallow"** the Sabbath means to treat it with the utmost reverence and respect (**Ezek. 20 : 12, 20**).
  2. To **"remember"** the Sabbath means to think of it, and plan for it all through the week (**Ex. 20 : 8-11**).
  3. To keep it **"holy"** means to keep it **"wholly"** for God. Therefore, we will guard its **edges** carefully (**Ex. 20 : 8-11**). See Amos 8 : 5 for the **wrong** attitude.
  4. God's ideal for the Sabbath is a day of **"delight"**, not of dullness and **"don'ts"**, austerity and gloom (**Isa. 58 : 13, 14**).
  5. We lay aside our own **words, works, pleasures and cares** (**Isa. 58 : 13, 14**).
  6. We prepare our **foodstuffs, homes and persons** on the sixth day (**Ex. 16 : 23; Luke 23 : 53-56**).
  7. No buying or selling on the Sabbath. Business matters not discussed (**Neh. 10 : 31; 13 : 15-22**).
  8. The Sabbath is measured from **sunset to sunset** (**Lev. 23 : 32; Neh. 13 : 19**). **"Even"** means **"sunset"** (**Deut. 16 : 6; Mark 1 : 32**). We **"open"** and **"close"** the Sabbath with praise and prayer.
  9. The Sabbath is **"a holy convocation"** [an assembly, or gathering together] (**Lev. 23 : 3**). We assemble for joyous public worship (**Luke 4 : 16; Acts 16 : 13**).
  10. Three books enrich the Sabbath hours—the Bible, the hymn book, and the Book of Nature.
  11. **"It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days"** (**Matt. 12 : 12**). We take sunshine, healing and comfort to the sick and distressed.
  12. We receive from Jesus **the innermost sacrament of the Sabbath—"Rest for the soul"** (**Matt. 11 : 28-30; Heb. 4 : 9, 10**). This is the ultimate secret of all true Sabbath keeping.

*Conclusion*    The Psalmist prayed: **"Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law"** (**Ps. 119 : 18**). It is only when our eyes have been opened by the Spirit of God that we come to see the true worth and beauty of the Sabbath.



“The Sabbath truth is like a stained-glass window rare,  
We stand **outside** and gaze, but see no beauty there;  
No fair design, naught but confusion we behold—  
’Tis only **from within** the glory will unfold.  
And he who would drink in the rapture of the view  
Must climb the winding stair, the portal enter through.  
The sacred door of Truth’s cathedral is most low,  
And all who wish to enter there the knee must bow  
In deep humility. But once **inside**, the light  
Of day streams through, and makes each colour heavenly bright.  
The Master’s great design we see, our hands we raise  
In reverent ecstasy of wonder, love and praise!”

## THE TWO MAJOR DIVISIONS OF DIVINE LAW

*Introduction* Christian thought is divided about the value and permanence of the Divine laws that were given through Moses in the Old Testament. Some Christians make a clear distinction between the "**Moral Law**," or the Ten Commandments, on the one hand, and the "**Ceremonial Law**," governing sacrifices and priestly ritual, on the other hand. The "Moral Law" is seen by this first group as **permanent**, and binding on Christians as well as Jews, whereas the "Ceremonial Law" is seen as **temporary** and **provisional**, becoming obsolete when "type" met "antitype" at the death of Christ.

However, in sharp contrast with the first group, there are other Christians who insist: (1) That the entire body of Old Testament "Law" comprises one system, and is an indivisible unity; (2) That the distinction between "Moral" and "Ceremonial" law is purely artificial and arbitrary; (3) That when Christ died, the whole body of Old Testament law was "blotted out" and "nailed to the Cross," and (4) That Christian believers are therefore "free from the Law," and are not bound in any way by any part of the Old Testament legislation.

Though both of these groups claim Scriptural support for their views, it is obvious that both cannot possibly be right. The Bible itself must be the final arbitrator. Accordingly, the purpose of this Study Guide is to address the question: "**What does the Bible teach on this matter?**"

*Discussion* We will conduct our enquiry in three stages.

### 1.—THE UNANIMOUS TESTIMONY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

The terms "**Moral Law**" and "**Ceremonial Law**," as such, are not found in the Bible. They are purely terms of convenience - like "**Trinity**," or "**Incarnation**" - used to describe some self-evident Biblical fact.

The accompanying chart focuses the testimony of Scripture. It shows that there are **genuine, substantive differences** between segments of the Divine Law - differences in **content**; in **purpose**; in **scope**; in **duration**. By their very nature and intent, some precepts were **permanent** and changeless, while others were **temporary** and subject to change.

(See Chart No. 29— *The Two Major Divisions of Divine Law*)

### 2.—THE BOOK OF HEBREWS CLINCHES THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

The Book of Hebrews is the one book of the New Testament that focuses at length on the **transition from Judaism to Christianity**. This is the theme of the entire book. Its purpose is to contrast the relative merits of the two religious systems, and to show the **inadequacy and exhaustion of the Levitical system**, as against the superlative adequacy and vitality of Christianity.

The distilled essence of Hebrews is concentrated in verse 9 of Chapter 10: "**He taketh away the first (Judaism), that he may establish the second (Christianity)**."

Accordingly, if significant changes were made in the Divine "Law" at Calvary's Cross, we would expect to find the full details of these changes in this book.

In Hebrews, **two apparently conflicting ideas about "Law"** are kept in constant juxtaposition. In one breath, Paul speaks of a Divine "Law" that has been "**changed**" or "**disannulled**" (See Hebrews 7:12, 18, 19). Yet, in the next breath he speaks of a Divine "Law" that is to be **permanently "written in the heart"** of true Christian believers, under the terms of what he calls the "New Covenant" (See Hebrews 8:6-12; 10:15-17). The context shows conclusively that this "New Covenant" represents the Christian Gospel - God's ultimate saving provision for all mankind - which is not transient and changing, but immutable and eternal!

Is Paul contradicting himself? Or could it be that he is making a **deliberate and proper distinction** between two categories of Divine Law?

A close examination of Hebrews 7:12 and 18, shows that the “Law” that was “**changed**,” or “**disannulled**” at Calvary’s Cross was “**the law of the priesthood**,” or the Levitical law - the body of Divine regulations that concerned animal sacrifices; offerings, and the whole spectrum of priestly duties.

By the rending of the Temple veil on the Crucifixion day (See Matthew 27:51) God had indicated unmistakably and finally that **all of the “priesthood” regulations of the Old Testament were finished**. This was not because they were evil in themselves, but because they were **exhausted**. Their sole purpose was to point forward to Christ, and that purpose had been fulfilled. Now that He had come, and made His one all-sufficient sacrifice, the Levitical regulations were **rendered superfluous** — like the scaffolding on a building, or the withered petals on a fruit-bearing tree.

On the other hand, a close examination of Hebrews 8:6-12 shows that another segment of the Divine Law the segment that deals with the universal moral principles expressed in the Ten Commandments - was **enhanced and dignified by the death of Christ!** (See Romans 3:31).

So the seeming contradiction is not real, after all. Paul is simply making the clearest possible distinction between two classes of Divine precepts - those that were temporary and provisional, and those that were changeless and eternal.

### **3.—THE “NEW COVENANT” CONSERVES AND PERPETUATES GOD’S UNCHANGING MORAL PRECEPTS.**

According to Hebrews, the “New Covenant” is not concerned with “ceremonial” or “priesthood” regulations at all; **nor does it envisage the introduction of some radically new “Moral” regulations**. On the contrary, the Divinely-given “Moral” Law of the Old Testament - the Ten Commandments - is the foundation of the “New Covenant,” and the object of this “New Covenant” is **not a change in God’s “Law” - but a change in man himself!**

It is most significant: (1) That the “New Covenant” promise is drawn from an Old Testament book - **Jeremiah** (31:31-33); (2) That the promise was made about **600 years before the Christian era began**. (3) That God speaks affectionately of “**My Law**,” as if His original precepts were still exceedingly precious to Him, and were to continue unchanged; (4) That the words, “My Law” are not to be understood in some amended or imaginary context, but in their **original**, Old Testament context, at the time the promise was made! (5) That, through this Covenant, God undertakes to fulfil the supreme ideal of the Christian faith, and of all true Biblical religion, namely, **the putting of His precepts inside the believer**, thus imbuing him with both the will and the power to keep them! (Compare Ezekiel 36:26-28)

Does this sound like the **abolition** of God’s “Moral” precepts, as expressed in the Ten Commandments? Never! If Paul’s words are thus interpreted, the plainest of plain English phrases have ceased to have any serious meaning!

*Conclusion* It would be well for every Christian believer who reads Paul’s references to the “New Covenant” to ask himself, sincerely and prayerfully: **“Have I come under the provisions of the “New Covenant?” Am I willing to do so? Am I willing to let God write the precepts of His holy law in MY heart - all ten of them?”**

If our answer is, “Yes, indeed!” we will have found the secret of that spontaneous and joyous obedience that marked the life of Jesus, when He said: “**I delight to do Your will, O My God, - yes, Your law is in My heart!**” (Psalms 40:8)

Blessed are those Christians whose daily commitment of heart and will is the echo of their Master’s prayer!

## HAS THE ORIGINAL BIBLE SABBATH BEEN LOST?

*Introduction* When the claims of the Bible Sabbath are presented nowadays, one of the commonest objections is: “**But who knows which day is the Sabbath? The original Sabbath has been lost!**”

In support of this claim it is argued that thousands of years have passed since early Bible times and, amid all the migrations; wars; revolutions, and changes of custom and calendar, the original order of the days of the week has become hopelessly jumbled up. So the claim is repeated: “**Nobody knows which day is the Sabbath. It might be Wednesday for all we know!**”

What force is there in this objection? **Has the original Sabbath become irretrievably lost?** Has civilized man as a whole become confused about the true order of the days of the week? Have changes in the calendar caused the Sabbath of Creation to disappear into the mists of antiquity?

The answer is a resounding “**No!**” Indeed, no legacy from antiquity is more completely intact than the seven-day week. **On no single fact of past or current history can we be more certain than the true order of the days of the week!**

Scientists, astronomers, historians and churchmen unite to testify that this is so. Three lines of carefully-winnowed, easily-verifiable evidence combine to buttress this assurance. These are: (1) **The Bible**; (2) **The History of the Calendar**, and (3) **The Science of Astronomy**.

*Discussion* There are three significant check-points at which we can establish, infallibly, the original order of the days of the week, and the true position of the Seventh day.

*(See Chart No. 31— Has the Original Bible Sabbath Been Lost?)*

### **CHECK-POINT No. 1 - THE GIVING OF THE MANNA (Exodus 16:4-35).**

From Creation, when God set apart the seventh day as the weekly Sabbath, the early patriarchs kept careful count of days, months and years (e.g. see the record of Noah and the Flood, Genesis 7:11, 12, 24; 8:4, 5, etc.). Yet, if men became confused or careless, God would not forget, and in the days of Moses, He removed all grounds for confusion or doubt by performing a dramatic, public, and long-continued miracle. This was the consistent, three-fold pattern in which the manna was given, over an incredible span of forty years!

First, a double portion of manna fell on the sixth day. Second, no manna fell on the seventh day. Third, the second portion of manna, left over from the sixth day, kept fresh and sweet during the Sabbath.

It is significant that neither Moses nor his companions were left to figure out for themselves which day was the Sabbath. **God Himself indicated, infallibly and unmistakably, the true seventh day**, by a spectacular, three-fold miracle, repeated over 2,000 times during a period of four decades.

The most confirmed skeptic could hardly ask for a more convincing or final demonstration than that!

### **CHECK-POINT No. 2 - THE PRACTICE OF CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES (Luke 4:16; 23:54-56).**

In the interval between the giving of the manna and the time of Christ, the Jewish people used a series of remarkable calendars, and kept careful records. Yet again, though men might lose track of days, God did not become confused.

Jesus' Sabbath-keeping "custom" (see the words "as His custom was" in Luke 4:16), proves conclusively that the Jews had not lost the true seventh day up to His time, for He kept the day then being observed by the Jews as the Sabbath. His disciples, also, honoured the Seventh day, as then observed, as "the Sabbath according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56).

If the Jews had been at fault in their reckoning of the Sabbath, we may be sure that Jesus would have corrected them.

Accordingly, at this second Check-point, the true position of the seventh day was not left in a fog of uncertainty. **For a period of thirty years it was unmistakably indicated again** - not by a public, weekly miracle like the giving of the manna - but by the weekly practice of the "Lord of the Sabbath" Himself! (Mark 2:27, 28).

### CHECK-POINT No. 3 - THE MODERN OBSERVANCE OF EASTER

In the 2,000-year interval between Christ's day and ours, it would have been impossible for the true seventh day to have been lost, for some very significant reasons:

1. **The world-wide, modern observance of Easter, which commemorates Christ's Crucifixion on Good Friday; His rest in the tomb on Easter Saturday, and His Resurrection on Easter Sunday. This observance is a public, irrefutable witness to the fact that the true seventh day has not been lost at any time during the Christian Age.**

*(See Chart No. 30 - The Three Days at Crucifixion Week-end)*

Three further evidences supplement the testimony of Easter:

2. Three remarkably-harmonious calendars have been in operation side-by-side for most of the Christian era. These are the Jewish, the Christian, and the Mohammedan calendars. Though they differ in some respects, **they all agree about the order of the days of the week. Saturday, for them all, corresponds with the seventh day!**
3. No calendar-change has altered the normal free-running order of the days of the week. For example, the sole change of the calendar in the Christian era, from the "Old Style" (Julian) to the "New Style" (Gregorian) - adopted in parts of Europe in 1582, and in England in 1752 - made a long-needed adjustment by dropping several calendar-dates from one month. However, the adjustment **affected the dates of the month, not the days of the week.** One month was shortened, but there was **no interference whatsoever with either the order or the names of the days of the week.** (See Additional Note, at conclusion).
4. Finally, to remove the last lingering shadow of a doubt, the Science of Astronomy adds its authoritative verdict. If a modern astronomer were to be confined for six months in an underground cavern, without clocks, or calendars, or instruments of any kind, so that he lost all count of days, **a few hours back in his observatory would enable him to tell - precisely - what day of the week it was!** Drawing on his past knowledge of the heavens, though without any reference to printed calendars, he could relocate himself in time solely by checking the position and movements of the heavenly bodies.

*Conclusion* One person, living in isolation without a calendar - whether Jew, Moslem or Christian - might conceivably lose track of a day, or several days, and thus become confused about which day of the week it was. However, immediately he renewed contact with relatives and friends, they would quickly point out his error and put him right. Individuals, communities and nations keep an automatic check on each other in this matter of time-determination, so that **the losing of the seventh day or any other day of the week - on a universal basis, is a sheer impossibility!**

**ADDITIONAL NOTE: DETAILS OF THE CHANGE OF  
THE CALENDAR FROM THE "JULIAN" TO THE "GREGORIAN" FORM**

(Introduced in parts of continental Europe in 1582, and England in 1752).

This calendar-change - the only such revision in the Christian Age - came about as follows: In common with the Jews, the ancient Romans used a week of seven days. Julius Caesar, first sole ruler, or dictator of Rome, came up with a reformed calendar plan, in the first century before Christ (46 B.C.). He measured years in **exactly 365 ¼ days**, with "excess" time accumulating, and making a year of 366 days every fourth year. (The "excess" time accumulated because the true solar or planetary year - measured by the earth's annual journey around the sun - requires **just under 365 ¼ days!**) Though the Julian year was **11 minutes and 10 seconds too long**, it was limited to a twelve-month period, and Caesar gave his own name to the month of July.

The Julian calendar also preserved the seven-day week of Genesis. The only trouble with this calendar was that the full day added every fourth year, made each year overflow its allotted span of 365 days, 5 hours, and 49 minutes, thus **creating an accumulating excess - not of real time, but of calendar-time.**

By the 16th century of the Christian era, the excess of calendar-time had increased to the place where the Julian Calendar was **10 days ahead of the normal season sequence**, and Pope Gregory XIII agreed to take the initiative in correcting the widening gap.

In 1582, so that the former displacement of calendar time might not recur, an Italian astronomer devised a new formula, which was approved by Pope Gregory in the same year. This proposed that **every Centesimal, or hundredth year (1800, 1900, 2100, etc.,) should not be counted a leap year, excepting every fourth hundredth, beginning with the year 2,000.** This formula works to keep the seasons in almost exact pace with the calendar years. So minute is the difference between the civil year and the natural year under the Gregorian scheme, that **it will not amount to one day in 5,000 years!**

To put the civil year back on schedule, **10 calendar days (i.e. dates of the month) were treated as non-existent.** The Julian calendar was not abandoned, but adjusted, and **October 5 of the "Old Style" calendar was simply re-numbered October 15.** The number and names of the Julian months was retained, as was the traditional order of the days of the week. Although the "Old Style" October 5 now had a different numerical designation, **it still remained the identical day of the week**, which was Friday in 1582. The **date** was altered, but not the **day.** The historic weekly cycle - the normal free-running sequence of seven days - was not upset in the slightest by Pope Gregory.

(For more details on the change of the Calendar, see leading Encyclopaedias, such as Britannica, World Book, Golden Book, Chambers, etc, as well as large Dictionaries).



## DOES COLOSSIANS 2:14-17 TEACH THAT THE WEEKLY SABBATH WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS?

### THE SEVEN "SHADOWY" SABBATHS OF LEVITICUS 23

In addition to the weekly Sabbath (Leviticus 23:3), there were **seven annual rest-days, or "Sabbaths"** that were linked with the Jewish seasonal festivals, and scattered throughout the ritual year.

1. **The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread** (vv 7, 8).
2. **The last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread** (vv 7, 8).
3. **The Day of Pentecost, or Feast of Weeks** (v 21).
4. **The first day of the seventh month- Feast of Trumpets** (v 24).
5. **The tenth day of the seventh month - Day of Atonement** (v 27).
6. **The first day of the Feast of Tabernacles** (vv 32-36).
7. **The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles** (vv 32-36).

These seven yearly rest-days, like the yearly "Feasts," were part of the "**Ceremonial Law**," and were tied to the seasons, and the harvests. They fell on specified days of the **month**, but not on specified days of the **week**. Like our birthdays, they might fall on any day of the week, as year followed year, and sometimes, inevitably, they coincided with the weekly Sabbath.

Because of God's command "**Ye shall do no work therein**," these ceremonial rest-days were also called "**Sabbaths**," and because special sacrifices were offered on these days, they were "**Shadows of things to come**," i.e. they pointed forward to Christ's great redemptive sacrifice on Calvary.

Leviticus 23:38 makes a clear distinction between the yearly Sabbaths and the Sabbath of Creation, by stating that the yearly Sabbaths were "**BESIDE the Sabbaths of the Lord**." ("Beside" means apart from, distinct from, separate from). A wider study of Scripture shows that these two classes of "rest-days" were distinct in **origin**, in **purpose**, and in **duration**.

\* \* \*

*Introduction* When the claims of the Seventh-day Sabbath are set forth as still being binding upon Christians, one of the first New Testament texts that is quoted in rebuttal is Colossians 2:14-17.

**"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross..... Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ."**

Three inferences are commonly drawn from this text:

- (1) That the "handwriting of ordinances" refers to the Ten Commandments.
- (2) That the "Sabbath days" mentioned refer to the weekly Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment.
- (3) That both the Ten Commandments and the weekly Sabbath were "taken out of the way," and "nailed to the Cross" when Christ died.

Our purpose in this Study Guide is to ask: "**Are these legitimate inferences? Is this the real meaning of the text?**"



*Discussion* At the outset, it is transparently clear that something of deep significance **was** changed when Jesus died; that the Cross **does** mark a transition-point of immense importance, and that some long-standing Old Testament institutions and observances **were**, indeed, “nailed to the Cross.”

What were these observances?

We are not left to guess.

The simplest clue to the meaning of Colossians 2:14-17 is found in the final sentence: **“which are a shadow of things to come.”**

All that we need to do is to divide the God-given observances of the Old Testament into two groups:

THOSE THAT <b>WERE</b> “SHADOWS”	THOSE THAT WERE <b>NOT</b> “SHADOWS”
<p>The “shadowy” (or typical) observances were the animal sacrifices; yearly holy days; meat offerings; drink offerings, etc.; that were appointed after the fall of man; that were tied in closely with the Hebrew festivals and the priesthood, and that pointed forward to Christ’s redemptive work.</p> <p>Seven annual rest-days, or festival “Sabbaths” are listed among these “shadowy” observances in Leviticus 23: 4-44, as being <b>“Beside (or in addition to) the Sabbaths of the Lord”</b> (Leviticus 23:38).</p> <p>However, these seven seasonal “Sabbaths” were <b>yearly</b>, not weekly, “holy days.” They were tied to dates of the month, but not to specified days of the week.</p>	<p>On the other hand, the great moral principles summarized in the Ten Commandments were certainly not “shadows!” They were designed to regulate human conduct for all time.</p> <p>Among these moral precepts, the weekly Sabbath dates from Creation, and had <b>no inherent forward-looking significance.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It was appointed <b>in Eden</b>, before man sinned. (Genesis 2:1-3)</li> <li>2. It was given as a <b>memorial</b>, pointing back to Creation - a great event in the past (Exodus 20:11).</li> <li>3. It was <b>not a type</b>, or “fore-shadowing” of redemption. Before the Fall, Adam did not need redemption. A “type,” or “shadow” of Christ’s great future sacrifice would have been meaningless to him, in his innocence in Eden.</li> </ol>
THESE WERE <b>ABOLISHED</b> AT THE CROSS.	THESE WERE <b>ESTABLISHED</b> AT THE CROSS.

(Chart No. 32 - A Key to Colossians 2:14-17, helps to clarify the difference between the weekly and yearly Sabbaths.)

Let the simple distinction be recognized between one fingerpost which points **BACKWARD**, and the other fingerpost which points **FORWARD**, and the difficulties that some folk have had with this text will disappear.

*Conclusion* A final observation and a final question are appropriate here:

**THE OBSERVATION:** To insist that this text abolishes the Ten Commandments is to make Paul contradict himself (Romans 7:12; 14; 22; 3:31), as well as to make him contradict Jesus (Matthew 5:17-19).

**THE QUESTION:** “What is there in the Cross of Christ that would threaten or repeal the Sabbath that was given to man in Eden?”

The answer is plain: “Nothing. Nothing whatsoever.” The Cross confirmed and established the great moral principles that are summed up in the Ten Commandments (Romans 3:31).



## GOD'S PREVIEW OF THE GREAT APOSTASY

*Introduction* Someone has imagined the amazement and alarm of Peter and Paul if they came to life today and made a survey of much that now passes as Christianity. The only yardstick the Apostles would know would be "the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), as described in the New Testament. As they compared many of the popular modern churches with the original Christian Church, it is certain that their hearts would be "stirred within them" as Paul's was when he passed along the streets of Athens (Acts 17:16).

Consider just a few of the strange, new officials, new objects and new practices they would find in the modern church, which were unheard of in the Early Church.

In the Modern Church	In the Early Church
<i>Popes, priests, cardinals, monks and nuns</i>	<i>Absolutely unknown</i>
<i>Monasteries, palaces, cathedrals</i>	<i>Absolutely unknown</i>
<i>Thrones, robes, crowns, mitres, jewels, pomp and pageantry</i>	<i>Absolutely unknown</i>
<i>Relics, images, holy water, beads, charms, medals, holy pictures</i>	<i>Absolutely unknown</i>

Outraged and indignant, the Apostles would cry: "What has happened to the simplicity and purity of the early Church? Who has been responsible for these unscriptural changes? Have God's watchmen been asleep, to allow the enemy to sow these tares?"

These questions are answered in the prophecy of the Seven Seals, found in Revelation 5 and 6. This is God's preview of the Great Apostasy.

*Discussion* This vision actually begins in chapter 4:1, 2, where John is given a view of the throne of God in Heaven. In chapter 5 he sees a mysterious book of seven sealed scrolls in the hand of God (v 1). This book is taken by the Lord Jesus Christ and, one by one, the seals of mystery are broken (vv 5-7).

### THE FIRST SEAL — REV. 6:1, 2

(See Chart No. 34—First Horseman)

The rider on the white horse presents a picture of the purity, enthusiasm and victory of the early Christian Church. The bow is the symbol of aggressive warfare. The white horse and the crown are symbols of triumph, and were used by Roman Emperors in the celebration of their victories.

So amazing was the initial "explosion" of Christianity that, within seventy years after the Crucifixion, the heralds of the Cross had carried the Gospel to the boundaries of the then-known world (Rom. 1:8; Col. 1:23). Historians estimate that by A.D. 100, 5 million converts had been won to Christ. During this period the Church was marked by purity of life and doctrine; evangelistic fervour; and uncompromising separation from the world.

NOTE: Inasmuch as no indication is given of the precise dates or events associated with the opening of the seals, we should avoid dogmatism here. The emphasis in each case is upon THE CHANGING CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH, rather than upon arbitrary periods of time. In general terms, the first seal would extend from Pentecost to the end of the first century. Furthermore, once opened, the seals are NEVER CLOSED, so the attitudes and qualities dramatised by each seal persist, with greater or less potency, throughout the entire Christian age.

**THE SECOND SEAL — REV. 6 : 3, 4***(See Chart No. 34—Second Horseman)*

The rider on the red horse pictures the **tragic corruption of original purity which took place in the Church after the first Apostles were laid to rest**. Red is the universal symbol of danger, war and bloodshed. In Bible times it stood for sin and corruption (Isa. 1 : 18).

In many parts of the Christian world, recent converts from heathenism grasped the helm of leadership and instead of resisting corrupting influences, turned the polluted streams of paganism into the pure fountain of Christian truth. Like drops of red ink in a vessel of clean water, these pagan elements soon stained the whole fabric of the Church's life and worship. **Belief in purgatory, the veneration of saints, prayers for the dead, the use of images in worship, infant baptism, the use of charms, rosary beads and holy water,** were just a few of the dark, red pagan drops.

**"There was given unto him a great sword."** Church leaders openly courted the favour of the civil power. After the so-called "conversion" of Constantine in A.D. 313, it became legal to be a Christian. Unholy alliances were formed between Church and State. The Church had now grasped the **"great sword" of civil power**, and was prepared to use political means to achieve spiritual ends. From this point onwards persecution of dissenters or "heretics" became a matter of settled Church policy.

**"Power to take peace from the earth."** Inevitably, this was a period of conflict, as well as compromise and corruption. The Church was torn by rivalries, jealousies, and bitter controversies which lasted, in some cases, for generations.

The period of this seal extends from the close of the first century to the period of Constantine.

**THE THIRD SEAL — REV. 6 : 5, 6***(See Chart No. 35—Third Horseman)*

The rider on the black horse symbolises the **increasing corruption of the Church**, which progressed rapidly from the time of Constantine to the beginning of Papal supremacy, in A.D. 538. During this period **the true Gospel was almost completely eclipsed by worldliness and superstition**. So radically changed did the Church become, so opposite in character to the Church of the New Testament, that God was now obliged to represent it by a **black horse—the very opposite to white!**

**"A pair of balances in his hand"**. The balances—symbol of worldly business and commercialism—indicate that by this time the fallen Church had abandoned its God-appointed task of world evangelisation. Like the man with the muck-rake in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress", who "could look no way but downward", the Church had become preoccupied with the things of this world. Bishops had begun to compete with worldlings in buying and selling and, by its vast accumulation of houses and lands, the Church became the wealthiest institution in Europe!

So completely did the apostate Church lose sight of the original Gospel that it even attempted to **sell the bread of life!** By such perversions as **purgatory, the mass, the indulgence and the confessional**, God's gift of salvation was offered in exchange for money. Balances are also the symbol of judgment, and may here picture the Church's attempt to climb into the judgment seat, to rule the consciences, and to decide the destinies of men.

**"A measure of wheat for a penny"**. Here is food being doled out at famine prices. This "measure" (choenix) held less than a quart—a meagre daily ration for a soldier. A "penny" (denarius) represented a full day's wages for a labourer.

**"Three measures of barley for a penny"**. In normal times, a penny would buy twenty-four measures of barley, but here only three—the daily ration allotted to a slave!

These were days of widespread spiritual darkness and famine, when a cheap substitute for the bread of life was being offered to the people, yet the darkness was relieved by one bright ray of hope.

**"See that thou hurt not the oil and the wine"**. Here is evidence that even in the days of darkest apostasy, the rich bounties of heaven would still flow freely to the earth, and the light of true religion would never be completely extinguished. In spite of the very worst that Satan could do, he could not obstruct or pervert the free and unceasing ministry of the Holy Spirit—bringing enlightenment, refreshment and comfort—here symbolised by "the oil and the wine". This is a clear indication also, that even in these days of deepest spiritual famine, God nourished and preserved a remnant of faithful witnesses, who resisted the Great Apostasy.

#### **THE FOURTH SEAL — REV. 6 : 7, 8**

*(See Chart No. 35—Fourth Horseman)*

The rider on the pale horse is the symbol of **apostasy in full flower**, when the State-church of the Middle Ages—the professed Church of Jesus Christ—became an **instrument of ruthless tyranny and persecution**. The word "Hell" here is from the Greek "Hades", and means the "power of the grave". Here is the complete reversal of God's original purpose for His Church, and at first sight, a complete triumph for Satan. **The Church which Jesus founded as the ambassador of life and peace has now become a pitiless engine of destruction and death—a hideous and unrecognisable caricature of the Church of the New Testament!**

Yet this has always been the inevitable harvest of departure from the pure worship of God. From the day that Cain killed Abel, the disobedient and perverse have always sought to justify their rebellious ways by silencing those who protested, and clung to the worship of God in its original simplicity. **The fourth horseman is a graphic and accurate symbol of the tremendous mortality which occurred during the period of Papal supremacy**. For a thousand years the soil of Europe was drenched with the blood of an estimated 50 million martyrs. The era of the pale horse was the era of the "Inquisition", and the world still shudders at its memory. The historian Wylie says of this dark era: **"It was the noonday of the Papacy; but the noonday of the Papacy was the midnight of the world!"**

This seal extends from the beginning of Papal supremacy to the opening of the Protestant Reformation.

#### **THE FIFTH SEAL — REV. 6 : 9-11**

*(See Chart No. 36 —The Souls Under the Altar)*

The opening of the fifth seal reveals the **victims of the fourth horseman—"Protestants"** before the Reformation, martyred millions lying at the foot of a bloodstained altar—pleading with God for retribution.

**"The Souls under the Altar"**. "Souls" is used here in the common Biblical sense of "persons" or "people" and, though slain, they are represented as crying to God by the same metaphor—personification—which is used in Gen. 4:10, where the voice of Abel's blood is represented as "crying to God from the ground".

**"The altar"**. The "altar" in this case is a fitting symbol of the lands of Western Europe, which for centuries had been crimsoned with martyr blood.

**"How long, O Lord?"** As a fact of history, the cry, "How long, O Lord?", was also raised by the Protestant Reformation, when brave men lifted their voices against Papal tyranny, called for a cessation of persecution, and insisted that the martyrs be recognised as the champions of truth and soul-liberty—men and women who were nearer to God's ideal than were their cruel executioners.

“White robes were given unto every one of them”. The “white robes” may be understood in two ways:

- (1) **Characters vindicated before men.** As a result of the Reformation, the opinion of millions concerning the martyrs has been radically changed. We now look back upon them with profound admiration. Whereas they were put to death as criminals and vermin, we think of them as heroes, and covet their faith and fortitude.
- (2) **Characters vindicated before God.** The white robe is the Biblical symbol of the righteousness of Christ. In spite of scorn, rejection, torture and death at the hands of men, God sees the martyrs as clothed in the stainless perfection of His Son, and their eternal acceptance with Him is assured (Rev. 3 : 4, 5).

#### THE SIXTH SEAL — REV. 6 : 12, 13

*(See Chart No. 36—Earthquake, Sun Darkened, Stars Fall)*

The opening of the sixth seal introduces three great convulsions of nature which followed the cessation of Papal persecution in Europe. To the watchful child of God, these are unmistakable preliminary signs of the soon return of Jesus.

- (1) **The Great Earthquake.** In view of the time of the opening of this seal—about 1750, when widespread religious persecution had ceased—“the great earthquake” is evidently that of Lisbon, Portugal, November 1, 1755. This was the most devastating and extensive earthquake ever recorded, up to that time. Ninety thousand lives were lost, and half the world felt the convulsion. Four million square miles of the earth’s surface were affected. In six minutes, 60,000 people perished in the Lisbon area alone. The appalling magnitude of this earthquake led many to regard it as a sign that the end of all things was at hand.
- (2) **The Darkening of the Sun and Moon.** Following the great earthquake, John’s attention was drawn to an extraordinary darkening of the sun. The fulfilment of this prediction occurred on May 19, 1780—twenty-five years after the Lisbon Earthquake—when the sun was unaccountably extinguished during the daylight hours. Webster’s dictionary refers to this phenomenon as “THE DARK DAY”. He does not state that several such “Dark Days” have occurred in history, but refers to **one only**. The darkness extended over a large portion of North America—commencing at about mid-morning and continuing until midnight. When the moon rose that night, it had the appearance of blood. Though many reliable records were made at the time no one has ever been able to account for this uncanny darkness. It was not due to an eclipse, for the heavenly bodies were not in the correct position. Webster’s dictionary says, “The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known.”
- (3) **The Falling of the Stars.** This third great natural phenomenon occurred about fifty years after the Dark Day, on the night of November 13, 1833, when meteoric showers of unparalleled brilliance were witnessed over a wide area of North America. This unforgettable display of “falling stars” was by far the most spectacular event of its kind ever recorded. Eye-witnesses estimated that the stars fell like a continuous fiery hailstorm at the rate of 200,000 an hour for five or six hours, and declared that they fell in the very manner described by the prophet: “**Even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken by a mighty wind**” (Rev. 6 : 13).

When listing the signs of His Second Coming, Jesus said that a darkening of the sun and moon and a falling of stars would herald His return (Matt. 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27). The striking similarity of Jesus’ words to those of John shows that the great natural disturbances of the sixth seal are **mammoth signs of the approaching end of the age**.

This conclusion is further reinforced by the fact that the closing verses of Revelation 6 lead us right up to the actual appearing of the King of kings (vv 14-17).

**THE SEVENTH SEAL — REV. 8 : 1**

*(See Chart No. 37 —Silence in Heaven, Christ Comes)*

The opening of the seventh seal rings down the curtain upon human history.

**“Silence in Heaven”**. This refers to the fact that Heaven will be emptied for a short period at the Second Advent, for the whole angelic host will accompany Jesus to the earth (Matt. 25 : 31).

**“About the space of half an hour”**. In prophetic time, which is reckoned on the basis of a day for a year, this would amount to about seven days. Evidently Jesus’ journey to the earth at the Second Advent, and His subsequent return to Heaven with His people, will occupy about one week of time.

*Conclusion*      And now it is time to ask the question which enables us to **put ourselves** into this great prophecy of the Seven Seals: **Why has God given US a chance to hear these things?**

He wants to save us from the dangers of compromise, even in little things.

He wants to fire our hearts with the same heroic loyalty which kept the martyrs faithful unto death.

He wants us to love His appearing, and be ready to meet Him in peace. This call to preparedness has especial meaning for us, because **we are now living between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals!**





## KEYS TO BIBLE SYMBOLISM

*(See Chart No. 38—Seven Keys to Bible Symbolism)*

### 1.—WINDS = WAR, STRIFE, UNREST, INVASION, DIVINE JUDGMENT

**Dan. 7 : 2:** "The four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea."

**Jer. 4 : 13:** "His [Babylon's] chariots shall be as a whirlwind."

**Jer. 25 : 31-33:** "Evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth."

**Jer. 23 : 19; 30 : 23:** "The whirlwind of the Lord."

**Jer. 49 : 35-37:** "Upon Elam will I bring the four winds . . . and I will send the sword after them."

**Jer. 51 : 1, 2, 11:** "I will raise up against Babylon a destroying wind . . . The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes."

**Dan. 11 : 40:** "The king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots and with horsemen and with many ships."

**Rev. 7 : 1, 2:** "Four angels, holding the four winds of the earth, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea."

### 2.—WATERS = PEOPLES, MULTITUDES, NATIONS, ARMIES

**Dan. 7 : 2, 3:** "The four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea . . . And four great beasts came up from the sea."

**Rev. 17 : 1, 15:** "The waters which thou sawest are peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues."

**Isa. 8 : 7, 8:** "The Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river . . . even the king of Assyria."

**Isa. 17 : 12, 13:** "The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters."

**Ezek. 26 : 3:** "I will cause many nations to come up against thee, O Tyrus, as the sea causeth his waves to come up."

**Rev. 12 : 15:** "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood."

### 3.—BEASTS = NATIONS, KINGDOMS, POLITICAL POWERS

**Dan. 7 : 3:** "And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another."

**Dan. 7 : 17:** "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings [kingdoms] which shall arise out of the earth."

**Dan. 7 : 23:** "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth."

**Jer. 4 : 7:** "The lion [Babylon] is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way."

**Jer. 50 : 17:** "Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away; first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones."

**Jer. 50 : 43, 44:** "The king of Babylon shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan."

### 4.—HEADS = KINGDOMS, DIVISIONS OF KINGDOMS

**Dan. 7 : 6:** "The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it."

**Rev. 12 : 3:** "A great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns."

**Rev. 13 : 1:** "I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns."

**Rev. 17 : 3:** "I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast . . . having seven heads and ten horns."

**Rev. 17 : 9, 10:** "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings [kingdoms]."

**5.—HORNS = KINGS, KINGDOMS, DIVISIONS OF KINGDOMS, POWER, AUTHORITY**

**Dan. 7 : 7:** "A fourth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had **ten horns.**"

**Dan. 7 : 24:** "The **ten horns** are **ten kings** [kingdoms] that shall arise."

**Dan. 8 : 3, 20:** "The **ram** which thou sawest having **two horns** are the **kings** [kingdoms] of Media and Persia."

**Dan. 8 : 5, 8, 21:** "The **rough goat** is the king of Grecia, and the **great horn** that is between his eyes is the **first king.**"

**Dan. 8 : 22:** "Whereas **four** [horns] stood up for it, **four kingdoms** shall stand up out of the nation."

**Ps. 75 : 4, 5, 10:** "The **horns** of the wicked also will I cut off; but the **horns** of the righteous shall be exalted."

**Jer. 48 : 25:** "The **horn** of Moab is cut off."

**Rev. 5 : 6:** "A **lamb** having **seven horns** and **seven eyes.**"

**Rev. 12 : 3:** "A **great red dragon**, having **seven heads** and **ten horns.**"

**Rev. 13 : 1:** "A **beast** having **seven heads** and **ten horns.**"

**Rev. 13 : 11:** "Another **beast** coming up out of the earth; and he had **two horns** like a **lamb.**"

**Rev. 17 : 3:** "A **scarlet coloured beast**, having **seven heads** and **ten horns.**"

**Rev. 17 : 12, 16:** "And the **ten horns** which thou sawest are **ten kings** [kingdoms]."

**6.—WINGS = SWIFTNESS OF MOVEMENT, EXTENT OF CONQUEST OR FLIGHT**

**Dan. 7 : 4:** "The first was like a **lion**, and had **eagle's wings.**"

**Dan. 7 : 6:** "Lo another, like a **leopard**, which had upon the back of it **four wings** of a fowl."

**Ezek. 17 : 3, 12:** "A **great eagle** with **great wings** . . . Know ye not what these things mean? . . . Behold, the **king of Babylon** is come."

**Hab. 1 : 6-8:** "Lo, I raise up the **Chaldeans** . . . Their **horses** also are **swifter** than the **leopards** . . . They shall **fly** as the **eagle** that hasteth to eat."

**Jer. 4 : 13:** "His [Babylon's] **horses** are **swifter** than the **eagles** of heaven."

**Deut. 28 : 49:** "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from afar, as **swift** as the **eagle** flieth."

**Rev. 12 : 14:** "And to the woman were given **two wings** of a **great eagle**, that she might fly into the wilderness."

**7.—DAYS = YEARS**

**Num. 14 : 33, 34:** "Your children shall wander in the wilderness **forty years** . . . After the number of the **days** in which ye searched the land, **even forty days, each day** for a year, ye shall bear your iniquities."

**Ezek. 4 : 6:** "Thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah **forty days**; I have appointed thee **each day** for a year."

**Dan. 8 : 14:** "Unto two thousand and three hundred **days**; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

**Dan. 9 : 24:** "**Seventy weeks** are determined upon thy people."

**Rev. 12 : 6, 14:** "That they should feed her there a **thousand two hundred and threescore days** . . . where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time."

**Rev. 13 : 5:** "And power was given to him to continue **forty and two months.**"

**Dan. 7 : 25:** "A time, times, and the dividing of time."

**Dan. 12 : 7:** "A time, times, and an half."

## SATAN'S WARFARE AGAINST THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

**Introduction** Deut. 4 : 2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it."

(See Chart No 22 —God's Commandments—Our Protection)

Throughout the ages, Satan has used many weapons against the Ten Commandments, but the most dangerous weapon of all has been the teaching that Christ gave the Church authority to add to or take away from the Commandments of God. In spite of God's thrice-repeated warning (Deut. 4 : 2; Prov. 30 : 6; Rev. 22 : 18), this doctrine has shaped the thinking and conduct of millions of professed Christians.

This may come as surprise to us, but it has not taken God by surprise. He predicted it long ago. How Satan has used leading men of the Church to make a breach in the law of God, is the theme of one of the most absorbing prophecies of the Bible. It is found in Daniel, chapter 7.

**Discussion** 1.—THE FOUR GREAT BEASTS AND THE TEN HORNS (vv 1-8 and 15-25)

(See Chart No. 38—Seven Keys to Bible Symbolism, also No. 39 —Lion and Bear, and No. 40—Leopard and Fourth Beast)

The simplest way to explain these symbols is to compare Daniel 7 with Daniel 2. The same four empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome—followed by a ten-fold division, are symbolised in both chapters.

DANIEL 2		DANIEL 7	
Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning
Head of Gold (vv 37, 38)	BABYLON	Lion (v 4)	BABYLON
Breast and arms of of Silver (v 39)	MEDO-PERSIA	Bear (v 5)	MEDO-PERSIA
Thighs of Brass (v 39)	GREECE	Leopard (v 6)	GREECE
Legs of Iron (v 40)	ROME	Fourth Beast (vv 7, 19, 23)	ROME
Feet and Toes (vv 41-43)	KINGDOMS OF WESTERN EUROPE	Ten Horns (vv 7, 8, 20, 24)	KINGDOMS OF WESTERN EUROPE

Note especially the close correspondence between the description of the legs of iron (Dan. 2 : 40), and the fourth beast (Dan. 7 : 7, 19, 23). The language used in both cases is almost identical (e.g. "iron", "break in pieces and bruise", etc.). This comparison provides the most conclusive key to the identification of the Fourth Beast as Rome.

2.—THE MYSTERIOUS "LITTLE HORN" (vv 8, 20, 25)

This was the detail that intrigued Daniel (vv 19, 20), and it is obviously the focal point of the whole chapter. Ten clear specifications are given, which enable us to identify this power with absolute certainty.

(See Chart No. 41—Identification of the Little Horn)

There is only one power in all history that has fulfilled these prophetic specifications to the letter, namely—**THE PAPACY**. The details are so numerous and explicit that there is no possibility of mistake. With reliable histories of Western Europe before us, let us now consider in detail how the **rise, location, character and work** of the Papacy fulfil these ten specifications:

(i) **Arose out of the Fourth Beast** (vv 7, 8)

The Papacy is essentially a **Roman power**, both in origin and character. It was cradled in **Italy**. Its headquarters have always been in **Rome**. It inherited many of the qualities and material assets of **Imperial Rome**. It bears the name, **Roman Catholic Church**, to this day.

(ii) **Among the Ten Horns** (v 8)

The Papacy did grow up, like a new horn on the head of a bullock, in the midst of the barbarian kingdoms which partitioned the old Roman Empire. It has been, throughout its long history, a **Western European power**. Says the historian Wylie: "Fully to trace the rise and development of this stupendous system, were to write a **history of Western Europe**" (J. S. Wylie, *The Papacy*, p 1). And Myers states: "Long before the fall of Rome, there had begun to grow up within the Roman Empire an ecclesiastical state which was shaping itself upon the imperial model" (*General History for Colleges*, p 348). Yet another historian, James Harvey Robinson, declares: "Besides the Emperors at Constantinople, and the various German kings, there grew up in Europe a line of rulers far more powerful than any of these, namely, the Popes" (*Mediaeval and Modern Times*, p 40).

Mark the words, "**grow up within the Roman Empire**", and "**grew up in Europe**". One would almost think the historians were writing a deliberate commentary on the prophecy of Daniel!

(iii) **After the Ten Horns** (v 24)

The most significant crisis in the collapse of the old Roman Empire occurred in A.D. 476 when, after a series of humiliations by barbarian invaders, the Emperor Romulus Augustulus abdicated. The political supremacy of the Papacy, however, did not begin until sixty-two years later when, in A.D. 533, Justinian, Emperor of Eastern Rome, decreed that the Bishop of Rome should be recognised as the "**Head of all the Holy Churches**". This decree was put into effect in A.D. 538. Thus the Papacy grew into full power **after the barbarian kingdoms had divided Rome's territories**.

*(See Chart No. 15—Map of European Kingdoms)*

(iv) **Different from the other Horns** (v 24)

The Papacy was **different** from all preceding or contemporary kingdoms. They were normal political or secular powers, established usually by force of arms. The Papacy was an **abnormal combination of religion and politics**. Its authority was based, not upon **military conquest, but upon the claim to possess an express mandate from God!** Its very essence was an alliance between Church and State, with the Church controlling the State. The Pope was a Priest-King. Once again the words of the historian Myers are to the point: "Long before the fall of Rome, there had begun to grow up within the Roman Empire an **ecclesiastical state**, which was shaping itself upon the imperial model. This **spiritual empire**, like the secular empire, possessed a hierarchy of officers, of which deacons, priests or presbyters, and bishops were the most important . . . Another consequence of the fall of the Roman power in the west was the development of the Papacy. In the absence of an Emperor in the west, the popes rapidly gained influence and power and soon built up an **ecclesiastical empire** that in some respects took the place of the old empire." (*General History for Colleges*, pp 348, 316)

A "spiritual" or "ecclesiastical empire" means a "religious" or "Church empire"—**an Imperial Church**. This is something altogether unique in world history!

**(v) Had a Look more Stout than His Fellows (v 20)**

The historian Robinson bears witness to the fact that the Papacy did indeed become the mightiest power in Mediaeval Europe: "Besides the emperors at Constantinople and the various German kings, there grew up in Europe a line of rulers far more powerful than any of these, namely, the Popes . . . We must follow this most powerful and permanent of all the institutions of the later Roman Empire into the middle ages. We must stop first to consider how the Western, or Latin, portion of Christendom, which gradually fell apart from the Eastern, or Greek region, came to form a separate institution under the Popes, the longest and mightiest line of rulers that the world has ever seen." (*Mediaeval and Modern Times*, pp 40, 41)

Mark the historian's words: "the mightiest power"; "most powerful and permanent"; "the longest and mightiest line of rulers"!

**(vi) Uprooted Three Kingdoms (vv 8, 20, 24)**

(See Chart No. 15—Map of European Kingdoms)

From the time of Constantine (A.D. 306–337), to that of Justinian (A.D. 527–565), a long and violent struggle continued between the two largest factions of the Church: (a) Those who supported the Bishop of Rome against (b) those who embraced the doctrines of Arius, a heretical priest of Alexandria. The Emperors of Eastern Rome, whose capital was now in Constantinople, were foremost in championing the Catholic cause. The strife was often bitter and bloody. Most of the barbarian nations, to whom the Roman Empire had now yielded, bowed to the authority of the Bishop of Rome. But the Heruli, the Vandals and the Ostrogoths challenged his sovereignty. They were confirmed Arians. The first Arian "horn" was uprooted in A.D. 493 when Theodoric, leader of the Ostrogoths, crushed the power of the Heruli in Italy. A generation later, under the impact of Justinian's forces, fighting the cause of the Roman pontiff, the last two barriers to Papal supremacy collapsed in this order:

The Vandals in A.D. 534.

The Ostrogoths in A.D. 538.

Henceforth the very names of these three kingdoms disappear from European history. They have no modern successors.

**(vii) Spoke great words against the Most High (v 25)**

To such incredible lengths did the Papal Church go, when intoxicated with the wine of power, that a frail mortal, the Bishop of Rome, was exalted and worshipped as "another God on earth"! He was further declared to have power to forgive sins against God, and authority to "change even the precepts of Christ"!

Think of it! . . . A feeble man, who forgets, and makes mistakes—like other men; who needs food and drink and sleep—like other men; who gets tired and ill, and grows old, and at last dies—like other men; who sins grievously, and needs to be forgiven—like other men; such a man was given Divine titles and honours and finally declared to be "infallible"! . . . Such is the delirium of power!

Thus the very institution which should have been a spokesman for God became a mouthpiece for the Prince of Darkness, to "speak great words against the Most High".

**(viii) Wore Out the Saints of the Most High (v 25)**

It is conservatively estimated that during the Middle Ages, 50,000,000 martyrs perished under the Papal sword. For centuries the soil of Europe was crimsoned with martyr blood. Great armies were raised and crusades were launched for the sole purpose of exterminating the so-called "heretics". The world still shudders at the memory of the "Inquisition", but how many remember that this inhuman tribunal was both the creation and the tool of the Papal power?

Lecky, the rationalist historian, declares: "That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history." (*Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, p 32).

(ix) **Thought to Change Times and Laws** (v 25)

Becoming more and more arrogant and presumptuous, the Papal church did not hesitate to **tamper with the law of God!** The very institution which should have been foremost in championing the Divine commandments now took a bold initiative in **breaching God's protecting wall**. Finding the **second commandment** out of harmony with its use of images in worship, the Papal church attempted to eliminate this sacred precept, as can be discovered by reading almost any Catholic Catechism today. Then, ignoring the plain requirements of the **fourth commandment** concerning the seventh day as the Sabbath of the Lord, it commenced to legislate vigorously in favour of Sunday—the first day of the week. According to the prophecy, the "Little Horn" power was to **"think to change times and laws"**. The only Divine precept concerning "time" is the fourth commandment!

(See Chart No. 42—*The Commandments as given by God, and as changed by man*)

(x) **Reigned for a Time, Times, and the Dividing of Time** (v 25)

(See Chart No. 43—*Diagram of the 1260 Days*)

**Events at the Beginning of the Reign of the "Little Horn"**

The Bishop of Rome was **enthroned** as the spiritual Head of Christendom by the decree of Justinian in **A.D. 538**.

After centuries of struggle with the Arian heresy on the one hand, and with the rival Catholic bishops on the other, the Papacy at length found a powerful champion in Justinian, who ascended the throne of Constantinople as Emperor of Eastern Rome in A.D. 527. Eager to patronise the Roman Church as a stepping-stone to the re-conquest of the Western Empire, Justinian waged unrelenting war against the Arian rulers, and legislated vigorously in favour of the Catholic party. In A.D. 533, Justinian proclaimed the Bishop of Rome as **"head of all the Holy Churches"** and **"the true and effective corrector of heretics"**, ruling also that the Archbishop of Constantinople should hold second place. This decree went into full effect in A.D. 538 when Belisarius, Justinian's general, gave the death-blow to the Ostrogoths, the last of the three great Arian powers. In the same year (A.D. 538), Justinian published edicts compelling all non-Catholics to join the church in ninety days or leave the Empire, and confiscated all their goods.

**Events at the end of the Reign of the "Little Horn"**

The Bishop of Rome was **dethroned**, as a consequence of the French Revolution, in **A.D. 1798**.

In 1797, when Pope Pius VI became seriously ill, Napoleon gave orders that in the event of his death, no successor should be elected to his office, and the Papal rule should cease. But the Pope recovered, and on 10th February, 1798, on pretence of an insult to the French ambassador in Italy, Berthier, general of the French Revolutionary forces and Napoleon's famous Chief of Staff, entered Rome and took the Pope prisoner. The aged bishop was arrested on the night of 20th February, the twenty-eighth anniversary of his elevation to the Papal chair; the ring of authority was torn from his finger; his property was confiscated and sold; the Papal states were abolished and Rome was declared a republic. The Pope himself was carried off to France, where he died a captive, worn out with fatigue and sorrow, at Valence, on 29th August, 1799. For a long interval the Papal throne was vacant.

Up till the Revolution, France had been a leading supporter of the Papacy for many centuries, and was called **"The Eldest Son of the Church"**. Consequently, this disaster

brought to an end the age-long political supremacy of the bishop of Rome, and dealt the Papacy a wound from which it has not yet fully recovered.

**In the face of such conclusive evidence, there can be no shadow of doubt concerning the true identity of the "Little Horn". Twelve hundred years of history point unerringly at the Papal power, declaring: "Thou art the man!"**

### **3.—CHRIST—NOT SATAN—SPEAKS THE FINAL WORD (vv 26, 27)**

**"The mills of God grind slowly,"** said an ancient sage, **"but they grind exceeding small!"** As if to convince us of this, God mentions **the final judgment** three times in Daniel 7 (vv 10, 22, 26); and **His eternal Kingdom** four times (vv 14, 18, 22, 27). This is a Divine Guarantee that, whilst Satan's warfare against God's commandments has been long and determined, **Christ—not Satan—will speak the final word!**

### *Conclusion*    **Ex. 32 : 26: "Who is on the Lord's side?"**

We cannot close a Bible lesson such as this without facing the personal challenge:

**On which side do WE stand in this great conflict between truth and error?**

Are we working **with Satan** to enlarge the breach in God's law? Or, are we working **with God** to repair the breach? These are life-and-death questions. May God help us to say with Joshua: **"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."** (Joshua 24 : 15)





## THE TESTIMONY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH CONCERNING THE CHANGE OF THE SABBATH

\* \* \*

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS BY ROMAN CATHOLIC AUTHORS

\* \* \*

**"Question: How prove you that the Church hath power to command feasts and holy days?"**

**"Answer: By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves, by keeping Sunday strictly and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same Church" ("An Abridgement of Christian Doctrine", p 58, by Henry Tuberville. New York, Kenedy, 1833 approbation).**

\* \* \*

**"This observance of the Sabbath\*—in which, after all, the only Protestant worship consists—not only has no foundation in the Bible, but it is in flagrant contradiction with its letter, which commands rest on the Sabbath, which is Saturday.**

**"It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Church" ("Plain Talk about the Protestantism of Today", p 213, by Monsignor Segur. Thomas B. Noonan & Co., Boston, 1868).**

**\*By "the Sabbath", Monsignor Segur obviously means Sunday. He is therefore using the term in the popular but not the Biblical sense.**

\* \* \*

**"The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday . . . The Protestant world at its birth found the Christian Sabbath too strongly entrenched to run counter to its existence; it was therefore placed under the necessity of acquiescing in the arrangement, thus implying the Church's right to change the day, for over three hundred years. The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day, the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church as spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world" ("The Catholic Mirror", Sept. 23, 1893, from the last of a weekly series of four editorials entitled: "The Christian Sabbath". The "Catholic Mirror" was the official organ of Cardinal Gibbons, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.).**

\* \* \*

**"The first precept in the Bible is that of sanctifying the seventh day: 'God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it' (Gen. 2 : 3). This precept was confirmed by God in the Ten Commandments: 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God' (Exodus 20). On the other hand, Christ declares that He is not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it (Matt. 5 : 17). He Himself observed the Sabbath: 'and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day' (Luke 4 : 16). His disciples likewise observed it after His death: 'They rested on the Sabbath day according to the commandment' (Luke 23 : 56). Yet with all this weight of Scripture authority for keeping the Sabbath, or seventh day, holy, Protestants of all denominations make this a profane day, and transfer the obligation of it to the first day of the week, or the Sunday. Now what authority have they for doing this? None, whatever, except the unwritten word, or tradition, of the Catholic Church" ("End of Religious Controversy", p 89, by John Milner. P. J. Kenedy, New York, 1897).**

**“Question: Is the observance of Sunday as the day of rest a matter clearly laid down in Scripture?”**

**“Answer:** It certainly is not; and yet all Protestants consider the observance of this particular day as essentially necessary to salvation. To say we observe the Sunday because Christ rose from the dead on that day, is to say we act without warrant of Scripture; and we might as well say that we should rest on Thursday, because Christ ascended to heaven on that day, and rested in reality from the work of redemption” (“**The Controversial Catechism**,” p 160, by Stephen Keenan. Burns & Oates, London, 1896 edition).

\* \* \*

**“Question: Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?”**

**“Answer:** Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her—she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day—a change for which there is no Scriptural authority” (Ibid, pp 124, 125).

\* \* \*

“You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorising the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we [Catholics] never sanctify” (“**The Faith of Our Fathers**”, p 89, by James Cardinal Gibbons. James Murphy Company, New York, 1917).

\* \* \*

“Protestants often deride the authority of Church tradition, and claim to be directed by the Bible only; yet they, too, have been guided by the customs of the ancient Church, which find no warrant in the Bible, but rest on Church tradition only! A striking instance of this is the following: The first positive command in the Decalogue is to ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy’, and this precept was enforced by the Jews for thousands of years. But the Sabbath day, the observance of which God commanded, was our Saturday. Yet who among either Catholics or Protestants, except a sect or two, like the ‘Seventh Day Baptists’, ever keep that commandment now? None. Why is this? The Bible which Protestants claim to obey exclusively, gives no authorisation for the substitution of the first day of the week for the seventh. On what authority, therefore, have they done so? Plainly on the authority of that very Catholic Church which they abandoned and whose traditions they condemn” (“**Rebuilding a Lost Faith**”, p 80, by John L. Stoddard. P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York, 1922).

\* \* \*

**“What Bible authority is there for changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week? Who gave the Pope authority to change a command of God? If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, then the Seventh-day Adventist is right in observing the Saturday with the Jew . . . Is it not strange that those who make the Bible their only teacher should inconsistently follow in this matter the tradition of the Church?”** (“**The Question Box Answers**”, p 179, by Bertrand L. Conway. With a preface by Cardinal Gibbons. The Paulist Press, New York, 1923).

\* \* \*

**“Question: Which is the Sabbath day?”**

**“Answer:** Saturday is the Sabbath.

**“Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?”**

**“Answer:** We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336) transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday” (“**The Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine**”, p 50, by Peter Geiermann, London, 1934. Sanctioned by the Vatican, Jan. 25, 1910).

"The Jews' Sabbath Day was Saturday; we Christians keep Sunday holy. The Church, by the power our Lord gave her, changed the observance of Saturday to Sunday.

"A word about Sunday. God said: 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day!' The Sabbath was Saturday, not Sunday; why, then, do we keep Sunday holy instead of Saturday? The Church altered the observance of the Sabbath to the observance of Sunday . . . Protestants who say that they go by the Bible and the Bible only, and that they do not believe anything that is not in the Bible, must be rather puzzled by the keeping of Sunday when God distinctly said, 'Keep holy the Sabbath day'. The word Sunday does not come anywhere in the Bible so, without knowing it, they are obeying the authority of the Catholic Church" ("The Catechism Simply Explained", p 89, by H. Canon Cafferata. Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd., London, 1938).

\* \* \*

"Now, as we have shown, the law of Sunday observance is not an immutable decree of God, but a law of our own making. The same factors (Christian law and custom) which fashioned, phrased and interpreted it to suit the needs of the sixth century, can, if need be, refashion or reinterpret it to meet the special needs of today" (Article, "Sunday is not the Sabbath", by Lawrence L. McReavy, p 58, "The Australian Catholic Digest", Sept., 1941. Published by the Advocate Press, Melbourne, Australia).

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"In the year A.D. 321, the Roman Emperor Constantine decreed that the first day of the week, Sunday, was to be observed as a civic day of rest from ordinary work and business. That did not impose any obligations of religious observance upon Christians. But in A.D. 336 the Catholic Church, at the Council of Laodicea, made the ecclesiastical law obliging the faithful to attend Mass and to abstain from servile work on Sundays" (pp 23, 24, Roman Catholic Tract entitled "Seventh-day Adventists", by Dr. L. Rumble).

\* \* \*

"The word, 'Sabbath', means rest, and is Saturday, the seventh day of the week.

"Why, then, do Christians observe Sunday instead of the day mentioned in the Bible? In order to make clear to the Jews that they are no longer under the Old Law of Moses, with its requirements of circumcision, abstinence from certain meats, and the scrupulous observance of the Jewish sacrifice on the Sabbath, but under the New Law of Christ, the infant Church changed the day to be kept holy from Saturday to Sunday.

"But since Saturday, not Sunday, is specified in the Bible, isn't it curious that non-Catholics who profess to take their religion directly from the Bible and not from the Church, observe Sunday instead of Saturday? Yes, of course, it is inconsistent; but this change was made about fifteen centuries before Protestantism was born, and by that time the custom was universally observed. They have continued the custom, even though it rests upon the authority of the Catholic Church and not upon an explicit text in the Bible. That observance remains as a reminder of the Mother Church from which the non-Catholic sects broke away—like a boy running away from home but still carrying in his pocket a picture of his mother, or a lock of her hair" ("The Faith of Millions", pp 543, 544, by John A. O'Brien (with a preface by Cardinal Griffin). W. H. Allen, London, 1958. First cheap edition).

\* \* \*

"One practice we have, which Protestants observe, and there is not a word about it in the Bible—that is the keeping of Sunday holy.

"The Bible tells us to keep Saturday holy. The change was made by Christian tradition dating back to the time of the Apostles. But not one of them said a single word about making the change, when writing the New Testament" ("Commentary on the Catechism", p 88, by W. Frean, "Majellan" Office, Redemptorist Fathers, Ballarat, Vic. Printed in Australia, 1959. Foreword by His Eminence, Cardinal Gilroy).



## HOW WERE MEN SAVED BEFORE CALVARY'S CROSS ?

*Introduction* When we studied **Why Jesus Came to the World** (Lesson 9), we learned that Jesus Christ is **the only Way of Salvation**. No truth of the Bible is set forth more plainly or consistently than this.

**John 14 : 6:** " I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

**Acts 4 : 12:** "Neither is there salvation in any other."

**John 1 : 29:** "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

But this strong Bible emphasis upon salvation through Jesus Christ alone poses a problem:

"What about the people in the ages before the Cross? How could they be saved by Jesus Christ, when He had not yet died? How could they know anything about Calvary and its meaning?"

The answer is: **By means of the Hebrew Sanctuary and its services!**

In the centuries before Jesus came, God devised a wonderful method of **teaching in advance the Way of Salvation through a sinless Redeemer**. This method has been called: "**God's Kindergarten School of Redemption**". It was an acted, or dramatised prophecy—a kind of sand-tray model—of the saving work of Christ. It began with Abel's simple altar of sacrifice at the Gate of Eden (Gen. 4 : 4; Heb. 11 : 4), and was at length expanded into the solemn and instructive ritual of the Hebrew Sanctuary, which was instituted at the time of Moses (Ex. 25 : 8, 9).

In this lesson we will study how the Way of Salvation was taught from day to day in God's Old Testament "School of Redemption".

### *Discussion* 1.—A DESCRIPTION OF THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY (Heb. 9 : 1-7)

(See Charts Nos. 45 and 46 —Sanctuary Exterior and Interior)

Full details of the Sanctuary, its furniture and its priesthood, are given in Exodus, chapters 25 to 30. Its main features were as follows:

- (a) **The Courtyard:** A large enclosure about 92 by 183 ft. (reckoning a cubit at 22 in.) which surrounded the tabernacle. Its entrance was at the eastern end, and it contained the brazen laver (or washbowl) and the large altar of burnt offering.
- (b) **The Sanctuary Itself:** A large tent, about 18 by 55 ft. in size, which was divided into two rooms or apartments separated by a curtain, or veil. The walls were made of boards overlaid with gold, and the roof coverings were of cloth and skins. Obviously, the Sanctuary was not large enough for congregational worship in the modern sense. Yet it was the earthly centre of the whole Hebrew system of worship.
- (c) **The First Apartment or "Holy Place":** This contained the seven-branched candlestick, or lampstand, the table of shewbread and the altar of incense.
- (d) **The Second Apartment or "Most Holy Place":** This contained only the Ark of the Covenant, in which were preserved the two tablets of stone upon which God had written the Ten Commandments. The golden lid of the ark, bearing the figures of two cherubim facing each other, was called "The Mercy Seat".
- (e) **The Priests** were the appointed ministers of the Sanctuary. They were members of the tribe of Levi, of the household of Aaron, and they alone were permitted to enter the sacred tent. Their duties were to assist with the various sacrifices and offerings involved in the Sanctuary ritual, and to care for the upkeep and transportation of the Tabernacle and its furniture. It was their responsibility, also, to instruct the Hebrew laity in the meaning of the Sanctuary ritual (Mal. 2 : 7).

## 2.—THE DAILY SERVICE — A PREVIEW OF CALVARY AND THE HEAVENLY PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

Full details of this service are given in Leviticus 4. Its main features were as follows:

- (a) The Hebrew nation, for the purpose of sin-offerings, was divided into four groups: (1) The priests; (2) The rulers; (3) The common people; (4) The entire congregation. For each group a special sin-offering was required.

*NOTE: This offering was not a lamb in every case, though the lamb is used in most descriptions of the Sanctuary service as the simplest and most representative of the animals offered.*

- (b) The underlying principle in each sin-offering was the principle of **substitution**—the offering of an innocent animal's life in place of the life of the sinner. To teach that the wages of sin is death, the animal died (at the hands of the repentant sinner) as the sinner's substitute or sin-bearer.
- (d) Before killing the sacrificial victim, the sinner placed his hands upon its head and confessed his sins, thus in symbol transferring the responsibility for his sins to the innocent animal.
- (d) The officiating priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice, either in the holy place, or on the altar of burnt offering, thereby depositing the sin at the Sanctuary for later consideration.
- (e) By this daily ritual, confessed sin accumulated in the Sanctuary and defiled it, making necessary a special service of release, or cleansing, at the end of the year.
- (f) The penitent sinner himself went free until the last day of the year—the Day of Atonement—when his case came up for review to determine the final disposition of his sin.

## 3.—THE YEARLY SERVICE — A PREVIEW OF THE FINAL JUDGMENT AND THE CLEANSING OF THE UNIVERSE FROM SIN

Full details of this service are given in Leviticus 16. Its main features were as follows:

- (a) The Yearly Service centred in the second apartment, and was the exclusive, personal ministry of the High Priest.
- (b) It was known as the "Day of Atonement", or the "Cleansing of the Sanctuary".
- (c) It took place on the tenth day of the seventh month. In the Jewish calendar, this would be in the autumn.
- (d) After certain preliminary offerings by the High Priest, lots were cast on two goats provided by the congregation. One lot was for "the Lord's Goat", the other was for "Azazel", or "the Scapegoat", which represented Satan.
- (e) The High Priest killed the Lord's Goat and carried a bowl of its blood into the Most Holy Place, to sprinkle on and before the Mercy Seat for the people. As he came out, he sprinkled the blood on the furniture of the Holy Place, and then on the laver and altar in the courtyard.
- (f) Finally, the High Priest confessed the accumulated sin of the whole congregation over the head of the live goat, which was led away into the wilderness to perish with the sin.

*NOTE: The Scapegoat ceremony did not take place until AFTER the Sanctuary and congregation had been "cleansed" by the blood of the Lord's Goat.*

- (g) In order to ensure the blotting out of his sins, every Israelite was required to be present at the Day of Atonement service. If he voluntarily absented himself, or refused to participate, he was cut off from the congregation. The Day of Atonement was therefore viewed as a yearly Day of Judgment, and is still so regarded by the Jews.

#### 4.—THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY SERVICE

Some may ask: **What did the Sanctuary Service accomplish? Did it actually teach the true way of salvation before the Cross? Did it lead men into saving fellowship with God?**

Conclusive proof that the Sanctuary Service did teach the way of salvation is found in the rare quality of religious experience enjoyed by men like Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, Daniel and John the Baptist, all of whom lived and died before Calvary's Cross. The godly characters of these men can be accounted for only on the basis that God's "Kindergarten School" was an effective teacher of salvation by grace!

**II Tim. 3 : 15:** The Old Testament Scriptures made men "wise unto salvation"

**Ps. 51 : 1-13:** Crushed by guilt and remorse, David found the way to peace with God through the Sanctuary revelation.

**Ps. 77 : 13:** He testified: "Thy way, O God, is in the Sanctuary".

**Ps. 73 : 16, 17:** He also glimpsed the final triumph of righteousness by going "into the Sanctuary of God".

**John 8 : 46:** Abraham "saw Christ's day, and was glad".

So, for Old Testament believers, the Sanctuary Service was a "Telescope of Faith" by which they could gaze across the gulf of ages to the First Advent and Calvary's Cross, and beyond that to the Second Advent and the Final Judgment!

#### *Conclusion*

Two questions remain before we conclude this lesson:

**If we had been faced with God's problem in the centuries before the Cross, could we have devised a better method of teaching salvation than the Sanctuary service?**

**Of what practical value to us today is the study of this ancient ritual?**

It has two great values for us. Firstly, it explains "How to come to Jesus" in terms so simple and elementary that a child can understand. To gain the assurance of sins forgiven, we must take the same steps as the ancient Hebrew sinner. We must confess our sins in Jesus' name. We must lay them upon Him as our innocent Sin-bearer and claim forgiveness through the merits of His death. Secondly, it illustrates God's great desire to make our hearts His temple, to dwell within us day by day and save us not only from the guilt, but from the power of sin. Again and again in the Bible this Divine indwelling is presented as God's dearest wish and our greatest need. "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25 : 8). It was God's purpose that the earthly sanctuary should be an abiding illustration or model of what the lives of His true worshippers were to be. It was to be a symbol of the inner sanctuary of the soul.

**II Cor. 6 : 16:** "I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

Let us invite Him to come and dwell within us today!





## CHRIST'S MINISTRY IN THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

*Introduction* **Heb. 9 : 24: Christ appears now in the presence of God for us.**

In order to experience the full benefits of the Gospel, we must appreciate the work that Jesus has done for us in the **past**, and the work that He will do for us in the **future**, but most of all, we must be aware of the **work that He is doing for us NOW!** If Christianity is to be to us a saving, satisfying, keeping power, we must know Christ in the **present tense**.

When we studied **Why Jesus Came to the World** (Lesson 9), we promised that at a later time we would come back and learn more about the sixth "rung" of the Gospel Ladder — **Christ's Priesthood** — which involves **His present ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary**. No area of Bible truth is more satisfying or rewarding than this.

### *Discussion* 1.—THE PREVIEW OF HIS PRIESTHOOD

This preview was given to us in Lesson 33, when we studied the Earthly Sanctuary and its services.

**Heb. 8 : 5:** The Earthly Sanctuary was the "example" and "shadow" of heavenly things.

**Heb. 9 : 8, 9:** The first tabernacle was a "figure" for the time then present.

We learned that the Earthly Sanctuary service was a "Telescope of faith", by which Old Testament believers could grasp the essentials of Christ's sacrifice and heavenly ministry. The value of this "telescope" is greatly increased for us by the addition of **two more powerful "lenses"**—the Book of Hebrews and the Book of Revelation—which are supplied in the New Testament.

When Leviticus, Hebrews and Revelation are studied together, they provide a remarkably clear and satisfying picture of the **work Jesus is doing for us in Heaven now!**  
**Matt. 27 : 51:** "The veil of the Temple was rent in twain."

The supernatural rending of the Temple veil at the very moment Jesus died signified that the Earthly Sanctuary had completed its work. The earthly priesthood had now been replaced by the Priesthood of Christ. From henceforth the attention of God's people must be focused upon the **Heavenly reality** to which the shadowy services pointed.

### 2.—THE PLACE OF HIS PRIESTHOOD

**Heb. 9 : 24:** "Into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

**Heb. 9 : 12:** "He entered in once into the holy place".

**Heb. 8 : 1, 2:** "A minister of the true tabernacle."

**Heb. 8 : 5:** God showed Moses a heavenly "pattern", or blueprint, from which the Earthly Sanctuary was copied.

**Heb. 9 : 11:** The Heavenly Sanctuary is "greater" and "more perfect" than the Earthly. Therefore, it cannot be any less real!

From these texts the conclusion is inescapable that there stands in Heaven today a "true" tabernacle—a great, original Sanctuary—of which the Earthly was merely a miniature copy, or model. Whilst it is futile to speculate about the size, materials, or appointments of the Heavenly Sanctuary, there can be no doubt whatever about its reality, or about the fact that it is the place where Jesus performs His present work for man!

### 3.—THE PROGRAMME OF HIS PRIESTHOOD

Obviously, this programme follows the pattern that is already familiar to us by our study of the Earthly Sanctuary.

If the Heavenly Sanctuary is the original, and the Earthly is the miniature or copy, there must be a close correspondence between the programme of ministry in the two sanctuaries—at least, in general features—else, what point would there be in comparing them?

The most conspicuous feature of the Earthly Sanctuary Service was its **two-fold division**. It was conducted in **two apartments**, and the full year's programme of ministry was divided into **two phases**—the **Daily** and the **Yearly**.

*(See Chart No. 47—Parallels Between the Two Sanctuaries)*

From this comparison we conclude that the **two phases of ministry in the Earthly Sanctuary during one year, provide a key to the two phases of ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary during the whole Christian era.**

The keynote of the **Daily Service** on earth was the **continual priestly ministrations of the blood of sacrifice, and the continual rising of the incense of intercession**. This corresponds with the **first division of Christ's heavenly ministry**.

**I John 2 : 1:** "An Advocate with the Father."

**Rom. 8 : 34:** "Christ makes intercession at the right hand of God."

**Heb. 7 : 25:** "He ever liveth to make intercession for us."

**Rev. 5 : 6:** "A Lamb as it had been slain."

The keynote of the **Yearly Service** on earth was the **judgment and final blotting out of sin**. This corresponds with the **second division of Christ's heavenly ministry**.

**Heb. 9 : 23:** The Heavenly Sanctuary, like the Earthly, must be "purified" or "cleansed" from the defiling shadow that sin has cast.

**Dan. 7 : 9, 10:** The books are opened for final judgment.

**Acts 3 : 19:** The promise of the "blotting out" of sins in a "last day" setting.

**Rev. 22 : 11:** All human destinies decided and characters fixed. Rewards apportioned. "Unjust—unjust still"; "holy—holy still".

#### **4.—THE POWER OF HIS PRIESTHOOD**

Three New Testament words describe the power of Christ's priesthood. They are: "**HE – IS – ABLE**".

**Heb. 7 : 25:** "He is able to save to the uttermost."

**Heb. 2 : 18:** "He is able to succour them that are tempted."

**Jude 24:** "He is able to keep us from falling and present us faultless" to God.

Jesus, in His present role as our **great High Priest**, is the inexhaustible supply of all our needs. He is the evergreen, moment-by-moment **REALITY** which was pictured so vividly by the various symbolic features of the earthly sanctuary:

**The Human Priest**—pictured **ACCESS TO GOD** through Jesus.

**The Ark and Law**—pictured **RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE GOD** through Jesus.

**The Mercy Seat**—pictured **ACCEPTANCE BY GOD** through Jesus.

**The Blood of Sacrifice**—pictured **RECONCILIATION WITH GOD** through Jesus.

**The Golden Candlestick**—pictured **ENLIGHTENMENT FROM GOD** through Jesus.

**The Table of Shewbread**—pictured **SUSTENANCE FROM GOD** through Jesus.

**The Altar of Incense**—pictured the **CONTINUAL FRAGRANCE OF JESUS' INTERCESSION BEFORE GOD**.

When we studied "The Saving Work of the Holy Spirit" (Lesson 7), we learned that Jesus, from His place of authority at God's right hand, sends forth His Holy Spirit—His "Other Self"—to translate these Divine provisions into daily reality in our lives!

What more could we ask? What needs do we have that Jesus does not supply?

*Conclusion* Three other New Testament words describe **the ideal response** which we must make to the truth concerning the present ministry of Christ. They are: **"LOOKING – UNTO – JESUS"** (Heb. 12 : 2).

This means focusing all our love and devotion upon Him. It means complete reliance upon Him; utter trust in Him; total commitment to Him for time and eternity. It means refusal to be satisfied with any substitute for Him. It means refusal to tolerate any rival to Him. It means abandoning all reliance upon our own gifts, or merits, or works, or will-power. It means **personal, daily, moment-by-moment dependence upon Christ, "the Living Bread (John 6 : 51), who is also "the Living Vine" (John 15 : 4, 5).**

A radiant young Christian was dying. Her influence had drawn a whole community nearer to God. Friends asked her the secret of her fragrant life. Lifting one hand to Heaven, she said with calm conviction: **"CHRIST THERE!"** Then, pointing to her own heart, she whispered: **"CHRIST HERE!"**

That dedicated Christian girl had found the innermost secret of the life of victory. She was qualified to become a teacher to the world. **"CHRIST THERE!" . . . "CHRIST HERE!"** That is the Everlasting Gospel condensed into four vibrant words. When we have laid hold upon the saving work of Christ in this way, we have found the very key to Paradise!



## GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE JUDGMENT

*Introduction* The truth of a final judgment at the end of history is deeply rooted in the Bible. It is mentioned scores - possibly hundreds-of times. Psalmists, prophets and apostles all bear consistent testimony to it. Jesus, also, made many pointed references to the judgment. It marks the climax of some of His greatest parables, and is the focal point of much of His teaching.

But the Bible writers had a **unique perspective** on the judgment. They did not treat it as bad news, but as **good news!** They did not view it as something outside the redemptive process, but as **part** of that process. They saw the judgment as proof that God is a moral God, and that the universe has a moral base. They saw it as proof that history is not in a state of endless suspense, where good and evil grapple in equal and eternal conflict, without hope of resolution. Nor is history an aimless and undirected process, like the erratic path of a falling leaf, or the random course of a meandering stream. To the Bible writers, history was **going somewhere** - like an arrow shot from a bow - and the day of final accounting was the inevitable destination. Therefore, **they welcomed the judgment with eagerness and hope**, because it promised the ultimate exposure and condemnation of evil, and the ultimate vindication and triumph of righteousness and truth.

We need urgently to recover the Biblical perspective on the judgment, and this Study Guide is designed to help us to do so.

*Discussion* The "Good News" about the judgment is embodied in **seven great Bible facts**, which every enlightened Christian needs to know:

### FACT 1. — IT CONCERNS EACH OF US PERSONALLY

Our personal summons to the Judgment was delivered almost 2,000 years ago. It is found in 2 Corinthians 5:10: "**For we must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ.**" So that no one will be mistaken, the summons is repeated in Romans 14:12: "**So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God.**"

If we received a summons to appear in an earthly court, would it not crowd out every other consideration? Would we not talk about it by day and dream of it at night? Would we not want to know all that we could about what was going to happen, and how to prepare for it? Would we not make an appointment with our lawyer without delay?

### FACT 2. — IT IS AS CERTAIN AS TOMORROW'S SUNRISE

**Romans 2:3:** "Do you think this, O man, that you will escape the judgment of God?"

**Acts 17:31:** "God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world."

**Hebrews 9:27:** "It is appointed to men once to die, and after this the judgment."

Our appointment at the Judgment is **one which we must each fill personally**. There can be no postponements, no deputising, no evasion, no bribes. Nothing can excuse us from the Judgment - not even death - for the dead will be resurrected to meet it!

### FACT 3. — ITS STANDARD IS THE LAW OF GOD

**James 2:12:** "Judged by the law of liberty."

The Divine Law is not something that exists apart from God Himself. It is the outflowing of His essential personality. It is simply **the reflection or writing out of the character of the Most High**. "This Law," said John Wesley, "is an **incorruptible picture of the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity....It is the face of God unveiled....It is the heart of God disclosed to man**" (*Forty-four Sermons*; pp 385, 386).

**John 12:46-48:** "Judged by the words of Jesus.

The words of Jesus are the translation into human language of the **thoughts, intentions and ideals of God**. The life of Jesus translated the character of God into flesh and blood!  
**Ps. 96:13:** "He will judge the world in righteousness and truth."

#### **FACT 4. — IT WILL TAKE IN EVERY SECRET THING**

**Eccl. 12:13, 14:** "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing."

**Romans 2:16:** "God will judge the secrets of men."

**Matt. 12:36, 37:** "Every idle word."

If we ask: How can God possibly bring "every secret thing" into the judgment? The answer is: **By means of the heavenly Books of Record.**

**Dan. 7:9, 10; Rev. 20:12:** "The books were opened."

**Rev. 20:12, 15:** "The Book of Life."

**Mal. 3:16:** "The Book of Remembrance."

**Isa. 65:6, 7:** "The Book of Sins."

*NOTE: It is FOR GOD'S SAKE, as well as man's, that the heavenly Books of Record are preserved. Not that God needs to have His memory jogged, for His omniscience gives Him total knowledge of all the secrets of men at all times. But we may be sure that Satan, also, keeps a "diary" of some kind, and if he thinks he can see the slightest chance of embarrassing God in the judgment, he will try. From the beginning of the great conflict between good and evil, Satan has charged God with self-interest and injustice, and because of this, God must carry the whole loyal universe with Him at every advance step. ALL OF GOD'S ACTIONS MUST BE COMPLETELY OUT IN THE OPEN, SO THAT NO QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE PROPRIETY OF HIS DECISIONS, OR THE INTEGRITY OF HIS GOVERNMENT, ARE LEFT UNANSWERED. Accordingly, God, as well as man, will be on trial in the judgment. This, doubtless, is one reason why the Bible speaks of "the hour of HIS (i.e. God's own) judgment" (Rev. 14:7), and of the time when GOD HIMSELF will be "judged" (Rom. 3:4). The Creator Himself will be "in court!" However, should any of God's decisions concerning angels or men be challenged in that last "Great Assize," all that He will need to do will be to open the Books. Their unerring testimony will be conclusive and final.*

It is idle, of course, to speculate about the **nature** of these heavenly "Books." We simply do not know. However, the fantastic array of possible recording methods now open to man in this day of dizzying electronic marvels, should prove that God is not limited to literal "books" of paper and ink. It is enough to know that the heavenly "Books" are records of some kind - meticulous in their detail, and faultless in their accuracy.

#### **FACT 5. — ITS OPENING SESSION HAS ALREADY BEGUN**

A wider study of this subject, which is undertaken elsewhere (See Study Guide No. 41), shows that there are three main divisions, or sessions, of the latter-day judgment.

(1) **The Pre-Advent Judgment**, which begins some time before Jesus returns. This preliminary review, or judgment, is **implicit in the Bible doctrine of the Two Resurrections**. The fact that one group of the dead - the godly - is raised to life, while the other group - the ungodly - is left sleeping in death, implies that a **prior investigation**, followed by a final, irrevocable verdict - for the godly, and **against** the ungodly - has been made before Jesus comes with His "reward" (Revelation 22:12; Daniel 12:1, 2). **The separation itself constitutes the verdict**. Daniel 7:9-11; 26, and Revelation 14:6, 7, also imply a judgment-session that convenes **before** the close of history, while normal human affairs are still proceeding.

(2) **The Millennial Judgment**, which takes place during the thousand years following Jesus' return (See Revelation 20:4; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3, and Study Guide No. 17).

(3) **The Executive Judgment**, which takes place at the end of the thousand years (See Revelation 20:11-14, and Study Guide No. 17).

In a future Bible reading we will consider in detail the amazing time-prophecy which **pinpoints the exact year in which the pre-Advent judgment was to begin**.

**FACT 6. — ITS DECISIONS WILL SATISFY THE MOST EXACTING CRITIC****Gen. 18:25:** "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"**Deut. 32:4:** "A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He."**Ps. 96:13:** "He will judge the world in righteousness and truth."**Rev. 11:16-18:** The loyal universe will exclaim, with deep satisfaction, "Thank God!"**Jude 14, 15:** Even the ungodly will be "convinced" of the justice of God's verdict against them!

The Judgment will issue in the public, complete and final vindication of right. Not one wrong will be left unrighted. Not one question in the long-standing controversy between Christ and Satan will be left unanswered. Not one shadow will be left upon the character of God.

**FACT 7. — IT HAS NO TERRORS FOR THOSE WHO TAKE CHRIST AS THEIR ADVOCATE****1 John 2:1:** "We have an Advocate with the Father."**1 Timothy 5:24:** We may send our sins "beforehand to judgment."**Rev. 3:5:** He will confess our names before the Father.*(See Chart No. 48 — Christ our Advocate)**Conclusion***1 John 4:17:** Through Christ we may have "boldness in the day of Judgment."**MY ADVOCATE**

I SINNED. And straightway, post-haste, Satan flew  
 Before the presence of the Most High God,  
 And made a railing accusation there.  
 He said, "This soul, this thing of clay and sod,  
 Has sinned. 'Tis true that he has named Thy name,  
 But I demand his death, for Thou has said,  
 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' Shall not  
 Thy sentence be fulfilled? Is justice dead?  
 Send now this wretched sinner to his doom.  
 What other thing can righteous ruler do?"  
 And thus he did accuse me day and night,  
 And every word he spoke, O God, was true!

Then quickly One rose up from God's right hand,  
 Before whose glory angels veiled their eyes.  
 He spoke, "Each jot and tittle of the law  
 Must be fulfilled: the guilty sinner dies!  
 But wait. **Suppose his guilt were all transferred  
 To ME and that I paid his penalty!**  
 Behold MY hands, MY side, MY feet! One day  
 I was made sin for him, and died that he  
 Might be presented faultless, at Thy throne!"  
 And Satan fled away. Full well he knew  
 That he could not prevail against such love,  
 For every word my dear Lord spoke was true!

—Martha Snell Nicholson



### ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE PRE-ADVENT, INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

If we understand the **key-importance of the power of choice** in the day-to-day salvation-process, we will have no difficulty in understanding the operations of the pre-Advent Judgment, and how they affect our eternal destiny. A simple analysis of the salvation-process produces the following facts:

1. Our initial choice to "receive Christ" (John 1:12) puts us "**IN CHRIST**" (2 Cor. 5:17). At the moment of our initial commitment, Jesus gives us the legal right to live forever (John 5:24; 1 John 5:11, 12).

2. Our sustained, habitual choices to **keep on** receiving Him, **keep us "IN CHRIST"** - in a state of perfect security (John 15:1-5; Colossians 2:6, 7; John 10:27, 28).

3. But we are **not irrevocably "locked" into salvation by one initial or isolated act of believing**. If we are to "abide" or "continue" in Christ, there must be a **sustained, persevering commitment to Him** - a continuous, personal union with Him (John 15:4; 8:31).

4. Consciously and deliberately, we must **renew our surrender to Christ's control** on a day-by-day, moment-by-moment basis. This is what the Bible means by "**abiding in Him**" (1 John 2:28); "**Continuing in the faith**" (Colossians 1:23); "**enduring unto the end**" (Matthew 24:13); "**keeping ourselves in the love of God,**" (Jude 21) and "**holding fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end**" (Hebrews 3:6, 14).

5. **One factor**, and one factor alone, can jeopardize our security, and take us out of Christ - that is **OUR OWN WILL** - our own conscious, personal decision to leave Him. So **one element of risk remains - but that lies within ourselves**. While no combination of men, or demons, or circumstances can destroy our security in Christ - **WE can destroy that security** by carelessness, or perversity, or neglect (Revelation 2:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 9:27).

6. Accordingly, when our individual cases are reviewed in the Judgment, before Jesus comes to "bring His reward with Him" (Revelation 22:12; Daniel 12:1, 2), only **one question** will need to be asked: "**Was this man "abiding in Christ" when death came to him, or when his probation closed?**" (2 Peter 3:14). It is the quality of our relationship with Jesus **AT THE END OF THE WAY** that counts for eternity.

7. In the parable of the wedding garment (Matthew 22:1-14) it was not the **initial acceptance** of the King's invitation that satisfied the King's inspection - it was the **actual, personal, current wearing** of the special wedding garment!

8. Likewise, on a plane journey, it is not the passengers who **start** the journey with a ticket who pass the Inspector's scrutiny - but those who **retain their ticket to the end of the journey**. And it is only the passengers who have lost, or have never possessed, a ticket, who are **apprehensive** about the final inspection. The ticket-holders, on the other hand, feel quite **safe** and **secure**. They actually **welcome** the Inspector's scrutiny!

9. In the light of the foregoing, there is a sense in which **WE JUDGE OURSELVES**, on a continuous basis - and seal our own destiny - in a judgment-process that is occurring **NOW**. By the consistent quality of our personal, day-to-day choices, **we are NOW deciding, or sealing, our eternal destiny**. A godly character is made up of the thousands of individual choices which we are **NOW** making in response to the Holy Spirit's prompting.

10. At no point in time, either at conversion, during our Christian lives, or at the Judgment, does God act arbitrarily, to override or manipulate our power of choice. The decisions of heaven's court are not arbitrary. It is **OUR decisions** that determine the verdict. Heaven simply recognises them. At the Judgment, **God takes note of our current quality of our commitment - our current orientation of heart and will - and places His seal of confirmation upon the life-style or character that we have consistently chosen**. **God's verdict in the Judgment simply discloses and vindicates** the quality and direction of our habitual personal choices.

**SUMMARY:** As free moral agents, we are the architects of our own destiny. **Our decisions all along the way are what count - not just those at the beginning.** Acceptance of Christ does not make us into robots. The salvation process is not automatic. Our initial commitment to Him does not take away our power of choice. We are always free to choose another master.

Accordingly, it is **not God's FUTURE decisions** at the Judgment that we need to fear; it is **OUR OWN DECISIONS** - the ones that we are making **NOW** - and they are under our own control!

\* \* \*

Do these considerations rob us of the quiet assurance that all Christians may have? Not at all. They only protect us from the false assurance of resting comfortably in a relationship that has never existed - or one that we have long since lost.



## SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT OF CHRIST'S HEAVENLY MINISTRY

**Introduction** In Lesson 34 we learned that the **Heavenly ministry of Christ** as our great High Priest is the "**sum**" of the Book of Hebrews, and the **vital heart** of the Christian faith (Heb. 8 : 1, 2).

Jesus is the "**new and living Way**" into the presence of God (Heb. 10 : 19-22). He is the "**one Mediator**" between God and men (1 Tim. 2 : 5). He is the "**Author and Finisher of our faith**" (Heb. 12 : 2). He is the **Living Ladder** between earth and Heaven (John 1 : 51). All our prayers and entreaties ascend to God through Him, and all Divine gifts and graces flow from God to us through Him. In place of priests, temples, altars, sacrifices and ceremonies, **He substitutes Himself** as the only "**Way**" of saving access to God (John 14 : 6).

So vital is this truth concerning the saving ministry of Christ that to remove it would be as disastrous as to remove the **hub** from a wheel; the **keystone** from an arch; the **sun** from the solar system, or the **heart** from the body!

**Question:** All this being true, what attitude would we expect **Satan** to take towards the heavenly ministry of Christ?

**Answer:** An attitude of ruthless opposition. **A settled determination to pervert, counterfeit or obscure this truth, so as to render it powerless for the mass of mankind.**

God has foreseen this Satanic opposition, and forewarned us against it. Satan's counterfeit of the Heavenly ministry of Christ is the subject of the prophecy of Daniel 8. Because it is impossible to do justice to this chapter in one Bible lesson, we will commence it now and complete it in Lessons 37 and 38.

**Discussion** First of all, let us look briefly at the whole chapter, which divides naturally into four parts:

What Daniel saw (vv 1-12).

What Daniel heard (vv 12, 13).

The interpretation begun by Gabriel (vv 15-25).

The interpretation interrupted and left unfinished (vv 26, 27).

Now let us look more closely at the vision itself, which also divides into four parts:

### 1.—THE RAM — SYMBOL OF MEDO-PERSIA (vv 3, 4, with v 20)

*(See first section of Chart No. 49)*

We have met this coalition of two nations before, in Daniel 2 and 7. Note the fact that this power became "**great**".

### 2.—THE HE-GOAT — SYMBOL OF GREECE (vv 5-8, with v 21)

*(See second section of Chart No. 49)*

We have also met this power in Daniel 2 and 7. Note the fact that this nation became "**very great**".

The "**notable horn**" which was broken, applies unquestionably to **Alexander the Great**. This dynamic young conqueror and ardent spreader of Greek culture was the "**first**" in importance of all the Greek warrior-kings. His military campaigns were noted for their **surprise tactics, audacity, and remarkable swiftness of manoeuvre**. After conquering Persia and almost all of the ancient world, Alexander died in Babylon at the early age of 32, as the result of a drunken orgy.

**3.—THE FOUR HORNS — SYMBOLS OF DIVIDED GREECE** (v 8, with v 22)

(See Chart No. 50 —Four Horns and Little Horn)

After Alexander's untimely death, rival Greek contenders struggled for leadership, and at length the empire was divided between four of his generals. **Cassander** took Macedonia and Greece; **Lysymachus** took Thrace and portions of Asia Minor; **Seleucus** took Babylon and Assyria; and **Ptolemy** took Egypt, Palestine and part of Syria. Alexander's kingdom was literally divided "toward the four winds of heaven".

**4.—THE LITTLE HORN — SYMBOL OF ROME, PAGAN AND PAPAL** (vv 9-12, with vv 23-25)

(See Chart No. 50 —The Four Horns and the Little Horn and No. 51 —The Little Horn Wars Against Christ)

Whilst this power is not identified by name, the marks of identification are too numerous and explicit to permit any mistake.

**IDENTIFICATION OF THE LITTLE HORN OF DANIEL 8**

<b>Bible Specifications</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Historical Fulfilment</b>
"Waxed EXCEEDING GREAT" (v 9)	Greater than Medo-Persia or Greece	Rome in its dual form (Pagan and Papal)
"Towards the south, east, and pleasant land" [Palestine] (v 9)	Arose and conquered FROM THE NORTH-WEST	Rome
"Of fierce countenance" (v 23)	Fierce, warlike aspect (compare Deut. 28:50)	Rome
"Understanding dark sentences" (v 23)	Spoke a strange, new language (compare Deut. 28:48, 49)	Rome
"He shall magnify himself in his heart" (v 25)	Proud, arrogant, domineering nature (compare Isa. 14:12-14)	Rome
"He shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" (v 24)	Persecuted the true people of God	Rome
"He shall stand up against the Prince of princes" (vv 11, 25)	Made Christ the special target of attack	Rome
"Cast down His [Christ's] Truth and Sanctuary" (vv 11, 12)	Opposed and perverted the vital truths associated with the Sanctuary	Rome
"By him the daily sacrifice was taken away" (v 11)	Took away the original Gospel provisions, as appointed by God	Rome
"Practised and prospered" till "the time of the end" (vv 12, 24, 17, 19)	Continued until the latter days. Longer than any other power in history	Rome

**What is meant by the "Daily Sacrifice" of Dan. 8 : 11-15?**

Only one word is found in the original Hebrew of this passage—**TAHMID**—which means "continual", or "regular". The same Hebrew word is found in Dan. 11 : 31 and 12 : 11. The word "sacrifice" in these verses is not present in the original text, but is

supplied by the translators. TAHMID was the collective word customarily used in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers for the various permanent features of the daily sanctuary services, such as the offerings, incense, shewbread, lights, etc. In Numbers 28 and 29 "the daily" (TAHMID) is used seventeen times in connection with the regular or continual service of the sanctuary.

"TAHMID (continual) is everything in the worship of God which is not used temporarily, but is permanent, as the daily sacrifice, the setting forth of the shewbread, and the like. The word comprehends all that is of permanent use in the holy services of divine worship." (The Book of the Prophet Daniel, p 298, by C. F. Keil)

The "daily" or "continual" features of the earthly sanctuary service pointed forward to the unceasing, personal mediation of Christ, our Great High Priest, in the Heavenly Sanctuary. The unflinching constancy and unchanging permanence of His Heavenly mediation is mentioned at least fifteen times in the Book of Hebrews, by such words as "abideth"; "forever"; "continually"; "ever liveth"; "endless"; "unchangeable"; "continueth ever" (see Heb. 5 : 6; 6 : 20; 7 : 3, 8, 16, 17, 21, 24, 25, 28; 10 : 12; 13 : 8). It is as if the writer of the Book of Hebrews was pointing with steady finger to the Heavenly ministry of Christ and proclaiming: "This is the true 'daily' of Daniel 8!"

**What is meant by the "Taking away of the Daily Sacrifice"?**

In the light of the foregoing, the "taking away of the daily sacrifice" must refer to some widespread human effort to pervert, obscure, or counterfeit the true "daily"—the continual, saving mediation of Jesus Christ—so as to render it powerless in the lives of millions. That this work has been done by Rome, especially in its Papal form, is shown by the following:

**A Counterfeit Sanctuary.** The Roman Catholic Church on earth has usurped the place of Christ's "true tabernacle" in Heaven.

**A Counterfeit Sacrifice.** The "sacrifice of the Mass" has usurped the place of Christ's true, "once-for-all" sacrifice.

**A Counterfeit Priesthood.** Human priests, who are exalted as "gods"; "christs"; and "creators of their Creator" have usurped the place of Christ, our true High Priest.

**A Counterfeit Mediator.** Mary has usurped the place of Christ, and is declared to be a more compassionate, accessible, and effectual mediatrix than Jesus Himself!

**A Counterfeit "Vicar of Christ".** The Pope has usurped the place of the Holy Spirit as the infallible Teacher of Divine truth, and the true Successor of Christ on earth.

**A Counterfeit Way of Salvation.** Salvation by works—prayers, payments, pilgrimages, penances, etc.—has usurped the place of salvation by God's free grace.

The vision of Daniel 8 is therefore not concerned with some narrow political or sectarian issue. It is not a picture of conflict between nations or denominations. It is far bigger than any of these. The "taking away of the daily" is nothing less than a highly-organized, world-wide attempt to neutralise all of the saving provisions of God, and to dethrone Christ as man's only effective Mediator!

No wonder the heavenly watchers were filled with alarm, so that one of them cried out in Daniel's hearing: "How long shall be the vision?" No wonder Daniel himself "fainted, and was sick certain days" (v 27)!

**Conclusion** We have now learned how Gabriel, in obedience to God's command, explained to Daniel the meaning of the Ram, the He-Goat and the Little Horn. But the most puzzling feature of the vision—the "2,300 days" of v 14—was left unexplained. This chapter is like an important letter, of which the last page is left unfinished, or is lost. Doubtless due to Daniel's age and exhaustion, the interpretation was interrupted at a most critical stage, and the prophet was left in a state of frustration and perplexity, hoping that Gabriel would return and complete the explanation of the vision at an early date. "I was astonished at the vision," said Daniel, "but none understood it" (v 27).

Did Gabriel ever come back? . . . Was the mystery of the "2,300 days" ever solved? . . . These questions will be answered in Lessons 37 and 38.



## GOD'S UNANSWERABLE CHALLENGE TO UNBELIEF

*Introduction* Isa. 48 : 3-5: "Before it came to pass I showed it thee."

Fulfilled prophecy is God's unanswerable challenge to unbelief. In this lesson we will study a unique time-prophecy, written over 500 years before Jesus' birth, which foretold the time of His baptism; the time of His crucifixion; and the time when the Gospel would begin to go out to the Gentile world. It has been called: "The Keystone of Old Testament Prophecy", because it locks all the others securely into place. The Bible contains many marvels, but none is greater than this!

Let us open the Bible and read Dan. 9 : 24-27.

(See Chart No. 52—Diagram of the Seventy Weeks)

*Discussion* 1.—ARE THE "SEVENTY WEEKS" LITERAL OR SYMBOLIC?

- (a) They are found in a setting of symbolic prophecy (Dan. 8 and 9) which requires that they be interpreted according to the **year-day principle** mentioned in Num. 14 : 34 and Ezek. 4 : 6. On this basis they represent **70 x 7, or 490 years.**
- (b) The Hebrews were accustomed to speak of "**weeks of years**", or "**heptads**" (groups of seven years), and modern translators recognise that Daniel had this usage in mind here. Examples: Moffatt's translation: "**Seventy weeks of years are fixed for your people and for your sacred city.**" Goodspeed's translation: "**Seventy weeks of years are destined for your people and for your holy city.**"
- (c) The footnote to Dan. 9 : 24 in the Douay Bible (Roman Catholic) agrees with this conclusion: "**V 24, SEVENTY WEEKS, namely of years (or seventy times seven, that is 490 years).**"
- (d) "**The proof of the pudding is in the eating of it.**" As we will presently see, this prophecy has been **exactly fulfilled** on the basis of the year-day principle—a practical demonstration of its validity, which none can deny!

2.—WHAT ARE THE FIVE MAJOR EVENTS OF THIS PROPHECY?

- (a) "**The commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem**"—457 B.C.  
Following the Babylonian and Persian captivity of Israel in the 6th century B.C., there were **three historic edicts** by Persian kings which authorised the return of the Hebrew exiles to their homeland. These were:  
**The decree of Cyrus—536 B.C.** Mainly concerned with the rebuilding of the Temple, the restoration of the sacred vessels and the Temple worship (Ezra 1 : 1-4).  
**The decree of Darius—519 B.C.** A renewal of the previous decree, made necessary because the work of rebuilding had been hindered by hostile intrigue (Ezra 6 : 7-12).  
**The decree of Artaxerxes—457 B.C.** This was a pivotal event in the epic of restoration, for in addition to promoting the re-establishment of worship in Jerusalem, it provided for the **re-constitution of the Hebrew state** with full powers of local government. The actual text of this royal decree, which went into effect in the seventh year of Artaxerxes' reign, is given in Ezra 7 : 11-26. Scholars have demonstrated by many lines of sound evidence that the seventh year of Artaxerxes was 457 B.C.

**NOTE:** *These three decrees are also described as "THE COMMANDMENT OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL" (Ezra 6:14), indicating that THE HAND OF PROVIDENCE WAS THE REAL MOVING FORCE behind them all!*



It is evident that the "commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" could not "go forth" in the full sense required by the prophecy, until the final, comprehensive decree of Artaxerxes went into effect in the autumn of 457 B.C. This conclusion is established by the testimony of Ezra 6 : 14, where the three decrees are grouped together as a single "commandment".

(b) **"The street shall be built, and the wall"—408 B.C.**

By the end of the first "seven weeks" or 49 years, work had evidently advanced to the stage where the ruined city had actually taken shape again.

(c) **"Unto the Messiah the Prince"—A.D. 27.**

"Messiah" means "the Christ" or "the Anointed One" (John 1 : 41, margin). Anointing was part of the inauguration ceremony of priests and kings in Bible times, and marked the official commencement of their work.

**Acts 10 : 38**—Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit.

**Matt. 3 : 16**—This anointing took place at His baptism, which marked the commencement of His public ministry.

**John 1 : 41**—Enlightened followers henceforth described Him as the "Messiah".

**Luke 4 : 14-21**: Jesus bore public witness to His own anointing by the Holy Spirit.

**Mark 1 : 15**: Immediately following His baptism (A.D. 27), Jesus declared: "The time is fulfilled", thus announcing the termination of the 69th "week", which was to be marked by the appearance of "the Messiah". By so doing, He appealed to the prophecy of Daniel 9 as conclusive proof of His Messiahship, and placed the seal of authenticity upon this unerring prediction.

(d) **"Messiah cut off in the midst of the week"—A.D. 31.**

After a brief public ministry of only 3½ years, Christ was "cut off; but not for Himself", in the midst of the 70th week. This is the "Holy of Holies" of Old Testament prophecy, where the command, "loose thy shoe from off thy foot", applies with greatest force. The miracle of Divine compassion is here matched by the miracle of Divine prediction. The Divine love that redeems, and the Divine wisdom that reads the future, reach their high watermark together!

**"He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation [offering] to cease."**

The meeting of Divine love and wisdom at Calvary was accompanied by a third miraculous action—the supernatural rending of the temple veil (Matt. 27 : 51). By this dramatic gesture God indicated that the "sacrifice and oblation" of the Old Testament Sanctuary Service had ceased, and placed yet another seal of authenticity upon the prophecy of Daniel 9.

**"He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week."**

For the 3½ years of His public ministry prior to the crucifixion, Jesus "confirmed the covenant" in Person (Rom. 15 : 8; II Cor. 1 : 20; I Cor. 11 : 25), and for 3½ years subsequent to His death, it was confirmed by the members of the original apostolic band (Heb. 2 : 3), making a total of seven years, or one prophetic "week".

(e) **Jewish national probation ends—A.D. 34.**

**Acts 7 : 54-60**: The martyrdom of Stephen. A far deeper significance is attached to the stoning of Stephen than may appear to the casual reader:

It clinches the formal rejection of the Gospel by responsible Jewish leaders at Jerusalem (Acts 7 : 51-54).

It precipitates a new era in Gospel expansion. Exclusive labour for Jews abruptly ceases. Christian witnesses, scattered by the sudden outburst of savage persecution, are impelled to evangelise the Gentiles. Samaritans and the Ethiopian eunuch are the first-fruits from among non-Jews (Acts 8 : 1, 4, 5, 27, 29).

Paul, the future apostle of the Gentiles, steps upon the stage (Acts 7:58), and is converted the year after Stephen's death (Acts 9).

The following words from Sir Robert Anderson sum up the climactic significance of Stephen's death: "But though the public event which marked their fall (the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70) was thus deferred, **the death of Stephen was the secret crisis of Israel's destiny.** Never again was a public miracle witnessed in Jerusalem. The special Pentecostal proclamation was withdrawn. The Pentecostal Church was scattered. The apostle of the Gentiles forthwith received his commission, and the current of events set steadily, and with continually increasing force, **toward the open rejection of the long-favoured people**" (The Silence of God, pp 82, 83).

### 3.—OF WHAT PRACTICAL VALUE IS THE "SEVENTY WEEKS" PROPHECY TO US TODAY?

**It reinforces our confidence in the Divine inspiration of the Bible.** No human hand could write history 500 years in advance with such amazing accuracy!

**It demonstrates the matchless love and forbearance of God.** He endured Israel's perversity for 1,000 years, and then added another 500 years of patient and loving favour!

**It provides the master-key which unlocks the great time-prophecy of Dan. 8:14.** (The subject of Lesson 38.)

**It confirms our faith in Jesus Christ as the true Messiah.** No other person in all history was ever the subject of such a detailed and exact prediction!

*Conclusion*     **John 1:45: "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write."**

Happy is the man who has made this thrilling discovery!

*(See over page for explanation of Chart No. 56 - Change-over from B.C. to A.D. Reckoning)*

**THE CHANGE-OVER FROM B.C. TO A.D. RECKONING**

... As it relates to the "Seventy Weeks" prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27.

*(See Chart No. 56 – The Changeover from B.C. to A.D. Reckoning)*

In the words of the angel Gabriel "**Seventy Weeks**" (or 490 years) of extended probation for Daniel's people, were to reach "**from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem,**" until the appearance of "**Messiah the Prince.**"

Following the Babylonian and Persian captivity of Israel in the 6th Century B.C., there were **three historic decrees** issued by Persian kings authorizing the return of the Hebrew exiles to their homeland. These decrees are grouped together as **one "commandment"** in Ezra 6:14: "**They built, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.**"

The decree of **Cyrus** (536 B.C.) pertained to the rebuilding of the Temple only (Ezra 1:1-14). The decree of **Darius** (519 B.C.) provided for the continuance of that work, which had been hampered by hostile intrigue (Ezra 6:7-12). But the decree of **Artaxerxes** (457 B.C.) **provided for the reconstitution of the Hebrew state, with full powers of local government.**

This last decree is therefore the one from which we measure the 70 prophetic "weeks" of Daniel 9. **The actual text of this royal decree, which went into effect in the autumn of the seventh year of Artaxerxes reign, is given in Ezra 7:11-26.** The initial 483 years of Gabriel's prophecy - composed of 7 + 62 prophetic "weeks" - if reckoned from the first day of 457 B.C., would reach to the last day of A.D. 26. This is demonstrated by the fact that it requires all of the 26 years A.D. plus all of the 457 years B.C. to make a total of 483 years.

Furthermore, if the decree of Artaxerxes did not go into effect until after Ezra reached Jerusalem, which was in the latter half of 457 B.C. (Ezra 7:8), then **the first three-quarters of 457 B.C. must be added to the last day of A.D. 26.** This would bring us to **the autumn of A.D. 27** - the time of Christ's Baptism. In other words, the 483 years is made up of **456 ¼** years from the B.C. era, and **26 ¾** years from the A.D. period.

## SOLVING THE MYSTERY OF THE 2,300 DAYS

**Introduction** In our study of the Ram, the He-goat and the Little Horn of Daniel 8 (Lesson 36), we traced the rise of the **great counterfeit system of worship** which Satan has used to pervert and obscure the Heavenly Priesthood of Christ. We learned how the angel Gabriel came to Daniel at God's command and explained every detail of the vision **except the time period**, "the 2,300 days" of v 14.

The purpose of this lesson is to discover whether the mystery of the 2,300 days was ever solved.

### **Discussion** 1.—WAS THE EXPLANATION OF THE VISION OF DANIEL 8 EVER COMPLETED?

#### Did Gabriel ever come back?

Yes. Daniel 9 records how, some time later, in answer to the prophet's prayer (vv 3-19), Gabriel returned (vv 20, 21) and instructed Daniel to **recall the former vision** (vv 22, 23). He then resumed his explanation **precisely at the point where he had broken off**—with the **time-element** of the former vision. The very first thing Gabriel mentioned when he returned was **time** (Dan. 9 : 24), and it was the **time period**—"the 2,300 days"—that had been left unexplained in Daniel 8. These facts show that the vision of Daniel 9 is the **continuation and completion** of the vision of Daniel 8.

### 2.—ARE THE 2,300 DAYS LITERAL OR SYMBOLIC?

They are obviously **symbolic**, for this reason: Three verses in Daniel 8 state that this prophecy would reach into the **distant future** (v 17: "the time of the end"; v 19: "the last end of the indignation"; v 26: "for many days"). Moffatt renders v 17: "the vision concerns the crisis at the close", and v 26: "the vision relates to the far future."

If 2,300 **literal** days had been intended, they would amount to **about 6½ years only**, which would not even reach from Daniel's day to the beginning of the Christian era, let alone to the time of the end! It is evident, therefore, that the 2,300 days must be understood as **symbolic or prophetic days** which, when interpreted according to the "day-for-a-year" principle (Num. 14 : 34; Ezek. 4 : 6), represent **2,300 years**.

### 3.—WHEN DO THE 2,300 DAYS BEGIN?

In Dan. 9 : 24 Gabriel said that "70 weeks (490 years) were to be **"determined"** upon Daniel's people. "Determined" means **"cut off"**, **"measured off"**, or **"appointed"**. This "cutting off" must be **from some longer period of time**, and the only such period referred to in this vision is the 2,300 days, which means that the two periods must have a **common starting point**.

The starting point for the "70 weeks" is specifically given as: **"From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem"** (v 25). This event must also mark the beginning of the 2,300 days. The "commandment" referred to is a clearly established historical landmark—**the restoration decree of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, which was made in 457 B.C.** (Ezra 6 : 14; 7 : 11-26).

*(See Chart No. 52—The Seventy Weeks Diagram)*

Having established the starting-point, the rest is simple arithmetic. 2,300 full years, reckoned from the **beginning of 457 B.C.**, extend to the end of A.D. 1843. However, inasmuch as the decree of Artaxerxes did not go into full effect until the **autumn of 457 B.C.** (i.e.  $\frac{3}{4}$ -way through the year), 2,300 full years reach beyond the end of 1843, to the **autumn of A.D. 1844**.

*(See Chart No. 55—God's Prophetic Yardstick)*

### 4.—WHICH SANCTUARY WAS INTENDED—THE EARTHLY OR THE HEAVENLY?

The "Sanctuary" of Dan. 8 : 14 must refer to the **Heavenly Sanctuary**, for in 1844 the **Earthly Sanctuary** no longer existed. It had lain desolate for almost 1,800 years. Disowned and abandoned by Christ (Matt. 23 : 37, 38); desecrated by God Himself at the super-

natural rending of the inner veil (Matt. 27:51); the Temple in Jerusalem was finally destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70, and has never been rebuilt since that time.

#### 5.—HOW WAS THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY “DEFILED”?

In order to give a complete answer to this question, the “defilement” of the Sanctuary must be understood in two ways:

(a) **In the immediate context of Daniel 8**, the defilement was obviously brought about by the perversions and counterfeits of the Papal system of worship, which beclouded and obscured the Heavenly Sanctuary Service, and the saving work of Christ as man’s only Mediator.

(b) **In the wider context of the whole Bible**, the Heavenly Sanctuary is defiled by the long, dark shadow that sin has cast, so that not only earth but Heaven itself needs to be “cleansed” from this sinister shadow. Sin had its beginnings in Heaven when Lucifer fell, and the influence of that tragic rebellion remains until he is at last destroyed. Furthermore, since the fall of Adam, human sin has been recorded in the heavenly books of judgment, thereby adding a further element of defiling shadow.

#### 6.—HOW WILL THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY BE “CLEANSED”?

Obviously, by the undoing or reversal of those factors that have brought defilement. This calls for:

(a) **A Cleansing Work on Earth**. This will be accomplished by a bold group of reformers who re-discover and proclaim the truth concerning the Heavenly Mediation of Christ. By the very act of explaining and defending this Bible truth, these reformers will expose the counterfeit mediation of the Papal system, and commence to undo its influence.

(b) **A Cleansing Work in Heaven**. This will be accomplished by the commencement of the Heavenly “Day of Atonement”, when Christ begins the final or judgment-phase of His two-fold ministry; when the “Books” of heaven are opened and investigated (Dan. 7:10); and the confessed sins of God’s children are blotted out of the Heavenly records. So sweeping will this cleansing work be that it will not cease till the universe itself is made clean when, at the end of the Millennium, sin and its author are destroyed in the lake of fire.

#### 7.—WHAT DOES THE YEAR 1844 MEAN TO US PERSONALLY?

It means that we have entered the most solemn and challenging period in the history of man. The great Heavenly “Day of Atonement” has come. **The hour of God’s judgment has actually begun**. Jesus is now performing His final ministration on behalf of sinners. Decisions are being made which affect the destinies of every man and woman living on the earth. Soon the decree will go forth that closes human probation: **“He that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still”** (Rev. 22:11).

Are we prepared for this moment of destiny? Have we searched our hearts and confessed our sins? Have we accepted God’s provision for full personal cleansing? (I John 1:9).

*Conclusion* **Our mood of seriousness in this Heavenly “Day of Atonement” must match the seriousness of the ancient Hebrews in their yearly Day of Atonement!**

We must send our sins “beforehand” to judgment (I Tim. 5:24). We must “abide in Christ” on a moment-by-moment basis (I John 2:28), so that when the final, decisive hour comes for us personally we, with Paul, will be “found in Him” (Phil. 3:9).

Ellen G. White, who cherished the Advent hope from 1843 to 1915, voices the sentiment of every true disciple in this final judgment-hour. Her life was the personification of serious earnestness in the things of the Kingdom. As she lay dying, her whole trust was in the unmerited grace of Christ, the one Hope of every believer. **“I am guarding every moment,”** she said in the last hours with her family, **“so that nothing may come between me and my Lord!”**

## THE JEWISH FEASTS IN TYPE AND ANTITYPE (PART I)

*Introduction* There were seven significant religious "feasts," or festivals, spread throughout the ancient Jewish year. Four of these were the "Spring-feasts" (Passover; Unleavened Bread; First-fruits, and Pentecost), observed in the early part of the religious year, and three were "Autumn-feasts" (Trumpets; Atonement, and Tabernacles), located in the latter half of the year. (See Leviticus 23:4-44)

Considered separately, or together, these feasts comprise a rewarding field of study, yet, in order to fully appreciate their nature, timing and purpose, a knowledge of three important background factors is imperative. These are:

### 1.—THE CLIMATE OF PALESTINE, AND THE HEBREW FARMING YEAR

Because of its latitude, Palestine belongs to the sub-tropical zone, and has only two climatic seasons - a dry season in summer, and a wet season in winter. The summer season is so long, and dry, and hot, with no rain from June to September, that during that time all vegetation withers, and the whole land takes on a dead and desert-like appearance. Most of the streams run dry until the autumn rains begin.

However, an almost magical transformation of the whole country takes place after the autumn rains start. The landscape suddenly comes to life; flowers spring up out of every crevice, and the dead, brown grass turns lush with almost unbelievable speed.

The "early rain" (R.S.V. "autumn rain"), so frequently mentioned in the Bible, comes late in October, or in November, and softens the soil sufficiently for the farmer to plough and sow his fields. These rains are still comparatively light, but towards the end of December come heavier rains, with the greatest rainfall coming usually in January. This water penetrates the soil deeply, and causes the crops to grow, but a good harvest still depends critically upon the right amount and timing of the "latter rain," also frequently mentioned in the Bible (Deut. 11:14). These last showers of the season - the "spring rains" - come in March and early April, and promote the ripening of the grain. If the last rainy months yield only meagre falls, a poor harvest may result, even though the earlier rainfall has been abundant.

One God-send in Palestine is the dew that is particularly heavy in the Summer. It is brought to Western Palestine by moisture-laden air from the Mediterranean, which at night strikes the mountains of that region, and leaves behind its refreshing legacy of life-saving liquid in a season when every drop of water is a precious boon.

Naturally, the ploughing, sowing, and reaping; the threshing and winnowing; the irrigating and general care of vines and fruit trees; the animal husbandry, etc., of the Hebrew farming year were all geared to this vitally-important climatic cycle. Their whole livelihood - their very national existence - depended upon it. Inevitably, their annual religious festivals were geared to the same seasonal cycle, and **the barley harvest was the key to the whole festival programme.**

From May to October there was practically no rain, so ploughing and sowing for the main grain crops (barley and wheat) began about November. The first grain harvest - barley - came in Nisan (March-April) coinciding with the Passover, and paralleling the two related feasts (Unleavened Bread and First-fruits). The wheat harvest came a few weeks later, coinciding with Pentecost. Finally, late in October, after the long, hot months of summer, the Feast of Ingathering, or Tabernacles, celebrated the ending of the fruit-harvest (grapes, olives, dates, figs, etc.).

### 2.—THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE "RELIGIOUS" AND "CIVIL" YEAR

The Hebrews always numbered the months of their religious calendar with Nisan (or Abib) as the starting point, in harmony with the system of festivals outlined in the Levitical Law. But for civil purposes they began the year in the Autumn, with the seventh month, or Tishri (Ethaniam). The blowing of Trumpets on the first day of the Seventh month was the **civil New Year's Day** - celebrated by modern Jews as "Rosh Hashanah." Thus it is necessary for us to distinguish

carefully between their “**religious**” year, on the one hand, and their “**civil**” year on the other. A measurement of the actual time-span covered by the yearly cycle of sacred festivals shows that they occupied only **seven** of the full twelve months. So their religious “year” was **only seven months long!**

### **3.—THE “TYPE-ANTITYPE” LINKAGE BETWEEN THE FEASTS AND THEIR FUTURE COUNTER-PARTS**

Doubtless all Bible students would agree that there is an authentic “forward-looking” motif in the Old Testament - a sense of incompleteness, coupled with an element of expectation of a coming age of fulfilment, when the promised Deliverer, or “Messiah,” would appear.

This “forward-looking” element is sometimes called the “type-antitype” motif, for it was focused in ritual actions or observances which “fore-shadowed” or anticipated, specific future events. The Old Testament ceremonies were the “**types**,” and their future historical fulfilments, or complements, were the “**anti-types**.”

The presence of this “type-antitype” linkage between Old and New Testaments is widely acknowledged, and its value as an interpretative tool is freely admitted, but not all Bible students are agreed as to the **scope**, or **extent** of its application. Some argue that the “type-antitype” linkage applied **only as far as the Cross**, or the Resurrection of Christ, or Pentecost, and then collapsed. Others insist that it must take in **the full sweep of Christ’s post-crucifixion ministry** - from His ascension to the close of the Christian age. The latter group cannot locate any Scripturally-designated “cut-off point” that would interrupt the out-working of the full cycle of anti-typical events, and they hesitate to invent an arbitrary terminal point. These Study Guides adopt the latter position as being most consistent with the full sweep of Biblical revelation. Logically, if the typical festivals were an unbroken cycle, like so many links in a chain, the anti-typical events must also be like so many links in an unbroken chain!

*(See p.166 for diagram of The Hebrew Farming Year).*

## THE JEWISH FEASTS IN TYPE AND ANTITYPE (PART II)

*Introduction* Equipped with the vital preliminary information presented in Part I, we can now get a much clearer picture of what the annual feasts meant to God's people in the **Age of Anticipation**, and what they can mean to us, who live in the last remnants of the **Age of Fulfilment**, when almost all predictive and typical elements in the Bible have met their historical counter-parts.

*Discussion* Three further steps will round out our study:

### 1.—THE PROGRAMME OF THE FEASTS

As already noted, a yearly cycle of seven feasts was involved, and the pattern of observance is spelled out in passages such as Leviticus 23. Three of these were "Harvest Festivals," or "Pilgrimage Festivals," requiring the presence of all Hebrew males of twelve years and over at the tabernacle, and having stipulated "Festival Sabbaths," or days of complete cessation from secular work. The "Harvest Festivals" were: (1) The Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasted for seven days and immediately followed the Passover Supper (held the previous night), in the middle of the first month (Nisan), at the beginning of the **Barley Harvest** (Leviticus 23:5-14); (2) The Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, fifty days later, celebrating the season of the **Wheat Harvest** (Leviticus 23:15-21; Exodus 34:22); (3) The Feast of Ingathering (or Booths, Shelters, or Tabernacles), in the middle of the seventh month (Tishri), at the close of the **Olive and Fruit Harvest**. (Leviticus 23:34-44; Deuteronomy 16:13).

The four other annual observances, not requiring full male assembly, included two in the Spring, and two in the Autumn. The Spring Feasts were the Passover, celebrated on the 14th day of Nisan (Exodus 12:6-12; 29-33; Leviticus 23:5-8; Numbers 33:3; Deuteronomy 16:1), and the Feast of First-fruits, observed on the 16th of Nisan - the day after the yearly Passover Sabbath (Leviticus 2:12; 23:10, 11). The two additional Autumn feasts were the Blowing of Trumpets, on the first day of the seventh month (Leviticus 23:24, 25), and the Day of Atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month (Leviticus 23:27-32).

*(See Chart No. 57 – Jewish Feasts in Type and Antitype)*

### 2.—THE PURPOSE OF THE FEASTS

While they obviously provided for reunion and fellowship, the yearly festivals were not primarily social occasions - they were essentially **worship services**. All the elements of true worship were present. As such, they embodied **commemorative, educative and predictive** elements:

- (1) **Commemorative.** For example, the Passover recalled the night of deliverance from Egypt, and the Feast of Tabernacles revived memories of the forty years of "tent-life" in the wilderness wandering.
- (2) **Educative.** Geared as they were to the orderly march of the seasons, and to the main harvests, the feasts were an integral part of the Divine education of Israel. They helped to develop and preserve an attitude of awed dependence upon God, as well as a spirit of gratitude and praise. The nature, resources, and claims of the Covenant-relationship were repeatedly and lovingly spelled out, and counsel was systematically given on the safe ordering of priorities.
- (3) **Predictive.** But their purpose was obviously predictive, or typical, also, for **each feast anticipated some significant aspect of the future work of Christ**. This is demonstrated by the fact that **sacrifice for sin** - the element of substitution, in one form or another - was intimately associated with each feast. Of course, none of these "shadowy" animal sacrifices had actual saving virtue in itself. They were merely pictures of, and pointers to, the Final Reality to Come. Like a telescope, they were



not meant to be looked **at**, but to be looked **through**. Their object was the coming, Supreme Sacrifice, when the countless thousands of anticipatory sacrifices would **coalesce** in Christ's final, all-sufficient offering.

### 3.—THE PREDICTIVE ELEMENT IN THE FEASTS

The fact that there was such a predictive element is placed beyond dispute by Jesus and the apostles. At least three of the ancient festivals are specifically named in the New Testament, and expressly declared to have met their fulfilment in some key-phase of Christ's redemptive work. These are:

- (1) **The Passover.** (1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:19, 20). Met its anti-type in Christ's sacrifice. Fulfilled to the precise **month, day and hour!** (14th Nisan).
- (2) **Unleavened Bread.** Though not expressly named in the New Testament, this feast was part-and-parcel of the Passover-type. The two terms "Passover" and "Unleavened Bread" were used interchangeably for the one feast. Leaven was a symbol of sin (1 Corinthians 5:7-8) and the bread - devoid of leaven - was a symbol of the sinless Saviour, who rested in the tomb on the Sabbath of Passover week-end. Fulfilled to the precise day (15th Nisan).
- (3) **First-fruits.** (1 Corinthians 15:20-23). Answered to the Old Testament type, and applied specifically to Christ's Resurrection, as its anti-type. Fulfilled to the precise day (16th Nisan).
- (4) **Pentecost.** (Acts 2:1-4). Coming exactly 50 days after the offering of the wave-sheaf of first-ripe barley (on 16th Nisan), the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit is expressly linked with the historical fulfilment of the ancient festival type. Also, the Old Testament, typical Pentecost was a "harvest" festival, and this element is markedly present in the anti-typical Pentecost - as seen in the marvellous harvest of 3,000 souls (v 41) that resulted from the Holy Spirit's work. Fulfilled to the precise day (6th Sivan).

If we liken the "type-antitype" correspondence to the links in two parallel chains, we have now come to the place where **the first four links of fulfilment have fallen into place**. The four early, Springtime feasts have met their historical counterparts in the series of key-events that were associated with Christ's first Advent (i.e. His Death, Burial, Resurrection, and the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit). **But can we locate the last three anti-types with equal assurance?** Can we discover a series of three latter-day events, in sequence, that will match the three Autumn feasts of the Hebrew cycle?

Obviously, to do this, we must move out of Bible times, past the 1,260 years of the great Papal apostasy, into modern Christian history.

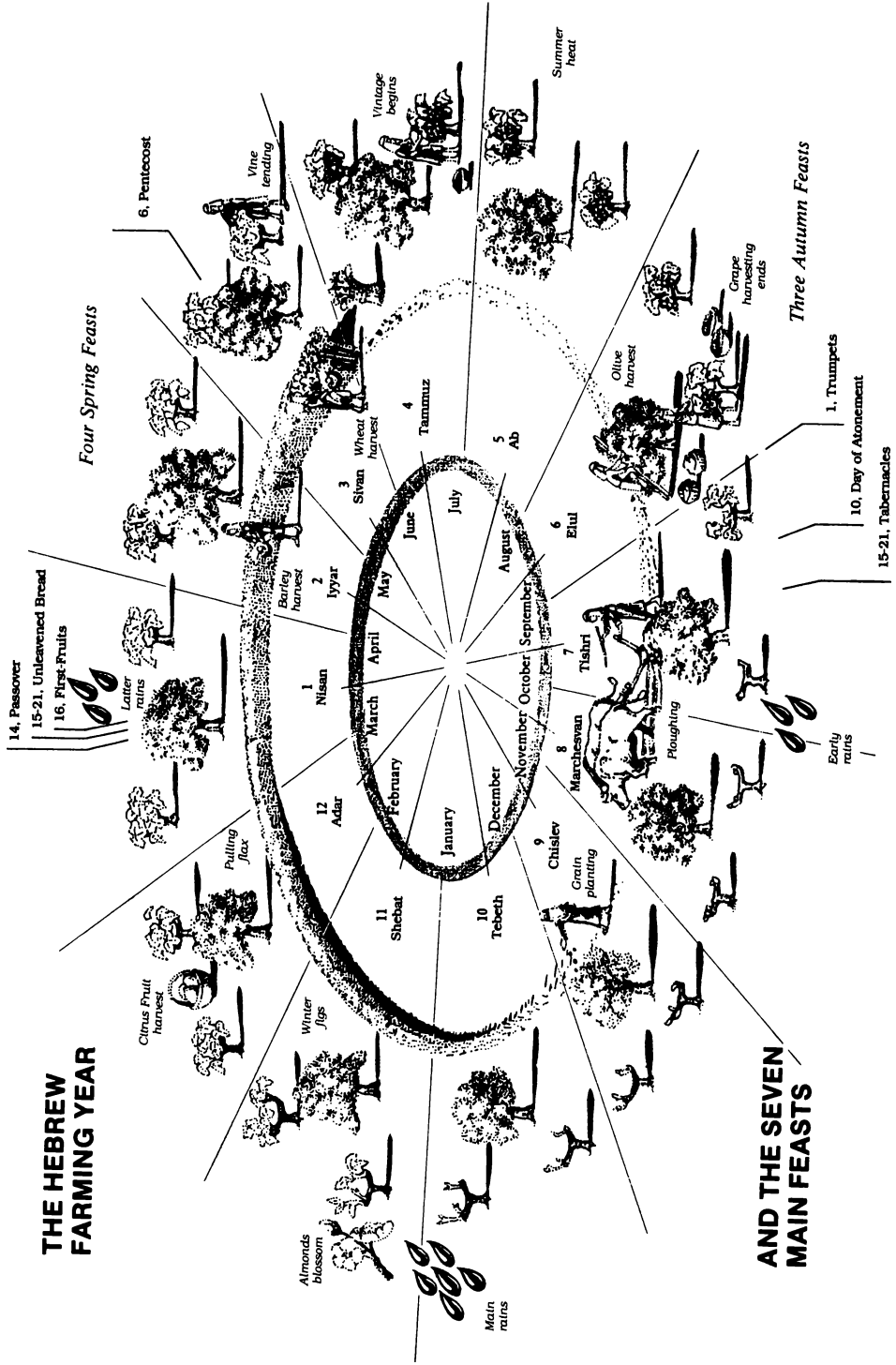
- (5) **Trumpets.** (Revelation 14:6, 7). Met its counter-part in the Great Second Advent Awakening of the 1830's and 1840's, announcing the approach of the anti-typical "cleansing of the sanctuary," which, commencing in 1844, marked the terminal point of the 2,300 days prophecy of Daniel 8:14.
- (6) **Day of Atonement.** (Daniel 7:9, 10; 8:14; Revelation 11:18, 19). Fulfilled in the Pre-Advent Judgment - the opening phase of the final judgment - which began as predicted in 1844, and answers to the annual "cleansing of the sanctuary" ritual of the earthly sanctuary service.
- (7) **Tabernacles.** (Isaiah 35; Matthew 8:11; 13:39, 43; 24:31; Luke 13:28, 29; Revelation 7:9-17; 14:14-16; 19:6-9). Yet to be fulfilled in the final great "Ingathering," or "Harvest Home-coming" of God's redeemed, at the Second Coming of Christ. This will be the climactic "Harvest of all Harvests," projected in the "harvest motif" of a score of parables and prophecies (See Matthew 13:39-41; James 5:7, 8; Matthew 3:12; Revelation 14:14-16).

*Conclusion* Studied in the light of the foregoing Scriptural and historical facts, the Feasts present, in capsule form, a **dramatized prophecy of the high points of Christ's redemptive work, during the entire Christian age.** The two great mountain-peaks of Scripture - the First and Second Advents - stand out in unmistakably bold relief. The feasts thus provide yet another preview of the deliberate, orderly, majestic march of God through the centuries to His final triumph!

Again we ask: Why has God given **US** a chance to study this stirring theme? The words of Jesus, in Luke 12:35 and 36, provide the answer: "**Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord.**"

*(See over page for diagram of The Hebrew Farming Year).*

# THE HEBREW FARMING YEAR



## Four Spring Feasts

## Three Autumn Feasts

## AND THE SEVEN MAIN FEASTS

## THE SANCTUARY - THE HUB OF BIBLE TRUTH

*Introduction* Just as the spokes of a wheel are built around the central hub, so the Bible is built around the theme of the Sanctuary. As a matter of fact, apart from the Lord Himself, **more Bible space is devoted to the Sanctuary than to any other one topic.** On the basis of this writer's personal count, a total of 103 chapters is devoted to some aspect of Sanctuary teaching! And this does not include the scores of scattered individual references to the "Sanctuary" or the "Temple of God" in such books as Psalms and the Revelation. **One fact is inescapable - if we were to remove from the Bible all references to the Sanctuary, the Book would literally fall to pieces in our hands!**

*Discussion* In this Study Guide, we will examine the spokes of the "Gospel Wheel." We will note how they cover the whole spectrum of Bible truth, and how they all meet in the Sanctuary "Hub."

(See Chart No. 58 - *The Sanctuary - Hub of Bible Truth*)

### 1.—THE HOLINESS OF GOD (1 Peter 1:16; Exodus 19:10-25; Deut. 32:4)

All meaningful Bible study begins with **the character of God.** Everything that Christianity stands for grows out of the question: "**What kind of God do we worship?**" The ultimate foundation of Biblical morality is not what God **requires**, but what God **is**.

The primary meaning of the word "holy" is "**separated**" or "**set apart**," and it signifies **the fundamental distinction between God and His creatures.** Especially does it signify **God's "separateness" from all that is evil and unclean.** God's "holiness" is His moral excellence; His stainless, incorruptible goodness; His unquenchable enthusiasm for righteousness; His total and uncompromising recoil from evil. As light is to darkness, as warmth is to cold, so **God's "holiness" is the polar-opposite of evil.**

Accordingly, the primary, heart-searching message of the Sanctuary was crystal-clear. **God hated iniquity, and man was not permitted to saunter into the Divine presence with his hands in his pockets and his heart full of sin!**

The meticulous insistence upon quality and exact detail in building the Sanctuary; the strict cautions against trespassing upon Mt. Sinai; the warnings against mingling the "sacred" with the "common;" the insistence upon "unblemished" offerings, and upon scrupulous cleanliness, reverence, decorum and order; the veiling of access to God's presence - all were designed to implant and heighten the sense of **God's "holiness" - His "separateness" from evil.**

### 2.—THE ETERNITY OF GOD'S LAW (Psalms 111:7, 8).

God has a system of absolutes, or unchanging moral values. These values are expressed in the Ten Commandments, which were inscribed on tables of stone, and preserved within the Ark of the Covenant. But these sovereign and unchangeable moral values do not exist apart from God. **They are God in essence.** Beams of His glory, they can no more be separated from Him than light and heat from the sun. Because they form the basis of the moral order of the universe, they are designed to regulate human conduct for all time, and will be the standard of the Judgment (James 2:12).

The central object of the Sanctuary furniture was the "Ark of the Covenant," which was a graphic representation of the Divine government. Enshrined in the Ark was the Law of God - the foundation of His government. Immediately above the Law was the golden lid of the Ark - the "Mercy-Seat." Above the Mercy-seat was the "Shekinah glory" - the visible symbol of God's presence - resting always between the cherubim. The "Mercy-seat" - the appointed place of meeting between God and sinful man - was an abiding witness to the harmony of the Divine attributes; an assurance that God's justice would always be tempered with mercy.

### 3.—THE REALITY OF SATAN AND SIN (John 8:44; 1 John 3:4, 8).

The Sanctuary does not hedge or equivocate about the old-fashioned doctrines of Satan and Sin. It does not gloss over them, or white-wash them. It confronts them as grim and terrible realities - **the root-causes of all the trouble and misery in the world!** With its index finger pointing to God's Holy Law in the sacred Ark, the Sanctuary declares: **"Sin is the transgression of the Law!"** (1 John 3:4).

The Sanctuary's witness to sin is the echo of Genesis 3, where Adam and Eve, in a sinless Eden, chose to disobey a clear-cut command of their Creator, and as a consequence, lost their access to the Tree of Life.

In Sanctuary terms, **sin is the deliberate breaking-off of man's original love-relationship with God.** Its essence is, **"My right to myself!"** It is all human conduct that challenges God's sovereignty and authority; separates us from His control, and unfits us to dwell in His presence.

The Sanctuary does not take a casual, flippant, or superficial view of sin. **Its wages are death** (Ezekiel 18:4, 20; Romans 6:23). **It binds man with cords that he cannot break** (Proverbs 5:22; Romans 6:16). **It creates an unbridgeable gulf of separation between man and God** (Isaiah 59:1, 2; Exodus 33:20).

In Sanctuary terms, Satan, also, knows all about our sins and, like a Prosecuting Attorney, he **"accuses us before God, day and night"** (Zechariah 3:1; Revelation 12:10).

### 4.—SALVATION BY FAITH (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

Thank God, while the Sanctuary is absolutely candid in its diagnosis of sin, **it is equally specific about God's remedy for sin!** No sooner had sin opened the gulf between man and God, than God set to work to bridge that gulf!

Also, just as the Sanctuary's view of sin has its roots in Genesis 3, so the roots of its Salvation-doctrine are found in this same chapter!

On the very day man sinned, God announced the coming of a Saviour, who would "bruise the serpent's head" (Genesis 3:15). Then, in order to illustrate **the precise manner** in which the Saviour would do his work - and **the enormous cost** that would be involved - God took the lives of innocent animals and used their skins to provide garments for Adam and Eve, in their nakedness and shame (Genesis 3:21).

By that graphic action, God established the principle of **"substitution"** - the innocent dying in place of the guilty - as the key-principle of salvation, and dramatized the essential elements of the whole plan of Redemption. **By that first sacrifice in Eden, He laid the foundation of the whole Sanctuary Service, and foreshadowed the death of Christ - when God, for love's sake, would take the full responsibility for man's sin, and - in His own Person - would bear the full penalty!**

The Sanctuary Service, as later elaborated in the Book of Exodus, picks up the principle of substitution from Genesis 3, and builds it into a system of worship - centred in the sacrificial lamb, and pointing forward to Christ - that would last for over 1000 years!

Man's part in the salvation-process would be to believe God; to renounce all reliance upon his own works of merit, and to receive the gift of Salvation so freely offered (Romans 6:23).

### 5.—CHRIST, OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST (Hebrews 8:1, 2).

In the full light of the Sanctuary and its services, there are **two phases to the redeeming work of Christ.** Both are so equally indispensable, that they have been called: **"The Two 'Heart-beats' of Redemption."** These are:

1. **Sacrifice**, or Blood-shedding.
2. **Mediation**, or Blood-sprinkling.

Blood-shedding was the part of the **Sacrifice**. Blood-sprinkling was the part of the **Priest**. Blood-shedding was the work of **provision**. Blood-sprinkling was the work of **application**.

This dual-motif, or "heart-beat" of the Levitical service, showed that, while the **foundation** of the plan of Salvation was laid at the Cross, the **whole** of Christ's redeeming work did not finish there. Biblical "redemption" envisages not only the paying of the ransom price - but the setting of the captives free!

Accordingly, while the **Sacrificial** aspects of Redemption were complete at Calvary - needing absolutely no supplementation or improvement by any works of man - **there still needed to be additional works of God**, before the Redemptive provision could be made fully operative!

The Resurrection of Christ; His Ascension; the Gift of the Holy Spirit; and Christ's present High-priestly work in heaven, were all needed - **not to add to the merit of His one, all-sufficient Sacrifice** - but to **apply the benefits of that sacrifice to individual believers**, throughout the centuries of the Christian age.

The post-Crucifixion work of Christ, as our great High Priest, is the theme of the book of Hebrews, and when this book is placed beside Leviticus, the full-orbed truth of Christ's complete Redemption is made crystal-clear!

#### **6.—THE JUDGMENT** (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Just as the Sanctuary illustrates the two "Heart-beats" of Redemption, so it illustrates the **two "Mountain Peaks"** of the whole scheme of Bible truth - (1) **Calvary's Cross**, and (2) **The Final Judgment**.

The two divisions of the Sanctuary Service - the "**Daily**" and the "**Yearly**" - had these two "Mountain-peaks" clearly in view. The Daily Service, centering in the slain lamb, turned the spotlight of prophecy upon **the Cross**. The Yearly Service - with its solemn work of review; its urgent call to heart-searching; and its clear-cut division between penitent and impenitent - turned its spotlight on **the Judgment**.

In the light of the Sanctuary, man's history is not to continue forever in a state of endless suspense. History is going somewhere. It has a fixed Goal. Because the universe has a moral base, its Ruler must not only be just - He must be **seen** to be just by all His intelligent subjects. His justice must be fully and publicly **disclosed**, and fully and publicly **vindicated**. That is the purpose of the final judgment.

While most people think of the Judgment in its relation to man, few think of it in its relation to **God**. In the full light of the Sanctuary, the Judgment climaxes in a final, universal "cleansing," or "vindication," not only of **redeemed man**, and a **redeemed creation**, but of **the character of God Himself!**

Seen in the light of the Sanctuary, the most important work in the universe is not the Salvation of man, important as that may seem. **It is the clearing of God's name from the false accusations of Satan**. This final and total vindication of God's character will be the eternal guarantee that sin shall not rise up the second time.

#### **7.—THE MILLENNIUM** (Revelation 20:1-9).

The Millennium - that intriguing bridge of 1,000 years between the two resurrections - is not just a haphazard arrangement; a cosmic irrelevancy; a meaningless hyphen. It, too, plays a major part in the out-working of the Great Controversy, and is directly related to the Sanctuary theme. There are at least two significant links between the Sanctuary service and the events of the Millennium. These are:

**(1) The Antitypical Fulfilment of the "Scape-goat" Ceremony.**

The day when Satan will be publicly unmasked before the universe as the prime instigator of all human sin, and imprisoned for 1,000 years, was clearly foreshadowed by the "Scape-goat" ceremony, at the close of the yearly Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:10, 20-22). Thereby, in graphic symbolism, was pictured **the climactic moment when the finger of universal blame would be pointed at Satan**, and the responsibility for his part in the sins of believers would be publicly rolled back upon his own head.

**(2) A Conclusive Proof of the Pre-Advent, Investigative Judgment.**

The Millennium is bounded by **two resurrections**, the first of which affects the godly only, and takes place at the Second Coming of Christ. Obviously, there is an inescapable conclusion that must be drawn at this point. The fact that **one class - the godly - is released from the grave** and transported to heaven at the Second Advent while **another class - the ungodly - is left in the tomb**, proves that **a preliminary sitting of the Heavenly Court has already taken place**, and that a favourable and final verdict has been reached concerning the godly!

So the fact of a pre-Advent Judgment is lifted above debate. **It is implicit in the Bible doctrine of the two resurrections.**

**8.—EARTH CLEANSED AND RENEWED (2 Peter 3:10-13).**

Just as the full yearly round of the Sanctuary Service terminated with the final "cleansing" of the Sanctuary on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16), so the end of the Millennium will witness the final "**Cleansing**" of **God's fallen creation from the last clinging traces of sin**. God is going to wash the earth, the waters, the air, the rocks, the soil, in the most powerful known antiseptic - **fire!** (2 Peter 3:10).

No teaching of Scripture is more consistent, or more emphatic, than this. None of the issues of the Great Controversy are to be left in doubt. All are to be completely and finally resolved. Evil will at last be judged and destroyed - totally destroyed. Righteousness, too, will be judged and vindicated - totally vindicated. No loose-ends of confusion or questioning will be left dangling. **No residue; no ash; no atom; no shadow of doubt or of evil will be left in existence!**

That day of final, universal "cleansing" is the sublime goal to which the whole Creation - and the whole scheme of Biblical truth - moves with jubilant expectation. Every Day of Atonement; every Feast of Tabernacles, and every Year of Jubilee, pointed to that day of final release and cleansing with steady, unwavering finger!

It is called, "**The Day of the Lord**" (2 Peter 3:10); "**The Regeneration**" (Matthew 19:28); "**The Restitution of all things**" (Acts 3:21), and "**The New Heavens and the New Earth**" (Revelation 21:1).

When these exciting, mind-stretching assurances are gathered together, they mean one thing, and one thing only - **God will not be satisfied until all that was lost through sin has been restored**; man's environment has been "released from the bondage of corruption" (Romans 8:21), and man himself has been re-established in Paradise restored. (Revelation 22:14).

These are the full implications of the "**Cleansing of the Sanctuary**" of Daniel 8:14, and the "**Cleansing of the Heavenly things,**" of Hebrews 9:23.

**9.—THE CENTRALITY OF THE CROSS**

One feature of the "Gospel Wheel" - the most significant feature - remains for study - **the Centrality of Calvary's Cross**. Just as the great doctrinal themes of Scripture all find a common meeting-place in the Sanctuary "Hub" - so the Sanctuary itself has as its Centre, "**the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world**" (John 1:29).

Around that stupendous fact - the Cross - the whole scheme of Redemption moves. The outer rim of the wheel is therefore labelled: **“THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL - WHERE SIN ABOUND, GRACE DOTH MUCH MORE ABOUND!”**

*Conclusion* This, then, is the unique and priceless ministry of the Sanctuary Doctrine - to **bind the whole Bible together into one unified and harmonious fabric, and to focus the sinner’s attention upon Calvary’s Cross.**

And now it is time for us to ask again, the question that we have asked so many times before: **“Why has God given US a chance to hear these things?”**

Only one answer is possible: **“So that we might receive the gift of full salvation that is offered us so freely in Christ, and commit ourselves to Him for time and eternity!”**

Sarah Reed tells us how she did this, in the light of the Sanctuary Service:

I bend my ear down to the Book and listen,  
And back across the centuries I hear  
The trampling of a million little hoofs of lambs  
To slaughter led.

As in the night, when I would sleep and dream,  
I hear them, one by one, approach the place of sacrifice;  
Sweet, gentle, unresisting things,  
So pure and white.

And then I lift the Book and hold it near my heart.  
The little lambs all quiet now, but, oh, I feel  
The even tread of ONE who walked alone—  
God’s perfect Lamb!

The footsteps cease—somewhere outside the City’s walls—  
My heart picks up the surging of a wondrous flow  
That started from His broken heart that day  
And reached my own!





## GOD'S LAST WARNING MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

*Introduction* Our study of Daniel 8 : 14 has led us to expect the appearance of a **great, truth-restoring movement** on earth at the end of the 2,300 days. In order to meet the requirements of this prophecy, the aim of this movement should be to strip away the Papal counterfeits, and **restore the truth concerning the Heavenly ministry of Christ**, especially in its relation to the Sanctuary and the Judgment. This truth, as we found in our study of Daniel 8, has long been perverted and obscured by the Papal apostasy.

The question which confronts us now is: **"Are these expectations justified? Is our understanding of Daniel 8 : 14 correct? Are there parallel passages of Scripture which establish this interpretation beyond the shadow of doubt?"**

The Book of Revelation is the counterpart or "twin" of the Book of Daniel. These two prophetic books have been compared to the two **"sights" on a rifle barrel**. Puzzling passages in Daniel can be much better understood when lined up with parallel passages in Revelation. There is one chapter of Revelation which answers to Daniel 8 : 14 like a hand to a glove. It is **Revelation 14**. Let us open the Bible and read vv 14-16.

### *Discussion* 1.—DOES THE HARVEST SCENE HERE DESCRIBED MEAN THE END OF THE WORLD?

It reads like a description of the Second Coming of Christ, doesn't it? But can we be absolutely sure of this? Yes, we can. A parallel Scripture—Matt. 13 : 39—declares plainly: **"The harvest is the end of the world."**

### 2.—ARE WE LIVING ON THE EVE OF THE WORLD'S FINAL HARVEST?

The evidence permits only one answer. Unmistakable signs prove that we are now living in the last days, immediately preceding earth's final harvest-hour.

*(See Chart No. 18—Signs of Christ's Coming)*

### 3.—WILL GOD ALLOW THIS FINAL HARVEST SCENE TO BURST UPON THE WORLD WITHOUT WARNING?

God has never allowed such a thing to happen before. He has always warned men—saints and sinners alike—of an impending crisis. (Amos 3 : 7). Examples: Noah's warning of the Flood. Moses' warning of the plagues of Egypt. Jonah's warning to the people of Nineveh. Jesus' warning of the impending destruction of Jerusalem.

Even so, as we stand today on the eve of earth's final harvest-hour, because God is a God of love and consistency, we have a right to say: **"There ought to be a great message of warning going out to the world right now!"**

### 4.—IS THERE SOME SPECIFIC BIBLE PASSAGE WHICH CONTAINS GOD'S LAST WARNING MESSAGE BEFORE THE HARVEST-HOUR?

**Revelation 14 : 6-11** meets all the requirements of such a message. It immediately precedes John's description of the Second Advent (vv 14-16). It is expressly designed to meet the social and religious conditions now prevailing.

*(See Chart No. 59—Three Angels' Messages)*

### 5.—WHAT VITAL TRUTHS WILL RECEIVE SPECIAL EMPHASIS IN THE PREACHING OF THIS LAST WARNING MESSAGE?

**"The Everlasting Gospel"** (v 6). This means the original, unchanged Gospel of the grace of God—the Gospel by which Adam, Abraham, Joseph, Daniel, Peter and Paul were saved—the **eternal "good news"** concerning the **saving work of Christ**. Such an **"Everlasting"** Gospel corresponds with the original **"daily"** of Daniel 8 which Satan has tried so persistently to "take away". It centres in the **continual, all-sufficient mediation of Christ**—Christ Himself, as Sin-bearer, High-Priest, and daily **"Bread of life"**—always available for the salvation of men!

**"The Hour of His Judgment is Come"** (v 7). This is the most dramatic, electrifying announcement of God's last warning message. Not **"The hour of His Judgment is coming"**—but **"is come!"** **The Judgment Hour has arrived! It is here!** Mankind has never been in

this position before. It has moved into a new dimension of urgency and solemnity. A transition of cosmic magnitude has taken place. We have entered the "narrows" of history, where the river of time is racing to meet eternity. **We are actually living within the borders of the final Judgment Hour!**

**"Worship Him that made Heaven and Earth"** (v 7). The fact that God is Creator is the foundation of all true religion, and of all enduring human values. It is the foundation of Divine authority and human responsibility. It gives meaning, direction and purpose to life. It gives God the right to make laws for men and to call them to account at the Judgment. By linking **Creation** with the **Judgment**, this message links the "first things" with the "last things". It affirms that the world will have as rational and purposeful an **ending** as it had a rational and purposeful **beginning**. It is therefore a direct challenge to the twisted, pagan, godless philosophies of our time.

Obviously, this call to worship God as the Creator assumes the unchanged authority of the **Ten Commandments**, and the perpetuity of the **weekly Sabbath** as the abiding sign of God's Creative power.

**6.—IS THERE A CHRISTIAN GROUP ON EARTH TODAY WHICH VIEWS THE PREACHING OF THE JUDGMENT-HOUR MESSAGE AS ITS GOD-APPOINTED TASK?**

Yes. They are known as **Seventh-day Adventists**. They arose in 1844, out of the great wave of Second Advent expectation which swept the world in the first half of last century. They exist for one purpose only—to **floodlight the Person and work of Christ and to carry the Judgment-Hour message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people in this generation**. They are employing almost every major language. They are harnessing every legitimate agency—the printing press, the radio, the television, and the living preacher—for the speedy finishing of the mighty task!

**7.—IS THIS THE GREAT, TRUTH-RESTORING MOVEMENT FORETOLD IN DANIEL 8:14?**

Yes. Beyond the shadow of a doubt. It fulfils all the requirements of Daniel's prophecy!

(a) **It arose at the right TIME**. Centuries before, God had placed His finger upon **1844** as the year when Jesus would move into the last phase of His High Priestly work, and the universe would move into a new and final phase of God's dealings with sin. There was simply **no other point in history** when the announcement: **"The hour of His Judgment is come!"** would have been true.

(b) **It does the right WORK**. It strips away the mask from the Papal counterfeits. It lifts up the truth from the dust. It focuses attention upon the vital, heart-truths of the Christian faith. **It restores the true, original "daily" of Daniel 8, which had been "taken away" by Satan**. It points with steady finger to the saving ministry of Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary. This is its paramount task. While fearlessly diagnosing man's sin, it faithfully proclaims God's remedy for sin. **Between Creation and the Judgment it plants the blood-stained Cross of Redemption!** Thus it presents a rational and unified view of Holy Scripture, and enables sinners to meet their Maker and their Judge in peace.

(c) **It bears the right FRUIT**. It is winning men and women to Christ at the rate of over 1000 per day. Yet its most precious fruit is not great numbers; large, ornate churches, or imposing institutions. Its most precious fruit is the **"fruit of the Spirit"**—godly characters; clean hearts; clean minds; clean lips; clean bodies—**men and women in whom the lost image of God is being restored**. In Revelation 14:12, the spotlight of prophecy shines full upon the kind of men and women who are produced by this message: **"Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."**

*Conclusion* **Why do you think God has given US a chance to hear this message of the Judgment-Hour? For two reasons:**

He wants us to be ready to meet Him in peace.

He wants us to have a share in giving to others the message of the Judgment-Hour!

**Ezek. 33:7: "I have set thee a watchman . . . therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me."**

## A PEOPLE OF PROPHECY

**Introduction** Bible study becomes tremendously exciting when we first learn to find ourselves in the Book!

John the Baptist was able to do this. He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness . . . as said the prophet Esaias" (John 1 : 23). His heart was fired by an unshakable conviction that God had raised him up in specific fulfilment of His prophetic Word. No wonder John was invincible!

Jesus found Himself in the Bible. Concerning His own Person and mission He said: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4 : 21); and, "Moses wrote of Me" (John 5 : 46). This was not arrogance or conceit. It was the expression of a Heaven-born, Bible-based conviction.

In our study of "God's Last Warning Message" (Lesson 42), we learned that Seventh-day Adventists are reinforced by this same conviction. They point to passages like Dan. 8 : 14; Matt. 24 : 14; and Rev. 14 : 6-11 and declare: "We have arisen in response to these prophetic words. Our movement is prophecy come to life before your eyes. This day are these Scriptures fulfilled in your ears!"

In this lesson we will study a further reinforcement of this conviction—Revelation 10. In this chapter the prophetic spotlight rests squarely upon the birth-hour of the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

(See Chart No. 60—The Angel of Revelation 10)

Let us open the Bible and read Rev. 10 : 1 to 11 : 1. Our first step towards understanding this chapter will be to find the keys.

### **Discussion** 1.—FINDING THE KEYS OF REVELATION 10

We have already discovered that the keys to many of the riddles of Revelation are found in its twin book—Daniel. These two books are like the two sights on a rifle barrel. Their mysteries are solved when we get the two books in correct alignment. Read Daniel 12 side by side with Revelation 10, and note the striking parallels:

DANIEL 12	REVELATION 10
<i>"The man clothed in linen" (vv 6, 7)</i>	<i>"An angel clothed with the sun" (vv 1, 5)</i>
<i>"Standing upon the waters" (vv 6 7)</i>	<i>"Standing upon the sea and land" (v 2)</i>
<i>"Lifting his hand and swearing by Him that liveth for ever and ever" (v 7)</i>	<i>"Lifted up his hand and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever" (vv 5, 6)</i>
<i>"How long shall it be to the end?" (vv 6, 8)</i>	<i>"There shall be time no longer" (v 6)</i>
<i>"All these things shall be finished" (v 7)</i>	<i>"The mystery of God shall be finished" (v 7)</i>
<i>The Book of Daniel "closed up and sealed" (vv 4, 9)</i>	<i>"In his hand a little book—open" (v 2)</i>

From these parallels it is clear that the "open book" of Revelation 10 is nothing other than the Book of Daniel, viewed at the time when it was due to be unsealed.

### 2.—LOCATING THE TIME OF REVELATION 10

Can we discover when the Book of Daniel was unsealed and understood?

History declares that this occurred in the later years of the 18th century and the early years of the 19th, when a world-wide revival of prophetic study occurred. As a direct result of this study, the conviction gripped the hearts of multitudes of Christians in many Churches—ministers and laymen alike—that the hour had struck for the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecies, and that the Lord's return was at hand!

The century between 1750 and 1850 was one of the very greatest and richest birth-hours of all history. The revival of prophetic study was only one of five great religious movements which sprang into full vigour during this period, resulting in untold blessing to the world:

**The Wesleyan Revival in England.**  
**The Great Missionary Awakening.**  
**The Bible Society Movement.**  
**The Revival of Prophetic Study.**  
**The Great Second Advent Awakening.**

### 3.—IDENTIFYING THE PEOPLE OF REVELATION 10

By taking the "little book" from the angel's hand and eating it, the prophet John dramatises the joyous experience of thousands of Christian believers who took part in the revival of prophetic study and the great Second Advent Awakening which followed, in the first half of the last century.

From a close study of the time-prophecies of Daniel—especially "the 2,300 days" of Dan. 8 : 14—thousands of men and women in all the major churches were convinced that Christ would return in or about 1844. They understood the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" to mean the cleansing of the earth by fire at the Second Advent. This re-kindling of the Blessed Hope was an experience of indescribable sweetness.

Many of those early Adventists drew a parallel between the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" and the Jewish Day of Atonement and, discovering that the Day of Atonement for 1844 would fall on 22nd October, they preached this date as the very day when Christ would come.

But 22nd October came and went without any sign of the Master's appearing. The hope that was as "sweet as honey" soured to a disappointment as "bitter" as gall. Crushed and heartbroken, they fled to the promises of God for comfort and enlightenment. The key to an understanding of their disappointment was found in God's sure Word.

### 4.—EXPLAINING THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF REVELATION 10

After John's bitter disappointment in eating the "little book", he was instructed to "rise and measure the temple of God" (Rev. 11 : 1). Likewise, the disappointed Adventists of 1844 were moved by the Spirit of God to make a careful re-examination of the Biblical Sanctuary, and the prophecies which related thereto. In the course of this study they found the key to their disappointment.

Scores of painstaking checkings and re-checkings of the 2,300 days prophecy proved that they had made no mistake respecting the time of its fulfilment. All admitted that there was no fault in their calculation of the time. Their error lay in their mistaken conclusions respecting the nature of the event which was to occur at the end of the 2,300 days!

Whereas they had concluded that the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" symbolised Christ's return to earth, they now realised that this "cleansing" was to take place in Heaven, and referred to the opening of the second, or judgment-phase of Christ's ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary, which must be completed before His return to the earth.

Like a sudden shaft of light leaping out of midnight darkness, this new and Scriptural understanding of the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" transfigured their disappointment and kindled their hearts with new hope. Instead of lingering in their minds as a painful embarrassment, the disappointment of 1844 now became a sheet anchor for their faith! They realised that this very disappointment had been marked beforehand in God's prophetic Word which, by its patent fulfilment, had become an indisputable seal of the Divine character of the 1844 movement. What had seemed to be their heaviest liability had now become their greatest asset. They were able to find themselves, and their own bitter experience, upon the pages of the open Bible! This conviction fired the hearts of the disappointed Adventists and made their testimony invincible.

**5.—FULFILLING THE COMMISSION OF REVELATION 10**

But not only did they find **themselves** and their **disappointment** upon the pages of the Bible—they found their **work** there, also. God's remedy for disappointment was not indolence and self-pity, but a **rousing trumpet-call to action!**

**Rev. 10 : 11: "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."**

This commission parallels those found in Matt. 24 : 14; Matt. 28 : 18-20; and Rev. 14 : 6-11. It is in response to this specific commission that Seventh-day Adventists have launched a world-wide missionary programme, and pledged themselves to the completion of the Gospel task in this generation!

*Conclusion*      **Why do you think God has given US a chance to hear these things?**

So that **we, too**, will be able to **find ourselves and our work** upon this page of the open Bible.

So that **we, too**, will "Take the little book and eat it up."

So that **we, too**, will sense that the "mystery of God" is to be "finished" in our time.

So that **we, too**, will obey the command: "Rise and measure the temple of God."

So that **we, too**, will heed the commission: "Thou must prophesy again."



## CAN WE IDENTIFY GOD'S TRUE CHURCH TODAY?

*Introduction* The ancient Greeks had a story about the escape of Theseus from the Cretan labyrinth. This baffling maze had been built by Daedalus, the famous architect, and no man had ever been able to enter it and find his way out again. Theseus, a young Greek hero, had plunged into the labyrinth, slain the fearsome Minotaur who lived at its centre, and now faced the problem of finding an exit through the seemingly endless corridors of the bewildering maze. Happily, a friendly Cretan maiden had placed in his hands a ball of silver thread, which Theseus had played out as he entered the maze, and which now guided him as he made his escape.

How like the predicament of thousands of frustrated men and women today, as they view the wilderness of warring sects and denominations, each of which claims to be the one true Christian Church!

Here is a **baffling labyrinth**, indeed! But where can we find a silver thread to guide us safely through the tangled maze? God has provided an infallible guide that is available to every man. It is "the sure word of prophecy".

**II Peter 1 : 19: "As a light that shineth in a dark place."**

In this lesson we will study the prophecy of Revelation 12, which enables us to identify God's true Church with satisfying assurance.

*Discussion* Let us open the Bible and read the whole of this chapter. Then we will study it verse by verse under three headings:

### 1.—THE THREE LEADING SYMBOLS OF REVELATION 12

(See Chart No.61 —*The Woman and Dragon of Revelation 12*)

We are not left to guess at the identity of the three leading symbols in this chapter. The keys to their identity are found within the chapter itself. We will begin with the Dragon, because he is the easiest to identify.

#### The Great Red Dragon—Symbol of Satan

V 9 calls him "that old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan". There is no room for guesswork here. God has given us the exact meaning of this symbol, and **his identity is the master-key to the other two**. But Satan never appears in public. He always remains invisible. He gets his work done **through human agents**—people who are willing to become "gloves" for Satan's hand. At the time of John's vision, the most effective instrument Satan had on earth was **Pagan Rome**.

NOTE: "THE THIRD PART OF THE STARS OF HEAVEN" (v 4), is an obvious reference to the company of apostate angels whom Satan drew with him in his original rebellion against God. See vv 7-9, where John's mind is carried back momentarily to the original "war in Heaven" as a result of which Satan and his angels were cast out. Vv 10-12 describe how yet another great victory over Satan was won at Calvary's Cross, when a mighty shout of triumph rang through the courts of Heaven. (See John 12:31.)

#### The Sun-clothed Woman—Symbol of God's True Church

Throughout the Bible, God's favourite symbol for His Church is a pure and beautiful woman (Jer. 6 : 2; II Cor. 11 : 2). The symbolic woman of Revelation 12 agrees perfectly with this general Bible picture.

"Clothed with the Sun"—the robe of Christ's righteousness.

"The Moon under her feet"—the written Word of God, which reflects light from Christ, as the moon does from the sun.



**"A crown of twelve stars"**—twelve leaders were prominent in the Old Testament Church—the twelve sons of Jacob; and in the New Testament Church—the twelve Apostles.

**Expecting the birth of a man-child**—a perfect dramatisation of the Old Testament Messianic hope. The whole of the Old Testament could be summarised in one word: "Expectancy".

**Hated and persecuted by the dragon.**

**Befriended and protected by God.**

The sun-clothed woman is a perfect symbol of God's community of believers on earth—His true Church in all ages—viewed in the ideal sense, as God loves to think of her. As the great prophetic drama of Revelation 12 opens, John sees the Church on the eve of the birth of Christ.

**The Man-Child—Symbol of Jesus Christ**

Note the five clear marks of identification:

**Awaited for centuries by the Church of God.**

**Born into the world as a helpless babe.**

**Hated and attacked by Satan.**

**Caught up to God and His throne.**

**Will rule all nations with a rod of iron.**

These specifications fit only one Person who has ever lived—the Lord Jesus Christ. They simply could not apply to anyone else.

## **2.—THE THREE STAGES OF SATAN'S WARFARE IN REVELATION 12**

### **Stage I.—At the Birth of Christ (vv 1-6)**

The Devil, also, was familiar with the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, and behind the scenes he plotted to destroy the coming Saviour.

Immediately after Jesus was born, Satan, working through Rome's puppet king Herod, tried to destroy Jesus and defeat the plan of redemption. He also used Rome's official representative, Pilate, to authorise Christ's crucifixion and seal His tomb. However, in spite of His death and burial by Rome's agents, Christ escaped and was caught up to God and to His throne.

Baffled and beaten in his efforts to destroy Christ, Satan then turned and persecuted the Church, using Pagan Rome, the apostate Jews, and finally Papal Rome.

Though thousands of early Christians were cruelly martyred and thousands lapsed into apostasy, God preserved His Church by giving her the wings of a great eagle, which enabled her to escape to a refuge in the "wilderness", where she had "a place, prepared of God".

(The first stage of Satan's warfare extends from the birth of Christ to the beginning of Papal supremacy—A.D. 538.)

### **Stage II.—In the Dark Ages (vv 13-16)**

*(See Chart No. 43—The 1260 Days Prophecy)*

During the Dark Ages, God's true Church was outlawed from the great cities of apostate Christendom and driven into exile in "the wilderness". She was not found in Rome, Paris, Constantinople, or the other important centres of population, but in deserts, forests, caverns, and especially in the deep Alpine valleys of Central Europe. One of the best-known Christian communities to preserve a pure faith was the Waldenses, who, though cruelly persecuted, maintained their identity and faith for hundreds of years.

They followed the Scriptures in simplicity, and refused to recognise the authority of the apostate Roman Church. Their own written confessions of faith, as well as the accusations of their enemies, bear witness to the remarkable purity of their lives and worship. History also records that similar companies of "Protestants", before the Reformation, were found in Southern France, the British Isles, Syria and Abyssinia.

Satan launched a "flood" of Papal armies in Europe and Mohammedan hordes in the Middle East, in a furious effort to exterminate the fugitive Church. However, God provided miraculous protection, and "the earth helped the woman" in three remarkable ways:

**Behind lofty mountain bulwarks, in caverns, valleys and forests.**

**Through enlightened European rulers who befriended the Reformation.**

**In the great American "New World" across the Atlantic.**

Thus, in each generation of the Dark Ages, God preserved companies of faithful witnesses who are corporately represented by the fugitive woman. These heroic witnesses comprised "God's underground", who, like the faithful 7,000 in Elijah's day, "refused to bow the knee to Baal".

(The second stage extends from A.D. 538 to the end of Papal supremacy in A.D. 1798.)

#### **Stage III.—In the Last Days (v 17)**

After she emerges from her wilderness refuge at the end of the 18th century, and steps upon the public stage again, Satan continues his bitter warfare against the "remnant" Church—the last remaining portion of the woman's "seed".

Angry at past failures, and knowing that he has only a short time, Satan now fights with the fury of desperation (v 12). However, in spite of all opposition, the "remnant" Church steadfastly keeps the commandments of God and clings to the original "testimony of Jesus Christ".

(The third stage extends from A.D. 1798 to the Second Advent.)

### **3.—THE THREE MARKS OF GOD'S "REMNANT CHURCH" IN REVELATION 12**

The evidence contained in v 17 enables us to identify God's true Church in the last days with absolute certainty. Three clear marks of identity are given.

**It is the "remnant" of the Church's Seed.** Therefore, it must be identical in doctrine, character and objectives with the original piece—the Apostolic Church.

**It keeps the Commandments of God.** This must refer to God's Commandments in their original, unchanged form, in contrast with the traditions of men.

**It has the Testimony of Jesus Christ.** The "testimony of Jesus" through His prophets (I Peter 1 : 10, 11) is another name for the Biblical "Gift of Prophecy", by which inspired men produced the Holy Scriptures (II Peter 1 : 21), and by which God still guides His Church today (Rev. 19 : 10).

#### ***Conclusion* Why has God given US a chance to hear these things?**

So that we will be assured of God's power to preserve His Church amid the very fiercest trials (Matt. 16 : 18).

So that we will be able to identify God's true Church today, beyond the shadow of a doubt.

So that we will resolve to throw in our lot with God's "Remnant Church", take part in its work, and share in its final triumph.



## THE GIFT OF PROPHECY IN THE REMNANT CHURCH

*Introduction* When we studied the marks of God's Remnant Church (Lesson 44), we learned that its two plainest credentials would be:

**The keeping of the commandments of God.**

**The possession of the "testimony of Jesus Christ".**

From the beginning of their history, Seventh-day Adventists have believed that "the testimony of Jesus" is another name for the Biblical "Gift of prophecy", by which inspired men produced the Holy Scriptures (II Peter 1:21; Rev. 19:10). They strike a parallel between the Exodus movement and the Advent movement, and maintain that just as the Exodus movement was led and preserved by the prophet Moses (Hosea 12:13), so the Advent movement will be guided and protected by an active manifestation of the Biblical "Gift of prophecy".

Adventists go further, and claim that there is a broad and firm foundation in the whole Bible for the belief that God will speak again through inspired human lips in the last days, for the guidance and preservation of His Remnant Church.

**Does the Bible support this claim?** Let us open the Book and see.

*(See Chart No. 62 – The Abiding Gift of Prophecy)*

*Discussion* Here is a brief summary of what the Bible teaches about the Gift of prophecy, grouped for convenience under three broad headings.

### 1.—THE GIFT OF PROPHECY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Before sin entered, God talked with man face to face (Gen. 3:8).

Sin broke off the original, direct communication between God and man (Isa. 59:2).

God was therefore obliged to devise some new, indirect method of communication with man.

The new method God chose was by human mouthpieces, or interpreters, called "prophets"—in other words, by the "Gift of prophecy" (Num. 12:6; Ex. 4:15, 16; 7:1, 2; Amos 3:7).

The Gift of prophecy was God's preferred method of instructing His people in Old Testament times (Heb. 1:1; II Peter 1:21; Hosea 12:10).

### 2.—THE GIFT OF PROPHECY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Gift of prophecy continued to be God's preferred method of communication in New Testament times (I Cor. 14:1; Acts 13:1; 11:27, 28; 21:9-11; I Cor. 12:10; Eph. 4:8-11; Rev. 1:1, 2).

The whole Bible, therefore, is the product of the Gift of prophecy.

Jesus lifted the Gift of prophecy to its highest manifestation in His own Divine-human personality. It is actually called "the testimony of Jesus", and is the living echo of His voice (Deut. 18:15-19; I Peter 1:10, 11; Rev. 19:9, 10; Heb. 1:1, 2; I Peter 3:18-20).

The Bible expressly states that God has "set", or permanently established, the Gift of prophecy in His Church till the close of time (I Cor. 12:27, 28; 13:8-13; Eph. 4:8-11; I Cor. 1:6, 7).

Therefore, if God saw need to give special guidance to His Church amid the confusion of the last days, we would expect Him still to use His preferred method (Heb. 13:8; Prov. 29:18).

**3.—THE GIFT OF PROPHECY IN THE LAST DAYS**

Bible prophecy expressly declares that **God will speak again, and that He will again use the Gift of prophecy** in His Remnant Church (**Rev. 12 : 17; 19 : 10; 22 : 8, 9; Acts 2 : 17-21; Joel 2 : 28-32**).

Seventh-day Adventists recognise in the writings of **Ellen G. White** an authentic, last-day manifestation of the Biblical Gift of prophecy.

Ellen G. White's life, work and teachings harmonise exactly with all the Bible tests of a true prophet (**I Thess. 5 : 19-21; Isa. 8 : 20; Matt. 7 : 20; Jer. 28 : 9; Deut. 18 : 21, 22; I John 4 : 2**).

Seventh-day Adventists do not attach any superstitious veneration to the name, person, or relics of Mrs. White, but they do prize the inestimable gift of Divine counsel which is given permanent form in her writings.

The "Spirit of Prophecy" writings do not displace or eclipse the Bible—they enrich our appreciation of its truth and beauty, as the microscope enhances the snowflake, and the telescope magnifies the stars.

*Conclusion* The most conclusive evidence that God did truly speak in a special way to His Church through Mrs. White will be gained by a first-hand, unprejudiced reading of her inspirational writings (**Ps. 34 : 8; II Chron. 20 : 20**).

**I Thess. 5 : 20, 21: "Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good."**

\* \* \*

**INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT MRS. E. G. WHITE**

Born at Gorham, Maine, U.S.A., 26th November, 1827.

Had a twin sister—Elizabeth.

Parents—Robert and Eunice Harmon, Methodist Episcopal Church members in their early days. Eight children in the family.

Converted at a Methodist camp-meeting, March, 1840.

Baptised at age of 13 at Portland, Maine, by Methodist minister.

Dropped from the Methodist Church in Portland, Maine, 1843, because of Adventist views.

Married James White, 30th August, 1846.

First vision, December, 1844 (see "Early Writings", pp 13-20).

Four children, all boys, were born to James and Ellen White.

Health reform vision given 6th June, 1863.

Began keeping Sabbath in the autumn of 1846, soon after marriage.

Given instruction to begin publishing work in November, 1848.

First issue of "Present Truth", July, 1849.

James White died 6th August, 1881.

Laboured in Europe two years, from summer of 1885 to autumn of 1887.

Enjoyed pioneer work in Australia from 1892 to 1900.

13th February, 1915, fell in her home at St. Helena and broke her left leg.

Died 16th July, 1915.

Funeral Sabbath, 24th July, 1915, Battle Creek. Buried Oak Hill Cemetery.

Major current literary works represented by 55 titles. She wrote 2,000 articles for "Review", 2,000 messages in the "Signs", and 500 articles for other publications.

## SATAN'S WARFARE AGAINST THE REMNANT CHURCH

*Introduction* Rev. 12:17: "And the Dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

This verse introduces Satan's warfare against the Remnant Church, and v 12 states that this is the hour of Satan's greatest wrath, but no further details of the warfare are given in chapter 12. However, Revelation 13 fills in the details, and reveals the form Satan's warfare takes, the principal agents he employs, and the strategy he uses.

The three principal agents Satan will employ in his last, desperate bid for world dominion are described as "the dragon", "the beast", and "the false prophet" (Rev. 16:13). These are the Devil's "Trinity of Evil". We have already been introduced to the Dragon in Revelation 12. The other two members are described in detail in Revelation 13.

In this lesson we will identify "the beast" and in Lesson 47 we will explain the meaning of "the false prophet". Let us open the Bible and read the whole of Revelation 13.

(See Chart No. 63—*The Sea-Beast of Revelation 13*)

### *Discussion* 1.—WHO IS THE FIRST BEAST OF REVELATION 13?

The identification of this symbol is easy, because most of the clues have already been given to us in Daniel 7. When these two chapters are placed side by side, the "little horn", and the "leopard beast" are found to symbolise the same world power—the Papacy. Once again, the marks of identification are too numerous and explicit to leave any room for doubt.

#### TWELVE MARKS OF IDENTIFICATION

The Symbols	The Meaning
<i>Arises from the sea (v 1)</i>	<i>Arises in the old world, amid dense population</i>
<i>Combines features of Lion, Bear, Leopard and fourth beast of Daniel 7 (v 2)</i>	<i>Inherits and perpetuates the spirit of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome</i>
<i>Has seven heads (v 1)</i>	<i>Embodies elements of all the apostate powers Satan has used to rule the world.</i>
<i>Has ten crowned horns (v 1)</i>	<i>Its will is enforced by ten supporting kingdoms.</i>
<i>Receives power, seat and authority from the Dragon (v 2)</i>	<i>Inherits the headquarters and material assets of Pagan Rome</i>
<i>Receives deadly wound, goes into captivity (vv 3, 10)</i>	<i>Suffers a seemingly fatal setback</i>
<i>Deadly wound is healed (v 3)</i>	<i>Spectacular recovery. Excites world-wide astonishment and comment</i>
<i>Whole world worships, wonders and fears (vv 3, 4, 7, 8)</i>	<i>A world power—combines religion and politics—receives worship, yet wields sword</i>
<i>Blasphemes against God (vv 1, 5, 6)</i>	<i>Claims honours and powers which belong only to God</i>
<i>Receives power for forty-two prophetic "months" (v 5)</i>	<i>Enjoys supremacy for 1,260 years</i>
<i>Makes war with the saints of God (v 7)</i>	<i>Persecutes the true followers of Christ</i>
<i>Its number is 666 (vv 17, 18)</i>	<i>Has the number 666 associated with its name or title</i>

## 2.—WHAT IS MEANT BY THE “DEADLY WOUND”?

Whilst Daniel 7 makes no specific reference to this apparently fatal setback to the Papal power, we have already referred to it in our study of the 1,260 days' prophecy.

(See Chart No. 43—*The 1260 Days Prophecy*)

We should observe, however, that the death-wound given to the Papacy by Revolutionary France in 1798 was the **climax** of a long series of humiliating setbacks.

The Papacy enjoyed its noontide splendour in the days of Popes Innocent III and Boniface VIII (approx. 13th century). But this pinnacle of Papal power was followed by an increasingly violent landslide of reaction against ecclesiastical domination. The dissatisfaction with the Roman Church in England, as well as on the Continent, was a part of this reaction. The growth of a liberal and scientific spirit was another. The Protestant Reformation dealt the Papacy a crippling body-blow. The crumbling of the power and influence of the Hapsburgs in Austria and Spain left the decadent French state as a major bastion of the Roman Church. The arrest and imprisonment of the Pope in 1798 may be regarded as a **symbol of the widespread and vicious reaction against the power and privileges of the Church**, by the forces of Revolutionary France. Up till the Revolution France had been a leading European champion of the Papacy for 1,000 years, and when its support was suddenly and violently withdrawn, the Papal power appeared to face certain extinction.

## 3.—HOW AND WHEN WAS THE DEADLY WOUND “HEALED”?

This is another detail left untouched in the more condensed and distant prophecies of Daniel. But modern and contemporary history have brought it into focus as one of their most remarkable phenomena. At the end of the 18th century half Europe thought that the Papacy was extinct. In spite of its “deadly wound”, however, and in spite of numerous subsequent reverses, **the Church of Rome has enjoyed a steadily increasing influence in world affairs since the days of Napoleon**. Some of the more obvious “healing” developments have taken place in our time:

**The restoration of Papal sovereignty by Mussolini in 1929.**

**The phenomenal growth of Catholic influence in many countries, including the U.S.A.**

**The Second Vatican Council of 1962–1965.**

**The conciliatory attitude of large sections of modern Protestantism.**

**The steady Rome-ward current of the world movement for Church Union.**

## 4.—WHAT IS MEANT BY THE MYSTIC NUMBER 666?

(See Chart No. 64—*A Key to the Mystic Number 666*)

As indicated in Section 1, the identification of the Leopard-beast with the Papacy does not depend upon this numerical detail alone. Even if this feature were eliminated, the identification would still be unmistakable. But it is a significant fact that this twelfth specification applies also to the Papal power. It thus becomes another strand in an unbreakable cable of prophetic evidence.

*Conclusion* Before we conclude this lesson, one final question—a personal question—challenges our attention: **“Does our responsibility end with the mere IDENTIFICATION of the Beast-power?”**

No, indeed. An understanding of this great prophecy creates a two-fold responsibility for every reader:

(1) **We must take a personal stand against the Beast-power and its influence.**

Says Ellen G. White: "When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. **To stand in defence of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test.**" (Testimonies, vol. 5, p 136)

- (2) **We must show compassion to those who unwittingly support this apostate system.**

Is true freedom but to break  
Fetters for our own selves sake,  
And with callous hearts forget  
That we owe mankind a debt?  
No. True freedom is to share  
All the chains our brothers wear,  
And, with heart and hand, to be  
Eager to make others free.





## THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN PROPHECY

*Introduction*    **Rev. 13: 11:** "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."

(See Chart No. 63 —Land-beast of Revelation 13)

This is the second great political power that Satan will use in his last desperate attempt to destroy the "remnant church". It is also described as the "false prophet" (Rev. 16: 13; 19: 20; 20: 10), so it is an agency which combines religion with politics. The purpose of this lesson is to identify this power.

### *Discussion*    1.—WHO IS THE SECOND BEAST OF REVELATION 13?

#### FIRST FIVE IDENTIFICATION MARKS

The Symbols	The Meaning
<i>Arises out of the earth (v 11).</i>	<i>Arises in some new, vacant, or sparsely-populated land.</i>
<i>Arises at the time the sea-beast is falling (v 10).</i>	<i>Grows into nation-hood about the time of the Papal overthrow (A.D. 1798)</i>
<i>Has two lamb-like horns (v 11).</i>	<i>Two Christ-like principles give it strength. (Civil and Religious Liberty.)</i>
<i>Has no crowns on horns (v 11).</i>	<i>Not a monarchy—some form of republic.</i>
<i>Exercises power equal to the sea-beast (v 12).</i>	<i>Becomes a formidable, if not supreme, world power.</i>

Only one power in history meets these five prophetic specifications, namely, the **United States of America**. This nation was not established by military conquest like the kingdoms of Europe, but grew up quietly like a plant in the sparsely-populated New World. It became a nation in the latter half of the 18th century, as the Papal power was waning. No nation in history has dedicated itself more openly to the principles of civil and religious liberty. It is a republic, not a monarchy. It has made enormous gains in population, material wealth and military strength, especially during the past century, until today it is the richest and most powerful nation on earth!

Every lover of freedom will wish that the prophecy ended here, for the rest is bitterly disappointing. **A radical and alarming change of character is predicted to take place in this favoured nation, which began with such rich promise and noble ideals.**

### 2.—WHAT IS MEANT BY "IT SPAKE AS A DRAGON"?

Here are two opposites pictured in glaring contrast. "Lamb-like" characteristics change dramatically to "Dragon-like" characteristics. The "Lamb" is the symbol of Christ. The "Dragon" is the symbol of Satan. According to this prophecy, there will be in America a fateful tug-o'-war between these two super-human powers, and for one brief, final hour the Devil will appear to triumph!

History will yet witness on American soil the emergence of a State-supported religious tyranny as ruthless as the Spanish Inquisition of the Middle Ages, or the iron-fisted despotism of Imperial Rome!

#### LAST FIVE IDENTIFICATION MARKS

The Symbols	The Meaning
<i>Speaks as a Dragon (v 11).</i>	<i>Undergoes a startling change from democracy to absolutism.</i>
<i>Enforces worship of the sea-beast (v 12).</i>	<i>Becomes a leader in the crusade for Papal restoration.</i>

<i>Deceives multitudes by working miracles (v 13).</i>	<i>Exalts physical marvels as the ultimate proof of truth in religion.</i>
<i>Urges making of image to sea-beast—gives life to the image (vv 14, 15)</i>	<i>Creates in the New World a Church-State monopoly patterned on the Mediaeval Papacy.</i>
<i>Enforces worship of image, and reception of mark of sea-beast under pain of death (vv 15, 16, 17).</i>	<i>Repudiates man's basic freedoms—boycotts and persecutes commandment-keeping minority.</i>

**3.—WHAT IS MEANT BY THE “IMAGE TO THE BEAST”?**

From the days of the Emperor Constantine (A.D. 306-337), the Papal church has defended the **union of Church and State**, and has unblushingly allied itself with the civil power. The Papacy is not merely a church, but a **combination of Church and State**. This is the very essence of the Papal system. The making of religious laws and the persecution of heretics or dissenters, are therefore part of its **settled policy**. The State is subject to the Church, and the Church uses the arm of the State to enforce its dogmas. According to this amazing prophecy, **America will take the lead in creating an image or replica of the Papal system in the New World!**

This American fusion of Church and State—this super-Church—will be a repudiation of everything that Protestantism has stood for in the promotion of religious liberty. The machinery of State will be employed for the making and enforcement of religious laws. The rights of individual conscience will be sacrificed on the altars of conformity and political expediency.

**4.—WHAT IS MEANT BY THE “MARK” OF THE BEAST?**

This question will be answered in Lesson 48.

**5.—ARE THERE SIGNS THAT THIS “IMAGE TO THE BEAST” IS NOW COMING TO LIFE?**

There are many ominous signs. Here are just a few:

- The work of the National Reform Administration. Dedicated to making America a “Christian Nation” by laws and penalties, if persuasion fails.
- The activities of the “Lord’s Day Alliance”. Dedicated to the making and enforcement of Sunday laws, and the nation-wide observance of Sunday.
- The rapid growth of Roman Catholic power and influence in America.
- The retreat of Historic Protestantism.
- The strong Rome-ward current of the Ecumenical movement.

**6.—ARE THERE SIGNS OF REACTION AGAINST THIS BETRAYAL OF INDIVIDUAL SOUL-LIBERTY?**

Yes. Hundreds of Americans have refused—and many are even now refusing—to surrender the rights of individual conscience. Men are facing fines, imprisonment, social rejection and loss of employment rather than disobey the commandments of God. When the laws of the State conflict with the laws of God, these men are saying: **“We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5 : 29).**

*Conclusion*      **What of the future?**

According to the Word of God, **religious freedom is facing its darkest, but finest hour!** A crisis will yet develop in America, and in every land of earth, which will match the scene in ancient Babylon, when King Nebuchadnezzar set up his golden image, gathered his officers together, and commanded them, on pain of death, to bow down and worship (Dan. 3 : 1-7).

But when the moment of testing came, and the vast multitude bowed down as one man, there were three slim figures silhouetted against the sky—the figures of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. **“Be it known unto thee, O king,” they said, “That we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up” (Dan. 3 : 16-18).**

In every religious crisis of the past, God has found such men. In earth’s last great hour of testing, He will find them again. Will we be among them?

## THE SEAL OF GOD AND THE MARK OF THE BEAST

### *Introduction* Acts 5 : 29: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

The Bible records many great religious crises of the past, when obedience to God's commandments became a **public test**; when life-or-death decisions had to be made, and a clear line of distinction was drawn between those who served God and those who served Him not.

**Examples:** The Passover (Ex. 12 : 1-23)  
 The Golden Calf (Ex. 32 : 26)  
 Mount Carmel (I Kings 18 : 21)  
 The Fiery Furnace (Dan. 3 : 13-18)

Great as were these crises, however, they pale into insignificance beside **the last, fierce, public clash between truth and error**, just before Jesus comes.

The book of Revelation describes **two world-wide movements** in the last days, one inspired by God, the other inspired by Satan, which will divide the inhabitants of the earth into **two camps**, and climax in the last great religious crisis of the ages. God's movement concerns the marking of His servants with the "**Seal of God**", and is predicted in Rev. 7 : 1-3. Satan's movement concerns the stamping of his servants with the "**Mark of the Beast**", and is predicted in Rev. 13 : 15-17.

The book of Revelation refers again and again to this final clash between the Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast. **This is the last public test of loyalty that will ever come to the inhabitants of the earth.** The richest of Heaven's blessings are promised to those who receive the Seal of God (Rev. 7 : 15-17; 14 : 1-4), while the most fearful of Heaven's warnings are threatened against those who receive the Mark of the Beast (Rev. 14 : 9-11; 16 : 1-2).

Thank God, we do not need to approach this last great crisis unprepared. It is the privilege of every Christian to learn from the Bible the nature of the final test, to acquaint himself with the issues involved, and to decide now on which side he will stand.

*Discussion* Obviously, when we are dealing with the Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast, we are dealing with a **clash of opposites**. If we can identify one, we have the key to the identity of the other. Accordingly, our first step will be to identify the Seal of God.

### 1.—WHAT IS THE "SEAL OF GOD"?

Revelation 6 brings us right up to the great day of God's wrath, and asks the searching question: "**Who shall be able to stand?**" (Rev. 6 : 17).

Revelation 7 answers this question by pointing to a **company of people who, in the very last moments of time, receive God's protecting mark—the "Seal of the Living God"**—and are thus enabled to stand unharmed in the day of His wrath.

How shall we identify this protecting "Seal"?

(See *Charts Nos. 65 and 66 and explain how these help to identify the Seal of God*)

### The Three Elements of a Seal

A seal is a mark or sign of authority, and is used by rulers and officials to make laws and agreements valid. It contains the **name, title (or office), and territory** of the lawgiver.

### A Typical Royal Seal

The seal of George VI, a recent King of England. Note the three elements:

**Name:** George VI  
**Title:** King  
**Territory:** Great Britain and Dominions.

### **The Seal of God**

The Fourth Commandment, written with the finger of God and found in the heart of His Law, contains all three elements of a seal:

**Name:** "The Lord thy God"  
**Title:** "Maker"  
**Territory:** "Heaven and Earth"

NOTE: *The Bible makes it plain that the CASUAL, SUPERFICIAL OBSERVANCE of the Sabbath day—viewed only as a formal or legal exercise—does not constitute the "Seal of God". The Sabbath DAY, standing by itself and regarded merely as A SLICE OF TIME, is not the "Seal". God's "Seal", in the deepest sense, is THE WRITING OF HIS COMMANDMENTS UPON THE SURRENDERED HEART IN TRUE CONVERSION, BY THE INWARD WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Eph. 1:13; 4:30; Heb. 10:15, 16; Ezek. 36:26, 27; 20:12, 20). The "Seal of God" is therefore A CHARACTER-SEAL, A FIXED INCLINATION OF HEART AND WILL, IN AGREEMENT WITH THE KNOWN WILL OF GOD. It is the restoration of the lost "image of God" that man possessed in Eden.*

*However, this voluntary, inward reception of the Spirit's "Seal" will inevitably be MANIFESTED BY A LIFE OF OUTWARD OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S KNOWN COMMANDS (John 14:15; II Tim. 2:19; Rev. 14:12). Especially in the setting of the last days, when the authority of God as Creator is universally challenged and despised, and His commandments are openly spurned, THE PUBLIC OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH BECOMES THE DISTINGUISHING MARK OR "SEAL" OF THOSE WHO WORSHIP GOD AS THE "MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH".*

Says James G. Murphy: "The observance of the Sabbath connects man with the origin of his race, with the six days creation, and with the Creator Himself. He that observes the Sabbath aright holds the history of that which it celebrates to be authentic, and therefore believes in the primeval and absolute creation of the heavens and the earth, and as a necessary antecedent to all this, in the Creator, who at the close of His latest creative effort, rested on the seventh day. The Sabbath thus becomes a SIGN by which the believers in a historical revelation are distinguished from those who have allowed these great facts to fade from their remembrance (Ex. 31 : 15) . . . The observance of the Sabbath then, becomes the characteristic of those who cherish the recollections of the origin of their race, and who worship God as Jehovah, the historical God, who has revealed Himself to man from the dawn of his existence as the God of love . . . The act of creation is the origin of all title to the creature, and to the obedience of the intelligent creation. The creation of man is commemorated in the fourth commandment. Hence it contains the fountain-head of all authority in God, and all duty in man." (Commentary on the Book of Exodus, pp 143, 144, by James G. Murphy)

### **2.—WHAT IS THE "MARK OF THE BEAST"?**

The "Beast" of Revelation 13 has already been identified as the Papacy, in Lesson 46. The "Mark of the Beast" must therefore be some conspicuous sign of Papal authority—some widely-accepted Papal counterfeit—which stands in direct opposition to the "Seal of God". There can be no doubt whatever as to the identity of this "Mark" of Papal power. The institution of Sunday—a rival, man-made Sabbath—meets all the requirements of the "Mark of the Beast", which is the outward, public, visible sign of submission to Papal authority.

(See Chart No. 66—*The Mark of Apostasy*)

NOTE: *In the light of what we have learned about the INWARD and SPIRITUAL nature of the "Seal of God", the "Mark of the Beast" must also be SOMETHING DEEPER THAN THE OUTWARD SUPERFICIAL OBSERVANCE OF A PARTICULAR DAY. Fundamentally, this "Mark" must also be A CHARACTER-SIGN, A FIXED INCLINATION OF HEART AND WILL, IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO THE KNOWN WILL OF GOD.*

*In the setting of the last great crisis, when the full light of truth is shining upon the Sabbath as the sign of allegiance to the Creator, those who reject this light and observe Sunday WILL THEREBY OPENLY DECLARE THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE LAW OF GOD. Sunday observance will thus become THE DISTINGUISHING MARK OF THOSE WHO, DEEP IN THEIR HEARTS, HAVE DELIBERATELY CHOSEN TO REJECT THE AUTHORITY OF GOD IN FAVOUR OF THE AUTHORITY OF MAN. This class will reflect the character-image of Satan, rather than the character-image of God!*

### 3.—DOES THE PAPAL CHURCH REGARD SUNDAY AS A SIGNIFICANT "MARK" OF ITS RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY?

Four quotations will answer this question:

**"Question:** How prove you that that the Church hath power to command feasts and holy days?

**"Answer:** By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves, by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same Church." (*An Abridgement of Christian Doctrine*, p 58, by Henry Tuberville, New York, Kenedy, 1833 approbation)

\* \* \*

**"Question:** Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?

**"Answer:** Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her—she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day—a change for which there is no scriptural authority." (*The Controversial Catechism*, pp 124, 125, by Stephen Keenan, Burns and Oates, London, 1896 edition)

\* \* \*

In 1895, J. F. Snyder, of Bloomington, Illinois, U.S.A., wrote to Cardinal Gibbons, asking this question: "Does the Roman Catholic Church claim the act of changing the observance of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week as a mark of her power?" Through his Chancellor, the Cardinal gave the following answer:

"Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical and religious without her. And the act is a **mark** of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters.

(Signed) H. F. THOMAS,

Nov. 11 1895

Chancellor for the Cardinal"

\* \* \*

The most authoritative doctrinal council of the Catholic Church was the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which was called to determine "**the doctrines of the Church in answer to the heresies of the Protestants**" (*Catholic Encyclopædia*, Vol. XV, Article "Trent", p 30). At this critical council, the question of the authority of the Church over the authority of the Bible was the subject of long and vigorous debate. The matter was not settled until the last session of the Council, and it is significant that the argument that turned the tide in favour of tradition was **the change of the Sabbath**. This action was cited as **the final proof** that the authority of the Church was superior to the authority of the Bible!

"Finally, at the last opening on the eighteenth of January, 1562, their last scruple was set aside; the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture. The authority of the Church could therefore not be bound to the authority of the Scriptures because **the Church had changed the Sabbath**

into Sunday, not by the command of Christ, but by its own authority. With this, to be sure, the last illusion was destroyed, and it was declared that tradition does not signify antiquity, but continual inspiration." (Canon and Tradition, p 263, Heinrich Julius Holtzman, Luduigsburg, 1859)

#### 4.—IS ROME'S CHANGE OF THE SABBATH SUCH A SERIOUS MATTER, AFTER ALL?

God, not man, must be allowed to decide this question. His Word settles the matter with absolute finality. **The urgency of the warnings given, and the severity of the penalties imposed, reveal how seriously God views this matter:**

**Rev. 14 : 9-11: "The wrath of God without mixture."**

No one could read these awesome words thoughtfully and feel this is a matter of small importance. These verses contain **the most solemn and terrible warning in all the Bible**. It is evident, therefore, that this high-handed action of the Papal power has stirred the indignation of Heaven to its very depths.

A moment's reflection will reveal why this is so. **The change of the Sabbath is the boldest and most sustained challenge to the authority of God that has ever been offered by man!**

If it is a crime to forge a human name; if it is treason to tamper with the law of an earthly king; what yardstick can measure this unbelievable outrage, where puny men have dared to mutilate the law of Heaven, and forge God's name to a lie?

Seen in this light, the Sabbath-Sunday controversy is not merely a clash of days—it is essentially a clash of **authorities—the authority of the creature versus the authority of the Creator**. This is what makes it of life-and-death importance!

Think of **our nation's flag**. What makes it different? What makes it sacred? It is composed of the same materials as a shirt or a handkerchief; why then don't we treat it as if it were a common thing? **Because it is the chosen symbol of our nation's authority!** Respect for the flag shows respect for the authority it represents. Disrespect for the flag shows disrespect for the same authority.

Apply this to the Sabbath. It is made of **time**—just like the other six days. What, then, makes it different? What makes it sacred? God has "**sanctified**", or separated it for a special purpose. **It is the appointed "sign" or "seal" of the Creator, the chosen symbol of His authority.**

If a citizen deliberately trampled his own nation's flag in the dust, and just as deliberately gave his salute to an enemy's flag, would he not be guilty of treason? By the same token, **the man who deliberately exalts Sunday, and consciously tramples the Sabbath underfoot, is guilty of treason against God!**

*Conclusion*      One final question remains to be answered: **On which side will we stand in the last great conflict between truth and error?**

*(See Chart No. 33—Truth or Tradition?)*

The simplest way to answer this question is to ask again: **Where would Jesus stand?** If He returned today, and witnessed the inexcusable breach that has been made in God's law—would He stand among those who are **enlarging** the breach, or among those who are **repairing** the breach, or would He take a **passive, neutral, uncommitted** attitude?

**Heb. 13 : 8: "Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, and today, and forever."**

If Jesus came back today, He would stand exactly where He did in days of old. He would champion the down-trodden law of God. He would become a fearless repairer of the breach. **Life holds out no greater honour to us than to stand with Him, and work with Him, for the finishing of this sacred task!**

## GOD'S FINAL CALL — "COME OUT OF BABYLON!"

*Introduction* When we studied **God's Last Warning Message** in Rev. 14:6-11 (Lesson 42), we noticed that the second angel made a strange announcement:

**Rev. 14:8:** "Babylon is fallen, is fallen."

This same announcement is repeated with greater urgency, power and fullness in Revelation 18:

**Rev. 18:1-4:** "Babylon the great is fallen . . . Come out of her, My people."

To whom is this Divine call, "Come out of Babylon", addressed? Does it have any special meaning for us today? Let us open the Bible and see.

### *Discussion* 1.—WHEN IS THIS ANNOUNCEMENT DUE?

From our reading of Revelation 14 we have learned that the announcement: "Babylon is fallen" is part of the great threefold message which goes out to the world just before Jesus comes.

(See Chart No. 59—*The Three Angels' Messages*)

From a study of Rev. 18:4 it is also evident that this announcement is made just before the outpouring of the Seven Last Plagues.

### 2.—WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "BABYLON" IN THE CHRISTIAN AGE?

#### (a) Clues from the Old Testament

The Old Testament has been called: "A Tale of Two Cities"—Jerusalem and Babylon. Both appear early in the book of Genesis, and both stand in sharp contrast throughout the whole of the Old Testament period. These two cities represent principles that are eternally at war.

JERUSALEM	BABYLON
<i>The home of true, God-given religion</i>	<i>The melting-pot of false, man-made religions</i>
<i>Represents the principle of salvation by GOD-DEPENDENCE</i>	<i>Represents the principle of salvation by SELF-DEPENDENCE</i>
<i>The earthly dwelling-place of God and His people</i>	<i>The traditional enemy of God and His people</i>
<i>Religion kept separate from worldly alliances</i>	<i>Religion allied with political power</i>
<i>Fountain or "MOTHER" of all later unfold- ings of truth</i>	<i>Fountain or "MOTHER" of all later manifes- tations of apostasy</i>

#### (b) Clues from the New Testament

The plainest clues are given in Revelation 17, where the "Babylon" of the New Testament era is pictured as a "woman" and "a city".

(See Chart No. 67--*The Woman on the Scarlet Beast*)



## THE "BABYLON" OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Symbol	Meaning
<i>A corrupt and dissolute woman (vv 1, 5)</i>	<i>A fallen apostate church. (Contrast with true Church—Rev. 12)</i>
<i>Clothed in purple, scarlet, precious stones and pearls (v 4)</i>	<i>The embodiment of worldly wealth and luxury. (Contrast with simplicity of true Church)</i>
<i>Seated on a scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns (v 3)</i>	<i>Obviously related to the Dragon of Rev. 12, and the Leopard beast of Rev. 13</i>
<i>Seated also upon many waters (vv 1, 15)</i>	<i>Holds despotic sway over the multitudes of earth</i>
<i>A cup with the wine of her fornication (v 4)</i>	<i>False doctrines and policies which deceive the nations</i>
<i>Her name is "Babylon"—Mother of Harlots (v 5)</i>	<i>Inherits and perpetuates the spirit of ancient Babylon</i>
<i>Drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs (v 6)</i>	<i>Opposes and persecutes the true people of God</i>
<i>The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her (v 2)</i>	<i>Lives in unlawful alliance with the political powers of earth</i>
<i>Is allied with, and receives support from, ten kings (vv 12, 13, 17)</i>	<i>Is supported by a confederacy of political powers</i>
<i>Is the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth (v 18)</i>	<i>An unmistakable reference to Rome</i>

From this evidence it is clear that the "Babylon" of the book of Revelation is a comprehensive symbol of the corrupt and fallen church, which lives in unlawful alliance with the political powers of earth, and has its roots in all the great apostasies of the past.

So gravely has the apostate church departed from the original Christian faith, that in the eyes of God it has become the reincarnation of ancient Babylon!

NOTE: *The "Babylon" of the New Testament is not a symbol of ANY ONE CHURCH OR DENOMINATION VIEWED IN THE EXCLUSIVE SENSE. Ellen G. White, whose comments on Biblical subjects are always so dependable, applies the term "Babylon" to "THE WORLD-LOVING CHURCHES OF THE LAST DAYS" (PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS, p 124). Some have restricted this symbolic woman to the Roman Catholic Church alone, but though Rome is obviously included here, the symbol has a much wider significance than this. "Babylon" is essentially the symbol of INWARD CHARACTER, rather than name or location. Accordingly, ANY RELIGIOUS SYSTEM WHICH SUBSCRIBES TO THE FALSE PRINCIPLES LISTED ABOVE—whatever its name or location—is a part of modern "Babylon".*

## 3.—WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR BABYLON TO "FALL"?

This is not a description of a political or military overthrow, but refers to a process of tragic moral and spiritual decline—a departure from first principles.

II **Thess. 2:3**: "A falling away", or departure from the true faith.

**Rev. 2:4**: "Thou hast left thy first love."

**Rev. 2:5**: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen".

Obviously, the "fall" of spiritual Babylon takes in every departure from "the faith once delivered unto the saints" which has occurred in Christian history, some of which were traced when we studied the prophecy of the Seven Seals (Lesson 29). However, in the setting of the last days, this "fall" refers to the condition of **total apostasy** described in Rev. 18:2, when the professed Church of God surrenders completely to Satanic control, and becomes "**the habitation of devils; the hold of every foul spirit; and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird**".

#### 4.—WHAT IS MEANT BY BABYLON'S "WINE"?

Babylon's "wine" symbolises the **false doctrines and superstitions** which she advocates, by means of which she intoxicates and seduces the inhabitants of the earth. Examples:

- Salvation by self-dependence, as opposed to salvation by God-dependence.
- The authority of the Church exalted above the authority of the Bible.
- The substitution of Sunday for the original Bible Sabbath.
- The natural immortality of the soul.
- Spiritism—so-called communication with the dead.
- The union of religion with political power.
- The employment of political means to serve religious ends.
- Religious laws, intolerance and persecution.

These unscriptural errors are as old as Babel—as old as Cain. They are threads from the fabric of every false religious system that has ever been.

#### 5.—WHO ARE THE "DAUGHTERS" OF BABYLON?

Those religious organisations—of whatever name—which **inherit the character and perpetuate the spirit of their "Mother"**. This applies also to those individuals who weakly tolerate or passively surrender to the doctrines and aims of modern Babylon.

This is a time for courageous heart-searching. As we consider the false doctrines listed above, we should ask: "**Have I been unwittingly drinking the 'wine' of modern Babylon?**"

If Jesus were with us today, He would not tolerate or compromise with these unscriptural evils. He would protest again: "**Take these things hence, and make not My Father's house an house of merchandise**" (John 2:16).

#### 6.—WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "COME OUT" OF BABYLON?

**II Cor. 6:14-18:** "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers . . . Come out from among them and be ye separate."

"To come out" means to **sever all connection with every unscriptural doctrine and practice**. This separation is to be as complete and final as that of the immigrant who renounces his former citizenship; the bride who forsakes all rivals for her legal husband; the parachutist who leaps from his plane . . .

**Acts 19:18, 19:** The early Christians took God's call to "come out" so seriously that they **burned** the relics of their former apostasy. Does God ask any less of His people today?

#### 7.—WHERE DO WE GO WHEN WE "COME OUT"?

Thank God, He does not leave us to wander aimlessly in a wilderness of confusion and doubt. He has provided a warm and inviting spiritual home for us—the fold of the Good Shepherd—the "Remnant Church" of Rev. 12:17.

To "come out of Babylon" is not merely a **negative** process, whereby we resolutely and finally cut loose from error. It is a **positive** process, also, whereby we intelligently and deliberately identify ourselves with the truth!

*Conclusion*     **John 10 : 14: "I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine."**

In every generation, two voices have been calling to men—the voice of the "Good Shepherd", who "calleth His own sheep by name" (John 10 : 3, 4) and the voice of the "stranger" (v 5). Millions have been deceived by the "voice of the stranger". What about us? Have we heard the call of the True Shepherd? Have we recognised it? Have we heeded it?

**"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My Hand" (John 10 : 27, 28).**

Blessed is the man who hears and obeys that call!

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#### ADDITIONAL NOTE ON "COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE!"

There are times when it is **not enough to know and believe** what is truth; to have right opinions; to silently, secretly place one's sympathies on the right side. "**Belief**" must be translated into "**ACTION**."

It was **not enough** for the ancient Hebrews, on that fateful "Passover" night in Egypt, to merely believe. Action, also, was called for. **The blood must be sprinkled on the doorpost!**

It was **not enough** for the fugitive hosts of Israel to stand on the shore of the Red Sea, with the waves lapping at their feet, and wait passively for a miracle - **they had to step into the sea!**

It was **not enough** for God's people in Elijah's day to merely nod their heads and say: "That settles it! We are convinced now that Jehovah is right, and that Baal is wrong!" **They had to step out openly, and take their stand with Elijah!**

It was **not enough** for Nicodemus and other Jewish converts to applaud Christ's teachings in the secrecy of their own hearts, but never to confess Him openly. **They had to break strong national ties, and long-established customs, and identify themselves boldly with the new-born Christian Church!**

So today, it is **not enough** for us to say in our hearts: "I believe that God's last warning message is true." It is **not enough** to be a secret disciple. If we are on a sinking ship, it is **not enough to applaud the life-boat. WE MUST GET INTO IT!** Even so, it is **not enough** to agree that "**Babylon is fallen, and is become the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird.**" **WE MUST HEED GOD'S CALL TO 'COME OUT OF HER!' "**

## THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMOUR

*Introduction* There are two ways of engaging in Christian warfare. One is by surrounding ourselves with elaborate barriers of law and discipline. That's the **NEGATIVE** way. The other is by allowing our lives to be so filled with the good and the beautiful that evil will have no appeal. That's the **POSITIVE** way.

The old Greek story of Ulysses, Orpheus, and the Isle of Sirens illustrates these two methods. When Ulysses drew near the perilous island, he ordered his sailor's ears to be stuffed with wax, and he had himself bound securely to the mast, so that he could not yield to the maddening music of the siren's singing. However, when Orpheus - the master-musician - passed the island, he took no such precautions. He sat calmly out on the deck, unmoved by the siren's songs - **BECAUSE HE WAS A BETTER MUSICIAN THAN THEY WERE!** He could make far more beautiful music than the Sirens, and so their songs had no power to seduce him. Ulysses was fortified from without. Orpheus was fortified **FROM WITHIN!**

The Bible recommends the **POSITIVE** method of meeting temptation. **"DO NOT BE OVERCOME OF EVIL,"** it says, **"BUT OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD"** (Romans 12:21). This positive Bible principle is further emphasised in Ephesians 6:10-18, where we are encouraged to: **"PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD."**

*(See Chart No. 68 - The Christian's Armour)*

*Discussion* There are seven pieces of this supernatural "armour." Each piece is worthy of our close study, and we are urged to **"take"** the armour - the **"whole"** armour. This initiative must be **ours**. The armour will not be **thrust** upon us against our will. It does not come to us **automatically!**

### 1.—"YOUR LOINS GIRT ABOUT WITH TRUTH" (v 14)

A girdle, or kilt, of leather straps, plated with metal, was worn by Roman soldiers in Paul's day. This allowed ample freedom of movement, while providing protection for the lower abdomen and the thighs.

For the Apostle, God's "Truth" corresponds with this protective girdle. "Truth" is found in God's Word. This means that a **thorough, first-hand knowledge of the Bible is a protective armour against evil.** It is imperative, however, that we make the truth our own by diligent personal study. Truth treated casually, or kept apart from us, affords no protection. Truth becomes effective armour only when it is admitted to the soul by personal faith and continual study.

### 2.—"THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS" (v 14)

The Roman soldier was equipped with chest armour, also, to protect his heart and vital organs. This was usually made of metal, and could comprise one piece, or several overlapping pieces. Biblical "Righteousness," as applied to men, embraces both **release from the guilt of sin, and an inward reinforcement against the power of sin.** However, both of these provisions are **DIVINE GIFTS**, wholly independent of human merit or striving. Accordingly, whether credited to us in "Justification," or wrought in us in "Sanctification," the "Breastplate of Righteousness" is protective armour that is provided wholly by God.

### 3.—"YOUR FEET SHOD WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE" (v 15)

The soldier of Paul's day urgently needed foot-armour. So does the Christian today. Sandals were "shock-absorbers" - affording protection from the thorns; thistles; stones and irregularities of the road. They also helped to give the soldier firm-footedness and stability when he was engaged in combat. **Even so, the "Gospel of peace," ensuring peace both with God and men, is an effective spiritual "shock-absorber" and stabilizer.** The Gospel, received

and applied, protects us from the cuts, bruises, abrasions and irritations that come to us, not only in our warfare with Satan, but with his human agents, and with adverse circumstances. When Paul wrote his triumphant affirmation of confidence in Romans 8:31-39, he was wearing the Gospel sandals!

After all, it is the love of self that is the great destroyer of our peace. When self is all alive, we stand ready to guard it continually from mortification and insult. But, when we are dead to self, and our life is hid with Christ in God, we shall not take neglects and slights to heart. We shall be deaf to reproach, and blind to scorn and insult.

Acceptance of "the Gospel of peace" enables us to get ourselves off our hands so completely that we can "absorb" slights and irritations without hurt. Thank God for the "sandals of peace!"

#### 4.—"THE SHIELD OF FAITH" (v 16).

This is one of the most comprehensive and versatile pieces of armour. It augments and enhances every other piece. "Faith" is continuous, spontaneous "open-ness to God." It is total dependence upon God - in every emergency. It is a settled disposition to welcome the handling of God, at all times, in all circumstances.

Such is the power of "Faith" that it can turn the force of the fiercest of Satan's assaults. **By its aid, we can "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."** This is not merely a cautious hint of precarious or uncertain victory over evil. It is an emphatic, rock-ribbed pledge that is positive, consistent, and permanent.

#### 5.—"THE HELMET OF SALVATION" (v 17)

A helmet protects the head, and the head is the seat of rationality, conviction, judgment, motivation and control. "**Salvation,**" as used in the Bible, is also a comprehensive term. **It embraces THE WHOLE MOVEMENT OF GOD TOWARDS THE SINNER, in enlightenment, protection, healing and blessing.** It embraces all of our past, present, and future needs. Accordingly, in God's gift of "Salvation," we may rest. Our lives; our reputations; our joy; our peace; our hope, are no longer at the mercy of men, or demons, or circumstances. Wearing this "helmet," we can say with Paul: "**IF GOD BE FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?**" (Romans 8:31) and, "**WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?**" (Romans 8:35)

#### 6.—"THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD" (v 17)

The "Sword" is a weapon of "offence," as well as "defence." The Christian warrior may become so saturated with the Bible, that the Word of God has become part of His person. Thus it was with Jesus. So faithfully had He absorbed and memorized the Scriptures, that "IT IS WRITTEN" sprang instantly to His lips in every emergency. So it may be with us. **When assailed by temptation, we are not to look to circumstances, or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the Word - all its strength is ours!** Satan trembles and flees before the weakest soul who takes refuge in a "THUS SAYS THE LORD!"

#### 7.—"PRAYING ALWAYS, WITH ALL PRAYER" (v 18)

Prayer is our vital and direct link with heaven. We may close every door to sinful thoughts, and nagging doubts, and unholy imaginings, by lifting the soul to God in sincere prayer. "Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees." **At all times, God, in all the strength of His boundless omnipotence, is "only a prayer away!"**

Why, then, should the Christian warrior cripple himself, and cheat himself of victory, by refusing to pray?

*Conclusion*

In these nine Bible verses, God is pin-pointing the three most important aspects of the Christian warfare:

1. The grim and urgent reality of our daily conflict with evil - which reaches its peak-intensity in the last days (Revelation 12:12).
2. The superhuman strength and cunning of our Adversary - the Devil.
3. The invincibility of our defences - **if we keep the armour on!**

This is no "make-believe" warfare; no mock-battle; no "shadow-sparring," It is a **life-or-death, destiny-deciding conflict**. And of ourselves we are no match for the dark legions of evil that are arrayed against us. Therefore we are urged to "be strong in the Lord." Only the supernatural can match and prevail against the supernatural!

What strong comfort there is, then, in the words of Christ: "**I give you power .... OVER ALL THE POWER OF THE ENEMY!**" (Luke 10:19).



## GETTING READY FOR HEAVEN

### *Introduction* II Pet. 3 : 11-14: "What manner of persons ought ye to be?"

If we were expecting to migrate permanently to another country, what changes would this prospect make in the pattern of our daily lives? Would we not begin to prepare seriously for life in that new land, so that when we arrived, we would not be complete strangers?

Our lives would be dominated and revolutionised by this new and exciting prospect. The language, laws, customs, dress, climate, diet, currency, sicknesses, standard of living, politics, religion and education of the citizens of our future homeland would immediately become our major preoccupation.

If we were in danger of carrying some sickness, or contracting one when we got there, would we not take thorough precautions before our departure?

Inasmuch as we are expecting to migrate soon from earth to heaven when Jesus comes, **should we not have the same serious attitude towards preparation for life in the heavenly world?**

To help us to get ready for the coming migration, God has given us the Bible. It is a faithful mirror of the standards that will govern our conduct in the world to come. In this lesson we will study these principles of Christian living, and our relationship to them.

————— (See Chart No. 69 – Christian Standards)

### *Discussion* 1.—THE RELEVANCE OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

The Bible standards of conduct have a **two-fold relevance**. Not only do they help to fit us for life in our **future**, heavenly home, but they help us to grapple more effectively with the practical realities of life in this **present** world!

**Ps. 119 : 9:** "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word."

There is a widespread notion abroad today that Christian standards of morality are arbitrary, repressive and obsolete. Advocates of this view are saying: "**There are no absolute standards. Truth, beauty and decency are only relative. Every man must be permitted to create his own moral values, and to do his own thing, in his own way, in his own situation!**"

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick has written a hard-hitting reply to this irresponsible, twisted, pagan view of life:

"Go into a science laboratory and tell **them** there are no standards in their work, and **they will throw you out!** Standards are their central business . . . Standards of **induction, of verification, of technique, and behind these, profound standards of veracity, integrity, and disinterested devotion to truth.**

"Wherever you find great work being done in engineering, in architecture, in agriculture, in medicine, in music, in art, in literature or in science; amid the infinite variety of expressions, you will find **at the core and centre of it all standards . . . concerning which men are persuaded that nowhere can their disregard be right, and nowhere can their observance be wrong!**"

### 2.—THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

The ultimate foundation of Christian morality is not merely what God **requires**, but what God **is**.

**I Pet. 1 : 15, 16:** "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

God's "holiness" is His moral excellence, His stainless, incorruptible goodness; His unquenchable enthusiasm for righteousness; His uncompromising and total recoil from evil.

**Deut. 32 : 4:** "A God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is He."



Bible "holiness", therefore, has nothing to do with haloes, or stained-glass-window "saints", or sanctimonious words and attitudes. It is positive, active, and virile, not negative, passive, and supine. It means **"total commitment to goodness, and total separation from evil"**.

**Rom. 12 : 9:** "Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good."

**II Tim. 2 : 19:** "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Furthermore, **God's character does not change.** The constant ebb and flow of human opinions and values does not alter His character by a hair's breadth.

**Mal. 3 : 6:** "I am the Lord, I change not."

It is out of this fundamental fact of God's unchanging holiness that His **authority, His claims, and His commands** arise. **His standards are the faithful and unalterable reflection of His character!**

### 3.—THE SCOPE OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

God's claims are so broad and far-reaching that they take in every department of our lives.

**Luke 10 : 27:** "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind."

**I Cor. 10 : 31:** "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

**Col. 3 : 17:** "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

**Phil. 4 : 8:** "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely—think on these things."

Though God's standards cover every area of human conduct, He does not regiment our lives down to the last microscopic detail. Instead of long, complicated lists of rules and regulations, He gives us **great, unchanging principles, illustrated in the Bible by scores of practical examples.** He then leaves us free to apply these principles in our individual circumstances, under the guidance of His Spirit.

*(See outline, entitled "A Summary of Christian Standards", at the end of this lesson)*

### 4.—THE REWARDS OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

Think first of the present rewards:

**Prov. 3 : 2:** "Length of days, and long life and peace shall they add to thee."

**Prov. 6 : 22:** "They are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."

The impression is sometimes given that in this present world, the Christian life is all hardship and sacrifice, but no gain. Nothing could be further from the truth. **Even if there were no hereafter, God's standards would still be the best guarantees of present liberty, peace, health, prosperity, security and happiness—the blessings that we all covet most!**

God's commandments proved to be a **sound insurance policy** for Daniel and his companions (Dan. 1 : 15, 19, 20, 21). So will they be to us.

Now consider the **eternal** rewards:

**Gal. 6 : 8:** "He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

### 5.—THE LIVING OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

At this point, many will say: "I respect and applaud these standards, but I **cannot live them.** It's like asking a helpless paralytic to climb to the top of Mount Everest, or jump to the moon! It just can't be done!"

**II Cor. 2 : 16:** "Who is sufficient for these things?"

If we try to live these standards in our own strength, we are doomed to dismal failure, but in the strength of the Spirit of God, all things are possible.

**Ezek. 36 : 27:** "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My Statutes."

**Phil. 4 : 13:** "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

**Conclusion** Said John Ruskin: "The great object of God's salvation is to make people not merely do right things, but enjoy them!  
 —Not merely honest, but to love honesty . . .  
 —Not merely just, but to love justice . . .  
 —Not merely truthful, but to love truth . . .  
 —Not merely good, but to love goodness . . .  
 —Not merely pure, but to love purity . . .  
 —Not merely holy, but to hunger and thirst after holiness!"

Ruskin was wise enough to see that God's biggest problem is not the problem of getting us into Heaven, but the problem of getting Heaven into us!

When this marvellous transformation has taken place, we will obey God's standards as naturally as a candle gives light, or a fire gives warmth, and we will not be strangers in our future heavenly home.

**We will be ready for Heaven, because we already have Heaven in our hearts!**

\* \* \*

## A SUMMARY OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

### 1.—HEALTH AND TEMPERANCE

(See Lesson 53—How to Care for God's Living Temple)

### 2.—SPEECH, SWEARING, TALE-BEARING

Ex. 20:7: *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*

Eph. 4:29-32: *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.*

Matt. 5:33-37: *Swear not at all.*

Matt. 12:36, 37: *For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*

Col. 4:6: *Let your speech be always with grace.*

Prov. 18:21: *Death and life are in the power of the tongue.*

James 4:11: *Speak not evil of one another.*

Lev. 19:16: *Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people.*

Prov. 26:22: *The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds.*

Prov. 26:20: *Where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth.*

Prov. 20:19: *A tale-bearer revealeth secrets; therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.*

Prov. 20:3: *Every fool will be meddling.*

Prov. 16:28: *A whisperer separateth chief friends.*

Prov. 18:7: *A fool's mouth is his destruction.*

Prov. 17:27: *He that hath knowledge spareth his words.*

Ps. 141:3: *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth.*

Ps. 19:14: *Let the words of my mouth . . . be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord.*

### 3.—DECENCY, CHASTITY, SOCIAL PURITY

Ex. 20:14: *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

I Cor. 6:13-18: *The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord.*

Matt. 5:27, 30: *Whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery.*

Prov. 6:32: *Whoso committeth adultery destroyeth his own soul.*

Eph. 5:3-5: *Fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you.*

Prov. 4:23-27: *Keep thy heart with all diligence.*

Matt. 5:8: *Blessed are the pure in heart.*

Gen. 39:9: *How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

Phil. 4:8:  *whatsoever things are pure, think on these things.*

II Cor. 10:5: *Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

### 4.—COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE, HOME IDEALS

Gen. 2:18-24: *Therefore shall a man cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.*

Eph. 5:25-28: *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church.*

Ex. 20:14: *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

Matt. 19:3-9: *What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*  
 Matt. 5:31, 32: *Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery.*  
 II Cor. 6:14: *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers*  
 Deut. 7:3, 4: *Neither shalt thou make marriages with them [idolatrous nations].*  
 Prov. 15:17: *Better a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.*  
 Prov. 17:1: *Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.*

#### 5.—RECREATION, AMUSEMENT (also Reading, Music, Television)

Rom. 12:2: *Be not conformed to this world.*  
 I John 2:15: *Love not the world.*  
 James 4:4: *The friendship of the world is enmity with God.*  
 Ex. 23:2: *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.*  
 Prov. 1:10: *If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*  
 Ps. 101:3: *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes.*  
 Prov. 4:14: *Go not in the way of evil men.*  
 Prov. 6:28: *Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?*  
 Rom. 12:9: *Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*  
 Amos 5:15: *Hate the evil, and love the good.*  
 I Cor. 15:33: *Evil communications corrupt good manners.*  
 Isa. 5:20: *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil.*  
 Prov. 16:25: *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*  
 Phil. 4:8: *Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, think on these things.*  
 Rom. 14:7: *None of us liveth to himself.*  
 Rom. 14:13: *Let no man put a stumbling-block in his brother's way.*  
 Rom. 14:21: *It is good therefore neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.*  
 Matt. 18:7: *Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!*

#### 6.—DRESS AND PERSONAL ADORNMENT

Ps. 45:13: *The king's daughter is all glorious within.*  
 I Tim. 2:9, 10: *That women adorn themselves with modest apparel.*  
 I Pet. 3:3, 4: *The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.*  
 Prov. 30:13: *There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes!*  
 Prov. 6:16, 17: *The Lord hates a proud look.*  
 Prov. 16:18: *Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*  
 Isa. 3:16-24: *Because the daughters of Zion are haughty . . . the Lord will take away their tinkling ornaments.*  
 II Kings 9:30: *Jezebel, the proud pagan queen with the painted face.*  
 Rev. 17:4: *The apostate church, adorned with gold, precious stones and pearls.*  
 Rev. 12:1: *The true church clothed in simple garments.*  
 I Sam. 16:7: *Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.*

#### 7.—HONESTY, TRUTHFULNESS, INTEGRITY

Ex. 20:15, 16, 17: *Thou shalt not steal . . . bear false witness . . . covet.*  
 Lev. 19:13: *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him.*  
 Lev. 19:35, 36: *Just balances, just weights shall ye have.*  
 Deut. 25:13-16: *Thou shalt have a perfect and just weight.*  
 Prov. 11:1: *A false balance is an abomination to the Lord.*  
 Prov. 6:16-19: *The Lord hates a false witness, a lying tongue.*  
 Prov. 21:6: *The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.*  
 Isa. 33:15: *He that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hand from holding bribes.*  
 Jer. 17:11: *He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.*  
 Rom. 12:17: *Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*  
 Phil. 4:8: *Whatsoever things are honest . . . think on these things.*  
 Rev. 14:5: *And in their mouth was found no guile.*

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME AND FAMILY

*Introduction* In his excellent book: "**Makers of the Home**," Arthur Spalding says: "Upon parents, ..... lies a responsibility greater than that which rests upon the rulers of nations, the leaders of the church, or the public teachers of the youth. The man and the woman who unite their lives for the making of a new home assume the most tremendous obligations. **They have not only, like rulers, to use life, or, like teachers, to shape life; they have to institute life, and to launch it upon its career of time and eternity.** But for them there would be no souls to lose or to save; no doing of deeds great or mean; no experiences of happiness or of misery; no judgment to be met or reward to be received. **Parents are the primary power in human life and society.** They determine whether life is to be, and if it is, how it shall be directed. They are the arbiters of fate." (p 17)

Then he adds, pointedly: "**If Christianity is to win, it must not fail to create Christian homes!**" (ibid.)

Spalding's sobering words strike the key-note for this Study Guide. His convictions are reinforced by the united testimony of Scripture, and by the whole history of civilized man. For Christian people, the key-importance of the home is indisputable. It is buttressed by an unassailable logic. Its value is self-evident. It is not something to be argued for, but something to be argued from.

Yet the home is under constant threat, and never more so than today. Disguised and open attacks in the popular media demonstrate this. Alarming divorce statistics highlight the home's mortal peril. Accordingly, Christian parents, youth, and children need to be fortified with a comprehensive, first-hand knowledge of what the Bible teaches concerning the origin, the sacredness, and the preservation of the Christian home.

*(See Chart No. 70 – The Christian Home and Family)*

*Discussion* We will review the Bible's teaching on marriage under five headings:

### 1.—GOD'S IDEAL - AN INDISSOLUBLE UNION

(Genesis 2:21-24; Ephesians 5:22-31; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Exodus 20:14, 17)

The total and permanent unity of husband and wife in marriage is implied in the Divine pronouncement: "**They shall be one flesh**" (Genesis 2:24). Two sovereign requirements for Christian marriage are projected here: (1) **Marriage to one person only** (Monogamy), and (2) **Marriage for life** (Indissolubility). These two elements are not optional, or relative. They are mandatory and absolute. Within this framework of total and permanent union, no married Christian can relate to any person other than his/her covenanted sex-partner at any time, nor with private reservations as to length of time. **In Christian terms, life has no more sacred or binding covenant than the marriage vow.** There is absolutely no room for flippancy or irresponsibility in this matter.

But the Bible doctrine of the sanctity of marriage goes beyond a Divine mandate. It also presents a Divine example. With its roots planted firmly in the Genesis record, the New Testament makes marriage as indissoluble, on the one hand, and as monogamous on the other—**as the sacramental union between Christ and His beloved Bride - the Church!** (Ephesians 5:25-32)

What higher dignity could be given to the marriage union than this? What loftier sanctions could be attached to it? What more powerful safeguards could be thrown around it?

### 2.—THE HUSBAND - KING AND PRIEST

(Ephesians 5:25-31; 1 Corinthians 7:3; Colossians 3:19; 1 Timothy 5:8; 1 Peter 3:7).

"Husbands, love your wives," is the first Divine requirement for the male partner in marriage.

"Love;" in Biblical terms, is not a fleeting impulse, or a gush of sentiment - it is a steady, regulating principle. Love is not passive. It is active, out-going, sharing and ministering - not grasping, demanding, self-seeking, or self-serving. It delights to give. It delights to serve. One perceptive writer defines "Love" as "**fulness of response.**" Another describes it as: "**a steady direction of the will towards another's lasting good.**" And when Paul passes "love" through the prism of his inspired intellect, it emerges as: "**Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears!**" (1 Corinthians 13:4-8, Moffat's translation).

What implications does this have for Christian husbands? What demands does it make? What challenges does it bring? What pattern of conduct does it require?

Clearly, the overbearing, domineering, self-serving tendencies will be subdued in the Christian husband, and the out-going graces of courtesy, tenderness, patience and tolerance - even reverence for his wife - will be cultivated.

His approach will not be, "What can I get? But, "what can I **give?**" Not, "What is the most I can extract?" But "What is the most I can **contribute?**"

Then the Christian "husband" will be a true "house-band" - binding, unifying, bracing, protecting the home partnership. Then, indeed, he will be what God intended him to be - the King and Priest of the home!

He will not wait for his wife to take the initiative in exemplifying the Christian graces. He will play the "lead-part." He will strike the key-note. As Husband - he will take the initiative in loving and serving; in helping and trusting. As King - he will take the initiative in protecting, defending, and providing. As Priest - he will take the initiative in peace-making; forgiving, reconciling - healing tensions and misunderstandings when the unity of the home is threatened. As Priest - he will take the initiative in lifting his wife and family up to God!

"**As Christ loved ....**" - this is the manner in which he is to play the "lead-part!"

### 3.—THE WIFE - QUEEN AND TEACHER

(Proverbs 31:10-31; 1 Corinthians 7:39; Colossians 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1)

A sage, with deep insight, has compared the wife, in relation to her husband, to the **bow-string** of the archer's long-bow. "**She bends him,**" said the sage, "**yet she obeys him!**"

Just as the husband must master the delicate balance between the sterner qualities of leadership, and the gentler qualities of husband and father; so the wife must master the equally-delicate balance between co-operative submission, on the one hand, and lawful individuality and initiative on the other.

How is this done? In the same manner, and by the same means, as her husband learns and performs his dual role as King and Priest. By first opening her heart to the indwelling of God's love, as a controlling, masterful force. The ultimate secret of married happiness is that both husband and wife shall habitually consent - in motive, thought, word, and action - to be God-governed, or - as the Bible puts it - "brought captive to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5).

As God's representative, the wife and mother will then take the initiative in encouraging her children to become "God-governed" personalities, also. A story from Dr. Frank Boreham illustrates the imaginative persistence of one faithful mother in attempting to lead her children to God. "A mother in my congregation," writes Dr. Boreham, "assured me the other day that she had been greatly assisted in the training of her children by forming the habit of talking to them in their sleep. 'I go round,' she told me, 'from cot to cot. I bend over them and suggest to them the holiest, sweetest and most beautiful thoughts I can collect. If they are sleeping soundly, I speak softly. If they are sleeping lightly, I whisper faintly. I tell them that I know they will grow up to be pure and good and unselfish, to follow the Christ, serve their fellows, and love God above all. And when I gather them around my knee, I fancy that, when I approach such themes, their minds

seem prepared to welcome the thought. It is as though a something already implanted in their hearts springs up to welcome the idea that I then openly suggest to them.”

Someone who heard this story commented: “**All hell could not tear children away from a mother like that!**”

#### 4.—CHILDREN - JEWELS OF THE HOME

(Psalms 127:3; 144:12; Proverbs 1:8, 9; 22:6; Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-4; 2 Timothy 3:15).

A wealthy Roman matron, asked by a visitor to display her famous collection of jewels, called her children to her side. “**These are my Jewels,**” she said, proudly.

A modern writer, with the same perspective, wrote this prayer: “Oh, heavenly Father, make me a better parent. Help me to understand my children, to listen patiently to what they have to say and to answer all questions kindly. Keep me from interrupting them, talking back to them and contradicting them. Make me as courteous to them as I would have them be to me. Give me the courage to confess my sins against my children and ask them for forgiveness, when I know that I have done wrong.

“May I not vainly hurt the feelings of my children. Forbid that I should laugh at their mistakes, or resort to shame and ridicule as punishment. Let me not tempt a child to lie and steal. So guide me hour by hour that I may demonstrate by all I say and do that honesty produces happiness.

“Reduce, I pray, the meanness in me. May I cease to nag; and when I am out of sorts, help me, Oh Lord, to hold my tongue. Blind me to the little errors of my children and help me to see the good things that they do. Give me a ready word of honest praise.

“Help me to treat my children as those of their own age, but let me not exact of them the judgments and conventions of adults. Allow me not to rob them of the opportunity to wait upon themselves, to think, to choose and to make their own decisions.

“Forbid that I should ever punish them for my selfish satisfaction. May I grant them all their wishes that are reasonable and have the courage always to withhold a privilege which I know will do them harm.

“Make me so fair and just, so considerate and companionable to my children that they will have genuine esteem for me. Fit me to be loved and imitated by children.” — Garry C. Myers.

What immeasurable loss would come to the world, if parents like this were to disappear. What immeasurable gain, if such parents were to multiply!

#### 5.—THE FAMILY ALTAR - RUDDER OF THE HOME

(Psalms 127:1; Genesis 18:19; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15; Malachi 4:5, 6.)

Just as the rudder of a sea-going vessel determines the ship's direction, and helps to ensure its safe arrival, so the practice of regular family worship helps to establish and preserve the goals, values, and priorities of the Christian family.

One perceptive Christian author has described the family altar as “the little church of the home.” Her words are worth noting: “In all that pertains to the success of God's work, the very first victories are to be won in the home life... Parents, during the week live as in the sight of a holy God, who has given you your children to train for Him. Train for Him **the little Church in your home**, that on the Sabbath all may be prepared to worship in the Lord's sanctuary” (**Testimonies for the Church**, Vol 6, p 354).

Abraham believed this, and established his home-altar wherever he pitched his tent.

Joseph's parents did likewise, and he was kept for God amid the corruption of Egypt.

Daniel's parents did likewise, and he was kept for God in idolatrous Babylon.

Jesus' parents did likewise, and he was kept for God in wicked Nazareth.

Timothy's mother and grandmother did likewise, and he, too, was kept for God amid the moral pollution of Roman society.

*Conclusion* One of Elijah's first tasks on Mount Carmel was to "**repair the altar of the Lord,**" which lay in ruins. This was the signal for a sweeping reformation throughout the land of Israel. (1 Kings 18:30-32)

**What about the "altar of the Lord" in your home?** Has it fallen into disrepair? Will you be an Elijah for God and repair the altar today?

## HOW TO CARE FOR GOD'S LIVING TEMPLE

*Introduction* **John 2 : 13-16:** Jesus cleanses the Temple in Jerusalem.

Christ's cleansing of the Temple was a dramatic illustration of the work He came to do in the human soul. God's original ideal was that man should be a living temple for His indwelling, but sin defiled the body-temple and marred God's plan. Jesus came to drive out the demons of selfishness and lust that had made their home in man, and to restore him as a clean temple for God's possession.

Many people think of Christ's work as applying only to the cleanliness of our hearts, as if He were indifferent to the way we treat our bodies. It therefore comes as a complete surprise to learn that **God views our whole personality—body, soul and spirit—as His temple**, and that He is just as keenly interested in the health and welfare of our bodies as He is in the health of our souls!

**II Cor. 6 : 16:** "Ye are the temple of the living God"

How does God want us to care for His living temple? Let us open the Bible and see.

*Discussion* **1.—GOD'S CLAIM TO THE BODY-TEMPLE**

God's claim is based upon the fact that He is our **Maker, Owner, Preserver and Redeemer.**

**I Cor. 6 : 19, 20:** "Your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost . . . Ye are not your own . . . Ye are bought with a price . . . Wherefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

**Ps. 100 : 3:** "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves."

**Acts 17 : 28:** "In Him we live and move and have our being."

**Rom. 14 : 8:** "Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."

What impact does this Divine claim have upon us? It should hush our hearts with gratitude and awe. The greatest day in our lives comes when this realisation first dawns over our souls. Life can never be quite the same again for us from the moment we say: **"I BELONG TO GOD. MY BODY IS HIS TEMPLE!"** This is surely the most powerful, life-changing conviction that can ever lay hold upon our hearts. **If God places such a high value upon us, can we continue to have a cheap regard for ourselves?**

**2.—GOD'S CONCERN FOR THE BODY TEMPLE**

**Ex. 20 : 5:** "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

It is fundamentally right for God to be jealous about His property. We are jealous about our property, aren't we? If we owned a beautiful temple, of intricate design and matchless craftsmanship, would we not be concerned to guard it from abuse?

Accordingly, God says that the health and welfare of His people is **His highest wish** for them.

**III John 2:** "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

This concern is prompted solely by love and a desire for His people's good.

**Deut. 6 : 24:** "For our good always, that He may preserve us alive."

God places a high value upon our **physical bodies.** He does not subscribe to the false view of man which regards the human body wholly as a source of evil, and despises it as a vile and worthless husk. God created our bodies "in His own image", and pronounced them "very good" (Gen. 1 : 31). Therefore, His redemptive work takes in our bodies, and He will not rest until they are fully reclaimed from sin, disease and death.

**Rom. 8 : 23:** "The redemption of the body."

**I Thess. 5 : 23:** "Your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless."

God's concern for the body temple is reflected also in His warnings and prohibitions against its wilful abuse.

**I Cor. 3 : 16, 17:** "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy."



However, because of God's concern for the welfare of His living temple, we would expect more than warnings against abuse. We would expect Him to give **clear and positive counsel** about how to keep the body temple in the best possible condition. Does the Bible contain such counsel?

### 3.—GOD'S COUNSEL CONCERNING THE BODY-TEMPLE

God's health counsel has two outstanding merits - its **Breadth** and its **Benefits**. Let us consider them in order:

*(See Chart No. 71 – The Wheel of Health)*

(1) **Breadth.** God's health counsel takes in **the whole of man - physical, mental, and spiritual - and the whole of life.** His health programme is a remarkably comprehensive, rational, well-balanced programme.

**1 Cor. 10:31:** "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

**1 Cor. 9:26:** "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things."

The Bible meaning of "Temperance" is not merely "**total abstinence from that which is bad,**" but also "**the moderate use of that which is good.**" Some of the Bible's most positive recommendations for good health are as follows:

**Strict personal cleanliness** (2 Cor. 7:1).

**Proper sanitary provisions** (Deut. 23:12-14).

**Isolation of infectious diseases** (Num. 5:2, 3; Lev. 13:45, 46).

**Burning of infected materials** (Lev. 13:47, 48, 52).

**Clean and wholesome foods** (Gen. 1:29; Lev. 11:1-47).

**Non-intoxicating drinks** (Prov. 20:1).

**Avoidance of gluttony** (Luke 21:34; 1 Cor. 9:25).

**Adequate exercise and rest** (Ex. 20:8-11; Mark 6:31).

**Clean, positive thinking** (Phil. 4:8).

**Cheerfulness, contentment and trust in God** (Prov. 17:22; Phil. 4:11; Isa. 26:3, 4).

**The most fastidious modern Health Department could hardly find fault with these recommendations!**

(2) **Benefits.** God puts the benefits of self-discipline - and the penalties of self-indulgence - squarely before us:

**Deut. 30:15, 19, 20:** "Behold, I set before you life and good, and death and evil. Wherefore, choose life."

**Gal. 6:7, 8:** "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

**Deut. 6:24:** God's commands are "for our good always, that He may preserve us alive."

**Prov. 3:1, 2:** "Length of days, and long life, and peace" are the sure fruits of obedience to God.

**Daniel 1:8, 15, 17, 20, 21:** Daniel's life is a classic illustration of the benefits - physical, mental, and spiritual - that follow faithful adherence to God's laws of health.

*Conclusion* We are now in a position to appreciate the force of Paul's appeal in Romans 12:1: "**I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.**"

The sanest and most rational way to live is in harmony with the laws of God.

**"The great business of life is to find which way God is moving and then—move with Him."**

Let us resolve to do this, and we will be compelled to say with David: "**With Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light**" (Ps. 36:9).

## THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

### *Introduction* I Cor. 11 : 25: "This do in remembrance of Me."

From the dawn of time God has employed the principle of **active participation** in teaching His people spiritual truths. He knows that we learn best by **doing**. The impact of the lesson is deeper and more lasting if we are permitted to **touch and taste and handle** as well as to hear and see and think.

**Old Testament examples:** Man's continuous need to eat the fruit of the tree of life, even in Eden. The sacrificial offerings, appointed immediately after the entrance of sin. Noah's building of the ark. God's command to Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac. The Passover ceremonies. The gathering of the manna. The building of the tabernacle, and the whole Sanctuary service.

So it is in the New Testament. Whilst the emphasis upon external ceremonies is greatly reduced and the ordinances are much simplified, the principle of **education by active participation** remains.

The three divinely-appointed ordinances of the Christian Church are:

**Baptism by Immersion**

**The Ordinance of Foot-Washing**

**The Lord's Supper**

Inasmuch as the ordinance of Baptism is dealt with in Lesson 36, we will concentrate in this lesson upon the other two.

*(See Chart No. 72 – Christian Ordinances)*

### *Discussion* 1.—THE ORDINANCE OF FOOT-WASHING — John 13: 1-17

Two questions will help us to see more deeply into the Master's purpose in washing His disciples' feet:

#### **Was Jesus really instituting a new ordinance for the Christian Church?**

Some Christians maintain that Jesus never intended His words or actions on this occasion to be taken literally. They insist that He was merely giving an **unusually forceful illustration—a dramatisation—of humility and service**, in the general sense.

This matter can be settled conclusively only by a direct appeal to Scripture, and inasmuch as all Christian believers are not agreed at this point, the Bible evidence should be considered with especial care. There are two main lines of evidence:

(a) Three verses indicate clearly that Jesus had **something more in mind than merely a general lesson of humility**.

v 7: "What I do thou knowest not now."

v 8: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me."

v 12: "Know ye that I have done to you?"

These verses show that the true significance of Jesus' action was **not immediately apparent** to the disciples; also, that this washing was a **unique condition of partnership with Christ**. Furthermore, if Jesus had merely been giving an example of humility in the general sense, He would not have needed to **probe** His disciples with the question: "**Do you understand the meaning of My action?**" His meaning would have been obvious to all!

(b) Three other verses prove conclusively that Jesus **did** wish His disciples to engage in the **literal repetition** of His action.

v 14: "Ye ought also to **wash one another's feet.**"

v 15: "Ye should **do as I have done.**"

v 17: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye **do them.**"

Even the most casual reading of this evidence shows that **Jesus' words about foot-washing were just as positive, deliberate and unequivocal as were His words at the institution of the Lord's Supper.** If there is no hesitancy to accept the literal meaning of His command in one case, why should there be reluctance to accept the literal meaning in the other?

**What enduring lessons are enshrined in this service for us?**

Four lessons are evident:

(a) **It is a memorial of Jesus' life of service.**

Jesus appointed two other great memorials:

The Lord's Supper — The memorial of His death;  
Christian Baptism — The memorial of His resurrection.

Is there no memorial of His **self-sacrificing life?**

Yes, there is. In the washing of His disciples' feet, **all the selfless activities of His earthly life are gathered together and focused in one sublime and unforgettable deed!**

Says Louis Berkouwer: "That little scene in the upper room is actually the epitome of His entire mediatorial career. It symbolises in striking action all the self-humiliation to which the Master put Himself." (Faith and Sanctification, p 148)

(b) **It is an opportunity to perform a personal service for our King.**

If an opportunity came for us to wash the feet of our Saviour, as Mary did, would we not grasp it eagerly? Would we not count it a high honour? Yet when we wash the feet of the humblest Christian brother, **Jesus regards this as a personal service, performed directly to Himself!**

**Matt. 25 : 40:** "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me!"

How this fact lifts, transfigures and glorifies this homely ordinance! What new lustre, beauty and dignity it gives to it! When viewed in this light there is **nothing menial, servile, or humiliating** about this service. Jesus was **never so truly regal** as when, on that last night, He stooped to perform the task of a slave. **It was the kingliest thing that He ever did!**

(c) **It is a perpetual reminder that we are "our brother's keeper".**

**Gen. 4 : 9:** "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Cain's callous, irresponsible question received its most decisive answer in the Upper Room that night, as Jesus knelt to wash the feet of His disciples. Satan has tried persistently to convert us all into Cains, to stifle our sense of responsibility towards others, and to make us aloof, indifferent and unfeeling, but Jesus testified by this action that God holds us **directly responsible for our influence, not merely upon our non-Christian neighbours, but also upon our own brethren within the Church!**

**Rom. 14 : 7:** "None of us liveth unto himself."

**I Cor. 8 : 12:** "When ye sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."

(d) **It is an acted pledge that we will do all in our power to keep our brother's life clean.**

**Rom. 14 : 13:** "Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block in his brother's way."

Says J. R. Miller: "We are to come to each other with basin and towel. **We are to help each other to be clean Christians.** We are to seek the sanctification, purification and upbuilding in character of our fellow disciples . . . Especially must we be cleansed ourselves if we would seek the cleansing of others. What if our own hands, with which we should wash the feet of other disciples, are not clean, but are themselves covered with sin? Instead of cleansing the lives we touch, we shall leave stains upon them."

**Heb. 10 : 24:** "Let us give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we can stir up to love and helpful deeds." (Amplified New Testament)

**2.—THE LORD'S SUPPER — I Cor. 11 : 23-29** (see also Matt. 26 : 26-28; Mark 14 : 22-24; Luke 22 : 18, 20; I Cor. 10 : 16, 17)

Four outstanding features are apparent in this service, also:

**(a) It is all-inclusive in scope**

By the appointment of this ordinance, Jesus gave renewed emphasis to the principle of **active participation**: No believer is excluded. This is a service of the Church in which every member can have a personal share—one that involves his whole being!

**(b) It has unforgettable associations**

It is easy to think of alternative memorials that Jesus could have chosen to commemorate His death: a monumental pillar; a gleaming obelisk; a cairn; a marble inscription; the annual reading of a memorial address; the singing of a memorial hymn; a pilgrimage; an insistence upon the preservation of the actual cross, or the actual tomb. But no, in his Divine wisdom He chose a homelier but better memorial—the appointment of a simple meal. By this means the scenes of His death, and our personal share in its benefits, are entwined with the most familiar and hallowed associations of the human heart—the home, the family and the meal-table!

**(c) It has four prime essentials**

If we wish to receive the maximum benefit from this ordinance, we must become **personally involved**. We cannot be content to be mere passive spectators. **Hands, lips, mind, heart, conscience and will must combine in active participation**. The ideal Communion Service involves a four-fold act of devotion:

**A Backward Look (The Look of Remembrance)**

**I Cor. 11 : 24:** "This do in remembrance of Me."

**I Cor. 11 : 26:** "Ye do show the Lord's death."

**A Forward Look (The Look of Hope)**

**I Cor. 11 : 26:** "Till He come."

**Titus 2 : 11-13:** "Looking for that blessed hope."

**Heb. 9 : 28:** "Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time."

**An Inward Look (The Look of Self-examination)**

**I Cor. 11 : 28:** "But let a man examine himself."

**Ps. 139 : 23, 24:** "Search me, O God, and know my heart."

**Matt. 7 : 1-5:** "First cast the beam out of thine own eye."

**An Upward Look (The Look of Dependence)**

**Heb. 12 : 2:** "Looking unto Jesus."

**John 6 : 48-58:** "I am the Living Bread . . . He that eateth Me shall live by Me."

**John 15 : 1-5:** "I am the Vine . . . Without Me ye can do nothing."

**(d) It teaches one enduring lesson**

**Matt. 4 : 4:** "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

This was the paramount lesson taught by the daily supply of manna in the wilderness, and it is the enduring lesson of the Lord's Supper. The attitude of **total dependence upon Christ**, so powerfully impressed upon Communion days, must become the **lifelong habit of the soul**. This is the distilled essence of true religion. This is the ideal response of the believing heart. This is saving faith.

"Living in Christ, adhering to Christ, supported by Christ, drawing nourishment from Christ, we bear fruit after the similitude of Christ." (Desire of Ages, p 677)



## GOD'S PLAN FOR THE SUPPORT OF HIS WORK

*Introduction* **Matt. 28 : 18-20:** "Go ye therefore and teach all nations."

These words have been called "The Church's Marching Orders". Christ was commissioning His disciples to embark on the spiritual conquest of the whole world.

Think of the staggering magnitude of this task! Think of the vast resources of man-power and money needed to keep it going! How natural that men should ask: "Where do all the millions of dollars come from to support and extend the Church's world-programme? Is this left to chance methods—like lotteries, raffles, bazaars, fairs, etc.—or does God have a definite plan for financing His work?"

**Luke 14 : 28-31:** "Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost?"

God is a wise Planner, and we would expect Him to devise some master-plan which would be consistent with His own principles, and yet adequate for the needs of His Church's world-wide task.

God has devised such a plan. It is based upon the giving of a **specified proportion** of our income, but not a **specified amount**. It does not favour the rich man, nor does it impose hardship upon the poor man. It is like a chain with three indispensable links.

### *Discussion* 1.—THE FIRST LINK—OWNERSHIP

God's ownership of all things is the most fundamental fact of human existence, and the most fundamental doctrine of the Bible. It is the foundation of all Divine claims and promises, and of all human duties. It is therefore the **ultimate starting-point** for any discussion of His plan for the support of His work. This primal fact helps us to see the whole plan in true perspective.

Where is the Bible evidence that God owns all?

**Ps. 24 : 1:** God owns the world.

**Ps. 95 : 5:** God owns the sea.

**Ps. 50 : 9-12:** God owns the cattle, the wild beasts, and the birds.

**Haggai 2 : 8:** God owns the silver and the gold.

**I Cor. 6 : 19, 20:** God owns our bodies.

We cannot make any progress towards an understanding of God's plan for financing His work unless we first recognise this sovereign fact that **God owns all**. Humbling it may be, but it is inescapably true that **whatever means are needed for the support of God's work must ultimately come from Him!**

**I Tim. 6 : 7:** "We brought nothing into this world, and can take nothing out."

**I Chron. 29 : 14:** "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee."

An appreciation of this first fact **revolutionises our whole approach to life**, and helps to prepare us for the second link, which follows logically.

### 2.—THE SECOND LINK—STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship takes its meaning from, and grows out of, ownership. Unless there were first an owner, there could never be a steward.

Stewardship means "the responsible management of entrusted property". "Ownership" describes God's relation to man. "Stewardship" describes man's relation to God. As God's stewards, we are the managers, caretakers, or trustees of His property.

What does the Bible teach about stewardship?

**Matt. 25 : 14-30:** The parable of the talents.

We are all God's stewards, entrusted with a **fair proportion** of His assets, according to our several abilities.

**I Cor. 4 : 2:** A steward is required to be faithful.

**Matt. 25 : 27:** A steward is expected to invest his master's assets.

**Matt. 21 : 34:** A steward is expected to make due returns to his master.

**Luke 16 : 2:** A steward is obliged to render an account of his trading.

**Gen. 2 : 16, 17:** A steward is obliged to respect his master's reserved portions.

God's best-known reserved portions are the Sabbath, the Body-Temple, and the Tithe. According to the Bible, all three of these belong to God. A "Tithe" means a one-tenth portion of our "increase" or net earnings. Because the tithe is so vitally concerned with the financing of God's work, let us see what the Bible teaches about it.

**Gen. 14 : 20:** Abraham returned a tithe to God.

**Gen. 28 : 20-22:** Jacob also returned a tenth portion.

Up to this time, the Bible has made no specific mention of the tithe. But the fact that Abraham and Jacob both exercised their stewardship according to the same pattern proves that God had already made His will known in this respect.

**Lev. 27 : 30:** The tithe belongs to God.

**Prov. 3 : 9:** The tithe is to be reckoned on clear "increase", or net gains.

**Num. 18 : 21:** The tithe was used for the support of the Levites.

**Mal. 3 : 8-11:** An unlimited blessing promised to the tithe-payer.

**Does the New Testament endorse the Tithing principle?**

**Matt. 22 : 21:** "Render unto God the things that are God's."

Rather than relaxing or abolishing the tithing obligation, the New Testament deepens and intensifies it. To the Jews, many of whom were formal, self-righteous tithe-payers, Jesus stressed the inwardness and spirituality of the tithe.

**Matt. 23 : 23:** Jesus endorsed tithing—but only as an expression of heart-religion!

**I. Cor. 9 : 13, 14:** God has "ordained" that, as in the Old Testament period, "They that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel."

From this Bible evidence it is clear that God wishes us to exercise our stewardship in the same way as His people did in Bible times—by returning a faithful tithe to His treasury. If every modern Christian were to do this, there would always be an abundance of means for the support of God's work!

However, the tithing plan was not given primarily for the purpose of raising money. Its chief purpose was spiritual education—the forging of new, strong bonds between man and God.

**II Cor. 12 : 14:** "I seek not yours, but you."

Stewardship is not an end in itself, but only a means to an end. Its purpose is to prepare us for the third and final stage of God's great plan.

### 3.—THE THIRD LINK—PARTNERSHIP

**Amos 3 : 3:** "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

Partnership means mutual ownership, mutual trust, mutual objectives, mutual obligations. It is the marriage of the human will with the will of God. This is God's supreme ideal for every Christian. It is the goal and reward of stewardship. It is the climax and crown of the Gospel plan. It is the experience where we become so fully identified with Christ that we are one with Him in motives, purpose, ideals, and character.

**How is this Divine-human partnership brought about?**

**Matt. 11 : 27, 28:** "Come unto Me . . . Take My yoke . . . Learn of Me . . ."

Christ's "yoke" is the love-discipline of His holy Law. It is not a burden or a fetter, but a link that unites us to Him. His "yoke" thus becomes the means whereby He shares His life, grace, and strength with us, making obedience a delight. What a perfect picture of partnership!

*(See Chart No. 73 – Christian Stewardship)*

**Conclusion**    **How does the tithing plan contribute to this partnership?**

**Acts 20 : 35:** "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The greatest value of the tithing plan is that it gives the most God-like virtues room for exercise in our lives. Generosity, liberality, sympathy, compassion, self-forgetfulness—these are the fundamental qualities of God's character, and He longs to see them reproduced in us. When we faithfully practise the tithing plan, these beautiful qualities are given opportunity to make their home in our hearts, too, and thus play their part in restoring within us the lost image of God!

## DOES THE BIBLE TEACH THAT GOD IS A TRINITY?

*Introduction* The doctrine of the Trinity was born in a time of transition from the preparatory, incomplete faith of the ancient Jewish people, to the larger, richer faith of the emerging Christian community. However, it was not set forth as a problem - but as a **solution**.

The first Christians, many of whom were converts from Judaism, were faced with some revolutionary and inescapable facts that had to be accounted for. They were confronted by **two new and dynamic religious realities**. On the one hand, there was the fact of Jesus of Nazareth - a tangible, historical, flesh-and-blood personality - who had claimed to be God in human flesh, and had performed incredible works to support His claim. On the other hand, there was a second force; an invisible, compelling, life-changing force - the promised Holy Spirit - who was indisputably at work among them!

It seemed to them - and the dawning of the new conviction spread over centuries of time - that the only Scriptural and satisfying way to account for these new realities was to view Jesus and the Holy Spirit - equally with the Father - as authentic manifestations of the true and living God. God was still One, in His essential Being, they affirmed, but three in His manifestation and function.

Accordingly, the doctrine of the Trinity was not a denial or repudiation of the original Old Testament faith in one God - known as "mono-theism" - it was the enlargement and completion of that faith. The doctrine of the Trinity was simply the bridge between the narrower, more restricted monotheism of the Old Testament, and the larger, richer monotheism of the New.

But the new truth of the essential "three-ness" of God was not something that the early Christians "invented," or "discovered," or "grasped" by their own unaided intellectual powers. It was something that **grasped them**. They did not possess it - it **possessed them**. They did not argue for it - they argued **from it**. Like the tempest or the tide, it caught them up in its irresistible embrace, and swept them along into new dimensions of truth and victory.

*Discussion* In this Study Guide we will walk in the footprints of those early Christians. We will explore the foundations of their expanding faith, and share the wonder and excitement of the new revelation of God that came to them. We will approach the study of the Trinity by three paths:

### 1.—THE TRINITY IN SCRIPTURE

The word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible - but the fact is unmistakably present. (Compare our use of the word "Incarnation").

#### (1) Old Testament Evidence

The Old Testament contains several intriguing passages where the plural pronouns "**us**" and "**our**" are used when God speaks of Himself, and what He intends to do. These are:

**Genesis 1:26:** "us" and "our"

**Genesis 3:22:** "us"

**Genesis 11:7:** "us"

**Isaiah 6:8:** "us"

The implication is that there are **at least two personal entities** - entities who can **confer**, and **agree** in purpose - **within the being of God**. Obviously there are **more than one**. There may even be **more than two!**

However, at best these are only hints, or pointers, and we must resist the temptation to read too much into them. Standing alone, they certainly do not provide us with an adequate or convincing revelation of the tri-unity of God.

But God has not left this matter in suspense or doubt, for the solution to this intriguing Old Testament puzzle is given to us in the New Testament.



(2) **New Testament Evidence**

Repeatedly, in the Apostolic writings, **three Divine Persons** - identified as **“the Father,” “the Son,”** and **“the Holy Spirit”** - are named and associated on terms of complete equality. Examples are:

<b>Matthew 28:19:</b>	“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”
<b>John 14:16-26:</b>	“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”
<b>1 Corinthians 12:3-6:</b>	“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”
<b>2 Corinthians 13:14:</b>	“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”
<b>Ephesians 2:18-22:</b>	“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”
<b>Ephesians 3:14-17:</b>	“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”
<b>Ephesians 4:3-7:</b>	“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”

These New Testament statements are not merely “hints” or “pointers.” They are emphatic and unequivocal affirmations of revealed truth!

But we have by no means exhausted the New Testament evidence, for the “Father,” the “Son,” and the “Holy Spirit” are not only named and associated in the Apostolic Scriptures. **Their qualities and powers are described in a manner that befits only three personal, Divine beings who are equal in every sense of the term.** The New Testament invests each of these Divine Persons with the **attributes** and **titles** of God; ascribes to them the **actions** of God; and pays to them the **worship** that is due only to absolute Deity! The following chart demonstrates this:

(See Supplementary chart, Demonstrating the Complete Equality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

In the face of this evidence, we are impelled to ask: **“What other conclusion can we draw than that all three of these Divine Persons are essentially and equally God?”**

**2.—THE TRINITY IN SYMBOL**

Apart from Scripture, there is another body of evidence - drawn this time from the Book of Nature - which supplements the Biblical testimony in a most significant way.

We are surrounded by intriguing **“trinities”** in the natural world - **i.e. created phenomena which are one, and yet three** - so that, even if we hesitate to accept the essential “three-ness” of God because it seems to be illogical, we are compelled to recognize the many “trinities” that exist all around us!

*(See Chart No. 74 – The Tri-unity of God)*

Consider some of the most obvious examples of the “three-in-one” phenomenon that confront us in the natural world:

- (1) **Time** is a “trinity.” We experience it in three segments - past; present; future - no more, no less.
- (2) **Space** is a “trinity.” We measure it as length, breadth, and height - three “dimensions,” no more, no less.
- (3) **Matter** is a “trinity.” We describe it as solids; liquids; gases. Three categories, but no more.
- (4) **Light** is a “trinity.” When a beam of white light is passed through a crystal prism, or “spectroscope,” it breaks up into three primary colours - red, blue, yellow, and their combinations - which make up what we call the “spectrum” of light.
- (5) **The Sun** is a “trinity.” We experience it in three ways, as light, heat and power. Yet the sun is one.
- (6) **Water** is a “trinity.” We know it in three forms - as a solid (ice); as a liquid (water), and as a gas (steam).
- (7) **Personality** is a “trinity.” Its three indispensable elements are intelligence, emotions, and will.

Obviously, the foregoing “trinities” are **symbols** only. They do not, and cannot **prove** the three-fold nature of God. They simply illustrate the fact that in our daily lives we are surrounded by examples of the “three-in-one” phenomenon. **What they do prove is that the existence of “tri-unity” is neither illogical nor impossible.**

Accordingly, while the truth of God’s “tri-unity” may be above and beyond reason - it is not **against** reason! These natural “trinities” are therefore like chairs or ladders that we draw up and climb onto. They enable us to reach a little higher, and see a little further.

### 3.—THE TRINITY IN EXPERIENCE

The early Christians were convinced of the essential “three-ness” of God, not because they could explain it - but because it needed no explanation. **This was how they were experiencing God, and that put an end to all doubt and debate.** For them, the truth of the Trinity was established, not by argument but by **experiment**. So it may be with us.

Dr. John Henry Jowett tells a luminous story which shows how the ultimate, personal proof of the Tri-unity of God must be the proof of experience.

It was a Saturday morning, and he was at work in his study, preparing the sermon that he was to preach the following day. The words of Jesus in John 3:8 had gripped his imagination: **“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”**

Dr. Jowett was one of the most experienced and gifted preachers of his time yet, try as he would, no clear-cut message, or plan of presentation would take shape in his mind. While his heart said: “This is the text,” he could get no further. He seemed to be like a man trying one key after another in an unusually stubborn lock - only to find that it would not yield to any of them.

So, after several fruitless hours, he did a wise thing. He closed his books, and decided to go for a walk along the sea-shore. It was a bright spring morning, cool and clear. He saw the tall ships across the bay, and the North Sea rollers breaking on the shore. He saw, too, seated by the breakwater, an old sailor friend who, knife in hand, was splicing rope. “Ah,” thought the Doctor, “the very man! If anyone can explain the mysteries of the wind, it’s Tom!”

So he went over to the sailor, greeted him, and sat down on the shingle by his side. For a few minutes, the conversation drifted from the weather to politics to the state of the fishing industry and kindred generalities, until at length the doctor decided to focus it on his immediate problem. After relating his frustration of the last few hours, he said: “Tom, I want you to tell me all you know about the wind. You’ve worked with the wind; played with the wind; fought with the wind these fifty years. Can you explain the wind to me?”

The old sailor looked out across the bay with steady eyes. He saw the white sails of the ships billowing in the breeze. He saw, too, the “mare’s tails” race across the surface of the water. “No,” he replied, with pursed lips, and a rueful shake of his head. “No, Dr. Jowett, I can’t explain the wind. Even after fifty years, it’s still a mystery to me.” “But,” he added decisively, with a flash of conviction in his eyes. “there’s one thing I can do.”

“What’s that?” asked the Doctor, eagerly, hopefully.

“**I can hoist a sail, Doctor!**” said the old man, “**I can hoist a sail!**”

Dr. Jowett sprang to his feet. “Thank you, Tom,” he said, fervently, “I have my sermon!”

### *Conclusion*

So with us. We cannot understand or explain God. We cannot probe the mysteries of His Divine existence. **But we, too, can “hoist a sail!”** We can expose our lives to God, and let Him fill them and use them.

In John 14:16, 21 and 23, Jesus describes the Divine “indwelling” - the intimate and beautiful relationship which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit wish to establish with each believer. **“We will come unto him,”** said Jesus, **“and make our abode with him.”** This is by far the most exalted privilege that is open to man. Blessed are those who, moment by moment, open up their lives to this Divine indwelling.

**CHART DEMONSTRATING THE COMPLETE EQUALITY  
OF THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT**

**1.— ATTRIBUTES OF GOD**

	OMNIPOTENCE	OMNISCIENCE	OMNIPRESENCE	ETERNITY
FATHER	Revelation 19:6	Hebrews 4:13	Ephesians 4:6	1 Timothy 1:17
SON	Hebrews 1:3	Colossians 2:3	Matthew 18:20	Hebrews 1:8
HOLY SPIRIT	Luke 1:35	1 Cor. 2:10, 11	Acts 8:29, 39	Hebrews 9:14

**2.— TITLES OF GOD**

	"LORD"	"GOD"	"SAVIOUR"	"TRUTH" and "LIFE"
FATHER	Acts 17:24	Hebrews 1:1	Titus 3:4	Hebrews 6:18, John 5:26
SON	Acts 10:36	1 John 5:20	Titus 2:13	John 14:6, 1 John 5:11, 12
HOLY SPIRIT	2 Cor. 3:17	Acts 5:3, 4	Titus 3:5	1 John 5:6, Romans 8:10

**3.— ACTIONS OF GOD**

	CREATION	RE-CREATION	LIGHT, OR GUIDANCE	INDWELLING
FATHER	Acts 4:24	Ephesians 4:24	1 John 1:5	2 Cor. 6:16
SON	John 1:3	2 Cor. 5:17	John 8:12	Ephesians 3:17
HOLY SPIRIT	John 6:63	Titus 3:5	John 16:13	Romans 8:9, 11

**4.— WORSHIP AND OBEDIENCE, AS TO GOD**

FATHER RECEIVES	Ephesians 3:14; Revelation 5:8, 12, 13; 11:16; 19:4
SON RECEIVES	Hebrews 1:6; Philippians 2:10, 11; John 5:23; 20:28; Revelation 5:8, 12, 13
HOLY SPIRIT RECEIVES	Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20; Acts 2:1-4; 13:2; 16:6, 7; 15:28; Revelation 1:4; Ephesians 2:18

## GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR CHURCH ORGANIZATION

*Introduction* In his first letter to the Corinthian Church, the Apostle Paul lays the foundation for "Gospel Order," or "Church Organization." "**God is not the Author of confusion,**" he declares, "**but of peace, in all the Churches of the saints**" (14:33). Then, as a logical conclusion, he adds: "**Let all things be done decently, and in order**" (14:40).

Why this repeated insistence upon "Gospel Order?" Why this passion for "organization?" The reasons are not hard to find, for, wherever there is to be concerted, effective group-action along any worth-while line, there must be organization. A bee-colony, for example, is highly organized. So is a healthy human body. An army; a hospital; a railway system; an orchestra; a brass-band - even a football team - all need to be organized. Within the framework of sound organization, the rights and privileges - and the contributions, in both money and talent - of all members of a society are protected. Outside of these protective guide-lines, no member is secure.

Accordingly, when analysed, "**organization**" is one of the hall-marks of civilization. It is nothing more nor less than a group of rational, civilized people, agreeing to impose certain disciplines upon themselves, in order to achieve some mutually-desirable goal!

The purpose of this Study Guide is to examine "**God's Blueprint for Church Organization,**" as set forth in the New Testament. Our study will fall into four parts:

### 1.—THE PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION

A close examination of 1 Corinthians 12 reveals what these principles are. They are based upon the harmonious functioning of a normal, human body. They lie at the foundation of all successful human relationships. Six of these principles can be easily discerned:

- (1) **Unity and Harmony with Variety** (vv 4-5; 8-11; 12; 14; 17; 20; 25; 28-30)
- (2) **Mutual Interdependence and Tolerance** (vv 21-25)
- (3) **Mutual Respect, Affection, Appreciation and Trust** (vv 21-26)
- (4) **Mutual Surrender of Personal Independence** (vv 21-26)
- (5) **Mutual Concern for the Well-being of the Church as a Whole** (vv 14-26)
- (6) **Mutual Acceptance of the Overall Sovereignty of God** (vv 3-11)

Here is God's picture - an ideal picture, it is true - of His Church. It is composed of a wide variety of personalities, dispositions, races, languages and cultures - yet it functions as harmoniously as a healthy, well-coordinated "body" - all under the direction of Christ, its Divine "Head!"

But is this ideal realizable, or is the picture overdrawn? Surely, if it were realizable, it would be one of the greatest wonders of the world!

### 2.—THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THESE PRINCIPLES

1 Corinthians 12 presents the model Christian Church - in principle. The Acts and the Epistles present it as a functioning reality.

Though the infant Church was launched in the face of great difficulties - suspicion, prejudice, threats, persecution, etc., - and while the Church had only the slenderest of human resources - no money; no property; no prestige - it survived. This happened because a simple blueprint of organization quickly emerged - guided and animated by the dynamic Agency of the Holy Spirit.

This pattern of organization was not arbitrarily imposed. Nor was it an instant, full-grown system. It grew to meet the needs of the growing Church. It was a piecemeal, step-by-step development. It provided for such practical and urgent matters as: (1) The administration of financial and material resources; (2) The care of needy and under-privileged members; (3) Division of responsibility by the appointment of officers, or leaders; (4) Ordination and commissioning of ministers; (5) Public outreach, in terms of individual and mass-evangelism; welfare ministry, etc.; (6) Regular gatherings for worship and prayer; (7) Periodical assemblies for reporting; adjustment of difficulties; counselling and planning.

Seventh-day Adventists have been captivated by the simplicity, the utility, and the down-to-earth, homespun wisdom of this First-Century model. Accordingly, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they have endeavoured to adapt the New Testament blueprint of organization to the needs of an expanding, international Gospel enterprise.

*(See Chart No. 75 – Five Levels of Church Administration)*

The world-organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church embodies five major stages of administration, rising from the “grass-roots” level:

1) **The First Level: - Individual members** who, in human terms, comprise the ultimate power-base of the Church. Seventh-day Adventists have adopted the “Representative” form of Church administration. The government of the Church, through duly elected representatives, has its roots at the “people” level. This means that administrative authority does not come **down** from delegated leadership; it comes **up** from the people. Elected leaders and office-bearers are not the masters, but the servants, of the people who elect them. Any element of “superiority” or “subordination,” at any level of the Church’s life, is inappropriate. The two-way arrows simply suggest **close interaction**, and **constant inter-dependence**. This, of course, is the polar-opposite of the “Papal” or “hierarchical” form of Church Government.

2) **The Second Level: - The Local Church**, composed of a group of individual members, in one locality or district, who have been admitted to membership after appropriate instruction, by Baptism or profession of faith. These local members elect their own officers and Church Board; administer their own finances; worship services, and evangelistic outreach. Also, through their representatives, they elect the next level of administrators.

3) **The Third Level: - The Local Conference**, composed of a group of Local Churches, usually spread over one state, province, county, or portion thereof, and administered by an Executive Committee - usually for a two or three year term.

4) **The Fourth Level: - The Union Conference**, comprising a group of several Local Conferences in a single territory, or major division of a territory - also administered by an Executive Committee - elected for a five-year term.

5) **The Fifth Level: - The World Divisions**, combining and functioning as the “General Conference.” There are currently fifteen of these Divisions, and their ultimate administrative head-quarters is in the U.S.A. That is where their combined officers meet from time to time as the “General Conference Executive Committee,” though each Division has also a separate Executive Committee, and a separate, local administrative headquarters in its own territory.

Periodically - currently at five-year intervals - a “plenary session” of the General Conference is called. Elected representatives from all Divisions of the Church gather at some convenient, central location. Officers, and an Executive Committee are elected for the next five-year period. Reports are heard from outgoing officers, and from heads of all departments of church activity (such as Sabbath School; Youth; Lay Activities; Publishing; Medical; Educational; Religious Liberty, etc.). Finances are reviewed. Problems and methods are studied, and plans are made for the more effective administration and outreach of the Church for the next five years.

To assist in the education and fruitful involvement of administrators, ministers, and members alike, the Church publishes several invaluable hand-books outlining Fundamental Beliefs; conditions of membership; duties of officers; occasions for church discipline; procedures for the transfer of members from one local congregation to another, etc. etc. These hand-books are: The **Church Manual**; the **Baptismal Certificate**; the **Minister's Manual**, and the **General Working Policy**.

### 3.—THE PROTECTION AFFORDED BY THESE PRINCIPLES

Almost 150 years of testing by Seventh-day Adventists has demonstrated convincingly how wise and beneficial these Biblical principles of Church organization are. For example, they help to ensure:

- (1) Concerted, well-coordinated action, by all departments and members, for the fulfilment of the Church's Divine Commission (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20; Revelation 14:6, 7).
- (2) Elimination of costly and wasteful duplication of effort and expense.
- (3) Responsible management and even-handed disbursement of church funds.
- (4) Protection against the inroads of false doctrine.
- (5) Provision for a continuing resource of denominationally-trained ministers, teachers, and administrators.
- (6) Provision for the discipline of unruly or disaffected members.
- (7) Safeguarding the Church's public image as a law-abiding, responsible, loyal section of the community.
- (8) Means for holding Church property, and speaking with one voice to civic authorities.
- (9) Ensuring that administrative, doctrinal, and outreach initiatives remain in the hands of the majority of responsible members.
- (10) Preserving the original identity and direction of the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

### 4.—OUR PERSONAL ATTITUDE TO THESE PRINCIPLES

In the last analysis, the well-being and success of the Church depends - as with every organized society - upon the cheerful and consistent support of each individual member.

The character of its members determines the character of the Church as a whole. This is a just and realistic assessment, for many people outside the Church are acquainted with only one, or a few, Seventh-day Adventists. By this one, or by these few, the non-Adventist naturally judges the character of the whole Church. "Ye are our epistle...known and read of all men" (2 Corinthians 3:2). This gives an almost awesome significance to the individual life, as it comes in review before the world. The credibility of the Church; of the Bible; of the Gospel - the credibility of God Himself - may depend upon one person's faithfulness, or unfaithfulness!

What an immense power for good or evil is entrusted to each person, therefore, who is a member of the Remnant church, with its solemn and final message of repentance and reformation for all men!

The Church member who is faithful to His Lord has duties, as well as privileges, in connection with God's visible organization on earth. These may be briefly summarized as follows: To live what he believes. To maintain his own vital touch with God by personal prayer and Bible Study. To maintain his own vital touch with the Church by habitual attendance at its services. To respect the house of worship, having due reverence, and to bear his share in its maintenance and the support of its activities. To respond promptly to every opportunity to render service to the extent of his abilities. To pay promptly an honest tithe; his offerings, and his

pledges. To care promptly for the transfer of his membership by letter. To endeavour to contribute to the spiritual uplift of the Church, as well as to receive spiritual strength for his own needs. In all this he is to look, not to erring man, but to Christ Himself, as the true Head of the Church.

### *Conclusion*

There are three important "R's" in the life of the true Seventh-day Adventist. The first of these is RENUNCIATIONS - the positive shunning of every form of known evil. The second is RESPONSIBILITIES - the cheerful performance of every form of known good. The third is RESOURCES - the abundant supernatural strength by which every precept of the Christian code may be fulfilled. These have been called "**The Three Dimensions of the Christian Life.**" We become involved in them all at the moment we become sons and daughters of God.

All three dimensions are important, but the third is the key to the successful discharge of the first two! We are not left staring in baffled helplessness at what God asks us to do. With Paul, we can say: "**I can do all things through Christ, who keeps on pouring power into me!**" (Philippians 4:13, Dr. A. T. Robertson's literal translation).

## THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*Introduction* **Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."**

No one could read the story of the founding of Christianity in the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles without being struck by one awesome fact - namely, **the immensely significant part played by the Holy Spirit!**

So vital, so commanding, so dynamic was the involvement of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts, that the book has been called: "**The Acts of the Holy Spirit,**" and the day of the Holy Spirit's outpouring at Pentecost, described in Acts Chapter 2, has been named: "**The Birthday of the Christian Church.**"

Take away the Holy Spirit from the early Church, and it would be destitute of life and energy - utterly bankrupt of spiritual power - like a sapless tree. **His invisible presence and power make Christianity a supernatural religion!**

*(See Chart No. 76 - The Gifts of the Holy Spirit)*

In our chart we have likened the Gifts of the Spirit to the ancient "**Cornucopia,**" or "**Horn of Plenty**" — the classic symbol of the Gifts of Heaven — overflowing in their abundance and inexhaustible in their supply.

*Discussion* In this lesson we will study seven of the richest and most rewarding aspects of the Gifts of the Spirit:

### 1.—THE MOTIVATION OF THE GIFTS

(John 14:16-18, 26; 16:7-14; Luke 24:49)

Imagine a responsible husband and father, whose work calls him to a distant land for many months. A man of practical foresight and a good "provider," he is concerned to ensure that his wife and family shall be well-cared-for during his absence. Accordingly, he tries to anticipate all possible needs and emergencies, and makes realistic provision to meet them. Items such as sufficient money in the bank; stores of fuel and non-perishable foods; a first-aid kit; a fire-extinguisher, are methodically listed and attended to. The car is put in good running order - brakes; tyres; tuning; greasing, etc. To relieve his wife of all possible embarrassment, he lists the 'phone numbers of police; fire-brigade; doctor; ambulance; hospital, etc. He explains who to contact if the hot-water service or plumbing breaks down, or if the car won't start. He even arranges for caring friends to drop in for periodical checks on his family.

Now apply this human illustration to Jesus. When the time came for Him to return to heaven, He was concerned for the future welfare of His infant church. With characteristic love and foresight He anticipated the needs of His people, and made realistic provision to meet those needs. **This provision was embodied supremely in the Holy Spirit and His supernatural "Gifts" or endowments, which placed all the resources of Heaven at His Church's disposal.**

### 2.—THE INDISPENSABILITY OF THE GIFTS

(Acts 1:8; John 6:63; Acts 2:38, 39)

Just as food, water, air and sunlight are indispensable to the support of our physical lives, so the "Gifts of the Spirit" are indispensable to our spiritual life and activity. They are the Christian's "Life-support System."

On the broad bosom of the Mississippi river, thousands of boats, large and small, ply back and forward. Doctors; grocers; salesmen; insurance agents and canvassers of all kinds of wares make their calls and do their business by means of this vast watery highway. **But let the waters**



of the Mississippi be suddenly dried up, and all the boats would lie, stranded and useless, on the river bottom! In like manner, the continual presence and power of the Holy Spirit is the sovereign, indispensable medium by which the church's life is lived, and its work done.

### 3.—THE IDENTITY OF THE GIFTS

(1 Corinthians 12, 14; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:7-15)

Three separate listings of the Gifts are recorded in the New Testament, and a total of **nearly twenty "Gifts" and "Manifestations"** of the Spirit are mentioned (See comparison of the three lists at the end of this Lesson). However, none of the lists is in precise agreement, and probably none of them was intended to be exhaustive. They are rather illustrative of **the amazingly wide range of spiritual resources** that are available to the Church - according to its need, and according to the depth of its commitment. It will be noted that the Gifts mentioned **cannot always be clearly differentiated**. Some of them overlap, and have characteristics common to another.

Furthermore, some of the Gifts are obscure to us moderns. Doubtless all of the terms used were well understood by the early Christians, but some of them are puzzling to 20th Century readers. For example, while "**prophecy**," "**healings**," and "**miracles**" seem to carry obvious credentials as super-human Gifts, can we be absolutely sure of what God intends by "**Faith**," in this particular context, i.e. as a **special Gift of the Spirit?** The Gifts of "**wisdom**," "**knowledge**," and "**showing mercy**" are likewise somewhat puzzling, in the same context.

Also, while the precise identity of each Divine Gift listed is not transparently clear, it is by no means easy to show where the line is to be drawn between "**natural**" gifts or talents, and the authentic "**super-natural**" Gifts of the Spirit, on the other. Nor can we be sure whether the special Divine Gifts are **always totally original and complete**, or whether they are sometimes the **augmentation** of already-existing, natural aptitudes. **Where is the modern Christian who is qualified to pronounce infallibly in these areas?**

What then could be God's object in setting before us such a rich profusion of Divine Gifts? Also, what could be His purpose in leaving some Gifts clouded in obscurity, where we can conjecture endlessly, but can never arrive at absolute certainty about their precise identity?

Could it be that God is seeking to remind us that we do not **control** or **use** the Holy Spirit? Rather, **He controls and uses US!** Could God be reminding us, also, that the bestowal of His Gifts is **not in any way dependent upon our initiatives, our comprehension, our preferences, or our expectations?**

Jesus likened the operations of the Spirit of God to **the activity of the wind** (John 3:8), which, in its relation to us, is completely **masterful, unpredictable, and uncontrollable**.

Accordingly, the Gifts of the Spirit are too rich and too spacious to be contained in any one Christian life, or even in the corporate life of the Church as a whole. We are dealing here with a **dimension of Spiritual Reality that cannot be imprisoned in human definitions, or in human creeds, or even in human thought**. As well try to compress a tempest into a tea-cup, an earthquake into a match-box, or an ocean into a thimble!

### 4.—THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS

(Ephesians 4:7-14; 1 Corinthians 12:7)

The simplest key to a correct understanding of the purpose of the Gifts is found when we ask: "**Did Jesus exercise the Gifts of the Spirit?**" Certainly He did, for He claimed the Spirit's "**anointing**" (Luke 4:18), and the Gifts of "**healing**," "**miracles**," and "**prophecy**," as well as "**preaching**" and "**teaching**," were all conspicuously present throughout His public ministry (Acts 10:38). The Gifts of the Spirit are therefore translated into the most practical, understandable terms when we read Jesus' words in Luke 4:18:

**"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty those who are bruised."**

Then, the Book of Acts, which immediately follows the Gospels, carries on the same theme and shows that **THE PRIME PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS WAS TO MAKE POSSIBLE, THROUGH THE CHURCH, THE CONTINUATION OF THE EARTHLY MINISTRY OF JESUS, IN EVERY LAND, IN EVERY AGE.** (Acts 3:1-10; 5:12-16; 6:8; 8:5-7)

All this is in perfect accord with Paul's clear statement of the threefold purpose of the Gifts, in Ephesians 4:7-14:

- (1) For the "perfecting" (Gk. "equipping") of the saints;
- (2) For the work of the ministry;
- (3) For the "edifying" (i.e. the building up) of the body of Christ.

The Church is simply **Christ's international, indestructible "Body"** - the earthly extension of His Divine Personality - through which He gets His work done in the world. **Through the Gifts, as manifested in His church, Jesus is able to go on working for man's deliverance without interruption, in generation after generation!**

#### 5.—THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE GIFTS

(1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

No New Testament fact is clearer than that **God alone** has the sovereign, proprietary rights over the Gifts. He is their **Author, Owner, Dispenser, Administrator and Controller.** Man does not select them, or control them, or earn them, or qualify in any way to receive them. Man cannot merit, monopolise, manipulate or confer them. They are not available to man by right, or on demand. They are not magical "toys" or "play-things" to be exploited by fanatical extremists. They are wholly gratuitous, spontaneous, unmerited, sovereign. They are "**divided severally by the Spirit, AS HE WILL**" (1 Corinthians 12:11).

Let these simple, Scriptural facts be grasped, and much modern confusion, extravagance and distortion would be instantly eliminated. It is well for us to note the **silences** of the New Testament in this area, and for us, in turn, to be silent where God's lips are sealed:

(1) Nowhere does the New Testament say that **all** Christians must, or will have **all** the Gifts. As a matter of fact, this possibility is firmly and finally ruled out by Paul (1 Corinthians 12:29, 30).

(2) Nowhere does the New Testament say that **every** Christian shall know, infallibly, **precisely what Gift he has.** We **may** know, if God pleases to tell us by some clear, personal token, but this precise, personal knowledge is **nowhere guaranteed** as the birth-right of every Christian. Usually it is easier for us to recognize the presence of some Divine gift in **other Christians,** rather than in ourselves.

(3) Nowhere does the New Testament say that the Gifts are to be used for **judgmental** purposes; as tests of spirituality, or as a means of classifying fellow Christian believers into "superior" or "inferior" categories.

(4) Nowhere does the New Testament appoint - or recognise - self-styled **human "practitioners,"** who are qualified to "assist" other people in "**getting** the gifts!"

(5) Nowhere does the New Testament say that **any one** gift - such as the gift of "**tongues,**" (Greek, "languages"), for example - is the **sovereign, final evidence** of the genuine Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

(6) Nowhere does the New Testament say that the Gifts are a **private luxury,** to be exercised for purely personal benefit. Rather, they are to be **exercised in community,** for the benefit of the whole Church. Accordingly, the Revised Standard Version renders 1 Cor. 12:7 thus: "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit **for the common good.**"

## 6.—THE CONTINUITY OF THE GIFTS

(1 Corinthians 12:28; 1:4-7; James 5:14, 15)

A wide diversity of opinion has arisen among Christians over the **continuity** or **duration** of the Gifts of the Spirit - especially in their full, Apostolic manifestation. Some teach that the miraculous Gifts were largely for “**inaugural**,” “**ground-breaking**,” or “**initial impact**” purposes - designed to break through the hard crust of Jewish prejudice and Roman paganism of the First century, and that they were **withdrawn** when the Church had become well-established at the close of the Apostolic age.

Other Christians are equally insistent that the Gifts are **permanent** and that they must continue in their full-scale, Apostolic manifestation to the close of the Christian age. By the second group - represented by the modern “Pentecostal” or “Charismatic” movements - “**healings**,” “**tongues**,” “**prophecies**” and “**miracles**” are used as convincing, final evidences of impeccable orthodoxy and especially-intimate fellowship with God.

Could it be that the truth lies **between** these two positions? Could it be that, in the providence of God, the function of many of the Gifts has now been taken over, at least in part, by **the spectacular advances of modern science and technology**?

**Certainly, in terms of the healing sciences**, such as medicine, surgery, immunology, sanitation, and hospitalization, the world we live in is a radically different world from that of the first century. The same is true in terms of **Communication**, by means of the printing-press, the radio, television, and satellites. The same is true, also, of the dramatic acceleration in **Biblical translation and distribution** in our time. These man-made “miracles” do not **displace** the Divine miracles, or make them superfluous, they simply **lessen the need** for the miraculous interventions and dramatic providences that were so urgently needed in the early Church.

Could it be, however, that in **times of acute extremity** - occasioned by the exhaustion of human resources, or by the entry into new and difficult fields of evangelism, or by the meeting of new and unprecedented manifestations of evil - the more dramatic impact of the miraculous gifts may be seen by God to be **needed** again, and therefore **manifested** again, in our day, sometimes in spectacular ways?

The fact that God has “**set**,” or established the Gifts in His Church (1 Corinthians 12:28); plus the fact that the Church that waits for His Second Advent is to “**come behind in no gift**” (1 Corinthians 1:4-7); plus the fact that **Divine healing** may occur at any time - within the limits of the Divine Will (James 5:14, 15) - all seem to argue convincingly for the **continuity** of the Gifts, as God may see fit to bestow them.

Also, **as long as “the Gospel of the Kingdom” needs to be preached** (Matthew 24:14), will not the Gifts of “**apostleship**,” “**teaching**,” and “**exhortation**” continue to be urgently needed?

## 7.—CONDITIONS FOR RECEIVING THE GIFTS

(1 Corinthians 12:11; Matthew 6:22, 23; Acts 5:32)

The New Testament is crystal-clear that there are **three prime conditions** to the Divinely-approved reception and manifestation of the Gifts. The first is a **genuine, God-recognized need** (1 Corinthians 12:11). The second is a **pure heart; pure motives; and unqualified commitment to God** (Matthew 6:22, 23; Acts 2:1, 38, 39). The third is an **obedient will** (Acts 5:32; 15:28).

That the Gifts are not bestowed haphazardly or indiscriminately is shown by the case of Simon Magus (Acts 8:5-22).

### *Conclusion*

The most urgent and challenging question relative to the Gifts of the Spirit is not: “**What Gift have I got?**” or “**What Gift have you got?**” or “**Is my Gift better than yours?**”

None of these questions is to be our first concern. If it is, we have not really advanced

beyond the childish rivalries of the Corinthian believers in their worst days. The mere **claim** to possess a specific Gift is not the matter of paramount importance. Besides, a close study of the lives of God's most dedicated and fruitful servants shows that this was not their major preoccupation. **Few of them ever spent as much as five minutes debating the question: "What special Gift have I got?"** Their burden was to put their lives completely at God's disposal, and **leave the rest to Him!**

In **Romans 12:1**, Paul spells out the ideal response of the individual Christian to the Gifts of the Spirit:

**"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."**

Accordingly, the supreme question that confronts us as we ponder our own relationship to the Holy Spirit and His Gifts is: **"AM I A LIVING SACRIFICE? IS MY LIFE OPEN - WIDE OPEN - TO BE POSSESSED AND USED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD?"**

*(See over page for comparison of three lists of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit)*

<b>THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>				
RSV	Rom. 12:5-8	1 Cor. 12 to 14	Eph. 4:8-13	
Prophecy	X	X	X	
Service—temporal and external: ministry; "Dorcas" matters for poor, sick, stranger	X			
Teaching	X	X	X	
Exhortation (encouragement, consolation)	X			
Giving—contributing, sharing one's own	X			
Ruling (KJV)—giving aid	X			
Showing mercy	X			
Wisdom		X		
Knowledge		X		
Faith		X		
Healing		X		
Miracles		X		
Discerning of spirits		X		
Tongues		X		
Tongues—interpretation		X		
Apostles		X	X	
Helpers		X		
Administrators		X		
governments				
Evangelists			X	
Pastors			X	

## THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

*Introduction* Jesus rejoiced to proclaim salvation for the chief of sinners (Luke 15 : 1, 7, 10), but he warned that there was **one awesome exception** in God's offer of universal pardon. This exception is the "**Unpardonable Sin**", which is referred to in Matt. 12 : 31-32: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but **the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men**. And whoso speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him, but **whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him**, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

What did Jesus mean? Why should **any sin** be unpardonable? If Jesus Christ can save to the "**uttermost**", how can such a sin be possible?

There is much confusion about this question. Some people have tortured themselves needlessly through fear of having committed the unpardonable sin; yet none of us is exempt from the danger of committing it. For these reasons we owe it to ourselves to seek a correct understanding of Jesus' startling warning.

### *Discussion* 1.—WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

In Lesson 11 we learned that He **convicts of sin** (John 16 : 8); He **sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts** (Rom. 5 : 5); He **brings about the New Birth** (John 3 : 1-8); He **guides into all truth** (John 16 : 13); He **gives strength for obedience** (Eph. 3 : 16); He **strives with stubborn hearts** (Gen. 6 : 3); He **helps our infirmities** (Rom. 8 : 26).

All the close, personal, intimate work of God upon the human soul is performed by the Holy Spirit. Every impulse towards goodness and truth is implanted by Him. Every desire for holiness is nourished and tended by Him. His work is so indispensable to conviction, conversion, repentance, assurance, and every other operation of Divine grace that none of these could occur without Him.

### 2.—IS THERE A MAN-MADE LIMIT TO THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK?

Yes, there is!

**Gen. 6 : 3:** "My Spirit shall **not always** strive with man."

**Rev. 3 : 20:** Jesus knocks—repeatedly—and patiently waits. But we may refuse to open the door.

**Prov. 28 : 9:** "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."

### 3.—IS THIS LIMIT REACHED BY A SINGLE STEP?

No. At least **five steps** towards this limit can be traced in the Bible.

**Grieving**  
(Eph. 4 : 30)

**Quenching**  
(1 Thess. 5 : 19)

**Resisting**  
(Acts 7 : 51)

**Hardened**  
(Heb. 3 : 13;  
Eph. 4 : 19)

**Abandoned**  
(1 Sam. 16 : 14;  
1 Sam. 28 : 6)

Other Bible examples of people who reached this limit:

The people before the Flood (Gen. 6 : 3, 5, 11, 12).  
Pharaoh (Ex. 8 : 15).  
Herod (Luke 23 : 8, 9).  
Judas (Luke 22 : 3).

#### 4.—WHAT, THEN, IS THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT?

From what we have learned thus far, we are now in a position to draw some conclusions:

The sin against the Holy Spirit is not some **single, isolated act of wickedness**, such as murder, lying, theft or impurity.

It is rather the **climax** to a long series of stubborn refusals to heed the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

It is the place where repeated stifling of the voice of God in the soul hardens into **unbreakable habit**.

It is the **final, deliberate closing of the heart** against the Spirit of God.

Says Alexander McLaren: "The only unpardonable sin is the sin of **persistently refusing the pardon** that avails for all sin." These conclusions are supported by God's lament concerning ancient Israel, and Jesus' warning to the people of His day.

**II Chron. 36 : 15, 16:** "Till there was no remedy."

**Matt. 6 : 23:** "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

**John 3 : 19, 20:** "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, but men loved darkness more than light."

#### 5.—WHAT MAKES THIS SIN UNPARDONABLE?

The fact that it is **unrepentable**. The man who repeatedly closes his heart against the Spirit of God is **deliberately destroying his own capacity for repentance**. Just as a ship's radio officer, by wilfully smashing his delicate receiving set, cuts off his only channel of communication with the shore, so we, by persistently stifling or resisting the Spirit of God, may **destroy the only channel of communication** between ourselves and Heaven!

Thus, deprived of the Holy Spirit's ministry by our own perverse and wilful action, **conviction becomes impossible**. So does **repentance, forgiveness, peace and assurance**. Even the **desire to be reconciled with God** is eventually lost. **We have reached the man-made limit to the Holy Spirit's work**.

Paul describes this tragic condition in Heb. 6 : 4-6 and 10 : 26-31.

*Conclusion* One question remains to be answered before we close this Bible lesson: "**How can we avoid committing the unpardonable sin?**"

There are three simple safeguards that everyone can employ:

(a) **By keeping our hearts sensitive to the slightest promptings of the Spirit of God.**

**I Sam. 3 : 10:** "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

**Isa. 30 : 21:** "This is the way, walk ye in it."

(b) **By guarding against the first step in conscious resistance to the known will of God.**

**Num. 22 : 18:** "I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord."

**Isa. 50 : 5:** "I was not rebellious, neither turned away back."

(c) **By cultivating the habit of prompt obedience when any new duty to God is made plain.**

**Ps. 18 : 44:** "As soon as they hear of Me, they shall obey Me."

**Ps. 119 : 60:** "I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments."

**Heb. 3 : 7, 8:** "Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

## WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT BAPTISM

### *Introduction* Eph. 4 : 5: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

In spite of the fact that the Bible speaks of only "one baptism", the modern Christian world is divided about this subject. Some have discarded the rite altogether. Others make it absolutely essential to salvation. Even those who still practise baptism are not agreed about it. Some argue for "sprinkling", some for "pouring", some for "total immersion". Some practise "infant baptism". Others insist that only "believers" should be baptised. Many sincere people are perplexed by these disagreements.

Eph. 4 : 5 assures us that there was a time when all Christians were united on this subject. Obviously, then, the logical way to escape from modern confusion is to go back to the New Testament and take a close look at baptism as it came "fresh from the mint", before it had been corrupted or spoiled.

### *Discussion* 1.—THE MANDATE FOR BAPTISM

A mandate is "an authoritative command from a superior", and the first fact that greets us as we open the pages of the New Testament on this topic is that baptism is the subject of just such an "authoritative command." **Matt. 28 : 18-20:** "Go—teach—baptise."

No Bible mandate is more explicit, emphatic, or final than this. Here are three Divine commands: "**GO—TEACH—BAPTISE**". Logically all three are of equal importance. If we discard one, we automatically undermine the authority of the other two. This ought to be enough to settle all controversy about the importance of baptism. **We have no right to play fast and loose with any Divine command.** To dismiss this one as trivial is the same as saying to Christ: "I don't attach any importance whatsoever to Your mandate!"

What loyal Christian would ever wish to enter into such unseemly controversy with his Lord?

Yet Jesus has given more—much more—than an imperial mandate for baptism. As if to lift this question right outside the realm of controversy, **He has reinforced His mandate with His own example!**

**Matt. 3 : 13-17:** "Thus it becometh us."

What more evidence of the importance of baptism could a conscientious Christian ask? If we had been living in Jesus' day, and had actually **witnessed His baptism**, and **heard His command**; could we have any further doubts about its importance?

### 2.—THE METHOD OF BAPTISM

(See Chart No. 77—*Christian Baptism*)

According to the New Testament, the Divinely-appointed **method** of baptism is as clear as the **mandate**. Three lines of evidence prove that the Apostolic method was by "**total immersion**" in water.

#### (a) The Original Meaning of the Word "Baptise"

The Greek word, "BAPTIZO", means to dip or plunge an object in water, so that the **whole article is immersed**, in the same fashion as a piece of cloth is completely immersed in a vat of dye.

#### (b) The New Testament Descriptions of the Baptismal Ceremony

All of these descriptions clearly picture immersion:

**Mark 1 : 5, 9:** "Baptised in the river Jordan." The Greek preposition used here is "EIS", which means "into".

**John 3 : 23:** "There was much water there."

**Matt. 3 : 16:** "Jesus went up straightway out of the water."

**Acts 8 : 36:** "They came to a certain water."



**Acts 8 : 38, 39:** "They went down both into the water . . . They came up out of the water."

Obviously, if sprinkling or pouring had been the New Testament method, candidates for baptism would not have needed to go near a lake or river. A cup or small bottle of water would have been sufficient!

**(c) The Way Christ's Disciples Interpreted His Command about Baptism**

**Rom. 6 : 4, 5:** "Buried" . . . "Planted" . . . "Risen".

**Col. 2 : 12:** "Buried" . . . "Risen".

Paul is using simple, unmistakable word-pictures here. But the acts of "sprinkling" or "pouring" bear not the slightest resemblance to being "buried", "planted", or "raised"!

A further, tangible evidence for baptism by "immersion" in the early Church is the fact that the **oldest Christian churches in the world**, some of which have been standing in Italy, Greece and North Africa for 1,500 years, have **large, sunken baptismal fonts, suitable for complete immersion!**

### 3.—THE MEANING OF BAPTISM

Just as the New Testament is clear about the **Mandate** and the **Method**, it is equally explicit about the **Meaning** of baptism. The most detailed explanation of the deeper, spiritual meaning of baptism is given in **Rom. 6 : 4-13**.

v 3: "Baptised into Christ's death."

vv 4, 5: "Buried with Him by baptism."

vv 4, 5: "Raised with Him to newness of life."

vv 6-10: "Crucified with Him, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

vv 11-13: "Dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God."

Further insights are given in other New Testament passages:

**John 3 : 5:** "Born again of water and of the Spirit."

**Gal. 3 : 27:** "Baptised into Christ . . . put on Christ."

**Col. 2 : 12:** "Buried with Him . . . risen with Him."

**Col. 3 : 1-3:** "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

From these Scriptures we draw the following conclusions concerning the meaning of baptism:

It is an acted memorial of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

It is a graphic dramatisation of true conversion.

It is the formal adoption ceremony into the family of God.

It is a public witness that we have become lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ.

It is the only legitimate doorway to membership in the Christian Church.

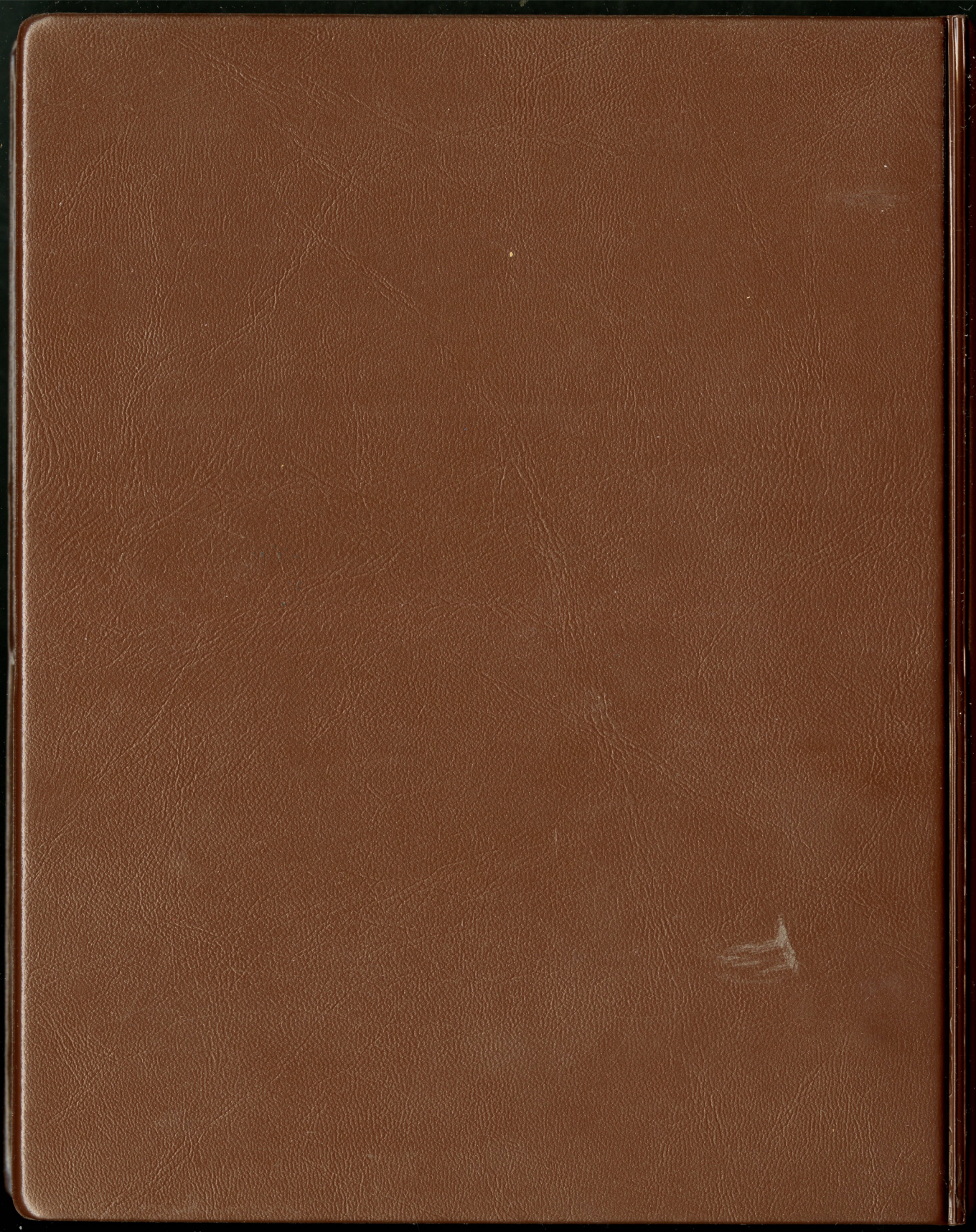
*NOTE: An understanding of these facts forestalls all controversy about "INFANT BAPTISM". It is automatically excluded, as having no meaning whatsoever in the Scriptural context.*

ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT, CHRISTIAN BAPTISM HAS MEANING ONLY FOR THOSE WHO ARE OLD ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND AND EMBRACE THE GOSPEL MESSAGE—TO BELIEVE, REPENT, AND BE TRULY "BORN AGAIN". *These are the New Testament prerequisites for baptism. Apart from them, though conducted at any age, it is a piece of empty and meaningless ritual. There is no magical, saving virtue in the water of baptism itself. It has symbolic value only, and is meaningless apart from personal faith in, and commitment to, Christ. (See Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37, 38; 8:37).*

**Conclusion Acts 22 : 16:** "And now, why tarriest thou?"

This quiet challenge comes home to the heart of everyone who learns the truth about baptism. It is the public seal of our discipleship, and God is honoured by prompt obedience.

As we ponder this question, let us remember that the pathway down into the waters of baptism is sanctified by the footsteps of the Master Himself. **It is always safe to follow where Jesus leads the way.** He trod this path, and He will be by our side as we follow in His steps today.



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