

SABBATH BIBLE LESSONS  
Senior Division



Living in the  
*Day of Atonement*

Vol. 95, No. 4

October–December, 2019

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# Foreword

We are currently living in the antitypical Day of Atonement. What does that mean? Is it simply a technicality—or is it really designed to impact the daily life, future plans, and even the thought patterns of each one of us?

Many do not realize that by nature, every human being is a sinner. We are bent to self-pleasing and inclined to violate the sacred moral law of Ten Commandments that was lovingly custom-designed for our happiness.

Nonetheless, “while we were yet sinners, the Son of God died for us. Laying aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and clothing His divinity with humanity, He stooped to our estate to rescue us from the thralldom of sin. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He came to this earth to take His position at the head of humanity. In our behalf He bore the stroke of divine justice.”—*Australasian Union Conference Record*, April 1, 1901.

“Christ is in the heavenly sanctuary, and he is there to make an atonement for the people. He is there to present His wounded side and pierced hands to His Father. He is there to plead for His Church that is upon the earth. He is cleansing the sanctuary from the sins of the people. What is our work?—It is our work to be in harmony with the work of Christ. By faith we are to work with Him, to be in union with Him.

“All heaven is interested in the work that is going on in this world. A people is to be prepared for the great day of God, which is right upon us; and we cannot afford to let Satan cast his shadow across our pathway, and intercept our view of Jesus and His infinite love. We should draw from Christ the very help we need.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 28, 1890.

“Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. He who could not see human beings exposed to eternal ruin without pouring out His soul unto death in their behalf, will look with pity and compassion upon every soul who realizes that he cannot save himself.

“He will look upon no trembling suppliant without raising him up. He who through His own atonement provided for man an infinite fund of moral power, will not fail to employ this power in our behalf. We may take our sins and sorrows to His feet; for He loves us. His every look and word invites our confidence. He will shape and mold our characters according to His own will.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 157.

As we study these lessons for the next three months, will we cooperate with His Holy Spirit by allowing Him to do exactly that?

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

## First Sabbath Offering for a Chapel in Las Vegas, NV (USA)

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, is an internationally renowned major resort city, known primarily for its gambling, shopping, fine dining, entertainment, and nightlife. Referred to as The Entertainment Capital of the World, it's famous for mega casino-hotels and



associated activities, making it a top tourist destination. The city's population grew by 85.2% in the 1990's and continues to grow rapidly—according to a 2013 estimate, the population is 603,488 with a regional population of 2,027,828.

“In the world-renowned health resorts and centers of tourist traffic, crowded with many thousands of seekers after health and pleasure, there should be stationed ministers and canvassers capable of arresting the attention of the multitudes. Let these workers watch their chance for presenting the message for this time.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 352.

In 2013, inspired by the above statement, the General Conference invested in what seemed to be an impossible mission—the opening of a church in Las Vegas. Young people walked tirelessly house-to-house in the heat of the day, canvassing for two weeks, medical professionals held health seminars, and evangelists boldly proclaimed the present truth through prophecy seminars. Since the city is mainly known for its nightlife, the locals work at night and sleep in the day. So, very few attended the evening evangelistic meetings. But those who came showed great interest and signed up for personal visits and Bible studies. After four years of visits and Bible studies by pastors traveling there from different areas, by God's grace, the number of the interested families grew tremendously and invested their hard-earned money to support the missionary work in their city. Their self-denial was rewarded when a missionary and his wife moved to Las Vegas and 19 of our Bible students were baptized in May 2013.

Today, the church in Las Vegas keeps growing and the brethren keep sacrificing, but they want to evangelize and expand even more. They are saving every penny to buy or build their own church, yet they need our worldwide brotherhood to contribute as well. Please show your generous support toward this first Sabbath offering. Thank you!

—Your brethren and sisters from Las Vegas

# Our Need for Atonement

“We . . . joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement” (Romans 5:11).

“Calvary stands as a memorial of the amazing sacrifice required to atone for the transgression of the divine law.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 33.

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, pp. 23–35.

## Sunday

September 29

### 1. A PERFECT START

- a. Describe the spiritual state that God originally bestowed upon Adam and Eve, the first members of the human race. Genesis 1:27, 31.
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“There were no sin and no signs of decay in glorious Eden. Angels of God conversed freely and lovingly with the holy pair. The happy songsters caroled forth their free, joyous songs of praise to their Creator. The peaceful beasts in happy innocence played about Adam and Eve, obedient to their word. Adam was in the perfection of manhood, the noblest of the Creator’s work.

“Not a shadow interposed between them and their Creator. They knew God as their beneficent Father, and in all things their will was conformed to the will of God. And God’s character was reflected in the character of Adam.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 26, 27.

- b. What made the Eden life delightfully rewarding? Genesis 1:28; 2:8, 19.
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“To Adam and Eve in their Eden home nature was full of the knowledge of God, teeming with divine instruction. Wisdom spoke to the eye and was received into the heart; for they communed with God in His created works.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 18.

## 2. PERFECTION TAINTED

- a. What spoiled the happy joy in Eden? Genesis 2:16, 17; 3:6.
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“Adam and Eve persuaded themselves that in so small a matter as eating of the forbidden fruit there could not result such terrible consequences as God had declared. But this small matter was the transgression of God’s immutable and holy law, and it separated man from God.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 33.

- b. How has this problem affected our whole planet? Romans 8:22.
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“[The matter of eating the forbidden fruit] opened the floodgates of death and untold woe upon our world. Age after age there has gone up from our earth a continual cry of mourning, and the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain as a consequence of man’s disobedience. Heaven itself has felt the effects of his rebellion against God.”—*Ibid.*

- c. What must we realize about the tendency of our race ever since that seed of rebellion entered to corrupt the natural human heart? Ecclesiastes 7:29.
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“Let us not regard sin as a trivial thing.

“Every act of transgression, every neglect or rejection of the grace of Christ, is reacting upon yourself; it is hardening the heart, depraving the will, benumbing the understanding, and not only making you less inclined to yield, but less capable of yielding, to the tender pleading of God’s Holy Spirit.

“Many are quieting a troubled conscience with the thought that they can change a course of evil when they choose; that they can trifle with the invitations of mercy, and yet be again and again impressed. They think that after doing despite to the Spirit of grace, after casting their influence on the side of Satan, in a moment of terrible extremity they can change their course. But this is not so easily done. The experience, the education, of a lifetime, has so thoroughly molded the character that few then desire to receive the image of Jesus.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 33, 34.

### 3. THE SIN PROBLEM

- a. **How does Scripture explain the existing crisis within humanity and throughout our entire planet? 1 John 3:4; 1:8.**
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“There is no one, however earnestly he may be striving to do his best, who can say, ‘I have no sin.’ ”—*The Upward Look*, p. 53.

“Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the word of God; it is ‘the transgression of the law;’ it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 492, 493.

- b. **What painful reality must every human being face? Romans 3:23; Isaiah 1:5, 6.**
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“The work of apostasy begins in some secret rebellion of the heart against the requirements of God’s law. Unholy desires, unlawful ambitions, are cherished and indulged, and unbelief and darkness separate the soul from God. If we do not overcome these evils they will overcome us.”—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 333.

- c. **How does God view the lack of justice caused by sin, and what is His solution? Isaiah 59:15, 16.**
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“In Eden, man fell from his high estate and through transgression became subject to death. It was seen in heaven that human beings were perishing, and the compassion of God was stirred. At infinite cost He devised a means of relief. . . . There was no hope for the transgressor except through Christ.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 25.

#### 4. ATONEMENT BY BLOOD

- a. **What plan had God devised in advance to rescue fallen humanity, and why was it necessary? Job 33:24; Genesis 3:17–21.**
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“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 222.

“As Adam’s transgression had brought wretchedness and death, so the sacrifice of Christ would bring life and immortality.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 66, 67.

- b. **What system was given to symbolize the sacrifice of Christ? Genesis 4:4; Leviticus 17:11.**
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“The sacrificial offerings were ordained by God to be to man a perpetual reminder and a penitential acknowledgment of his sin and a confession of his faith in the promised Redeemer. They were intended to impress upon the fallen race the solemn truth that it was sin that caused death. To Adam, the offering of the first sacrifice was a most painful ceremony. His hand must be raised to take life, which only God could give. It was the first time he had ever witnessed death, and he knew that had he been obedient to God, there would have been no death of man or beast. As he slew the innocent victim, he trembled at the thought that his sin must shed the blood of the spotless Lamb of God.”—*Ibid.*, p. 68.

“Without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin; and [the children of Adam] were to show their faith in the blood of Christ as the promised atonement by offering the firstlings of the flock in sacrifice.”—*Ibid.*, p. 71.

“The blood of the Son of God was symbolized by the blood of the slain victim, and God would have clear and definite ideas preserved between the sacred and the common. Blood was sacred, inasmuch as through the shedding of the blood of the Son of God alone could there be atonement for sin.”—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 55.



## 5. GRATITUDE FOR GOD'S PROVISION

- a. What should we realize about the atonement made in our behalf, and how should we respond to it? Hebrews 9:22; Romans 5:8–11.

“Jesus is our atoning sacrifice. We can make no atonement for ourselves, but by faith we can accept the atonement that has been made.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 321, 322.

“As one is drawn to behold Jesus uplifted on the cross, he discerns the sinfulness of humanity. He sees that it is sin which scourged and crucified the Lord of glory. He sees that, while he has been loved with unspeakable tenderness, his life has been a continual scene of ingratitude and rebellion. He has forsaken his best Friend and abused heaven's most precious gift. He has crucified to himself the Son of God afresh and pierced anew that bleeding and stricken heart. He is separated from God by a gulf of sin that is broad and black and deep, and he mourns in brokenness of heart. . . .

“God reveals to us our guilt that we may flee to Christ, and through Him be set free from the bondage of sin, and rejoice in the liberty of the sons of God. In true contrition we may come to the foot of the cross, and there leave our burdens.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 9, 10.

“The salvation of human beings is a vast enterprise, that calls into action every attribute of the divine nature. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have pledged themselves to make God's children more than conquerors through Him that loved them. The Lord is gracious and long-suffering, not willing that any should perish. He has provided power to enable us to be overcomers.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 27, 1903.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name some of the best features of the Eden lifestyle.
2. Why does God test our faithfulness and devotion in seemingly small ways?
3. Why is it wrong to blame God and others for the sins in our life?
4. Describe the depth of Christ's sacrifice in our behalf.
5. How should I respond to the atonement made by Jesus on the cross?

# The Sacrifices and Solemn Feasts

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

“God had chosen Israel. He had called them to preserve among men the knowledge of His law, and of the symbols and prophecies that pointed to the Saviour. He desired them to be as wells of salvation to the world.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 27.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 537–542.

*Sunday*

October 6

## 1. THE LAMB OF GOD SYMBOLIZED

- a. In the plan God gave to the Hebrews, what had to be done every day in order to atone for sin? Exodus 29:38–41.

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“The daily service consisted of the morning and evening burnt offering, the offering of sweet incense on the golden altar, and the special offerings for individual sins. . . .

“Every morning and evening a lamb of a year old was burned upon the altar, with its appropriate meat offering, thus symbolizing the daily consecration of the nation to Jehovah, and their constant dependence upon the atoning blood of Christ. God expressly directed that every offering presented for the service of the sanctuary should be ‘without blemish.’ Exodus 12:5. The priests were to examine all animals brought as a sacrifice, and were to reject every one in which a defect was discovered. Only an offering ‘without blemish’ could be a symbol of His perfect purity who was to offer Himself as ‘a lamb without blemish and without spot.’ 1 Peter 1:19.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 352, 353.

“The great lesson embodied in the sacrifice of every bleeding victim, impressed in every ceremony . . . was that through the blood of Christ alone is forgiveness of sins.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 913.

**2. HOLY UNTO THE LORD**

- a. How is God's seventh-day Sabbath distinct from the annual convocations that would symbolize His plan for deliverance from sin? Leviticus 23:1-3, 37, 38; Colossians 2:16, 17; Exodus 20:8-11.
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- b. What miraculous experience distinguished the Hebrews from ancient Egypt, a rebellious nation that had defiantly rejected God? Exodus 12:3-13.
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"Here was a work required of the children of Israel, which they must perform on their part, to prove them, and to show their faith by their works in the great deliverance God had been bringing about for them. In order to escape the great judgment of God which he was to bring upon the Egyptians, the token of blood must be seen upon their houses. And they were required to separate themselves and their children from the Egyptians, and gather them into their own houses; for if any of the Israelites were found in the houses of the Egyptians, they would fall by the hand of the destroying angel. . . . When the destroying angel went forth in the night to slay the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast, he passed over their houses, and not one of the Hebrews that had the token of blood upon their doorposts was slain."—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 200.

- c. How was this event to be memorialized? Exodus 12:14; Leviticus 23:5.
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"On the fourteenth day of the month, at even, the Passover was celebrated, its solemn, impressive ceremonies commemorating the deliverance from bondage in Egypt, and pointing forward to the sacrifice that should deliver from the bondage of sin."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 539.

- d. What followed the Passover? Exodus 12:15-20; Leviticus 23:6-8.
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### 3. PROVIDER OF HARVEST—AND HOPE

- a. **What offering to the Lord acknowledged Him to be the divine Provider of every morsel of food? Exodus 23:19 (first part); Leviticus 23:9–14.**
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“On the second day of the feast, the first fruits of the year’s harvest were presented before God. Barley was the earliest grain in Palestine, and at the opening of the feast it was beginning to ripen. A sheaf of this grain was waved by the priest before the altar of God, as an acknowledgment that all was His. Not until this ceremony had been performed was the harvest to be gathered.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 539.

- b. **What commemoration occurred on the fiftieth day? Leviticus 23:15–22.**
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“Fifty days from the offering of first fruits, came the Pentecost, called also the feast of harvest and the feast of weeks. As an expression of gratitude for the grain prepared as food, two loaves baked with leaven were presented before God. The Pentecost occupied but one day, which was devoted to religious service.”—*Ibid.*, p. 540.

- c. **Which feast, preceded by the solemn introductory feast of trumpets, brought hope to the people that their sins would be remembered no more? Leviticus 23:23–32.**
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“Only once a year could the high priest enter into the most holy place, after the most careful and solemn preparation. No mortal eye but that of the high priest could look upon the sacred grandeur of that apartment, because it was the especial dwelling place of God’s visible glory. The high priest always entered it with trembling, while the people waited his return with solemn silence. Their earnest desires were to God for His blessing. If he remained an unusual time in the most holy, the people were often terrified, fearing that because of their sins or some sin of the priest, the glory of the Lord had slain him. But when the sound of the tinkling of the bells upon his garments was heard, they were greatly relieved. He then came forth and blessed the people.”—*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 155, 156.

#### 4. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

- a. What happened during the final feast of the Jewish year, and why was this a joyous occasion? Leviticus 23:33–36, 39–43.

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“The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated to commemorate the time when the Hebrews dwelt in tents during their sojourn in the wilderness. While this great festival lasted, the people were required to leave their houses and live in booths made of green branches of pine or myrtle. These leafy structures were sometimes erected on the tops of the houses, and in the streets, but oftener outside the walls of the city, in the valleys and along the hillsides. Scattered about in every direction, these green camps presented a very picturesque appearance.

“The feast lasted one week, and during all that time the temple was a festal scene of great rejoicing. There was the pomp of the sacrificial ceremonies; and the sound of music, mingled with hosannas, made the place jubilant. At the first dawn of day, the priests sounded a long, shrill blast upon their silver trumpets; and the answering trumpets, and the glad shouts of the people from their booths, echoing over hill and valley, welcomed the festal day. Then the priest dipped from the flowing waters of the Kedron a flagon of water, and, lifting it on high, while the trumpets were sounding, he ascended the broad steps of the temple, keeping time with the music with slow and measured tread, chanting meanwhile: ‘Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem!’

“He bore the flagon to the altar which occupied a central position in the temple court. Here were two silver basins, with a priest standing at each one. The flagon of water was poured into one basin, and a flagon of wine into the other; and the contents of both flowed into a pipe which communicated with the Kedron, and was conducted to the Dead Sea. This display of the consecrated water represented the fountain that flowed from the rock to refresh the Hebrews in the wilderness. Then the jubilant strains rang forth:—

“ ‘The Lord Jehovah is my strength and song;’ ‘therefore with joy shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation!’ All the vast assembly joined in triumphant chorus with musical instruments and deep-toned trumpets, while competent choristers conducted the grand harmonious concert of praise.

“The festivities were carried on with an unparalleled splendor. At night the temple and its court blazed so with artificial light that the whole city was illuminated. The music, the waving of palm-branches, the glad hosannas, the great concourse of people, over which the light streamed from the hanging lamps, the dazzling array of the priests, and the majesty of the ceremonies, all combined to make a scene that deeply impressed all beholders.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 343–345.

## 5. SYMBOLIC OF SALVATION

- a. In considering the feasts of ancient Israel, what should we realize? Romans 15:4; John 1:29.
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“It is impossible to enumerate the advantages the Lord prepared for the world in making the Jewish nation the repository of His rich treasures of knowledge. They were the subjects of His special favor. As a people who knew and worshiped the true God, they were to communicate the principles of His kingdom. They were instructed by the Lord. He withheld from them nothing favorable to the formation of characters which would make them fit representatives of His kingdom. Their feasts, the Passover, the Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, and the ceremonies attending these gatherings, were to proclaim the truths that God had entrusted to His people. At these gatherings the people were to show gladness and joy, expressing their thanksgiving for their privileges and the gracious treatment of their Lord. Thus they were to show to a world that knew not God that the Lord does not forsake those who trust in Him. With joyful voices they were to sing, ‘Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God’ (Psalm 43:5). . . .

“The history of the children of Israel is written for our admonition and instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. Those who would stand firm in the faith in these last days, and finally gain an entrance into the heavenly Canaan, must listen to the words of warning spoken by Jesus Christ to the Israelites. These lessons were given to the church in the wilderness to be studied and heeded by God’s people throughout their generations forever.”—*The Upward Look*, p. 232.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did a lamb need to be offered up every morning and evening?
2. What protected the children of Israel on the night of the Passover?
3. Which ceremony was designed to acknowledge the Lord of the harvest?
4. Why was the day of atonement so important?
5. What was the general purpose of the feast days?

# Understanding the Symbols

“Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom” (Matthew 27:50, 51, first part).

“The rending of the veil of the temple showed that the Jewish sacrifices and ordinances would no longer be received. The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted.”—*Early Writings*, pp. 259, 260.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 273–279, 352, 353.

*Sunday*

*October 13*

## 1. DAILY CONSECRATION

- a. **Why was it necessary for Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross to replace the sacrificial offerings? Hebrews 10:9–12; Acts 3:1. How is the morning and evening sacrifice of ancient times relevant to us today?**

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“Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. The types and shadows under which the Jews worshiped, all pointed forward to the world’s Redeemer.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 25, 1897.

“The hours appointed for the morning and the evening sacrifice were regarded as sacred, and they came to be observed as the set time for worship throughout the Jewish nation. . . . In this custom Christians have an example for morning and evening prayer. While God condemns a mere round of ceremonies, without the spirit of worship, He looks with great pleasure upon those who love Him, bowing morning and evening to seek pardon for sins committed and to present their requests for needed blessings.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 353, 354.

“If ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now. Like the patriarchs of old, those who profess to love God should erect an altar to His worship wherever they pitch their tent. The father, as priest of the household, should offer the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. In a home where God is thus honoured, Jesus will love to tarry.”—*The Bible Echo*, December 15, 1893.

## 2. PURIFYING THE HEART

- a. **What is the significance of the Passover to us as Christians? 1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 7:26, 27.**

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“The Passover was to be both commemorative and typical, not only pointing back to the deliverance from Egypt, but forward to the greater deliverance which Christ was to accomplish in freeing His people from the bondage of sin. The sacrificial lamb represents ‘the Lamb of God,’ in whom is our only hope of salvation. Says the apostle, ‘Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.’ 1 Corinthians 5:7. It was not enough that the paschal lamb be slain; its blood must be sprinkled upon the doorposts; so the merits of Christ’s blood must be applied to the soul. We must believe, not only that He died for the world, but that He died for us individually. We must appropriate to ourselves the virtue of the atoning sacrifice. . . .

“The lamb was to be prepared whole, not a bone of it being broken: so not a bone was to be broken of the Lamb of God, who was to die for us. John 19:36. Thus was also represented the completeness of Christ’s sacrifice.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 277.

- b. **What did the hyssop symbolize in the Passover? Psalms 51:2, 7; 119:9; 1 Peter 1:22.**

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“The hyssop used in sprinkling the blood was the symbol of purification, being thus employed in the cleansing of the leper and of those defiled by contact with the dead.”—*Ibid.*

“We want something besides Sabbath religion. We need the living principle, and to daily feel individual responsibility. This is shunned by many, and the fruit is carelessness, indifference, a lack of watchfulness and spirituality. Where is the spirituality of the church? Where are men and women full of faith and the Holy Spirit? My prayer is: Purify Thy church, O God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 99.

“The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 189.

“The people of God must purify their souls through obedience to the truth, and be prepared to stand without fault before Him at His coming.”—*Evangelism*, p. 695.



**3. A HOLY LIFE, A HOLY ORDINANCE**

- a. Explain how the completeness of Christ's sacrifice was symbolized. Exodus 12:46; John 19:36.
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- b. How does the fact that the Passover lamb was not only to be slain, but also eaten relate to Christ our Passover? Exodus 12:8; John 6:53, 54, 63.
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"It is not enough even that we believe on Christ for the forgiveness of sin; we must by faith be constantly receiving spiritual strength and nourishment from Him through His word. . . . The followers of Christ must be partakers of His experience. They must receive and assimilate the word of God so that it shall become the motive power of life and action. By the power of Christ they must be changed into His likeness, and reflect the divine attributes. They must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, or there is no life in them. The spirit and work of Christ must become the spirit and work of His disciples.

"The lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs, as pointing back to the bitterness of the bondage in Egypt. So when we feed upon Christ, it should be with contrition of heart, because of our sins."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 277, 278.

- c. What specific ceremony did the Passover foreshadow, and what additional ordinance was added to it? Mark 14:16, 22–25; John 13:1–5, 13–15.
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"The act of Christ in washing the feet of His disciples was a sacred one; His motive in so doing was to bring about, through their remembrance of what Christ had done for them, a state of feeling where no exaltation of one above another should find place. This ordinance was to bring brother to an understanding of the feelings of his brother. . . .

"This ordinance does not speak so largely to man's intellectual capacity as to his heart. His moral and spiritual nature needs it. If His disciples had not needed this, it would not have been left for them as Christ's last established ordinance in connection with, and including, the last supper."—*The Review and Herald*, June 14, 1898.

#### 4. SET APART

- a. When the Passover was originally established, what restriction had God placed on who was allowed to partake of it? Why? Exodus 12:43–48.
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“[The Lord] required of Abraham and his seed, circumcision, which was a circle cut in the flesh, as a token that God had cut them out and separated them from all nations as His peculiar treasure. By this sign they solemnly pledged themselves that they would not intermarry with other nations; for by so doing they would lose their reverence for God and His holy law, and would become like the idolatrous nations around them.

“By the act of circumcision they solemnly agreed to fulfill on their part the conditions of the covenant made with Abraham, to be separate from all nations, and to be perfect. If the descendants of Abraham had kept separate from other nations, they would not have been seduced into idolatry. By keeping separate from other nations, a great temptation to engage in their sinful practices, and rebel against God, would be removed from them. They lost in a great measure their peculiar, holy character, by mingling with the nations around them.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 262, 263.

- b. As circumcision had been in the Old Testament, what New Testament ordinance is an emblem of separation from the world and consecration to God? Colossians 2:6, 10–12; Galatians 5:6.
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“Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. . . .

“Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command: ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing.’ And to them is fulfilled the promise: ‘I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’ 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 91.

## 5. A SOLEMN SEPARATION FROM SIN

- a. **What provisions did Jesus make for the Passover? Who partook of this feast with Him? Mark 14:12–15.**

“The Lord’s Supper was not to be observed only occasionally or yearly, but more frequently than the annual Passover. This solemn ordinance commemorates a far greater event than the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. That deliverance was typical of the great atonement which Christ made by the sacrifice of His own life for the final deliverance of His people.

“This ordinance is not to be exclusive, as many would make it. Each must participate in it publicly, and thus bear witness: I accept Christ as my personal Saviour. He gave His life for me, that I might be rescued from death.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 302.

“I was pointed back to the time that Jesus took His disciples away alone, into an upper room, and first washed their feet, and then gave them to eat of the broken bread, to represent His broken body, and juice of the vine to represent His spilled blood. I saw that all should move understandingly, and follow the example of Jesus in these things, and when attending to these ordinances, should be as separate from unbelievers as possible.”—*The Review and Herald*, November 1, 1850.

- b. **What did the unleavened bread symbolize? 1 Corinthians 5:6–8.**

“At the time of the Passover the people were directed to remove all the leaven from their houses as they were to put away sin from their hearts.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 95, 96.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **What reveals our daily need of atonement now as much as ever?**
2. **How does the hyssop in the Passover service have its parallel today?**
3. **Why is the ordinance of humility so important for us in these last days?**
4. **How is the ancient mingling with the uncircumcised repeated today?**
5. **From what and whom is the Lord’s Supper to be separate?**

# From Ascension to the Final Atonement

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1).

“The miracles of Jesus are a proof of His divinity; but the strongest proofs that He is the world’s Redeemer are found in the prophecies of the Old Testament compared with the history of the New.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 211.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Great Controversy*, pp. 323–332, 352.

## Sunday

October 20

### 1. FIRST FRUITS

- a. What was symbolized by the sheaf of grain waved before the Lord at the beginning of the harvest (Leviticus 23:9–11)? Matthew 27:50–53; 1 Corinthians 15:17–20.

“Christ arose from the dead as the first fruits of those that slept. He was the antitype of the wave sheaf, and His resurrection took place on the very day when the wave sheaf was to be presented before the Lord. For more than a thousand years this symbolic ceremony had been performed. From the harvest fields the first heads of ripened grain were gathered, and when the people went up to Jerusalem to the Passover, the sheaf of first fruits was waved as a thank offering before the Lord. Not until this was presented could the sickle be put to the grain, and it be gathered into sheaves. The sheaf dedicated to God represented the harvest. So Christ the first fruits represented the great spiritual harvest to be gathered for the kingdom of God. His resurrection is the type and pledge of the resurrection of all the righteous dead.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 785, 786.

“[Christ] presents to God the wave sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming.”—*Ibid.*, p. 834.

## 2. PENTECOST

- a. As in Hebrew times there was a celebration of the harvest 50 days after the offering of the wave sheaf, what harvest of souls was gathered at Pentecost (“fiftieth” in Greek)? Acts 2:1, 4, 7, 8, 41.
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“The Jewish leaders had supposed that the work of Christ would end with His death; but, instead of this, they witnessed the marvelous scenes of the Day of Pentecost. They heard the disciples, endowed with a power and energy hitherto unknown, preaching Christ, their words confirmed by signs and wonders. In Jerusalem, the stronghold of Judaism, thousands openly declared their faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah.

“The disciples were astonished and overjoyed at the greatness of the harvest of souls.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 44.

“What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world. As the disciples proclaimed the message of redeeming grace, hearts yielded to the power of this message. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price. Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions. . . .

“They could not be restrained or intimidated by threatenings. The Lord spoke through them, and as they went from place to place, the poor had the gospel preached to them, and miracles of divine grace were wrought.

“So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 48, 49.

- b. How can this also be an inspiration to us in our day? Acts 5:30–32.
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“The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer’s love and of His saving grace.”—*Ibid.*, p. 49.

### 3. THE BLOWING OF TRUMPETS

- a. In the Hebrew system, trumpets introduced the solemn day of final atonement. How was this paralleled in the preaching of William Miller? Leviticus 23:23–25; Matthew 24:32, 33.

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“[God] sent chosen messengers to make known the nearness of the final judgment.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 339.

“In nearly every town there were scores, in some, hundreds, converted as a result of [William Miller’s] preaching. In many places Protestant churches of nearly all denominations were thrown open to him, and the invitations to labor usually came from the ministers of the several congregations. It was his invariable rule not to labor in any place to which he had not been invited, yet he soon found himself unable to comply with half the requests that poured in upon him. Many who did not accept his views as to the exact time of the second advent were convinced of the certainty and nearness of Christ’s coming and their need of preparation. In some of the large cities his work produced a marked impression. Liquor dealers abandoned the traffic and turned their shops into meeting rooms; gambling dens were broken up; infidels, deists, Universalists, and even the most abandoned profligates were reformed, some of whom had not entered a house of worship for years. Prayer meetings were established by the various denominations, in different quarters, at almost every hour, businessmen assembling at midday for prayer and praise. There was no extravagant excitement, but an almost universal solemnity on the minds of the people. His work, like that of the early Reformers, tended rather to convince the understanding and arouse the conscience than merely to excite the emotions.

“In 1833 Miller received a license to preach, from the Baptist Church, of which he was a member. A large number of the ministers of his denomination also approved his work, and it was with their formal sanction that he continued his labors.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 331, 332.

“Those who accepted the advent doctrine were roused to the necessity of repentance and humiliation before God. Many had long been halting between Christ and the world; now they felt that it was time to take a stand. ‘The things of eternity assumed to them an unwonted reality. Heaven was brought near, and they felt themselves guilty before God.’ . . . Christians were quickened to new spiritual life. They were made to feel that time was short, that what they had to do for their fellow men must be done quickly. Earth receded, eternity seemed to open before them, and the soul, with all that pertained to its immortal weal or woe, was felt to eclipse every temporal object.”—*Ibid.*, p. 340.

## 4. A TIME AND A MESSAGE

- a. How do we know that God definitely operates on a distinct timetable? Ecclesiastes 3:1; Mark 1:14, 15.
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“The gospel message, as given by the Saviour Himself, was based on the prophecies. The ‘time’ which He declared to be fulfilled was the period made known by the angel Gabriel to Daniel.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 232.

- b. What history verifies William Miller’s prophetic research? Daniel 9:24–27.
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“The time of the first advent and of some of the chief events clustering about the Saviour’s lifework was made known by the angel Gabriel to Daniel. [Daniel 9:24 quoted.] A day in prophecy stands for a year. See Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6. The seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety days, represent four hundred and ninety years. A starting point for this period is given: [Daniel 9:25 quoted] sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years. The commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, as completed by the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus, went into effect in the autumn of 457 B.C. See Ezra 6:14; 7:1, 9. From this time four hundred and eighty-three years extend to the autumn of A.D. 27. According to the prophecy, this period was to reach to the Messiah, the Anointed One. In A.D. 27, Jesus at His baptism received the anointing of the Holy Spirit and soon afterward began His ministry. Then the message was proclaimed, ‘The time is fulfilled.’ Mark 1:15.

“Then, said the angel, ‘He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [seven years].’ For seven years after the Saviour entered on His ministry, the gospel was to be preached especially to the Jews; for three and a half years by Christ Himself, and afterward by the apostles. ‘In the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.’ Daniel 9:27. In the spring of A.D. 31, Christ, the true Sacrifice, was offered on Calvary. . . .

“The one week—seven years—ended in A.D. 34. Then by the stoning of Stephen the Jews finally sealed their rejection of the gospel.”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 698, 699.

## 5. A SURE PROPHETIC BASIS

- a. Although William Miller did not fully comprehend all the phases of Christ's ministration, on what theme did he base his call to repentance? Daniel 8:14. What is the call for us today? 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

"The seventy weeks—490 days—having been cut off from the 2300, there were 1810 days remaining. After the end of 490 days, the 1810 days were still to be fulfilled. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. Consequently the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 terminate in 1844. At the expiration of this great prophetic period, upon the testimony of the angel of God, 'the sanctuary shall be cleansed.'"—*The Great Controversy*, p. 328.

"[William Miller] adopted the generally received view that the earth is the sanctuary, and he believed that the cleansing of the sanctuary represented the purification of the earth by fire at the coming of the Lord. When, therefore, he found that the close of the 2300 days was definitely foretold, he concluded that this revealed the time of the second advent. His error resulted from accepting the popular view as to what constitutes the sanctuary."—*Ibid.*, p. 352.

"The great day was at hand, and in [God's] providence the people were brought to the test of a definite time, in order to reveal to them what was in their hearts. The message was designed for the testing and purification of the church. They were to be led to see whether their affections were set upon this world or upon Christ and heaven. They professed to love the Saviour; now they were to prove their love."—*Ibid.*, p. 353.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How had the resurrection of Christ and those with Him been symbolized?
2. What evangelistic event revealed the most valuable harvest we can reap?
3. What characterized the meetings of William Miller?
4. Why is it vital for us to understand the Bible prophecies based on time?
5. What discovery was made as a result of William Miller's research, and how was this a test of the church's attitude?



## First Sabbath Offering for the Headquarters of the Southern Mindanao Conference

Mindanao is the second largest and southernmost major island in the Philippines. This is also the name of one of the three island groups in the country (the other two being Luzon and the Visayas). It consists of the island of Mindanao (with a population of over 18 million) along with smaller outlying islands.



Over 70% of the people in the Philippines profess the Roman Catholic religion; 17% are Protestants; 5–10% Muslims, and the remainder are Buddhists and persons of other religions.

The language most commonly spoken in Mindanao is Cebuano (Bisaya), although the official languages are Filipino and English.

Since its inception in 1958, the work of the SDA Reform Movement in the Philippines started in Mindanao, particularly in Davao city. Later on, a property was acquired in Digos, Davao del Sur to be the first Mission headquarters in the country. By the grace of God, the work grew—and from this first Mission, it spread around the country and today we now have an established Union Conference with five Field Conferences and a very active membership.

At this point, the structure of this headquarters has become very old, and instead of repairing it, the brethren decided to build a new one to meet the demands of the activities of the Field Conference. This new building will include dormitories, restroom facilities and a session hall to hold reorganizational meetings.

“We may well feel that it is a privilege to be laborers together with God by giving of our means to set in operation that which will carry out His purposes in the world. All who possess the Spirit of Christ will have a tender, sympathetic heart, and an open, generous hand. Nothing can be really selfish that has Christ for its absorbing object.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 18, 1912.

Our brethren are raising funds for this project and still have a long way to bring it to completion. It is our sincere desire and prayer that the Lord will bless your generosity in furthering His work in this region.

*Your brethren in the Southern Mindanao Field Conference*

# The Day of Atonement

“For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord” (Leviticus 16:30).

“We are living in the great Day of Atonement, and it is now time that everyone should repent before God, confess his sins, and by living faith rest upon the merit of a crucified and living Saviour.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 224, 225.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Great Controversy*, pp. 352–354, 409–422.

*Sunday*

October 27

## 1. A FINAL MINISTRATION

- a. What essential truth about the sanctuary did the Millerites realize they had overlooked? Leviticus 16:29–31; Hebrews 8:1, 2; 9:24.

“The Scriptures were carefully searched with prayer and earnest thought, and after a period of suspense, light poured in upon our darkness; doubt and uncertainty were swept away.

“Instead of the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 referring to the purifying of the earth, it was now plain that it pointed to the closing work of our High Priest in heaven, the finishing of the atonement, and the preparing of the people to abide the day of His coming.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 58.

“In the typical system, which was a shadow of the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, the cleansing of the sanctuary was the last service performed by the high priest in the yearly round of ministration. It was the closing work of the atonement—a removal or putting away of sin from Israel. It prefigured the closing work in the ministration of our High Priest in heaven, in the removal or blotting out of the sins of His people, which are registered in the heavenly records. This service involves a work of investigation, a work of judgment; and it immediately precedes the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; for when He comes, every case has been decided.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 352.

## 2. A SOLEMN TIME

- a. Ever since the 2300 days ended in 1844, where has our High Priest, Jesus Christ, been ministering, and why is this important? Hebrews 9:1–3; Revelation 3:7; 11:19.
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“The time for the commandments of God to shine out with all their importance, and for God’s people to be tried on the Sabbath truth, was when the door was opened in the most holy place in the heavenly sanctuary, where the ark is, in which are contained the ten commandments. This door was not opened until the mediation of Jesus was finished in the holy place of the sanctuary in 1844. Then Jesus rose up and shut the door of the holy place, and opened the door into the most holy, and passed within the second veil, where He now stands by the ark, and where the faith of Israel now reaches.

“I saw that Jesus had shut the door of the holy place, and no man can open it; and that He had opened the door into the most holy, and no man can shut it (Revelation 3:7, 8); and that since Jesus has opened the door into the most holy place, which contains the ark, the commandments have been shining out to God’s people, and they are being tested on the Sabbath question.”—*Early Writings*, p. 42.

- b. What must we realize at this point in history? 1 Timothy 5:24.
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“We are in the great day of atonement, when our sins are, by confession and repentance, to go beforehand to judgment. God does not now accept a tame, spiritless testimony from His ministers. Such a testimony would not be present truth. The message for this time must be meat in due season to feed the church of God. But Satan has been seeking gradually to rob this message of its power, that the people may not be prepared to stand in the day of the Lord.

“In 1844 our great High Priest entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, to begin the work of the investigative judgment. The cases of the righteous dead have been passing in review before God. When that work shall be completed, judgment is to be pronounced upon the living. How precious, how important are these solemn moments!”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 124, 125.

### 3. INVESTIGATION, CASE BY CASE

- a. What shows that the Judgment concerns each of us personally? Ecclesiastes 11:9; Matthew 12:36; Daniel 7:9, 10.
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“Each of us has a case pending in the court of heaven. We are individually to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. In the typical service, when the work of atonement was performed by the high priest in the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary, the people were required to afflict their souls before God, and confess their sins, that they might be atoned for and blotted out. Will any less be required of us in this antitypical day of atonement, when Christ in the sanctuary above is pleading in behalf of His people, and the final, irrevocable decision is to be pronounced upon every case?”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 125.

- b. What should this make us pause to consider? Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14.
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“What is our condition in this fearful and solemn time? Alas, what pride is prevailing in the church, what hypocrisy, what deception, what love of dress, frivolity, and amusement, what desire for the supremacy! All these sins have clouded the mind, so that eternal things have not been discerned. Shall we not search the Scriptures, that we may know where we are in this world’s history? Shall we not become intelligent in regard to the work that is being accomplished for us at this time, and the position that we as sinners should occupy while this work of atonement is going forward? If we have any regard for our souls’ salvation, we must make a decided change. We must seek the Lord with true penitence; we must with deep contrition of soul confess our sins, that they may be blotted out.

“We must no longer remain upon the enchanted ground. We are fast approaching the close of our probation. Let every soul inquire, How do I stand before God? We know not how soon our names may be taken into the lips of Christ, and our cases be finally decided. What, oh, what will these decisions be! Shall we be counted with the righteous, or shall we be numbered with the wicked?”—*Ibid.*, pp. 125, 126.

“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests therein involved.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 314, 315.

**4. LOGICAL TIMING**

- a. **Why is the investigative judgment necessary before Christ's return? Matthew 16:27; Revelation 22:12.**

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“As anciently the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, so in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation—a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to his works.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 421, 422.

- b. **With whom does the judgment begin? 1 Peter 4:17.**

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“In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period.”—*Ibid.*, p. 480.

- c. **When and by whom will the wicked be judged? 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3.**

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“During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection the judgment of the wicked takes place. . . . It is at this time that, as foretold by Paul, ‘the saints shall judge the world.’ 1 Corinthians 6:2. In union with Christ they judge the wicked.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 660, 661.

**5. CONFORMING TO THE STANDARD**

- a. **What is God doing by His grace to ensure we pass the final judgment? Romans 8:28, 29; Ephesians 4:11–13.**
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“God’s object in bringing us to himself is to conform us to the image of Christ.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 21, 1896.

“The true, humble, earnest Christian will be receiving the mold of a perfect character, and his heart will ever be conforming to the image of Christ. His life will flow out in channels of beneficence and love. Such will be established in God. The work which grace began, if combined with earnest effort to press close to Jesus, glory shall finish in the kingdom of God.”—*Ibid.*, June 3, 1880.

- b. **Why is God’s law essential in order to conform our character to the image of Jesus? Romans 7:7; 1 Timothy 1:8–10; 1 John 1:9.**
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“A great work must be done for us all before we will have perfection of Christian character. The law of God is the standard of righteousness. This is the mirror into which we are to look to discern the defects of our character. When we look in a common mirror, it points out to us the defects upon our person, but it does not remove one stain; we must go and wash if we would become clean. So it is with the law of God. It is God’s great mirror, or moral detector of sin; but there is no saving quality in law; it has no power to pardon the transgressor. . . . Then what is the work before the sinner? It is to exercise repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. In His precious blood the stains of sin may all be washed away.”—*The Present Truth*, November 3, 1885.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Why was it important for the Millerites to persevere in their Bible study?
2. What was the significance of the “open and shut door” in Revelation 3?
3. Why is the investigative judgment such an important truth?
4. Why are the righteous and wicked judged at different times?
5. As the law reveals our defects of character, what should we do?

# Sobriety

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

“We cannot be off guard for a moment. . . . We are in the great day of atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time in the heavenly sanctuary should be our constant study.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 520.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Great Controversy*, pp. 479–491.

## Sunday

November 3

### 1. A SOLEMN MOMENT

- a. In the Hebrew nation, what characterized the time when the high priest would officiate in the most holy place? Leviticus 16:29, 30.

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“To lift that veil [at the entrance to the most holy place], and intrude unbidden into the sacred mystery of the most holy place, was death. For above the mercy seat dwelt the glory of the Holiest—glory upon which no man might look and live. On the one day of the year appointed for ministry in the most holy place, the high priest with trembling entered God’s presence, while clouds of incense veiled the glory from his sight. Throughout the courts of the temple every sound was hushed. No priests ministered at the altars. The host of worshipers, bowed in silent awe, offered their petitions for God’s mercy.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 437, 438.

“The high priest always entered it with trembling, while the people waited his return with solemn silence. Their earnest desires were to God for His blessing. Before the mercy seat, God conversed with the high priest. If he remained an unusual time in the most holy, the people were often terrified, fearing that because of their sins, or some sin of the priest, the glory of the Lord had slain him.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 274, 275.

“Let the church commence the work of purification before God by repentance, humiliation, deep heart searching, for we are in the antitypical day of atonement—solemn hour fraught with eternal results.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 378.

## 2. AN ILLUSTRATION FOR US

- a. **How does the solemnity of the yearly atonement service reflect the present work of our High Priest in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary? 1 Corinthians 10:11; Zephaniah 2:1–3.**
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“We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 489, 490.

- b. **What admonitions of the Saviour especially apply today? Mark 13:33; Revelation 3:3.**
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“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. . . .

“When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. . . .

“The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 490, 491.



### 3. TAKING HEED

- a. **What truth must be deeply impressed in the mind of every Christian at this time in history? 1 Corinthians 10:12; 1 Peter 4:7.**
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“Those who accept Christ, and in their first confidence say, I am saved, are in danger of trusting to themselves. They lose sight of their own weakness and their constant need of divine strength. . . . Our only safety is in constant distrust of self, and dependence on Christ.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 155.

“Well would it be for us each to hold up the mirror, God’s royal law, and see in it the reflection of His own character. Let us be careful not to neglect the danger signals and the warnings given in His word. Unless heed is given to these warnings, and defects of character are overcome, these defects will overcome those who possess them, and they will fall into error, apostasy, and open sin. The mind that is not elevated to the highest standard will in time lose its power to retain that which it had once gained.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 537.

“By conforming entirely to the will of God, we shall be placed upon vantage ground, and shall see the necessity of decided separation from the customs and practices of the world. We are not to elevate our standard just a little above the world’s standard; but we are to make the line of demarcation decidedly apparent.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 289.

- b. **What warning should we take from the prayer of Jesus to His Father that reveals His plan for each one of us? John 17:17.**
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“If you sit down with the ease-loving ones, with the words on your lips, ‘I am saved,’ and disregard the commandments of God, you will be eternally lost. There is truth in Jesus that is terrible to the ease-loving, do-nothing ones. There is truth in Jesus that is full of soothing joy to the obedient. It is the joy of the Holy Ghost. Be persuaded, then, to open the mind and heart, that you may see every ray of light shining from the throne of God.

“This is no time to be indifferent and careless and pleasure-loving. Christ is coming with power and great glory. Are you ready? Are you putting away your sins? Are you becoming sanctified through the truth in answer to the prayer of Christ?”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 318.

#### 4. ESCAPING THE SYNDROME

- a. **What attitude does Jesus identify as sadly typical in this last era of church history, as He ministers in the most holy place? Revelation 3:14–16.**
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“Messengers have been sent with warnings, reproofs, and entreaties. God’s servants have wept and prayed over the lukewarm state of the church. Some may arouse, but only to fall back into unconsciousness of their sin and peril. Passion, worldliness, malice, envy pride, strife for supremacy, make our churches weak and powerless. Some of Christ’s ambassadors are carrying a heavy burden on their souls, because their message is treated by so many as an idle tale. The eye of Jesus, looking down the ages, was fixed upon our time when He said, ‘If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace!’ It is still thy day, O church of God, whom He has made the depositary of His law. But this day of trust and probation is fast drawing to a close. The sun is fast westering. Can it be that it will set, and thou not know the things that belong unto thy peace? Must the irrevocable sentence be passed, ‘But now they are hid from thine eyes’? I tell you there is need to be alarmed.”—*The Review and Herald*, November 2, 1886.

- b. **What earnest plea does the Lord make to each of us? Revelation 3:17–21.**
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“It is time to seek God earnestly, saying with Jacob, ‘I will not let thee go except thou bless me.’ It will be of no avail to make a spasmodic effort, only to fall back into spiritual lethargy and lukewarmness. The past, with the slighted mercies, the admonitions unheeded, the earthly passions uncorrected, the privileges unimproved, the soul temple filled with desecrated shrines,—all is recorded in the books of heaven. But most solemn moments are still before you. Because of past neglect, the efforts you make must be the more earnest.

“The Saviour speaks to His people, ‘Be zealous and repent.’ It is not ministers whom you have slighted; it is not the warnings of men that you have rejected; it is not my delegated prophets that you have refused to hear, but your Redeemer, your only hope. If ye are destroyed, it is yourselves alone that are responsible.”—*Ibid.*

**5. BOWING BEFORE THE LORD**

- a. **How are Christ's true followers contrasted with those in the world in the last days? 2 Timothy 3:2 (first part); James 4:10.**
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“Will our churches humble themselves before the Lord in this day of atonement? Will they put away the sins which defile their garments of character, and separate them from God? The present is our day of visitation. Look not to a future, more convenient season, when the cross to be lifted will be less heavy, when the inclinations of the carnal heart will be subdued with less effort. ‘Today,’ saith the Spirit of God, ‘if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart.’ Today go about the work, else you may be one day too late. The impression that you have now may not be as strong tomorrow. Satan’s snare may close about you. The candlestick may be moved out of its place, and you left in darkness. ‘See that you refuse not him that speaketh.’ Says the true Witness, ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock.’ Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God, or through His delegated messengers, is a knock at the door of the heart; it is the voice of Jesus, asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, your determination to open becomes weaker and weaker. If the voice of Jesus is not heeded at once, it becomes confused in the mind with a multitude of other voices, the world’s care and business engross the attention, and conviction dies away. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of time, and of the great eternity beyond. The heavenly Guest is standing at your door, while you are piling up obstructions to bar His entrance. Jesus is knocking through the prosperity He gives you. He loads you with blessings to test your fidelity, that they may flow out from you to others. Will you permit your selfishness to triumph?”—*The Review and Herald*, November 2, 1886.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. **Why did the nation worry if the high priest delayed in the most holy place?**
2. **Why does the present day of atonement call for solemnity on our part?**
3. **Despite this reality, what is the attitude of most professed Christians?**
4. **How are we to be delivered from the problem of Laodicea?**
5. **In what ways has Jesus been knocking at the door of my heart?**

# The Books

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works” (Revelation 20:12).

“Ten thousand times ten thousand were assembled before a large throne, upon which was seated a person of majestic appearance. Several books were before Him, and upon the covers of each was written in letters of gold, which seemed like a burning flame of fire: ‘Ledger of Heaven.’ ”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 384.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 384–387.

*Sunday*

November 10

## 1. JUDGED BY WRITTEN RECORDS

- a. How does the first angel of Revelation announce the judgment, and what occurs in heaven at this time? Revelation 14:6, 7; Daniel 7:9, 10.

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“Day by day the record of your words, your actions, and your influence is being made in the books of heaven.”—*That I May Know Him*, p. 234.

“God knows every thought, every purpose, every plan, every motive. The books of heaven record the sins that would have been committed had there been opportunity. God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing. . . . God has a perfect photograph of every man’s character, and this photograph He compares with His law. He reveals to man the defects that mar his life, and calls upon him to repent and turn from sin.”—*The Signs of the Times*, July 31, 1901.

“Let us individually consider what is the record made in the books of heaven concerning our life and character, and our attitude toward God. . . . Let us examine our past life and see if we have given evidence of our love for Jesus by seeking to be like Him, and by working, as He worked, to save those for whom He died.”—*Lift Him Up*, p. 325.

## 2. THOSE UNITED TO CHRIST ARE INCLUDED

- a. **What happens in heaven once a person professes to serve Christ? Luke 10:20 (last part); Philippians 4:3 (last part).**
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“When we become children of God, our names are written in the Lamb’s book of life, and they remain there until the time of the investigative judgment. Then the name of every individual will be called, and his record examined.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 360.

“The black man’s name is written in the book of life beside the white man’s. All are one in Christ.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 342.

“Your name may be kept so pure that it cannot justly be connected with anything dishonest or unrighteous, but will be respected by all the good and pure, and it may be written in the Lamb’s book of life, to be immortalized among the holy angels.”—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 111.

- b. **Why is it vital to be truly led by the Holy Spirit? Romans 8:14.**
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“The Spirit of God, with its vivifying power, must be in every human agent, that every spiritual muscle and sinew may be in exercise. Without the Holy Spirit, without the breath of God, there is torpidity of conscience, loss of spiritual life. Many who are without spiritual life have their names on the church records, but they are not written in the Lamb’s book of life. They may be joined to the church, but they are not united to the Lord. They may be diligent in the performance of a certain set of duties, and may be regarded as living men; but many are among those who have ‘a name that thou livest, and art dead.’ ”—*SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1166.

“We are not saved as a sect; no denominational name has any virtue to bring us into favor with God. We are saved individually as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. And ‘by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.’ We may have our names recorded on the books of the most spiritual of the churches, and yet we may not belong to Christ, and our names may not be written on the Lamb’s book of life.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 10, 1891.

“Let church members bear in mind that the fact that their names are registered on the church books will not save them. They must show themselves approved of God, workmen that need not be ashamed. Day by day they are to build their characters in accordance with Christ’s directions. They are to abide in Him, constantly exercising faith in Him.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 48.

### 3. PRECISE RECORDS

- a. While our names may have been registered in the Lamb's book of life, what else is being meticulously recorded? Proverbs 15:3.
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"All your acts, however secret you may think they have been, are open to your heavenly Father. Nothing is hidden, nothing covered. All your acts and the motives which prompt them are open to His sight. He has full knowledge of all your words and thoughts."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 82.

"Remember, your character is being daguerreotyped [photographed] by the great Master Artist in the record books of heaven, as minutely as the face is reproduced upon the polished plate of the artist. What do the books of heaven say in your case? Are you conforming your character to the Pattern, Jesus Christ? Are you washing your robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb?"—*Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, p. 62.

"If we would be overcomers, we must search our hearts to be sure that we are not cherishing anything that is offensive to God. If we are, we cannot wear the white raiment that is here promised. If we would stand before God in the white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints, we must now do the work of overcoming."—*Historical Sketches*, p. 138.

- b. What is God's plan in this work? Revelation 11:1.
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"The grand judgment is taking place, and has been going on for some time. Now the Lord says, Measure the temple and the worshippers thereof. Remember when you are walking the streets about your business, God is measuring you; when you are attending your household duties, when you engage in conversation, God is measuring you. . . .

"When we are doing our work remember there is One that is watching the spirit in which we are doing it. Shall we not bring the Saviour into our everyday lives, into our secular work and domestic duties? Then in the name of God we want to leave behind everything that is not necessary, all gossiping or unprofitable visiting, and present ourselves as servants of the living God."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 972.

#### 4. BLOTTING OUT

- a. **Although our names may have been entered into the Book of Life, what is still possible? Psalm 69:28. What is God's desire for us? Philippians 2:14, 15.**
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"Time is fast hastening on, and every work will soon be brought into judgment, and either our sins or our names will be blotted out of the Book of Life."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 49.

"You cannot consent to profess the truth and not live it; you have ever admired a life consistent with profession. I was shown a book in which was written your name with many others. Against your name was a black blot. You were looking upon this and saying: 'It can never be effaced.' Jesus held His wounded hand above it and said: 'My blood alone can efface it. If thou wilt from henceforth choose the path of humble obedience, and rely solely upon the merits of My blood to cover thy past transgressions, I will blot out thy transgressions, and cover thy sins. But if you choose the path of transgressors you must reap the transgressor's reward. The wages of sin is death.'

"I saw evil angels surrounding you seeking to divert your mind from Christ, causing you to look upon God as a God of justice and to lose sight of the love, compassion, and mercy of a crucified Saviour who will save to the uttermost all that come unto Him. Said the angel: 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' "—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 543, 544.

"If we would be true lights in the world, we must manifest the loving, compassionate spirit of Christ. To love as Christ loved means that we must practice self-control. It means that we must show unselfishness at all times and in all places."—*My Life Today*, p. 80.

- b. **What privilege do we have as Christians, and what responsibility goes along with this privilege? 1 John 3:1–3.**
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"Well may you ask, 'Is my name written there?' It is registered in that book of life if you have a character that is pure and holy like the character of Christ. Faith in the truth alone will not save us. We must be like Christ if we shall one day see Him as He is."—*Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, p. 134.

## 5. PROMISES TO THE OVERCOMER

- a. What is in the book of remembrance? Malachi 3:16; Nehemiah 13:14.

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“In the book of God’s remembrance every deed of righteousness is immortalized. There every temptation resisted, every evil overcome, every word of tender pity expressed, is faithfully chronicled. And every act of sacrifice, every suffering and sorrow endured for Christ’s sake, is recorded.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 481.

- b. In summary, what should we ever keep in mind? Revelation 3:5; Matthew 10:32.

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“In order to confess Christ, we must have Him to confess. No one can truly confess Christ unless the mind and spirit of Christ are in him. . . . It is possible with our lips to confess Christ yet in our works deny Him. The fruits of the Spirit manifested in the life are a confession of Him. If we have forsaken all for Christ, our lives will be humble, our conversation heavenly, our conduct blameless. The powerful, purifying influence of truth in the soul, and the character of Christ exemplified in the life, are a confession of Him.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 303, 304.

“Whose names will not be blotted out of the book of life? Only the names of those who have loved God with all the powers of their being, and their neighbors as themselves.”—*Historical Sketches*, p. 138.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do we know that the evidence in the Judgment is just and true?
2. How does our accountability to God go way beyond church membership?
3. Why and how are we being measured right now?
4. Compare what is blotted out in those who will be lost vs. those saved.
5. What should be our main concern on a daily basis?



# The Battle

**“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:12).**

“Every day is a battle and a march. On every side we are beset by invisible foes, and we either conquer through the grace given us by God or we are conquered.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 453.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 121–128.

*Sunday*

*November 17*

## 1. INVISIBLE FORCES

a. Explain the war being waged against God’s children. 1 Peter 5:8, 9.

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“The prince of evil contests every inch of ground over which God’s people advance in their journey toward the heavenly city. In all the history of the church no reformation has been carried forward without encountering serious obstacles. Thus it was in Paul’s day. Wherever the apostle raised up a church, there were some who professed to receive the faith, but who brought in heresies, that, if received, would eventually crowd out the love of the truth. Luther also suffered great perplexity and distress from the course of fanatical persons who claimed that God had spoken directly through them, and who therefore set their own ideas and opinions above the testimony of the Scriptures. Many who were lacking in faith and experience, but who had considerable self-sufficiency, and who loved to hear and tell some new thing, were beguiled by the pretensions of the new teachers, and they joined the agents of Satan in their work of tearing down what God had moved Luther to build up. And the Wesleys, and others who blessed the world by their influence and their faith, encountered at every step the wiles of Satan in pushing overzealous, unbalanced, and unsanctified ones into fanaticism of every grade.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 396.

## 2. THE PLOT TO DISTRACT US

- a. How does Scripture verify our individual need of the righteousness of Christ, and why is this so important now? Ezekiel 14:20.
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“Satan invents unnumbered schemes to occupy our minds, that they may not dwell upon the very work with which we ought to be best acquainted. The archdeceiver hates the great truths that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful mediator. He knows that with him everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth.

“Those who would share the benefits of the Saviour’s mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God. The precious hours, instead of being given to pleasure, to display, or to gain seeking, should be devoted to an earnest, prayerful study of the word of truth. The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. . . . How important, then, that every mind contemplate often the solemn scene when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 488.

- b. Where should our focus be today? 2 Corinthians 10:3–5; Philippians 2:5. How does the enemy seek to distract us?
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“You should control your thoughts. This will not be an easy task; you cannot accomplish it without close and even severe effort. Yet God requires this of you. . . . You will have to become a faithful sentinel over your eyes, ears, and all your senses if you would control your mind and prevent vain and corrupt thoughts from staining your soul. The power of grace alone can accomplish this most desirable work.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 561.

“If Satan can draw the mind away to some unimportant issue, and cause the people to divide on some minor point, so that their hearts are barricaded against light and truth, he exults in malicious triumph.”—*Evangelism*, p. 154.

### 3. A DIFFERENT TYPE OF DRUNKENNESS

- a. Name some of the enemy's favorite ploys against us. Mark 4:19.
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"I saw that Satan bade his angels lay their snares especially for those who were looking for Christ's second appearing and keeping all the commandments of God. Satan told his angels that the churches were asleep. He would increase his power and lying wonders, and he could hold them. 'But,' he said, 'the sect of Sabbathkeepers we hate; they are continually working against us, and taking from us our subjects, to keep the hated law of God. Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with cares. If you can make them place their affections upon these things, we shall have them yet. They may profess what they please, only make them care more for money than for the success of Christ's kingdom or the spread of the truths we hate. Present the world before them in the most attractive light, that they may love and idolize it. We must keep in our ranks all the means of which we can gain control. The more means the followers of Christ devote to His service, the more will they injure our kingdom by getting our subjects. As they appoint meetings in different places, we are in danger. Be very vigilant then. Cause disturbance and confusion if possible. Destroy love for one another. Discourage and dishearten their ministers; for we hate them. Present every plausible excuse to those who have means, lest they hand it out. Control the money matters if you can, and drive their ministers to want and distress. This will weaken their courage and zeal. Battle every inch of ground. Make covetousness and love of earthly treasures the ruling traits of their character. As long as these traits rule, salvation and grace stand back. Crowd every attraction around them, and they will be surely ours. And not only are we sure of them, but their hateful influence will not be exercised to lead others to heaven. When any shall attempt to give, put within them a grudging disposition, that it may be sparingly.'

"I saw that Satan carries out his plans well. . . . He leads some in one way and some in another, always taking advantage of evil traits in the brethren and sisters, exciting and stirring up their natural besetments. If they are disposed to be selfish and covetous, Satan takes his stand by their side, and with all his power seeks to lead them to indulge their besetting sins. The grace of God and the light of truth may melt away their covetous, selfish feelings for a little, but if they do not obtain entire victory, Satan comes in when they are not under a saving influence and withers every noble, generous principle."—*Early Writings*, pp. 266, 267.

#### 4. KEYS TO VICTORY

- a. How only can we be successful against the enemy's tactics? Zechariah 4:6.
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“There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church and an impenitent congregation. If Satan had his way, there would never be another awakening, great or small, to the end of time. But we are not ignorant of his devices. It is possible to resist his power. When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the blessing will come. Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God's people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth. Wicked men and devils cannot hinder the work of God, or shut out His presence from the assemblies of His people, if they will, with subdued, contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins, and in faith claim His promises. Every temptation, every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 124.

- b. How long does this spiritual battle last? Matthew 24:12, 13.
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“We are never to rest in a satisfied condition, and cease to make advancement, saying, ‘I am saved.’ When this idea is entertained, the motives for watchfulness, for prayers, for earnest endeavor to press onward to higher attainments, cease to exist. No sanctified tongue will be found uttering these words till Christ shall come, and we enter in through the gates into the city of God. Then, with the utmost propriety, we may give glory to God and to the Lamb for eternal deliverance.”—*Ibid.*, p. 314.

“When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense 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. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason. . . .

“The Captain of our salvation will strengthen His people for the conflict in which they must engage.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 201.

## 5. EQUIPPING OURSELVES

- a. What kind of repentance do we need today? Luke 6:40–42, 46–49.
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“We are living in the great antitypical day of atonement. We must individually seek God. This is a personal work. . . . Let everyone confess, not his brother’s sin, but his own sin.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 218.

“Every step heavenward must be a step of humility.”—*Historical Sketches*, p. 139.

- b. For what can we be extremely thankful? Ephesians 6:10–17.
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“In these days of peril we should be exceedingly careful not to reject the rays of light which Heaven in mercy sends us, for it is by these that we are to discern the devices of the enemy. We need light from Heaven every hour, that we may distinguish between the sacred and the common, the eternal and the temporal. If left to ourselves, we shall blunder at every step; we shall incline to the world, we shall shun self-denial, and see no necessity for constant watchfulness and prayer, and we shall be taken captive by Satan at his will. . . .

“All whose names shall at last be found written in the Lamb’s book of life will fight manfully the battles of the Lord. They will labor most earnestly to discern and put away temptations and every evil thing. They will feel that the eye of God is upon them and that the strictest fidelity is required. As faithful sentinels they will keep the passage barred, that Satan may not pass them disguised as an angel of light to work his work of death in their midst.”—*My Life Today*, p. 321.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name some of the obstacles to overcome in sharing present truth today.
2. How can we avoid being distracted by our archenemy?
3. What is one reason why many may be facing financial struggles?
4. Explain some secrets to success in the spiritual battle of today.
5. How does our spiritual armor help us to be overcomers through Christ?

# Physical Vigor

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayst prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 2).

“What might not men and women have been had they realized that the treatment of the body has everything to do with the vigor and purity of mind and heart.”—*Maranatha*, p. 230.

**Suggested Reading:** *Sons and Daughters of God*, pp. 168–174.

*Sunday*

*November 24*

## 1. ONE OF CHRIST'S SPECIALTIES

- a. When Jesus, the Son of man, lived on earth, what was He most often doing? Acts 10:38.

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“During His ministry Jesus devoted more time to healing the sick than to preaching. His miracles testified to the truth of His words, that He came not to destroy but to save. His righteousness went before Him, and the glory of the Lord was His rearward. Wherever He went, the tidings of His mercy preceded Him. Where He had passed, the objects of His compassion were rejoicing in health, and making trial of their new-found powers.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 350.

- b. What is God's plan for the physical health of His children? 3 John 2.

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“[Jesus], the Chief of physicians, is ready to dispense the balm of Gilead. He will hear the prayers offered by the physician and the missionary, if His name will be glorified thereby; and the life of the suffering patient will be prolonged.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 536.

“I urge that those who are taking a neutral position in regard to health reform be converted. This light is precious, and the Lord gives me the message to urge that all who bear responsibilities in any line in the work of God take heed that truth is in the ascendancy in the heart and life. Only thus can any meet the temptations they are sure to encounter in the world.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 453.

## 2. THE POT OF MANNA AS A SYMBOL

- a. In what was a special pot of manna stored, and in what part of the sanctuary was this? Exodus 16:33, 34; Hebrews 9:3, 4. For what reason?
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“As God gave manna from heaven to sustain the children of Israel, so He will now give His people in different places skill and wisdom to use the productions of these countries in preparing foods to take the place of meat.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 124.

“The world at large are given to gluttony and the indulgence of base passions. The light of health reform is opened before the people of God at this day, that they may see the necessity of holding their appetites and passions under control of the higher powers of the mind. This is also necessary, that they may have mental strength and clearness, to discern the sacred chain of truth, and turn from the bewitching errors and pleasing fables, that are flooding the world. Their work is to present before the people the pure doctrine of the Bible. Hence health reform finds its place in the preparatory work for the second appearing of Christ.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 44.

- b. How does God view the eating of flesh foods? What should we do, considering we are living in the antitypical day of atonement? Psalm 78:17, 18; Isaiah 22:12–14, 20–22 (cf. Revelation 3:7).
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“Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. . . .

“Again and again I have been shown that God is bringing His people back to His original design, that is, not to subsist on the flesh of dead animals. He would have us teach people a better way. . . . If meat is discarded, if the taste is not educated in that direction, if a liking for fruits and grains is encouraged, it will soon be as God in the beginning designed it should be. No meat will be used by His people.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 383.

“Will our people see and feel the sin of indulging perverted appetite? Will they discard tea, coffee, flesh meats, and all stimulating food, and devote the means expended for these hurtful indulgences to spreading the truth?”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 569.

### 3. A STRENGTH-PRODUCING PLAN

- a. What is our Creator's original plan of nutrition for humanity? How did this change after sin corrupted the planet? Genesis 1:29; 3:18.

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"In order to know what are the best foods, we must study God's original plan for man's diet. He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food. [Genesis 1:29 quoted.] Upon leaving Eden to gain his livelihood by tilling the earth under the curse of sin, man received permission to eat also 'the herb of the field.'

"Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 81.

- b. Besides adopting the health reform for ourselves, what other sacred responsibility do we have regarding it? Psalm 67:1, 2.

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"God would be recognized as the Author of our being. That life He has given us is not to be trifled with. Recklessness in the bodily habits reveals a recklessness of moral character. The health of the body is to be regarded as essential for the advancement of growth in grace, an even temper."—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 405.

"Seventh-day Adventists are to be represented to the world by the advance principles of health reform which God has given us.

"Still greater truths are unfolding for this people as we draw near the close of time, and God designs that we shall everywhere establish institutions where those who are in darkness in regard to the needs of the human organism may be educated, that they in their turn may lead others into the light of health reform."—*Medical Ministry*, p. 187.

"The sick and suffering are to be helped. Many for whom this work of mercy is done will hear and accept the words of life. Many will be healed by the prayer of faith, and will go forth to advocate the precious principles of health reform."—*Pacific Union Recorder*, November 6, 1902.

"The Lord does not now work to bring many souls into the truth, because of the church members who have never been converted and those who were once converted but who have backslidden. What influence would these unconsecrated members have on new converts? Would they not make of no effect the God-given message which His people are to bear?"—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 371.



#### 4. A COMPREHENSIVE MESSAGE

- a. **How does spiritual truth promote physical health? Proverbs 3:7, 8; 4:20–22. How can children and youth be healthy? How can we restore health?**
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“In order for children and youth to have health, cheerfulness, vivacity, and well-developed muscles and brains, they should be much in the open air and have well-regulated employment and amusement.

“Children should have occupation for their time. Proper mental labor and physical outdoor exercise will not break the constitution of your boys. Useful labor and an acquaintance with the mysteries of housework will be beneficial to your girls, and some outdoor employment is positively necessary to their constitution and health.

“Those who do not use their limbs every day will realize a weakness when they do attempt to exercise. The veins and muscles are not in a condition to perform their work and keep all the living machinery in healthful action, each organ in the system doing its part. The limbs will strengthen with use. Moderate exercise every day will impart strength to the muscles, which without exercise become flabby and enfeebled. By active exercise in the open air every day, the liver, kidneys, and lungs also will be strengthened to perform their work.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 339.

“When I violate the laws God has established in my being, I am to repent and reform, and place myself in the most favorable condition under the doctors God has provided—pure air, pure water, and the healing, precious sunlight.

“Water can be used in many ways to relieve suffering.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 297.

“Will you not sign a pledge that you will no longer weaken or deface the Lord’s temple by working when you ought to rest? In order to have proper thoughts and in order to speak proper words, you must give your brain rest. You do not take sufficient time to rest. The weary brain and tired nerves would be invigorated if you would make a change in this respect.”—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 735.

- b. **When we consider the health benefits of trust in God, nutritious food, exercise, water, sunshine, fresh air, and rest, what else should we keep in mind (especially in an age of extremes)? Philippians 4:5.**
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## 5. STANDING FOR PRINCIPLE, BY GRACE

- a. How far-reaching is our duty to uphold God's health laws? To whom do we owe this duty? Why? 1 Corinthians 9:24–27.
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“Eating, drinking, and dressing are carried to such excess that they become crimes. They are among the marked sins of the last days, and constitute a sign of Christ's soon coming. Time, money, and strength, which belong to the Lord, but which He has intrusted to us, are wasted in superfluities of dress and luxuries for the perverted appetite, which lessen vitality, and bring suffering and decay. It is impossible to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God when we continually fill them with corruption and disease by our own sinful indulgence.

“Knowledge must be gained in regard to how to eat and drink and dress so as to preserve health. Sickness is the result of violating nature's law. Our first duty, one which we owe to God, to ourselves, and to our fellowmen, is to obey the laws of God. These include the laws of health. If we are sick, we impose a weary tax upon our friends, and unfit ourselves for doing our duty either in the family or to our neighbors. And when premature death is the result, we bring sorrow and suffering to others; we deprive our neighbors of the help we might have rendered them; we rob our families of the comfort and help which they should have received from us, and rob God of the service He claims of us to advance His glory. Then are we not, in a high sense, transgressors of God's law?”—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 12.

“It is as truly a sin to violate the laws of our being as it is to break the ten commandments. To do either is to break God's laws.”—*Ibid.*, p. 53.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do we know that the Lifegiver cares about our health?
2. Why is health reform so important in the present day of atonement?
3. Where in Scripture is God's plan for what we should eat in these last days?
4. What does true health reform involve besides just our food?
5. How does my acceptance of the health message show my love for others?

## First Sabbath Offering for Literature for Mission Fields

There is no question that literature is a vital tool in spreading the present truth to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples. A message in writing tends to carry greater impact and be more precise and easily understood than mere speech.

Yet many precious souls for whom Christ died are unable to receive the benefit of such literature—especially if they are in a restricted nation or are cumbered with extreme poverty. A truth-filled piece of literature is beyond their reach unless diligent efforts are made to provide for this need to the many who are hungering and thirsting for it.

First Sabbath Offerings for literature for poor countries and/or Mission Fields have been gathered before—and we truly thank the donors who have given to this worthy cause in the past. Your gifts have enabled thousands to get a chance to read the truth for themselves.

Today's world is a vast place with an ever-growing population, so the need is greater than ever before. The proceeds for today's offering for literature will involve a greater emphasis on translating and printing literature in new languages for people who have never received it before.

"To give *all nations* the message of warning—this is to be the object of our efforts. . . . Upon all who have received the word of God there rests the burden of doing this work. From city to city, and from country to country, they are to carry the publications containing the promise of the Saviour's soon coming. These publications are to be translated into every language; for to all the world the gospel is to be preached."—*The Review and Herald*, February 9, 1905.

With this in mind, it is our prayer that God may touch the hearts of all of us to give generously for this important need!

*The General Conference Publishing Department*



# Order and Organization

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

“God designs that His people shall be a unit, that they shall see eye to eye and be of the same mind and of the same judgment. This cannot be accomplished without a clear, pointed, living testimony in the church.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 361.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 343–362.

## Sunday

December 1

### 1. DEVELOPING AN ORGANIZED MIND

- a. What question, asked to God by Manoah, should guide our inborn quest for mental growth? Judges 13:8, 12.

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“The mind, the soul, is built up by that upon which it feeds.”—*Education*, p. 126.

“It is right for the youth to feel that they must reach the highest development of their mental powers. We would not restrict the education to which God has set no limit. But our attainments will avail nothing if not put to use for the honor of God and the good of humanity. Unless our knowledge is a steppingstone to the accomplishment of the highest purposes, it is worthless. . . .

“Heart education is of more importance than the education gained from books. It is well, even essential, to obtain a knowledge of the world in which we live; but if we leave eternity out of our reckoning, we shall make a failure from which we can never recover.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 497.

“A ‘Thus saith the Lord’ should guide you in all your plans of education.”—*Ibid.*, p. 69.

“The mind is to be disciplined, trained, educated; for the child of God is to do service for God in ways that are not natural, or in harmony with inborn inclination. Those who become the followers of Christ find that new motives of action are supplied, new thoughts arise, and new actions must result.”—*Christian Education*, p. 122.

## 2. SELF-DISCIPLINE FOR ETERNITY

- a. **In our pursuit of knowledge, of what should we beware in order to develop a sound mind? Ecclesiastes 12:12.**

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“If the physical powers are not taxed equally with the mental, too much strain is brought upon the latter. Unless every part of the human machinery performs its allotted tasks, the mental powers cannot be used to their highest capacity for any length of time.”—*Christian Education*, p. 211.

“Much is lost by a neglect to unite physical with mental taxation. The leisure hours of the student are often occupied with frivolous pleasures, which weaken physical, mental, and moral powers. Under the debasing power of sensual indulgence, or the untimely excitement of courtship and marriage, many students fail to reach that height of mental development which they might otherwise have attained.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 36, 37.

“How prevalent is the habit of turning day into night, and night into day. Many youth sleep soundly in the morning, when they should be up with the early singing birds, and be stirring when all nature is awake. Let youth practise regularity in the hours for going to bed, and for rising and they will improve in health, in mind, in spirit, in disposition.”—*The Youth's Instructor*, September 7, 1893.

- b. **What practical science should we also study? 1 Thessalonians 4:11.**

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“As far as possible, it is well to consider what is to be accomplished through the day. Make a memorandum of the different duties that await your attention, and set apart a certain time for the doing of each duty. Let everything be done with thoroughness, neatness, and dispatch.”—*Ibid.*

- c. **Of what value is an undisciplined mind? Proverbs 25:28.**

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“An ordinary mind, well disciplined, will accomplish more and higher work than will the most highly educated mind and the greatest talents without self-control.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 335.

### 3. INCREASING OUR WISDOM

- a. Name some keys to overcoming inefficiency. Colossians 3:23, 24.
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“Of one girl whom I employed, I was told that she would sit down in the midst of her unfinished work, when the dishes were not washed, or the beds made, and forget her duties while she read a book or a newspaper. In this way she would spend hours of time that should have been employed in doing the work for which she was paid. The house would be left in confusion for hours after it should have been in perfect order, because of this untidy habit.”—*The Youth's Instructor*, September 7, 1893.

- b. What contrast exists between the wise and the foolish? Proverbs 9:8; 15:31.
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“Of another whom I thought of employing. I learned that she was disrespectful to those who employed her, unless she took a fancy to them. Those whom she fancied, she would serve to her utmost, and the friends whom she chose, who flattered and approved her course, received her affection and favors. But I reasoned, ‘If she is a Christian, she will certainly take counsel and advice.’ A sorrowful expression came over the face of the person to whom I was speaking, as she said, ‘I am afraid you will be disappointed. If you seek to show her where she is erring, she will insist that she is doing the best she knows how, and instead of correcting her faults, will take on the air of one who is much injured. She does not respect authority, and will keep up rebellion in her mind, which, if not expressed in words, will be plainly revealed in her countenance. She will not keep her opinions to herself, but will freely tell others what she thinks about those who seek to correct her errors.’ ”—*Ibid.*

- c. Although reproof is not easy to bear, what must everyone learn who wants to grow and succeed in life? Proverbs 17:10; 6:23.
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“The Lord sends us warning, counsel, and reproof, that we may have opportunity to correct our errors before they become second nature.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 160.

## 4. ORDER THAT HONORS GOD

- a. In which ways should the body of Christ be orderly? For what purpose? 1 Corinthians 1:10; 14:40; 12:27, 28.
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“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9.

- b. Looking back in history, explain how Korah challenged the leaders appointed by God and the powerful way God stopped his rebellion. Numbers 16:1–3, 28–35. How did Korah use flattery to deceive the people?
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“Korah and his company, who aspired to the priesthood in their self-confidence, even ventured to take the censers and to stand in the door of the tabernacle with Moses. Korah had cherished his envy and rebellion until he was self-deceived, and he really thought the congregation were righteous, and that Moses was a tyrannical ruler. The people, flattered by their rebellious leaders, had been led to believe that all their troubles originated with Moses, who was continually reminding them of their sins. They thought that if Korah could lead them, and encourage them, and dwell upon their righteous acts instead of reminding them of their failures, they would have a very peaceful, prosperous journey, and he would without doubt lead them, not back and forward in the wilderness, but into the promised land.”—*The Signs of the Times*, September 9, 1880.

- c. How did God endorse Moses’ ministry of reproof? Numbers 17:1–10.
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“This wonderful rod was preserved to be frequently shown to the people to remind them of the past, to prevent them from murmuring, and again calling in question to whom the priesthood rightfully belonged. After the children of Israel were fully convinced of their wrong, in unjustly accusing Moses and Aaron, as they had done, they saw their past rebellion in its true light, and they were terrified.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, pp. 35, 36.

**5. REPROVING POPULAR SINS**

- a. Which item in the heavenly ark symbolizes God's organized ministry of reproof? Hebrews 9:3, 4; 8:1, 2. How does this apply to us today?
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"The Hebrews were not willing to submit to the directions and restrictions of the Lord. They were restless under restraint, and unwilling to receive reproof. This was the secret of their murmuring against Moses. Had they been left free to do as they pleased, there would have been fewer complaints against their leader. All through the history of the church God's servants have had the same spirit to meet."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 404.

- b. What character of ministry is needed in order to prepare God's people to meet the Lord in peace? 2 Timothy 4:1–5; Titus 2:11–15.
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"We do not consider that our dangers are any less than those of the Hebrews, but greater. There will be temptations to jealousies and murmurings, and there will be outspoken rebellion, as are recorded of ancient Israel. There will ever be a spirit to rise up against the reproof of sins and wrongs. But shall the voice of reproof be hushed because of this? If so, we shall be in no better situation than are the various denominations in our land who are afraid to touch the errors and prevailing sins of the people.

"Those whom God has set apart as ministers of righteousness have solemn responsibilities laid upon them to reprove the sins of the people."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 358, 359.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Name some points to remember about how our minds must be developed.
2. Why is temperance needed, even in intellectual pursuits?
3. Name some faulty work habits that should be overcome.
4. In what ways does the rebellion of Korah repeat itself today?
5. What solemn duty rests upon ministers and leaders at this hour?



# Spiritual Vitality

“Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4, last part).

“We cannot change ourselves; but the power of choice is ours, and it rests with us to determine what we will become.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 56.

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, pp. 73–95.

## Sunday

December 8

### 1. A SYMBOL OF GOD’S CHARACTER

a. What did God direct Moses to place in the ark of the covenant, even before the pot of manna and Aaron’s rod? Deuteronomy 10:1–5.

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b. Where did the law come from, and what was its purpose? Isaiah 51:4.

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“The words written by the finger of God on tables of stone so perfectly reveal His will concerning His people that none need make any mistake.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 225.

“The living God has given in His holy law a transcript of His character. The greatest Teacher the world has ever known is Jesus Christ. And what is the standard He has given for all who believe in Him to reach? ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect’ (Matthew 5:48). As God is perfect in His high sphere of action, so man may be perfect in his human sphere. The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. There is opened before us a path of continual advancement. We have an object to reach, a standard to gain which includes everything good and pure and noble and elevated. There should be continual striving and constant progress onward and upward toward perfection of character.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 141.

**2. REFLECTING HIS CHARACTER**

- a. Besides on tables of stone and in heaven (Hebrews 9:3, 4; 8:1, 2), where are the Ten Commandments to be written? By whom? Hebrews 8:10; 2 Corinthians 3:3.
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- b. What will be the experience of those who have the law of God within their heart? Psalms 37:31; 40:8. How will their speech change?
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“In mercy God seeks to lead the unrighteous to repentance. The obedient will delight in the law of the Lord. He puts His laws in their minds, and writes them in their hearts. Their speech will be such as is prompted by an indwelling Saviour. They have that faith that works by love and purifies the soul from all the defilement of Satan’s suggestions. Their heart yearns after God. In their conversion they love to dwell upon His mercy and goodness, for to them He is altogether lovely. They learn the language of heaven, the country of their adoption.”—*The Upward Look*, p. 297.

- c. What does it mean to live under God’s grace? Romans 6:4, 10–18; 8:1.
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“Those who will accept [Christ] as their personal Saviour will grow in grace, and in His strength will be enabled to obey the law of God.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 11, 1897.

“All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

“It is God who gives us power to overcome. Those who hear His voice and obey His commandments are enabled to form righteous characters.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 943.

### 3. FRUITS OF OUR CONNECTION

#### a. How do we receive divine strength from Christ? John 15:1–4.

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“All who take their position on the Lord’s side will, as branches of the True Vine, receive nourishment, and will be stimulated by the vine to bear like fruit. They will be in cooperation with God, according to their ability exercising themselves unto godliness by walking in newness of life, which is daily repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 23, 1897.

#### b. As we look to Jesus in the sanctuary above, what will our experience become? How does this also involve church relationships? Ephesians 2:4–6, 10; Hebrews 10:23–25.

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“In a life of service to Christ, connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful performance of church duties.”—*Education*, pp. 268, 269.

“Notwithstanding our varying types of character, we are brought into church capacity through the profession of our faith. Christ is the head of the church; and if those whose names are on the church record do not belong to Jesus, the invisible Head, they are like the fruitless branch of the vine, and are taken away. If one is really a fruitful branch, he will make it manifest by bearing fruit, giving evidence of his absolute allegiance to Christ. He will have a spiritual connection with God. Faith and love constitute the gold of character, and will be ever working on the Lord’s side to unite and harmonize the members of Christ’s body.

“Name, position, or wealth will not weigh one jot in the scale with God. Men and women are admitted to the church who do it no honor. But however poor, whatever the rank, tribe, or nationality, all are to be heartily received on their confession of faith, if you have evidence that the grace of God, which brings salvation, has wrought upon the heart. . . .

“This faith in Christ is demonstrated by works; it produces a transformation of character through the effectual working of God’s Holy Spirit. . . . Contrition of soul will mark the experience of every one who has received the grace of Christ.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 23, 1897.

**4. COMING INTO LINE**

- a. Explain Christ's goal for His church. Ephesians 5:1, 2, 27; Titus 2:13, 14.
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“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 214.

- b. What unites the members of the church? 1 Peter 4:8–11; 1 John 1:7.
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“Christ calls for unity. But He does not call for us to unify on wrong practices. The God of heaven draws a sharp contrast between pure, elevating, ennobling truth and false, misleading doctrines. He calls sin and impenitence by the right name.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 175.

- c. Describe some ways God purifies us. Proverbs 27:17; Isaiah 58:6–10.
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“While the world needs sympathy, while it needs the prayers and assistance of God's people, while it needs to see Christ in the lives of His followers, the people of God are equally in need of opportunities that draw out their sympathies, give efficiency to their prayers, and develop in them a character like that of the divine pattern.

“It is to provide these opportunities that God has placed among us the poor, the unfortunate, the sick, and the suffering. They are Christ's legacy to His church, and they are to be cared for as He would care for them. In this way God takes away the dross and purifies the gold. . . .

“In placing among us the poor and the suffering, the Lord is testing us to reveal to us what is in our hearts.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 261.

“Good works cost us a sacrifice, but it is in this very sacrifice that they provide discipline. These obligations bring us into conflict with natural feelings and propensities, and in fulfilling them we gain victory after victory over the objectionable traits of our characters.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 262, 263.

## 5. THE TEST OF OUR DEVOTION

- a. What reveals whether we truly love God? 1 John 3:14, 15, 18; 4:20, 21.

“The sanctification of the soul by the working of the Holy Spirit is the implanting of Christ’s nature in humanity. Gospel religion is Christ in the life—a living, active principle. It is the grace of Christ revealed in character and wrought out in good works. . . .

“Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by *trying* to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance.

It is not possible for the heart in which Christ abides to be destitute of love. If we love God because He first loved us, we shall love all for whom Christ died.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 384. [Author’s italics in the original.]

“A healthy Christian is one who has Christ formed within, the hope of glory. He loves truth, purity, and holiness, and will manifest spiritual vitality, having love for the word of God, and seeking communion with those who are acquainted with the word, in order that he may catch every ray of light that God has communicated to them, which reveals Christ and makes Him more precious to the soul. He who has sound faith finds that Christ is the life of the soul, that He is in him as a well of water springing up unto everlasting life, and he delights to conform every power of the soul to the obedience of his Lord.”—*The Review and Herald*, December 11, 1894.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why were the Ten Commandments to be preserved in the ark?
2. Describe the type of obedience the Lord longs to see in us.
3. What are some of the ways that discipleship of Christ is revealed?
4. Why is purity important for us, both individually and collectively?
5. How can I develop a deeper love both for Christ and others?

# “As a Lamp That Burneth”

“For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth” (Isaiah 62:1).

“Let us not allow the light which is in us to go out because we refuse to give that light to others.”—*Pacific Union Recorder*, February 20, 1908.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 157–162, 307, 308, 385–389.

## Sunday

December 15

### 1. AWAKENING OUR PRIORITIES

- a. What must become the chief aim of every believer today? Isaiah 62:1, 2.

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“There is no greater evidence that those who have received great light do not appreciate that light, than is given by their refusal to let their light shine upon those who are in darkness.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 16, 1895.

“If you . . . were in a saved state, you would all feel the perilous condition of the unsaved. The day will come, unless a great change is wrought in you, when you will hear from many lips. ‘I associated with these Christians, yet they never told me of my danger. They never warned me. I thought that if I was in danger of being lost, they would not rest day or night without arousing me to see my lost condition. Now I am lost. If I had been in their place and had seen one in a similar condition, I would not have rested until I had made them sensible of their state and pointed them to the only One who can save them.’”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 181, 182.

“What can be said to the idlers that will lead them to understand, and arouse them from their do-nothing position? O, that Zion would arouse and put on her beautiful garments. Brethren and sisters, as members of the church, let us act our part faithfully. . . .

“God has given to every man his work; not one is excused from service.”—*Pacific Union Recorder*, February 20, 1908.

## 2. IN AN AGE OF MORAL DARKNESS

### a. What cry strongly echoes down to us all? Isaiah 21:11 (last part), 12.

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“Everything seems to be stirred with an intense activity from beneath. Excitement is continually kept up. Feasting, buying, and selling, are brought into the churches. The watchman cries, ‘The morning cometh, and also the night.’ The night symbolizes prevalence of error, misinterpretation and misapplication of Scripture. Every species of delusion is now being brought in. The plainest truths of God’s word are covered with a mass of man-made theories. Deadly errors are presented as the truth to which all must bow. The simplicity of true godliness is buried beneath tradition.”—*The Bible Echo*, February 1, 1897.

“A great work is to be done in the world, and what efforts are we making for its accomplishment? The people have had too much sermonizing; but have they been taught how to labor for those for whom Christ died? Has a line of labor been devised and placed before them in such a way that each has seen the necessity of taking part in the work?

“It is evident that all the sermons that have been preached have not developed a large class of self-denying workers. This subject is to be considered as involving the most serious results. Our future for eternity is at stake.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 431.

“We are certainly living in the closing days of this earth’s history. We need to devote much time to our spiritual interests, if we would experience the spiritual growth that is essential in this age. We are to make decided reforms. The Voice said: The watchmen need to awake, and give the trumpet a certain sound. The morning cometh; and also the night. Wake up, My watchmen. Voices that should now be heard presenting the truth are silent. Souls are perishing in their sins, and ministers and physicians and teachers are asleep. Wake up the watchmen!”—*Pacific Union Recorder*, February 20, 1908.

### b. How is the Lord eager to transform our churches through His grace? Isaiah 60:1, 2.

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“The churches are withering up because they have failed to use their talents in diffusing the light of truth to others. Careful instruction should be given that will be as lessons from the Master that all may put their light to practical use in benefiting others.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 28, 1893.

### 3. RESULTS PROMISED

- a. **What assurance does God offer to all yearning to be imbued with His Holy Spirit in order to share truth with others? Proverbs 1:23; Psalm 81:10.**
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“All who have received the light of truth are placed under solemn obligations to let that light shine forth to others. Each can, in his humble sphere, do something for the Master. He may not be able to make magnificent offerings to advance the cause of God, but he can give the willing, cheerful, service of an obedient heart. All cannot be preachers; all cannot be generals in the army of the Lord; but all can be faithful privates, following in humble obedience the commands of the Captain of their salvation. They can cheer their companions with words of hope and courage, and by so doing will show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. God demands of all the very best service that they can give. If they can only do the lowly errands for Him, these should not be neglected.”—*The Review and Herald*, August 24, 1886.

“Church-members need to be taught that the measure of their success in ministering to souls will be the measure of their self-denial and their faithfulness in following Christ’s example.”—*Pacific Union Recorder*, February 20, 1908.

- b. **What results from faithful efforts to share light? Zechariah 8:20–23.**
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“God will move upon men of humble position in society, men who have not become insensible to the bright rays of light through so long contemplating the light of truth, and refusing to make any improvement or advancement therein. Many such will be seen hurrying hither and thither, constrained by the Spirit of God to bring the light to others. The truth, the word of God, is as a fire in their bones, filling them with a burning desire to enlighten those who sit in darkness. Many, even among the uneducated, now proclaim the words of the Lord. Children are impelled by the Spirit to go forth and declare the message from Heaven. The Spirit is poured out upon all who will yield to its promptings, and, casting off all man’s machinery, his binding rules and cautious methods, they will declare the truth with the might of the Spirit’s power. Multitudes will receive the faith and join the armies of the Lord.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 23, 1895.



#### 4. COURAGE AMID OPPOSITION

- a. Describe the experience of Jeremiah when mocked and derided in witnessing for God and how he overcame his fears. Jeremiah 20:7–11.
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“Because of the bitterness, hatred, and opposition manifested against the word of God spoken in reproof, many other messengers of God have decided to do as Jeremiah decided. But what did this prophet of the Lord do after his decision? Try as much as he would, he could not hold his peace. As soon as he came into the assemblies of the people, he found that the Spirit of the Lord was stronger than he was. . . .

“In this generation, when God’s servants speak the word of the Lord to reprove wrongdoers, to rebuke those who bring in wrong principles, have they not had an experience similar to that which Jeremiah had? When a course of action to pervert justice and judgment is introduced, the word of the Lord must be spoken in reproof.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1156.

- b. What should we learn from how prophets and apostles shared God’s messages with such tremendous power? Micah 3:8; 1 Corinthians 2:4, 5.
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“The word of God was preached by His ministers in early days ‘in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.’ The hearts of men were stirred by the proclamation of the gospel. Why is it that the preaching of the truth has now so little power to move the people? Is God less willing to bestow His blessing upon the laborers in His cause in this age than in the apostles’ day?

“The warning which we bear to the world must prove to them a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. And will the Lord send forth His servants to proclaim this fearfully solemn message and withhold from them His Holy Spirit? Shall frail, erring men, without special grace and power from God, dare to stand between the living and the dead to speak the words of everlasting life? Our Lord is rich in grace, mighty in power; He will abundantly bestow these gifts upon all who come to Him in faith. He is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than are parents to give good gifts to their children. The reason why the precious, important truth for this time is not powerful to save is that we do not work in faith.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 157, 158.

## 5. REAPING THE BOUNTY

- a. What was the purpose of Jesus in sending the miraculous draught of fishes? What can we learn from this experience in our labor for souls? Luke 5:4–10.

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“Be not so self-caring. There are thousands whose lives are just as precious as yours. Then why do you wrap your coat about you, and hug the shore? Awake to duty and to usefulness! If you will launch out into the deep and let down your nets, the Master will gather in the fishes, and you will see of the mighty working of God. . . .

“Teach the people to have light in themselves, and not to depend upon the ministers. They should have Christ as their helper, and should educate themselves to help one another, so that the minister can be free to enter new fields.”—*Historical Sketches*, p. 139.

“Our people have had great light, and yet much of our ministerial force is exhausted on the churches, in teaching those who should be teachers; enlightening those who should be ‘the light of the world.’”—*Evangelism*, p. 382.

- b. How is our Creator able to perform His work using the individuality He has graciously bestowed upon each one of us? Job 34:11; 37:7.

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“Men with one talent may reach a class that those with two or five talents cannot approach. Great and small alike are chosen vessels to bear the water of life to thirsting souls. . . . Let God work through whom He will. The message must go.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 462.

“My brethren and sisters, study your plans; grasp every opportunity of speaking to your neighbors and associates or of reading something to them from books that contain present truth. Show that you regard as of first importance the salvation of the souls for whom Christ has made so great a sacrifice.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 129.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Of what will many lost souls rightfully complain after it's too late?
2. Beyond mere sermonizing, what is the heart of the church's duty?
3. Explain God's plan to enlighten the world with the present truth.
4. How is the example taught by Jeremiah to be rewarded?
5. In what ways can I wean myself from burdening the ministers?

# To Be Sealed as Blameless

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24).

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them.”— *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 214.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 367–375;  
*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 207–216.

## Sunday

December 22

### 1. AN EXPERIENCE ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION

- a. What has Christ promised for all who gain the victory over sin? Revelation 3:5.
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- b. Upon what must we set our affections in order to experience this victory? Colossians 3:1–3.
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“Christ says of the overcomer, ‘I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.’ The names of all those who have once given themselves to God are written in the book of life, and their characters are now passing in review before Him. Angels of God are weighing moral worth. They are watching the development of character in those now living, to see if their names can be retained in the book of life. A probation is granted us in which to wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Who is doing this work? Who is separating from himself sin and selfishness? ‘Ye are dead,’ says the apostle Paul of the true followers of Christ, ‘and your life is hid with Christ in God.’ When we are alive to God, we are dead to self. May God help us to die to self. Whose names will not be blotted out of the book of life? Only the names of those who have loved God with all the powers of their being, and their neighbors as themselves.”—*Historical Sketches*, p. 138.

## 2. A WORK FOR THIS ERA

- a. Name a crucial work being carried out by four mighty angels throughout the day of atonement. Revelation 7:1–4.
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“Four mighty angels hold back the powers of this earth till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. The nations of the world are eager for conflict; but they are held in check by the angels. When this restraining power is removed, there will come a time of trouble and anguish.”—*Maranatha*, p. 257.

“A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory.

“While their hands were loosening, and the four winds were about to blow, the merciful eye of Jesus gazed on the remnant that were not sealed, and He raised His hands to the Father and pleaded with Him that He had spilled His blood for them. Then another angel was commissioned to fly swiftly to the four angels and bid them hold until the servants of God were sealed with the seal of the living God in their foreheads.”—*My Life Today*, p. 308.

- b. What determines the outcome of the coming conflict for each of us? Romans 8:6. What are the evidences of a carnal heart or mind? 1 Corinthians 3:3, 4.
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“As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle. How carefully we should improve the little remaining period of our probation!

“Minds that have been given up to loose thought need to change. . . . The thoughts must be centered upon God. Now is the time to put forth earnest effort to overcome the natural tendencies of the carnal heart.”—*Maranatha*, p. 243.

### 3. A SOLEMN TASK

- a. Explain how the sealing work involves the third angel of Revelation 14. What shows the solemn importance of being fully sanctified? Revelation 14:9–12; 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24.
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“I . . . saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, ‘Fearful is his work. Awful is his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat from the tares, and seal, or bind, the wheat for the heavenly garner. These things should engross the whole mind, the whole attention.’ ”—*Early Writings*, p. 118.

“Many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully.

“I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father.”—*Ibid.*, p. 71.

- b. What final blessing does God bestow especially to prepare the harvest of souls for His kingdom? Joel 2:23; Zechariah 10:1.
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“The sins of Israel must go to judgment beforehand. Every sin must be confessed at the sanctuary, then the work will move. It must be done now. . . .

“When the four angels let go, Christ will set up His kingdom. None receive the latter rain but those who are doing all they can. Christ would help us. All could be overcomers by the grace of God, through the blood of Jesus.”—*Spalding and Magan Collection*, 2a, pp. 2, 3.

#### 4. CONDITIONS FOR THE LATTER RAIN

- a. What is needed in order to receive the latter rain? Isaiah 43:25; 44:22.

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“The names of some will be blotted out of the book of life. Whose shall it be? Let us each examine ourselves carefully to see if we are in the faith; let us be diligent to make sure work for eternity. Jesus says that He will confess the name of the overcomer before His Father, and before the holy angels.”—*Historical Sketches*, p. 139.

“Those that overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, will be the favored ones who shall receive the seal of the living God. Those whose hands are not clean, whose hearts are not pure, will not have the seal of the living God. Those who are planning sin and acting it will be passed by. Only those who, in their attitude before God, are filling the position of those who are repenting and confessing their sins in the great anti-typical day of atonement, will be recognized and marked as worthy of God’s protection.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 445.

“No special work for God can be accomplished until self and selfishness are overcome.”—*Historical Sketches*, p. 139.

“Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 187.

“We want the deep movings of the Spirit of God in our hearts, that we may not only be able to secure for ourselves the white raiment, but that we may so influence others that their names may be entered in the book of life, never to be blotted out.”—*Historical Sketches*, p. 140.

- b. What should we realize about the latter rain? Hosea 6:3; Acts 3:19.

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“The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are ‘the times of refreshing’ to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said, ‘Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out [in the investigative Judgment], when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus’ (Acts 3:19, 20).

“Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from Heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given.”—*The Great Controversy*, 1888 ed., pp. 611, 612. [Words in brackets in the original.]

5. ULTIMATE VICTORY

- a. When Jesus completes His ministry in heaven, what encouraging declaration will He make in behalf of the overcomers? Revelation 22:11 (last part).

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- b. How may we realize the wonderful promises made to all who gain the victory through the blood of the Lamb? Revelation 22:14; Isaiah 26:2-4.

“Glorious will be the reward bestowed when the faithful workers gather about the throne of God and of the Lamb. . . . They will stand before the throne, accepted in the Beloved. All their sins have been blotted out, all their transgressions borne away. Now they can look upon the undimmed glory of the throne of God. They have been partakers with Christ in His sufferings, they have been workers together with Him in the plan of redemption, and they are partakers with Him in the joy of seeing souls saved in the kingdom of God, there to praise God through all eternity.

“My brother, my sister, I urge you to prepare for the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Day by day cast the love of the world out of your hearts. Understand by experience what it means to have fellowship with Christ. Prepare for the judgment, that when Christ shall come, to be admired in all them that believe, you may be among those who will meet Him in peace. In that day the redeemed will shine forth in the glory of the Father and the Son. The angels, touching their golden harps, will welcome the King and His trophies of victory—those who have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. A song of triumph will peal forth, filling all heaven. Christ has conquered. He enters the heavenly courts, accompanied by His redeemed ones, the witnesses that His mission of suffering and sacrifice has not been in vain.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 285, 286.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. With Christ’s help, why must we overcome our character defects?
- 2. Why has Jesus bidden four mighty angels to hold back the winds?
- 3. What do many people misunderstand about the latter rain or refreshing?
- 4. If our sins are blotted out, with what blessed task can God entrust us?
- 5. What can I do today to ensure I am one of the ultimate overcomers?

# *First Sabbath Offerings*



**OCTOBER 5**  
for a Chapel in  
Las Vegas, NV (USA)  
(see p. 4.)

**NOVEMBER 2**  
for the Headquarters  
of the Southern  
Mindanao Conference  
(see p. 25.)



**DECEMBER 7**  
Literature for  
Mission Fields  
(see p. 51.)