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VOL. 5

ELLEN G. WHITE

S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 5

Ellen G. White

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Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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Matthew

Chapter 2

1, 2. Attention Focused on Birth of Jesus.—The Lord moved upon the wise men to go in search of Jesus, and He directed their course by a star. This star, leaving them when near Jerusalem, led them to make inquiries in Judah; for they thought it was not possible for the chief priests and scribes to be ignorant of this great event. The coming of the wise men made the whole nation acquainted with the object of their journey, and directed their attention to the important events which were transpiring (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:26).

16-18. Faithfulness Would Have Rendered Wrath Harmless.—All this terrible calamity was suffered of God, to humble the pride of the Jewish nation. Their crimes and wickedness had been so great that the Lord permitted the wicked Herod to thus punish them. Had they been less boastful and ambitious, their lives pure, their habits simple and sincere, God would have preserved them from being thus humiliated and afflicted by their enemies. God would, in a signal manner, have made the wrath of the king harmless to His people, had they been faithful and perfect before Him. But He could not especially work for them, for their works were abhorred by Him (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:28).

Chapter 3

1-3. See EGW on Luke 1:76, 77.

7, 8 (Luke 3:7-9). Who Were Vipers?—The Pharisees were very strict in regard to the outward observance of forms and customs, and were filled with haughty, worldly, hypocritical self-righteousness. The Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead and the existence of angels, and were skeptical in regard to God. This sect was largely composed of unworthy characters, many of whom were licentious in their habits. By the word “vipers” John meant those who were malignant and antagonistic, bitterly opposed to the expressed will of God.

John exhorted these men to “bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.” That is, Show that you are converted, that your characters are transformed.... Neither words nor profession, but fruits—the forsaking of sins, and obedience to the commandments of God—show the reality of genuine repentance and true conversion (MS 112, 1901).

13-17 (Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:32, 33). Angels and a Golden Dove.—Jesus was our example in all things that pertain to life and godliness. He was baptized in Jordan, just as those who come to Him must be baptized. The heavenly

angels were looking with intense interest upon the scene of the Saviour's baptism, and could the eyes of those who were looking on, have been opened, they would have seen the heavenly host surrounding the Son of God as He bowed on the banks of the Jordan. The Lord had promised to give John a sign whereby he might know who was the Messiah, and now as Jesus went up out of the water, the promised sign was given; for he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God, like a dove of burnished gold, hovered over the head of Christ, and a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (*The Youth's Instructor*, June 23, 1892).

(Romans 8:26; Hebrews 4:16.) Heaven Open to Petitions.—[Matthew 3:13-17 quoted.] What does this scene mean to us? How thoughtlessly we have read the account of the baptism of our Lord, not realizing that its significance was of the greatest importance to us, and that Christ was accepted of the Father in man's behalf. As Jesus bowed on the banks of Jordan and offered up His petition, humanity was presented to the Father by Him who had clothed His divinity with humanity. Jesus offered Himself to the Father in man's behalf, that those who had been separated from God through sin, might be brought back to God through the merits of the divine Petitioner. Because of sin the earth had been cut off from heaven, but with His human arm Christ encircles the fallen race, and with His divine arm He grasps the throne of the Infinite, and earth is brought into favor with heaven, and man into communion with his God. The prayer of Christ in behalf of lost humanity cleaved its way through every shadow that Satan had cast between man and God, and left a clear channel of communication to the very throne of glory. The gates were left ajar, and heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God, in the form of a dove, encircled the head of Christ, and the voice of God was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The voice of God was heard in answer to the petition of Christ, and this tells the sinner that his prayer will find a lodgment at the throne of the Father. The Holy Spirit will be given to those who seek for its power and grace, and will help our infirmities when we would have audience with God. Heaven is open to our petitions, and we are invited to come "boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We are to come in faith, believing that we shall obtain the very things we ask of Him (*The Signs of the Times*, April 18, 1892).

The Sound of a Death Knell.—When Christ presented Himself to John for baptism, Satan was among the witnesses of that event. He saw the lightnings flash from the cloudless heavens. He heard the majestic voice of Jehovah that resounded through heaven, and echoed through the earth like peals of thunder, announcing, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He saw the brightness of the Father's glory overshadowing the form of Jesus, thus pointing out with unmistakable assurance the One in that crowd whom He acknowledged as His Son. The circumstances connected with this baptismal scene were of the greatest interest to Satan. He knew then for a certainty that unless he could overcome Christ, from thenceforth there would be a limit to his power. He understood that this communication from the throne of God signified that heaven was now more directly accessible to man than it had been, and the most intense hatred was aroused in his breast.

When Satan led man to sin, he hoped that God's abhorrence of sin would forever separate Him from man, and break the connecting link between heaven and earth. When from the opening heavens he heard the voice of God addressing His Son, it was to him as the sound of a death knell. It told him that now God was about to unite man more closely to Himself, and give moral power to overcome temptation, and to escape from the entanglements of satanic devices. Satan well knew the position which Christ had held in heaven as the Son of God, the Beloved of the Father; and that Christ should leave the joy and honor of heaven, and come to this world as a man, filled him with apprehension. He knew that this condescension on the part of the Son of God boded no good to him....

The time had now come when Satan's empire over the world was to be contested, his right disputed, and he feared that his power would be broken. He knew, through prophecy, that a Saviour was predicted, and that His kingdom would not be established in earthly triumph and with worldly honor and display. He knew that the prophecies foretold a kingdom to be established by the Prince of heaven upon the earth which he claimed as his dominion. This kingdom would embrace all the kingdoms of the world, and then the power and glory of Satan would cease, and he would receive his retribution for the sins he had introduced into the world, and for the misery he had brought upon the human race. He knew that everything which concerned his prosperity was depending upon his success or failure in overcoming Christ with his temptations; and he brought to bear on the Saviour every artifice at his command to allure Him from His integrity (*The Signs of the Times*, August 4, 1887).

16, 17 (Ephesians 1:6. See EGW on Matthew 4:1-11). A Pledge of Love and Light.—In our behalf the Saviour laid hold of the power of Omnipotence, and as we pray to God, we may know that Christ's prayer has ascended before, and that God has heard and answered it. With all our sins and weaknesses we are not cast aside as worthless. "He hath made us accepted in the beloved." The glory that rested upon Christ is a pledge of the love of God for us. It tells of the power of prayer,—how the human voice may reach the ear of God, and our petitions find acceptance in the courts of heaven. The light that fell from the open portals upon the head of our Saviour, will fall upon us as we pray for help to resist temptation. The voice that spoke to Jesus says to every believing soul, "This is my beloved child, in whom I am well pleased" (MS 125, 1902).

Assurance of Acceptance.—Through the gates ajar there streamed bright beams of glory from the throne of Jehovah, and this light shines even upon us. The assurance given to Christ is assurance to every repenting, believing, obedient child of God that he is accepted in the Beloved (*The Signs of the Times*, July 31, 1884).

A Way Through the Dark Shadow.—Christ's prayer on the banks of the Jordan includes every one who will believe in Him. The promise that you are accepted in the Beloved comes to you. God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This means that through the dark shadow which Satan has thrown athwart your pathway Christ has cleaved the way for you to the throne of the infinite God. He has laid hold of almighty power, and you are accepted in the Beloved (*The General Conference Bulletin*, April 4, 1901).

Chapter 4

1, 2 (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9; Luke 4:2). Moses' Fasting Not Like Christ's.—In the wilderness of temptation Christ was without food forty days. Moses had, on especial occasions, been thus long without food. But he felt not the pangs of hunger. He was not tempted and harassed by a vile and powerful foe, as was the Son of God. He was elevated above the human. He was especially sustained by the glory of God which enshrouded him (*The Signs of the Times*, June 11, 1874).

1-4 (Luke 4:1-4). The Power of Debased Appetite.—All was lost when Adam yielded to the power of appetite. The Redeemer, in whom was united both the human and the divine, stood in Adam's place, and endured a terrible fast of nearly six weeks. The length of this fast is the strongest evidence of the extent of the sinfulness and power of debased appetite upon the human family (*The Review and Herald*, August 4, 1874).

A Lesson to Take to Ourselves.—Christ was our example in all things. As we see His humiliation in the long trial and fast in the wilderness to overcome the temptations of appetite in our behalf, we are to take this lesson home to ourselves when we are tempted. If the power of appetite is so strong upon the human family, and its indulgence so fearful that the Son of God subjected Himself to such a test, how important that we feel the necessity of having appetite under the control of reason. Our Saviour fasted nearly six weeks, that He might gain for man the victory upon the point of appetite. How can professed Christians with an enlightened conscience, and Christ before them as their pattern, yield to the indulgence of those appetites which

have an enervating influence upon the mind and heart? It is a painful fact that habits of self-gratification at the expense of health, and the weakening of moral power, are holding in the bonds of slavery at the present time a large share of the Christian world.

Many who profess godliness do not inquire into the reason of Christ's long period of fasting and suffering in the wilderness. His anguish was not so much from enduring the pangs of hunger as from His sense of the fearful result of the indulgence of appetite and passion upon the race. He knew that appetite would be man's idol, and would lead him to forget God, and would stand directly in the way of his salvation (*The Review and Herald*, September 1, 1874).

Satan Attacks at Weakest Moment.—While in the wilderness, Christ fasted, but He was insensible to hunger. Engaged in constant prayer to His Father for a preparation to resist the adversary, Christ did not feel the pangs of hunger. He spent the time in earnest prayer, shut in with God. It was as if He were in the presence of His Father. He sought for strength to meet the foe, for the assurance that He would receive grace to carry out all that He had undertaken in behalf of humanity. The thought of the warfare before Him made Him oblivious to all else, and His soul was fed with the bread of life, just as today those tempted souls will be fed who go to God for aid. He ate of the truth which He was to give to the people as having power to deliver them from Satan's temptations. He saw the breaking of Satan's power over fallen and tempted ones. He saw Himself healing the sick, comforting the hopeless, cheering the desponding, and preaching the gospel to the poor,—doing the work that God had outlined for Him; and He did not realize any sense of hunger until the forty days of His fast were ended.

The vision passed away, and then, with strong craving Christ's human nature called for food. Now was Satan's opportunity to make his assault. He resolved to appear as one of the angels of light that had appeared to Christ in His vision (*Letter 159*, 1903).

The Trial Not Diminished.—Christ knew that His Father would supply Him food when it would gratify Him to do so. He would not in this severe ordeal, when hunger pressed Him beyond measure, prematurely diminish one particle of the trial allotted to Him by exercising His divine power.

Fallen man, when brought into straightened places, could not have the power to work miracles on his own behalf, to save himself from pain or anguish, or to give himself victory over his enemies. It was the purpose of God to test and prove the race, and give them an opportunity to develop character by bringing them frequently into trying positions to test their faith and confidence in His love and power. The life of Christ was a perfect pattern. He was ever, by His example and precept, teaching man that God was his dependence, and that in God should be his faith and firm trust (*The Review and Herald*, August 18, 1874).

1-11 (Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-13; see EGW on John 2:1, 2). The Whole Energies of Apostasy Rallied.—In the councils of Satan it was determined that He [Christ] must be overcome. No human being had come into the world and escaped the power of the deceiver. The whole forces of the confederacy of evil were set upon His track to engage in warfare against Him, and if possible to prevail over Him. The fiercest and most inveterate enmity was put between the seed of the woman and the serpent. The serpent himself made Christ the mark of every weapon of hell...

The life of Christ was a perpetual warfare against satanic agencies. Satan rallied the whole energies of apostasy against the Son of God. The conflict increased in fierceness and malignity, as again and again the prey was taken out of his hands. Satan assailed Christ through every conceivable form of temptation (*The Review and Herald*, October 29, 1895).

No Failure on Even One Point.—Christ passed from this scene of glory [His baptism] to one of the greatest temptation. He went into the wilderness, and there Satan met Him, and tempted Him on the very points where man will be tempted. Our Substitute and Surety passed over the

ground where Adam stumbled and fell. And the question was, Will He stumble and fall as Adam did over God's commandments? He met Satan's attacks again and again with, "It is written," and Satan left the field of conflict a conquered foe. Christ has redeemed Adam's disgraceful fall, and has perfected a character of perfect obedience, and left an example for the human family, that they may imitate the Pattern. Had He failed on one point in reference to the law of God, He would not have been a perfect offering; for it was on one point only that Adam failed (*The Review and Herald*, June 10, 1890).

Satan's Lies to Christ.—Satan told Christ that He was only to set His feet in the blood-stained path, but not to travel it. Like Abraham He was tested to show His perfect obedience. He also stated that he was the angel that stayed the hand of Abraham as the knife was raised to slay Isaac, and he had now come to save His life; that it was not necessary for Him to endure the painful hunger and death from starvation; he would help Him bear a part of the work in the plan of salvation (*The Review and Herald*, August 4, 1874).

(Matthew 3:16, 17; Mark 1:10, 11; Luke 3:21, 22.) Precious Tokens Showing Approval.—Christ did not appear to notice the reviling taunts of Satan. He was not provoked to give him proofs of His power. He meekly bore his insults without retaliation. The words spoken from heaven at His baptism were very precious, evidencing to Him that His Father approved the steps He was taking in the plan of salvation as man's substitute and surety. The opening heavens, and descent of the heavenly dove, were assurances that His Father would unite His power in heaven with that of His Son upon the earth, to rescue man from the control of Satan, and that God accepted the effort of Christ to link earth to heaven, and finite man to the Infinite.

These tokens, received from His Father, were inexpressibly precious to the Son of God through all His severe sufferings, and terrible conflict with the rebel chief (*The Review and Herald*, August 18, 1874).

(Genesis 3:1-6.) Satan Powerless to Hypnotize Christ.—Satan tempted the first Adam in Eden, and Adam reasoned with the enemy, thus giving him the advantage. Satan exercised his power of hypnotism over Adam and Eve, and this power he strove to exercise over Christ. But after the word of Scripture was quoted, Satan knew that he had no chance of triumphing (*Letter* 159, 1903).

(Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15.) The Two Adams Contrasted.—When Adam was assailed by the tempter in Eden he was without the taint of sin. He stood in the strength of his perfection before God. All the organs and faculties of his being were equally developed, and harmoniously balanced.

Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure. Here Christ overcame in the sinner's behalf, four thousand years after Adam turned his back upon the light of his home. Separated from the presence of God, the human family had been departing every successive generation, farther from the original purity, wisdom, and knowledge which Adam possessed in Eden. Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when He came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon Him, He was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed...

In what contrast is the second Adam as He entered the gloomy wilderness to cope with Satan single-handed. Since the fall the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and sinking lower in the scale of moral worth, up to the period of Christ's advent to the earth. And in order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us. He humiliated Himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that He might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him (*The Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874).

The Severest Discipline.—To keep His glory veiled as the child of a fallen race, this was the most severe discipline to which the Prince of life could subject Himself. Thus He measured His strength with

Satan. He who had been expelled from heaven fought desperately for the mastery over the One of whom in the courts above he had been jealous. What a battle was this! No language is adequate to describe it. But in the near future it will be understood by those who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony (*Letter 19*, 1901).

(Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15; 2 Peter 1:4.) The Power That Man May Command.—The Son of God was assaulted at every step by the powers of darkness. After His baptism He was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness, and suffered temptation for forty days. Letters have been coming in to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations. If He did not have man's nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man's behalf. His temptation and victory tell us that humanity must copy the Pattern; man must become a partaker of the divine nature.

In Christ, divinity and humanity were combined. Divinity was not degraded to humanity; divinity held its place, but humanity, by being united to divinity, withstood the fiercest test of temptation in the wilderness. The prince of this world came to Christ after His long fast, when He was an hungered, and suggested to Him to command the stones to become bread. But the plan of God, devised for the salvation of man, provided that Christ should know hunger, and poverty, and every phase of man's experience. He withstood the temptation, through the power that man may command. He laid hold on the throne of God, and there is not a man or woman who may not have access to the same help through faith in God. Man may become a partaker of the divine nature; not a soul lives who may not summon the aid of Heaven in temptation and trial. Christ came to reveal the source of His power, that man might never rely on his unaided human capabilities.

Those who would overcome must put to the tax every power of their being. They must agonize on their knees before God for divine power. Christ came to be our example, and to make known to us that we may be partakers of the divine nature. How?—By having escaped the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Satan did not gain the victory over Christ. He did not put his foot upon the soul of the Redeemer. He did not touch the head though he bruised the heel. Christ, by His own example, made it evident that man may stand in integrity. Men may have a power to resist evil—a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a power that will place them where they may overcome as Christ overcame. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them (*The Review and Herald*, February 18, 1890).

(Isaiah 53:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21.) The Terrible Consequences of Transgression.—Unless there is a possibility of yielding, temptation is no temptation. Temptation is resisted when man is powerfully influenced to do a wrong action and, knowing that he can do it, resists, by faith, with a firm hold upon divine power. This was the ordeal through which Christ passed. He could not have been tempted in all points as man is tempted, had there been no possibility of His failing. He was a free agent, placed on probation, as was Adam, and as is every man. In His closing hours, while hanging upon the cross, He experienced to the fullest extent what man must experience when striving against sin. He realized how bad a man may become by yielding to sin. He realized the terrible consequences of the transgression of God's law; for the iniquity of the whole world was upon Him (*The Youth's Instructor*, July 20, 1899).

Christ a Free Moral Agent.—The temptations to which Christ was subjected were a terrible reality. As a free agent, He was placed on probation, with liberty to yield to Satan's temptations and work at cross-purposes with God. If this were not so, if it had not been possible for Him to fall, He could not have been tempted in all points as the human family is tempted (*The Youth's Instructor*, October 26, 1899).

Christ on Probation.—For a period of time Christ was on probation. He took

humanity on Himself, to stand the test and trial which the first Adam failed to endure. Had He failed in His test and trial, He would have been disobedient to the voice of God, and the world would have been lost (*The Signs of the Times*, May 10, 1899).

3, 4. An Argument With Satan.—Bear in mind that it is none but God that can hold an argument with Satan (*Letter* 206, 1906).

4 (see EGW on Genesis 3:24). Deviation More Grievous Than Death.—[Matthew 4:4 quoted.] He told Satan that in order to prolong life, obedience to God's requirements was more essential than temporal food. To pursue a course of deviation from the purposes of God, in the smallest degree, would be more grievous than hunger or death (*Redemption: or The First Advent of Christ*, page 48).

5, 6. Who Can Stand a Dare?—Jesus would not place Himself in peril to please the devil. But how many today can stand a dare (MS 17, 1893)?

8-10 (Luke 4:5-8). A View of Real Conditions.—He [Satan] asked the Saviour to bow to his authority, promising that if He would do so, the kingdoms of the world would be His. He pointed Christ to his success in the world, enumerating the principalities and powers that were subject to him. He declared that what the law of Jehovah could not do, he had done.

But Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." This was to Christ just what the Bible declares it to be—a temptation. Before His sight the tempter held the kingdoms of the world. As Satan saw them, they possessed great external grandeur. But Christ saw them in a different aspect, just as they were—earthly dominions under the power of a tyrant. He saw humanity full of woe, suffering under the oppressive power of Satan. He saw the earth defiled by hatred, revenge, malice, lust, and murder. He saw fiends in the possession of the bodies and souls of men (MS 33, 1911).

10 (Luke 4:8). Command Compelled Satan.—Jesus said to this wily foe, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan had asked Christ to give him evidence that He was the Son of God, and he had in this instance the proof he had asked. At the divine command of Christ he was compelled to obey. He was repulsed and silenced. He had no power to enable him to withstand the peremptory dismissal. He was compelled without another word to instantly desist and to leave the world's Redeemer (*The Review and Herald*, September 1, 1874).

11 (Luke 4:13). A Council of Strategy.—Although Satan had failed in his most powerful temptations, yet he had not given up all hope that he might, at some future time, be successful in his efforts. He looked forward to the period of Christ's ministry, when he should have opportunities to try his artifices against Him. Baffled and defeated, he had no sooner retired from the scene of conflict than he began to lay plans for blinding the understanding of the Jews, God's chosen people, that they might not discern in Christ the world's Redeemer. He determined to fill their hearts with envy, jealousy, and hatred against the Son of God, so that they would not receive Him, but would make His life upon earth as bitter as possible.

Satan held a council with his angels, as to the course they should pursue to prevent the people from having faith in Christ as the Messiah whom the Jews had so long been anxiously expecting. He was disappointed and enraged that he had prevailed nothing against Jesus by his manifold temptations. But he now thought if he could inspire in the hearts of Christ's own people, unbelief as to His being the Promised One, he might discourage the Saviour in His mission and secure the Jews as his agents to carry out his own diabolical purposes. So he went to work in his subtle manner, endeavoring to accomplish by strategy what he had failed to do by direct, personal effort (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:97, 98).

Chapter 5

1-12. Sufficient to Prevent Bewilderment.—A study of Christ's wonderful sermon on the mount will teach the believer what must be the characteristics of those whom the Lord calls "Blessed." [Matthew 5:1-12 quoted.] ...

I thank the Lord that such plain directions

are given to believers. If we had no other instruction than is contained in these few words, here is sufficient, so that none need become bewildered. But we have a whole Bible full of precious instruction. None need be in darkness and uncertainty. Those who will seek by faith and prayer and earnest study of the Scriptures to obtain the virtues here brought to view, will easily be distinguished from those who walk not in the light. Those who refuse to follow a “Thus saith the Lord” will have no excuse to render for their persistent resistance of the Word of God (*Letter* 258, 1907).

Words of a Different Character.—As if enshrouded in a cloud of heavenly brightness, Christ pronounced from the mount of beatitudes His benedictions. The words spoken by Him were of an entirely different character from those which had fallen from the lips of the scribes and pharisees. The ones whom He pronounced blessed were the very ones they would have denounced as cursed of God. To that large concourse of people He declared that He could dispense the treasures of eternity to whomsoever He willed. Although His divinity was clothed with humanity, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. In this public manner He described the attributes of those who were to share the eternal rewards. He pointed out in particular those who would suffer persecution for His name’s sake. They were to be richly blessed, becoming heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Great would be their reward in heaven (MS 72, 1901).

A Treasury of Goodness.—Christ longed to fill the world with a peace and joy that would be a similitude of that found in the heavenly world. [Matthew 5:1-12 quoted.] ...

With clearness and power He spoke the words that were to come down to our time as a treasure of goodness. What precious words they were, and how full of encouragement. From His divine lips there fell with fullness and abundant assurance the benedictions that showed Him to be the fountain of all goodness, and that it was His prerogative to bless and impress the minds of all present. He was engaged in His peculiar, sacred province, and the treasures of eternity were at His command. In the disposal of them He knew no control. It was no robbery with Him to act in the office of God. In His blessings He embraced those who were to compose His kingdom in this world. He had brought into the world every blessing essential to the happiness and joy of every soul, and before that vast assembly He presented the riches of the grace of heaven, the accumulated treasures of the eternal, everlasting Father.

Here He specified who should be the subjects of His heavenly kingdom. He did not speak one word to flatter the men of the highest authority, the worldly dignitaries. But He presents before all the traits of character which must be possessed by the peculiar people who will compose the royal family in the kingdom of heaven. He specifies those who shall become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Himself. He proclaims publicly His choice of subjects, and assigns them their place in His service as united with Himself. Those who possess the character specified, will share with Him in the blessing and the glory and the honor that will ever come to Him.

Those who are thus distinguished and blessed will be a peculiar people, trading upon the Lord’s gifts. He speaks of those who shall suffer for His name’s sake as receiving a great reward in the kingdom of heaven. He spoke with the dignity of One who had unlimited authority, One who had all heavenly advantages to bestow upon those who would receive Him as their Saviour.

Men may usurp the authority of greatness in this world; but Christ does not recognize them; they are usurpers.

There were occasions when Christ spoke with an authority that sent His words home with irresistible force, with an overwhelming sense of the greatness of the speaker, and the human agencies shrunk into nothingness in comparison with the One before them. They were deeply moved; their minds were impressed that He was repeating the command from the most excellent glory. As He summoned the world to listen, they were spellbound and entranced and conviction came to their minds. Every word made for itself a place, and the hearers

believed and received the words that they had no power to resist. Every word He uttered seemed to the hearers as the life of God. He was giving evidence that He was the light of the world and the authority of the church, claiming pre-eminence over them all (MS 118, 1905).

13, 14 (chs. 15:9; 22:29). Humble Men Are Salt of Earth.—In His teachings, Christ likened His disciples to objects most familiar to them. He compared them to salt and to light. “Ye are the salt of the earth,” He said; “ye are the light of the world.” These words were spoken to a few poor, humble fishermen. Priests and rabbis were in that congregation of hearers, but these were not the ones addressed. With all their learning, with all their supposed instruction in the mysteries of the law, with all their claims of knowing God, they revealed that they knew Him not. To these leading men had been committed the oracles of God, but Christ declared them to be unsafe teachers. He said to them, Ye teach for doctrine the commandments of men. “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” Turning from these men to the humble fishermen, He said, “Ye are the salt of the earth” (*The Review and Herald*, August 22, 1899).

No Self-originated Light.—The light that shines from those who receive Jesus Christ is not self-originated. It is all from the Light and Life of the world. He kindles this light, even as He kindles the fire that all must use in doing His service. Christ is the light, the life, the holiness, the sanctification of all who believe, and His light is to be received and imparted in all good works. In many different ways His grace is also acting as the salt of the earth; whithersoever this salt finds its way, to homes or communities, it becomes a preserving power to save all that is good, and to destroy all that is evil (*The Review and Herald*, August 22, 1899).

17-19. Least Among Human Agencies.—[Matthew 5:17-19 quoted.] This is the judgment pronounced in the kingdom of heaven. Some have thought that the commandment breaker will be there, but will occupy the lowest place. This is a mistake. Sinners will never enter the abode of bliss. The commandment breaker, and all who unite with him in teaching that it makes no difference whether men break or observe the divine law, will by the universe of heaven be called least among the human agencies. For not only have they been disloyal themselves, but they have taught others to break the law of God. Christ pronounces judgment upon those who claim to have a knowledge of the law, but who, by precept and example, lead souls into confusion and darkness (*The Review and Herald*, November 15, 1898).

21, 22, 27, 28 (Revelation 20:12). Features of Character in Books of Heaven.—God’s law reaches the feelings and motives, as well as the outward acts. It reveals the secrets of the heart, flashing light upon things before buried in darkness. 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. By His law He measures the character of every man. As the artist transfers to the canvas the features of the face, so the features of each individual character are transferred to the books of heaven. 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).

48. Perfection in Character-building.—The Lord requires perfection from His redeemed family. He calls for perfection in character-building. Fathers and *mothers* especially need to understand the best methods of training children, that they may cooperate with God. Men and women, children and youth, are measured in the scales of heaven in accordance with that which they reveal in their home life. A Christian in the home is a Christian everywhere. Religion brought into the home exerts an influence that cannot be measured (MS 34, 1899).

The Life of a Perfect Man.—Our Saviour took up the true relationship of a human being as the Son of God. We are sons and daughters of God. In order to know how to behave ourselves circumspectly, we must follow where Christ leads the way.

For thirty years He lived the life of a perfect man, meeting the highest standard of perfection (*Letter 69*, 1897).

Chapter 6

16 (ch. 9:16). Manufactured Religion Not Life and Light.—There are times before us that will try the souls of men, and there will be need of watchfulness, of the right kind of fasting. This will not be like the fasting of the Pharisees. Their seasons of fasting were occasions of outward ceremony. They did not humble their hearts before God. They were filled with bitterness, envy, malice, strife, selfishness, and self-righteousness. While their heads were bowed in pretended humiliation, they were covetous, full of self-esteem, self-importance. They were oppressive, exacting, proud in spirit.

Everything in the Jewish service had been misinterpreted and misapplied. The purpose of the sacrificial offerings had been perverted. They were to symbolize Christ and His mission, that when He should come in the flesh, the world might recognize God in Him, and accept Him as the world's Redeemer. But their lack of true heart service for God had blinded the Jews to a knowledge of God. Exactions and ceremonies and traditions were the sum total of their religion.

The Pharisees had yet to learn that righteousness exalts a nation, that form and ceremony cannot take the place of righteousness. Christ was teaching the people as verily when enshrouded in the pillar of cloud as when seated on the mount. The same compassionate consideration for the poor was enjoined as in the lessons given to the disciples. But the responsibility of every individual in the sight of God, His mercy, love, and compassion, were not included in the lessons given to the people by the rulers in Israel. Said Christ, "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse." The truth, the life, the light, which should characterize true godliness could not be united with the manufactured religion of the Pharisees (MS 3, 1898).

24 (Luke 16:13; James 4:4). Double-minded Men Satan's Allies.—[Matthew 6:24 quoted.] Those who begin their Christian life by being half and half, will at last be found enlisted on the enemy's side, whatever may have been their first intentions. And to be an apostate, a traitor to the cause of God, is more serious than death; for it means the loss of eternal life.

Double-minded men and women are Satan's best allies. Whatever favorable opinion they may have of themselves, they are dissemblers. All who are loyal to God and the truth must stand firmly for the right because it is right. To yoke up with those who are unconsecrated, and yet be loyal to the truth, is simply impossible. We cannot unite with those who are serving themselves, who are working on worldly plans, and not lose our connection with the heavenly Counselor. We may recover ourselves from the snare of the enemy, but we are bruised and wounded, and our experience is dwarfed (*The Review and Herald*, April 19, 1898).

28, 29. Toil Cannot Duplicate Simplicity.—Here He shows that notwithstanding that persons may toil with weariness to make themselves objects of admiration, that which they value so highly will not bear comparison with the flowers of the field. Even these simple flowers, with God's adornment, would outvie in loveliness the gorgeous apparel of Solomon (MS 153, 1903).

An Idea of God's Regard.—If the lilies of the field are objects upon which the great Master Artist has bestowed care, making them so beautiful that they outrival the glory of Solomon, the greatest king that ever wielded a scepter; if the grass of the field is made into a beautiful carpet for the earth, can we form any idea of the regard which God bestows upon man, who was formed in His image (*Letter 4*, 1896)?

Every Flower Expresses Love.—The great Master Artist calls our attention to the soulless flowers of the field, pointing out the beautiful tints and the wonderful variety of shades one flower may possess. Thus God has revealed His skill and care. Thus He would show the great love He has for every human being.

Every flower is an expression of the love of God (*Letter 24*, 1899).

The flowers of the field, in their endless variety, are always ministering to the delight of the children of men. God Himself nourishes every root, that He may express His love to all who will be softened and subdued by the works of His hands. We need no artificial display. God's love is represented by the beautiful things of His creation. These things mean more than many suppose (*Letter 84*, 1900).

28-30. A Lesson of Faith.—Notwithstanding the curse was pronounced upon the earth that it should bring forth thorns and thistles, there is a flower upon the thistle. The world is not all sorrow and misery. God's great book of nature is open for us to study, and from it we are to gain more exalted ideas of His greatness and unexcelled love and glory. He who laid the foundation of the earth, who garnished the heavens and marshaled the stars in their order, He who has clothed the earth with a living carpet, and beautified it with lovely flowers of every shade and variety, would have His children appreciate His works, and delight in the simple, quiet beauty with which He has adorned their earthly home.

Christ sought to draw the attention of His disciples away from the artificial to the natural: "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Why did not our heavenly Father carpet the earth with brown or gray? He chose the color that was most restful, the most acceptable to the senses. How it cheers the heart and refreshes the weary spirit to look upon the earth, clad in its garments of living green! Without this covering the air would be filled with dust, and the earth would appear like a desert. Every spire of grass, every opening bud and blooming flower is a token of God's love, and should teach us a lesson of faith and trust in Him. Christ calls our attention to their natural loveliness, and assures us that the most gorgeous array of the greatest king that ever wielded an earthly scepter was not equal to that worn by the humblest flower. You who are sighing for the artificial splendor which wealth alone can purchase, for costly paintings, furniture, and dress, listen to the voice of the divine Teacher. He points you to the flower of the field, the simple design of which cannot be equaled by human skill (*The Review and Herald*, October 27, 1885).

Chapter 7

1, 2 (Luke 6:37; Romans 2:1; see EGW on 1 Samuel 14:44). Satan Judged by Own Idea of Justice.—Satan will be judged by his own idea of justice. It was his plea that every sin should meet its punishment. If God remitted the punishment, he said, He was not a God of truth or justice. Satan will meet the judgment which he said God should exercise (*MS 111*, 1897).

13, 14. See EGW on ch. 16:24.

15. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 11:14.

20, 21. See EGW on ch. 24:23, 24.

21-23 (ch. 24:24; 11:14, 15; 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10; Revelation 13:13, 14). A Profession Is Not Enough.—Those who claim modern sanctification would have come boastfully forward, saying, "Lord, Lord, do you not know us? Have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" The people here described, who make these pretentious claims, apparently weaving Jesus into all their doings, fitly represent those who claim modern sanctification, but who are at war with the law of God. Christ calls them workers of iniquity, because they are deceivers, having on the garments of righteousness to hide the deformity of their characters, the inward wickedness of their unholy hearts. Satan has come down in these last days, to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. His satanic majesty works miracles in the sight of false prophets, in the sight of men, claiming that he is indeed Christ Himself. Satan gives his power to those who are aiding him in his deceptions; therefore those who claim to have the great power of God can only be discerned by the great detector, the law of Jehovah. The Lord tells us if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. The sheep's clothing seems so real, so genuine, that the wolf cannot be discerned only as we go to God's great moral standard and there find

that they are transgressors of the law of Jehovah (*The Review and Herald*, August 25, 1885).

29. See EGW on Luke 4:18, 19.

Chapter 9

9, 10. See EGW on Luke 5:29.

11 (Isaiah 58:4; Luke 5:30). Fasting in Pride Versus Eating in Humility.—The Pharisees beheld Christ sitting and eating with publicans and sinners. He was calm and self-possessed, kind, courteous, and friendly; and while they could not but admire the picture presented, it was so unlike their own course of action, they could not endure the sight. The haughty Pharisees exalted themselves, and disparaged those who had not been blessed with such privileges and light as they themselves had had. They hated and despised the publicans and sinners. Yet in the sight of God their guilt was the greater. Heaven's light was flashing across their pathway, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it"; but they had spurned the gift. Turning to the disciples of Christ they said, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" By this question they hoped to arouse the prejudice which they knew had existed in the minds of the disciples, and thus shake their weak faith. They aimed their arrows where they would be most likely to bruise and wound.

Proud but foolish Pharisees, who fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness! Christ eats with publicans and sinners that He may draw men to Himself. The world's Redeemer cannot honor the fasts observed by the Jewish nation. They fast in pride and self-righteousness, while Christ eats in humility with publicans and sinners.

Since the fall, the work of Satan has been accuse, and those who refuse the light which God sends, pursue the same course today. They lay open to others those things which they consider an offense. Thus it was with the Pharisees. When they found something of which they could accuse the disciples, they did not speak to those whom they thought to be in error. They spoke to Christ of the things which they thought to be so grievous in His disciples. When they thought that Christ offended, they accused Him to the disciples. It was their work to alienate hearts (MS 3, 1898).

12, 13 (ch. 20:28; Mark 2:17; 10:45; Luke 5:31, 32). Relief in Every Case.—Christ was a physician of the body as well as of the soul. He was minister and missionary and physician. From His childhood He was interested in every phase of human suffering that came under His notice. He could truly say, I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. In every case of woe He brought relief, His kind words having a healing balm. None could say He had worked a miracle, yet He imparted His virtue to those He saw in suffering and in need. Through the whole thirty years of His private life He was humble, meek, and lowly. He had a living connection with God; for the Spirit of God was upon Him, and He gave evidence to all who were acquainted with Him that He lived to please, honor, and glorify His Father in the common things of life (*The Review and Herald*, October 24, 1899).

13 (Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32). Rejected Pleasantness to Fulfill Need.—He [Christ] might have gone to the pleasant homes of the unfallen worlds, to the pure atmosphere where disloyalty and rebellion had never intruded; and there He would have been received with acclamations of praise and love. But it was a fallen world that needed the Redeemer. "I came not to call the righteous," said He, "but sinners to repentance" (*The Review and Herald*, February 15, 1898).

16. See EGW on ch. 6:16.

17 (Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 38). New Bottles for New Wine.—The work of Jesus was to reveal the character of the Father, and to unfold the truth which He Himself had spoken through prophets and apostles; but there was found no place for the truth in those wise and prudent men. Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, had to pass by the self-righteous Pharisees, and take his disciples from unlearned fishers and men of humble rank. These who had never been to the rabbis, who had never sat in the schools of the prophets, who had not been members of the Sanhedrin, whose hearts were not bound about with their own ideas,—these He took and educated for His own use. He could make them as new bottles for the new wine of

His kingdom. These were the babes to whom the Father could reveal spiritual things; but the priests and rulers, the scribes and Pharisees, who claimed to be the depositaries of knowledge, could give no room for the principles of Christianity, afterward taught by the apostles of Christ. The chain of truth, link after link, was given to those who realized their own ignorance, and were willing to learn of the great Teacher.

Jesus knew that He could do the scribes and Pharisees no good, unless they would empty themselves of self-importance. He chose new bottles for His new wine of doctrine, and made fishermen and unlearned believers the heralds of His truth to the world. And yet, though His doctrine seemed new to the people, it was in fact not a new doctrine, but the revelation of the significance of that which had been taught from the beginning. It was His design that His disciples should take the plain, unadulterated truth for the guide of their life. They were not to add to His words, or give a forced meaning to His utterances. They were not to put a mystical interpretation upon the plain teaching of the Scriptures, and draw from theological stores to build up some man-made theory. It was through putting a mystical meaning upon the plain words of God, that sacred and vital truths were made of little significance, while the theories of men were made prominent. It was in this way that men were led to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and that they rejected the commandment of God, that they might keep their own tradition (*The Review and Herald*, June 2, 1896).

34. See EGW on ch. 12:24-32.

Chapter 10

32. See EGW on Luke 22:70.

34 (Luke 12:51). No Peace Because of Rejected Messages.—Christ declared, “I came not to send peace, but a sword.” Why? Because men would not receive the word of life. Because they warred against the message sent them to bring them joy and hope and life.

We look upon the Jews as inexcusable because they rejected and crucified Christ. But today the messages that the Lord sends are often received in a manner similar to the way in which the Jews received Christ’s message. If the instruction of the Lord does not harmonize with the opinions of men, anger takes control of reason, and men play into the enemy’s hands by opposing the message that God sends. Satan uses them as sharp instruments to oppose the progress of truth (MS 31, 1889).

Chapter 11

12 (Genesis 32:26). Spiritual Violence Brings Reward.—With the great truth we have been privileged to receive, we should, and under the Holy Spirit’s power we could, become living channels of light. We could then approach the mercy seat; and seeing the bow of promise, kneel with contrite hearts, and seek the kingdom of heaven with a spiritual violence that would bring its own reward. We would take it by force, as did Jacob. Then our message would be the power of God unto salvation. Our supplications would be full of earnestness, full of a sense of our great need; and we would not be denied. The truth would be expressed by life and character, and by lips touched with the living coal from off God’s altar. When this experience is ours, we shall be lifted out of our poor, cheap selves, that we have cherished so tenderly. We shall empty our hearts of the corroding power of selfishness, and shall be filled with praise and gratitude to God. We shall magnify the Lord, the God of all grace, who has magnified Christ. And He will reveal His power through us, making us as sharp sickles in the harvest field (*The Review and Herald*, February 14, 1899).

14 (Malachi 4:5; Luke 1:17). The Spirit and Power of Elijah.—In the spirit and with the power of Elijah, John denounced the corruptions of the Jews, and raised his voice in reproving their prevailing sins. His discourses were plain, pointed, and convincing. Many were brought to repentance of their sins, and, as evidence of their repentance, were baptized of him in Jordan. This was the preparatory work for the ministry of Christ. Many were convicted because of the plain truths uttered by this faithful prophet; but, by rejecting the light, they became enshrouded in deeper darkness, so that they were fully

prepared to turn from the evidences attending Jesus, that He was the true Messiah (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:48, 49).

20-24 (Luke 10:13-15). Witness Rejected.—The deeds of love and compassion performed by Jesus in the cities of Judea, were regarded with wonder by the angels of heaven; and yet multitudes in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum looked on with indifference, and in their hardness of heart they acted as though time or eternity was scarcely worth their attention. The majority of the inhabitants of these cities spent their time in caviling over themes of little importance, and but a few took the position that the Saviour of mankind was the Christ.

The prophecies of the Scriptures were plain, and gave clear predictions of His life, character, and work; and from the testimony of men who had spoken as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, evidence was sufficient to prove that Jesus was all He claimed to be—the Son of God, the Messiah of whom Moses and the prophets did write, the Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel. But it was in vain that He sought to convince the priests and rulers, and to draw the hearts of common people to His light. Priests and rulers, scribes and Pharisees, clung to their traditions, their ceremonies, customs, and theories, and suffered not their hearts to be touched and cleansed and sanctified by divine grace. The few who did follow Christ came from among the lowly and unlearned (*The Review and Herald*, June 2, 1896).

28-30. The Yoke of Restraint and Obedience.—Christ says, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you”—the yoke of restraint and obedience—“and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” We are to find rest by wearing His yoke and bearing His burdens. In being co-workers with Christ in the great work for which He gave His life, we shall find true rest. When we were sinners, He gave His life for us. He wants us to come to Him and learn of Him. Thus we are to find rest. He says He will give us rest. “Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” In doing this you will find in your own experience the rest that Christ gives, the rest that comes from wearing His yoke and lifting His burdens (*The General Conference Bulletin*, April 4, 1901).

In accepting Christ’s yoke of restraint and obedience, you will find that it is of the greatest help to you. Wearing this yoke keeps you near the side of Christ, and He bears the heaviest part of the load.

“Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” To learn the lessons Christ teaches is the greatest treasure students can find. Rest comes to them in the consciousness that they are trying to please the Lord (*Letter* 144, 1901).

Help to Bear Every Burden.—There is a condition to the rest and peace here offered us by Christ. It is that of yoking up with Him. All who will accept the condition will find that the yoke of Christ will help them to bear every burden needful for them to carry. Without Christ at our side to bear the heaviest part of the load, we must indeed say that it is heavy. But yoked with Him to the car of duty, the burdens of life may all be lightly carried. And just as a man acts in willing obedience to the requirements of God, will come his peace of mind...

Meekness and humility will characterize all who are obedient to the law of God, all who will wear the yoke of Christ with submission. And these graces will bring the desirable result of peace in the service of Christ (*The Signs of the Times*, April 16, 1912).

(Ch. 16:24; 9:23.) Symbol of Submission to God’s Will.—We are to bear the yoke of Christ that we may be placed in complete union with Him. “Take my yoke upon you,” He says. Obey My requirements. But these requirements may be in direct opposition to the will and purposes of the human agent. What then is to be done? Hear what God says: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” The yoke and the cross are symbols representing the same thing,—the giving up of the will to God. Wearing the yoke unites finite man in companionship with the dearly beloved Son of God. Lifting the cross cuts away self from the soul, and places man where he learns how to bear Christ’s burdens. We cannot follow Christ

without wearing His yoke, without lifting the cross and bearing it after Him. If our will is not in accord with the divine requirements, we are to deny our inclinations, give up our darling desires, and step in Christ's footsteps...

Men frame for their own necks yokes that seem light and pleasant to wear, but they prove galling in the extreme. Christ sees this, and He says, "Take My yoke upon you. The yoke you would place upon your own neck, thinking it a precise fit, will not fit at all. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me the lessons essential for you to learn; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." The Lord never makes a false estimate concerning His heritage. He measures the men with whom He is working. When they submit to His yoke, when they give up the struggle that has been unprofitable for themselves and for the cause of God, they will find peace and rest. When they become sensible of their own weakness, their own deficiencies, they will delight to do God's will. They will submit to the yoke of Christ. Then God can work in them to will and to do of His good pleasure, which is often entirely contrary to the plans of the human mind. When the heavenly anointing comes to us, we shall learn the lesson of meekness and lowliness, which always brings rest to the soul (*The Review and Herald*, October 23, 1900).

Christ's Yoke Never Galling.—Your work is not to gather up burdens of your own. As you take the burdens that Christ would have you, then you can realize what burdens He carried. Let us study the Bible, and find out what kind of yoke He bore. He was a help to those around Him. He says: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." You see there is a yoke to bear. Now this is the very faith that we want—a faith that will grasp the promises of God, one that will take the yoke of Christ and bear the burdens that He would have us. We often think we are having a hard time in bearing burdens, and it is too often the case, because God has not made any provision for us to carry these burdens; but when we bear His yoke and carry His burdens, we can testify that the yoke of Christ is easy and His burdens are light, because He has made provision for these. But when you feel depressed and discouraged, do not give up the battle; you have a living Saviour that will help you, and you will have rest in Him. You must not put your neck under the yoke of fashion, and yokes that God has never designed that you should bear. It is not our work to study how to meet the world's standard, but the great question with each one should be, How can I meet God's standard? Then it is that you will find rest to the soul; for Christ has said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

When you have a yoke that is galling to the neck, you may know it is not Christ's yoke; for He says His yoke is easy. What God wants of us is to be learning every day of our lives how to build our characters for time and for eternity. He does not want us to get into one channel and never turn out of that; to have fixed ideas, and hold them fast, whether they are right or wrong. He will place us amid trials and difficulties, and when we have learned to overcome obstacles in a right spirit, with high and holy purpose, He will give us another lesson. And if we have not the meekness of Christ to be constantly learning of Jesus in His school, then we must know that we have not the yoke of Christ (*The Review and Herald*, May 10, 1887).

29 (John 15:4, 5). Hard to Give Up Own Will and Way.—If you are willing to learn meekness and lowliness of heart in Christ's school, He will surely give you rest and peace. It is a terribly hard struggle to give up your own will and your own way. But this lesson learned, you will find rest and peace. Pride, selfishness, and ambition must be overcome; your will must be swallowed up in the will of Christ. The whole life may become one constant love sacrifice, every action a manifestation, and every word an utterance of love. As the life of the vine circulates through stem and cluster, descends into the lower fibers, and reaches to the topmost leaf, so will the grace and love of Christ burn and abound

in the soul, sending its virtues to every part of the being, and pervading every exercise of body and mind (*Letter 14*, 1887).

How to Wear the Yoke.—Take hold of the arm of God, and say, “I am nothing, and Thou art everything. Thou hast said, ‘Without me ye can do nothing.’ Now, Lord, I must have Thee abiding in me, that I may abide in Thee.” Then advance step by step, by living faith abiding in Jesus Christ. This is wearing His yoke, the yoke of obedience (MS 85, 1901).

Wearing the yoke with Christ, means to work in His lines, to be a copartner with Him in His sufferings and toils for lost humanity. It means to be a wise instructor of souls. We shall be what we are willing to be made by Christ in these precious hours of probation. We shall be the sort of a vessel that we allow ourselves to be molded into. We must unite with God in the molding and fashioning work, having our wills submitted to the divine will (*Letter 71*, 1895).

30. Easy Yoke Does Not Give Life of Ease.—The Lord calls His yoke easy, and His burden light. Yet that yoke will not give us a life of ease and freedom and selfish indulgence. The life of Christ was one of self-sacrifice and self-denial at every step; and with consistent, Christlike tenderness and love, His true follower will walk in the footsteps of the Master; and as he advances in this life, he will become more and more inspired with the spirit and life of Christ (*The Signs of the Times*, April 16, 1912).

Chapter 12

24-32 (ch. 9:34; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15). Eyes Closed to Evidence.—They [the Pharisees] attributed to satanic agencies the holy power of God, manifested in the works of Christ. Thus the Pharisees sinned against the Holy Ghost. Stubborn, sullen, ironhearted, they determined to close their eyes to all evidence, and thus they committed the unpardonable sin (*The Review and Herald*, January 18, 1898).

29, 30 (Luke 11:21-23). Stronger Than the Strong Man.—“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.” He who is with Christ, maintaining His unity, enthroning Him in the heart, and obeying His orders, is safe from the snares of the wicked one. He who unites himself with Christ will gather to himself the graces of Christ, and will give strength and efficiency and power to the Lord by winning souls to Christ. When Christ takes possession of the citadel of the soul, the human agent becomes one with Him. By cooperation with the Saviour, he becomes the instrument through which God works. Then when Satan comes and strives to take possession of the soul, he finds that Christ has made him stronger than the strong man armed (MS 78, 1899).

30. See EGW on ch. 16:24.

31, 32 (Mark 3:28, 29; Luke 12:10; see EGW on Exodus 4:21). Firm, Determined Resistance of Truth.—Christ was not warring against finite men, but against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places. He tells His hearers that all manner of sin and blasphemy may be forgiven if done in ignorance. In their great blindness they might speak words of insult and derision against the Son of man, and yet be within the boundary of mercy. But when the power and Spirit of God rested upon His messengers, they were on holy ground. To ignore the Spirit of God, to charge it with being the spirit of the devil, placed them in a position where God had no power to reach their souls. No power in any of God’s provisions to correct the erring can reach them....

To speak against Christ, charging His work to satanic agencies, and attributing the manifestations of the Spirit to fanaticism, is not of itself a damning sin, but the spirit that leads men to make these assertions places them in a position of stubborn resistance, where they cannot see spiritual light....

They think they are following sound reason, but they are following another leader. They have placed themselves under the control of a power which in their blindness they are wholly ignorant of. They have resisted the only Spirit that could lead them, enlighten them, save them. They are following in the path of guilt for which there can be no forgiveness, in this life or in the life to come. Not that any degree of guilt would exhaust the

mercy of God, but because pride and persistent stubbornness leads them to do despite to the Spirit of God, to occupy a place where no manifestation of the Spirit can convince them of their error. They will not yield their stubborn wills.

In this our day men have placed themselves where they are wholly unable to fulfill the conditions of repentance and confession: therefore they cannot find mercy and pardon. The sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit does not lie in any sudden word or deed; it is the firm, determined resistance of truth and evidence (MS 30, 1890).

Sin Against the Holy Ghost.—No one need look upon the sin against the Holy Ghost as something mysterious and indefinable. The sin against the Holy Ghost is the sin of persistent refusal to respond to the invitation to repent (*The Review and Herald*, June 29, 1897).

34-37. See EGW on Psalm 19:14; Isaiah 6:5-7.

37. A Sanctified Tongue Needed.—Cease to dwell upon the shortcomings of others. Keep the tongue sanctified unto God. Refrain from saying anything that might detract from the influence of another; for by indulging in these words of criticism, you blaspheme God's holy name as verily as you would were you to swear....

We need especially to guard against having a tongue that is sanctified to Satan. The tongue that God has given is to be used to glorify Him in speech. Unless it is, we shall be standing directly in the way of God's work in this world, and the judgments of heaven will surely fall upon us (MS 95, 1906).

42 (Luke 11:31). A Greater Than Solomon.—Christ knew that the Israelites regarded Solomon as the greatest king that ever wielded a scepter over an earthly kingdom. By special appointment of God, he had built their first magnificent temple, which was a marvel of beauty, richness, and glory, and gave influence and dignity to Israel as a nation. He was endowed with wisdom, and his name had been glorified by them. To be superior to him was, in their eyes, to be more than human, to possess the prerogatives of Deity [Matthew 12:42 quoted] (*The Youth's Instructor*, September 23, 1897).

43-45 (Luke 11:24-26). No Neutrality Possible.—[Matthew 12:43-45 quoted.] Christ shows that there can be no such thing as neutrality in His service. The soul must not be satisfied with anything short of entire consecration—consecration of thought, voice, spirit, and every organ of mind and body. It is not enough that the vessel be emptied; it must be filled with the grace of Christ (MS 78, 1899).

(Isaiah 57:12; 2 Peter 2:20, 21.) The Curse of Self-righteousness.—The garnished house represents the self-righteous soul. Satan is driven out by Christ. But he returned, in the hope of finding entrance. He finds the house empty, swept, and garnished. Only self-righteousness is abiding there. "Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

Self-righteousness is a curse, a human embellishment, which Satan uses for his glory. Those who garnish the soul with self-praise and flattery prepare the way for the seven other spirits more wicked than the first. In their very reception of the truth these souls deceive themselves. They are building upon a foundation of self-righteousness. The prayers of congregations may be offered to God with a round of ceremonies, but if they are offered in self-righteousness God is not honored by them. The Lord declares, "I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee." In spite of all their display, their garnished habitation, Satan comes in with a troop of evil angels and takes his place in the soul, to help in the deception. The apostle writes, "If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (MS 78, 1899).

Chapter 13

15. See EGW on Luke 7:29, 30.

24-30. Tares Attract Attention.—The

growth of the tares among the wheat would draw special attention to it. The grain would be subjected to severe criticism. Indeed, the whole field might be set down as worthless by some superficial observer, or by one who delighted to discover evil. The sower might be condemned by him, as one who had mingled the bad seed with the good for his own wicked purpose. Just so the erring and hypocritical ones who profess to follow Jesus bring reproach upon the cause of Christianity, and cause the world to doubt concerning the truths of Christ. As the presence of the tares among the wheat counteracted to a great degree the work of the sower, so sin among the people of God frustrates, in a measure, the plan of Jesus to save fallen man from the power of Satan and render the barren ground of the human heart fruitful of good works (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:248, 249).

52. Old and New Testaments Inseparable.—[Matthew 13:52 quoted.] In this parable, Jesus presented before His disciples the responsibility of those whose work it is to give to the world the light which they have received from Him. The Old Testament was all the Scripture then in existence; but it was not written merely for the ancients; it was for all ages and for all people. Jesus would have the teachers of His doctrine diligently search the Old Testament for that light which establishes His identity as the Messiah foretold in prophecy, and reveals the nature of His mission to the world. The Old and the New Testament are inseparable, for both are the teachings of Christ. The doctrine of the Jews, who accept only the Old Testament, is not unto salvation, since they reject the Saviour whose life and ministry was a fulfillment of the law and the prophecies. And the doctrine of those who discard the Old Testament is not unto salvation, because it rejects that which is direct testimony of Christ. Skeptics begin with discounting upon the Old Testament, and it takes but another step to deny the validity of the New, and thus both are rejected.

The Jews have little influence over the Christian world in showing them the importance of the commandments, including the binding law of the Sabbath, because in bringing forth the old treasures of truth, they throw aside the new ones in the personal teachings of Jesus. On the other hand, the strongest reason why Christians fail to influence the Jews to accept the teachings of Christ as the language of divine wisdom, is because, in bringing forth the treasures of His Word, they treat with contempt the riches of the Old Testament, which are the earlier teachings of the Son of God, through Moses. They reject the law proclaimed from Sinai, and the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, instituted in the Garden of Eden. But the minister of the gospel, who follows the teachings of Christ, will gain a thorough knowledge of both the Old and New Testament, that he may present them in their true light to the people an inseparable whole—the one depending upon and illuminating the other. Thus, as Jesus instructed His disciples, they will bring forth from their treasure “things new and old” (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:254, 255).

Chapter 14

9 (Mark 6:26; 1 Samuel 25:32-34). Wrong to Keep a Wrong Vow.—David had taken an oath that Nabal and his household should perish; but now he saw that it was not only wrong to make such a vow, but it would be wrong to keep it. If Herod had had the moral courage of David, no matter how humiliating it might have been, he would have retracted the oath that devoted John the Baptist’s head to the ax of the executioner, that the revenge of an evil woman might be accomplished, and he would not have had upon his soul the guilt of the murder of the prophet of God (*The Signs of the Times*, October 26, 1888).

Chapter 15

6. See EGW on Jeremiah 23:1.

9 (see EGW on ch. 5:13, 14; Jeremiah 8:8). Error as Parasites on Tree of Truth.—Satan has wrought with deceiving power, bringing in a multiplicity of errors that obscure truth. Error could not stand alone, and would soon become extinct, if it did not fasten itself like a parasite upon the tree of truth. Error draws its life from the truth of God. The traditions of men, like floating germs, attach themselves to the

truth of God, and men regard them as a part of the truth. Through false doctrines Satan gains a foothold, and captivates the minds of men, causing them to hold theories that have no foundation in truth. Men boldly teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and as traditions pass on from age to age, they acquire a power over the human mind. But age does not make error truth, neither does its burdensome weight cause the plant of truth to become a parasite. The tree of truth bears its own genuine fruit, showing its true origin and nature. The parasite of error also bears its own fruit, and makes manifest that its character is diverse from the plant of heavenly origin (*Letter 43*, 1895).

Chapter 16

6. See EGW on Luke 12:1.

18. The True Foundation.—[Matthew 16:18 quoted.] The word “Peter” signifies a loose stone. Christ did not refer to Peter as being the rock upon which He would found His church. His expression “this rock,” applied to Himself as the foundation of the Christian church (*The Signs of the Times*, October 28, 1913).

18, 19. See EGW on John 20:23.

22, 23 (Luke 22:31, 32). Satan Between Peter and Christ.—See what the Lord said to Peter.... He said, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” What was Satan doing? He came right up face to face with Peter and between the Lord and Peter, so that Peter even took it upon him to reprove the Lord. But the Lord came close to Peter and Satan was put behind Christ. The Lord told Peter that Satan had desired him, that he might sift him as wheat, but He says, “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.” If Peter had learned the lessons he ought to have learned, if he had stood right with God at the time of his trial, he would have stood then. If he had not been indifferent to the lessons Christ taught, he would have never denied his Lord (MS 14, 1894).

Satan Spoke Through Peter.—When Christ revealed to Peter the time of trial and suffering that was just before Him, and Peter replied, “Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee,” the Saviour commanded, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” Satan was speaking through Peter, making him act the part of the tempter. Satan’s presence was unsuspected by Peter, but Christ could detect the presence of the deceiver, and in His rebuke to Peter He addressed the real foe (*Letter 244*, 1907).

Satan’s work was to discourage Jesus as He strove to save the depraved race, and Peter’s words were just what he wished to hear. They were opposed to the divine plan; and whatever bore this stamp of character was an offense to God. They were spoken at the instigation of Satan; for they opposed the only arrangement God could make to preserve His law and control His subjects, and yet save fallen man. Satan hoped they would discourage and dishearten Christ; but Christ addressed the author of the thought, saying, “Get thee behind me, Satan” (*The Review and Herald*, April 6, 1897).

24 (Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; see EGW on Matthew 11:28-30). Travel Christ’s Road.—Those who are saved must travel the same road over which Christ journeyed. He says, “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” The character is to be formed according to the Christlikeness (MS 105, 1901).

The Cross Lifts.—We are to lift the cross, and follow the steps of Christ. Those who lift the cross will find that as they do this, the cross lifts them, giving them fortitude and courage, and pointing them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world (*The Review and Herald*, July 13, 1905).

(Job 19:25.) Up From the Lowlands.—The cross lifts you up from the lowlands of earth, and brings you into sweetest communion with God. Through bearing the cross your experience may be such that you can say, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and because He lives, I shall live also.” What an assurance is this (MS 85, 1901)!

(Ch. 7:13, 14.) At the Dividing of the Way.—The cross stands where two roads diverge. One is the path of obedience leading to heaven. The other leads into the broad road, where man can easily go

with his burden of sin and corruption, but it leads to perdition (MS 50, 1898).

(Ch. 12:30; Luke 11:23.) Living for Self Dishonors Redeemer.—Christians who live for self dishonor their Redeemer. They may apparently be very active in the service of the Lord, but they weave self into all that they do. Sowing the seeds of selfishness, they must at last reap a harvest of corruption.... Service for self takes a variety of forms. Some of these forms seem harmless. Apparent goodness gives them the appearance of genuine goodness. But they bring no glory to the Lord. By their service His cause is hindered. Christ says, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.”

Those who bring self into their work cannot be trusted. If they would lose sight of self in Christ, their efforts would be of value to His cause. They would then conform the life to His teachings. They would form their plans in harmony with His great plan of love. Selfishness would be banished from their efforts.... Self-denial, humility of mind, nobility of purpose, marked the Saviour’s life ... [Matthew 16:24 quoted] (MS 2, 1903).

Chapter 17

1-3 (Mark 9:2-4; Luke 9:28-31). Fittest to Minister to Christ.—The Father chose Moses and Elijah to be His messengers to Christ, and glorify Him with the light of heaven, and commune with Him concerning His coming agony, because they had lived upon earth as men; they had experienced human sorrow and suffering, and could sympathize with the trial of Jesus, in His earthly life. Elijah, in his position as a prophet to Israel, had represented Christ, and his work had been, in a degree, similar to that of the Saviour. And Moses, as the leader of Israel, had stood in the place of Christ, communing with Him and following His directions; therefore, these two, of all the hosts that gathered around the throne of God were fittest to minister to the Son of God (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:329).

Chapter 18

6. The Young in Christ.—[Matthew 18:1-6 quoted.] The little ones here referred to who believe in Christ, are not simply those who are young in years, but little children in Christ. There is a warning contained in these words lest we shall selfishly neglect or hold in contempt our weak brethren; lest we shall be unforgiving and exacting and judge and condemn others, and thus discourage them (*The Review and Herald*, April 16, 1895).

15-17 (Joshua 7:10-26). Some Are Not to Be Retained.—The names of those who sin and refuse to repent should not be retained on the church books, lest the saints be held accountable for their evil deeds. Those who pursue a course of transgression should be visited and labored with, and if they then refuse to repent, they should be separated from church fellowship, in accordance with the rules laid down in the Word of God....

Those who refuse to hear the admonitions and warnings given by God’s faithful messengers are not to be retained in the church. They are to be disfellowshipped; for they will be as Achan in the camp of Israel—deceived and deceiving.

Who, after reading the record of Achan’s sin and punishment, can think it according to the will of God that those who do wickedly, refusing to repent, are to be retained in the church? To retain them would be an insult to the God of heaven (*Letter* 215, 1902).

18. See EGW on John 20:23.

Chapter 19

13-15 (Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17). Memory Kept Children From Straying.—Could the afterlife of that little group be opened before us, we should see the mothers recalling to the minds of their children the scene of that day, and repeating to them the loving words of the Saviour. We should see, too, how often, in after years, the memory of these words kept the children from straying from the path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord (*The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1907).

Chapter 20

28. See EGW on ch. 9:12, 13.

30-34. See EGW on Mark 10:46-52.

Chapter 21

18-20 (Mark 11:12-14). Fruit-bearing Branches.—The Lord was hungry. He

represented a people hungering for fruit that they ought to have had, but did not receive from an apparently flourishing fig tree. The spiritual necessities were not supplied to satisfy the people whom Christ had pledged His life to save by His grace and righteousness.

When the Lord is with the people who have knowledge and advantages in spiritual enlightenment, and when they impart that which they have received from God, they are fruit-bearing branches. They receive God's rich blessing, and are producers of fruit. As a sure result, in the hand of God and under the influence of the Holy Spirit they are mighty men. Constantly they represent before the world the great goodness of God, not only in spiritual lines, but in temporal lines as well. They shall prevail; for of a truth God is with them (MS 65, 1912).

28-31. Nothing to Commend.—Christ did not condemn the first son for refusing the command. At the same time He did not commend him. The class who act the part of the son who said, "I will not," deserve no credit for holding the position they do. This open frankness is not to be commended as a virtue. This openness of character, sanctified by truth and holiness will make bold witnesses for Christ; but used as it is by the sinner it is insulting and defiant, and approaches to blasphemy. Because a man is not a hypocrite he is none the less a sinner. When the appeals of the Holy Spirit come to the heart our only safety lies in responding to them without delay (MS 127, 1899).

More Than a Promise Is Needed.—The history of Israel as presented in this parable should be studied by all who would practice the teachings of Christ. The vineyard represents the church. The two sons are the two classes of men and women in the world. The Lord calls every member of His church to work in His vineyard. We are to understand our relation to Christ. Christ must abide in our hearts that we may keep before us pure principles, high incentives to moral rectitude. Our work is not merely to *promise*, but to *do*. Honesty and integrity must bind us up with God to fulfill His word to the letter. Let those who hear the message God sends today beware, lest they follow the example of the self-exalted Jews. God does not propose to remove from our path everything that creates question or doubt in regard to the working of His servants. He gives ground for faith sufficient to convince the candid, sincere mind; but more evidence than this will never change the inward determination to resist light (MS 127, 1899).

Chapter 22

2-4 (Luke 14:16, 17). The Heavenly Banquet.—The spiritual banquet has been set before us in rich abundance. We have had presented to us by the messengers of God the richest feast—the righteousness of Christ, justification by faith, the exceeding great and precious promises of God in His Word, free access to the Father by Jesus Christ, the comforts of the Holy Spirit, and the well-grounded assurance of eternal life in the kingdom of God. We ask, What could God do for us that He has not done in preparing the great supper, the heavenly banquet (*The Review and Herald*, January 17, 1899)?

11, 12. Feasting on the Word.—A banquet has been prepared for us. The Lord has spread before us the treasures of His Word. But we must not come to the repast clothed in citizen's dress. We must have on the white robe of Christ's righteousness, which has been prepared for all the guests (MS 70, 1901).

(Revelation 7:13, 14.) Out of Tribulation.—Remember that every one who shall be found with the wedding garment on will have come out of great tribulation (*The Review and Herald*, April 17, 1894).

29. See EGW on ch. 5:13, 14; Jeremiah 8:8; Luke 4:18, 19.

37-39 (Mark 12:30, 31; Luke 10:27; Colossians 2:10). Complete in Christ.—The law of God requires that man shall love God supremely, and his neighbor as himself. When through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, this is perfectly done, we shall be complete in Christ (*Letter* 11, 1892).

Chapter 23

8 (see EGW on John 13:14, 15). No First or Last in Christ.—Those who, in the spirit and love of Jesus, will become one with Him, will be in close fellowship one with

another, bound up by the silken cords of love. Then the ties of human brotherhood would not be always on the strain, ready at any provocation to snap asunder. “All ye are brethren” will be the sentiment of every child of faith. When the followers of Christ are one with Him, there will be no first and last, no less respected or less important ones. A blessed brotherly fellowship one with another will bind all who truly receive the Lord Jesus Christ in a firm loyalty that cannot be broken. All will be equally one with Christ (MS 28, 1897).

All Ye Are Brethren.—God has made men responsible beings, and placed them in circumstances favorable to obedience to His will. In the dignity of their God-given manhood, they are to be governed and controlled by God Himself, not by any human intelligence in our world. Man is ever to acknowledge that God lives and reigns; men are never to become lords over God’s heritage. They are to consider that “all ye are brethren.” In the very fact that men are free moral agents, God teaches us not to be forced or compelled into any course of action, also that as responsible beings in copartnership with God we are to represent God in character. We are to have an interest in our brother, in our neighbor, in all around (*Letter 65*, 1895).

8-10. None to Place Spiritual Interests Under Another.—The oft repeated “Rabbi,” was very acceptable to the ear, but Jesus warned His disciples against this. He said to them, “But be not ye called rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.”

By these words Christ meant that no man is to place his spiritual interest under another as a child is guided and directed by his earthly father. This has encouraged a spirit to desire ecclesiastical superiority, which has always resulted in the injury of the men who have been trusted, and addressed as “Father.” It confuses the sense of the sacredness of the prerogatives of God (MS 71, 1897).

12. See EGW on Genesis 39:20.

13-33 (Luke 11:42-44). Legal Religion an Abomination.—The rebuke of Christ to the Pharisees is applicable to those who have lost from the heart their first love. A cold, legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. When fastings and prayers are practiced in a self-justifying spirit, they are abominable to God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposed sacrifice, all proclaim to the world the testimony that the doer of these things considers himself as righteous. These things call attention to the observer of rigorous duties, saying, This man is entitled to heaven. But it is all a deception. Works will not buy for us an entrance into heaven. The one great offering that has been made is ample for all who will believe (MS 154, 1897).

37-39 (Luke 13:34, 35; 19:42). Loading the Clouds of Vengeance.—Christ’s heart had said “How can I give thee up?” He had dealt with Israel as a loving, forgiving father would deal with an ungrateful, wayward child. With the eye of Omniscience He saw that the city of Jerusalem had decided her own destiny. For centuries there had been a turning away from God. Grace had been resisted, privileges abused, opportunities slighted. The people themselves had been loading the cloud of vengeance which unmingled with mercy was about to burst upon them. With choked, half-broken utterance, Christ exclaimed, “O that thou hadst known, even thou in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.” The irrevocable sentence was pronounced (MS 30, 1890).

Chapter 24

2 (Luke 19:44). Angels Did Work of Destruction.—Men will continue to erect expensive buildings, costing millions of money; special attention will be called to their architectural beauty, and the firmness and solidity with which they are constructed; but the Lord has instructed me that despite the unusual firmness and expensive display, these buildings will share the fate of the temple in Jerusalem. That

magnificent structure fell. Angels of God were sent to do the work of destruction, so that one stone was not left upon another that was not thrown down (MS 35, 1906).

23, 24 (ch. 7:20, 21; Isaiah 8:20; Mark 13:21, 22; Luke 21:8; 10:2-5; John 15:10; 1 John 2:4). How to Know a False Christ.—We need to be anchored in Christ, rooted and grounded in the faith. Satan works through agents. He selects those who have not been drinking of the living waters, whose souls are athirst for something new and strange, and who are ever ready to drink at any fountain that may present itself. Voices will be heard, saying, “Lo, here is Christ,” or “Lo, there;” but we must believe them not. We have unmistakable evidence of the voice of the True Shepherd, and He is calling upon us to follow Him. He says, “I have kept my Father’s commandments.” He leads His sheep in the path of humble obedience to the law of God, but He never encourages them in the transgression of that law.

“The voice of a stranger” is the voice of one who neither respects nor obeys God’s holy, just, and good law. Many make great pretensions to holiness, and boast of the wonders they perform in healing the sick, when they do not regard this great standard of righteousness. But through whose power are these cures wrought? Are the eyes of either party opened to their transgressions of the law? and do they take their stand as humble, obedient children, ready to obey all of God’s requirements? John testifies of the professed children of God: “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

None need be deceived. The law of God is as sacred as His throne, and by it every man who cometh into the world is to be judged. There is no other standard by which to test character. “If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Now, shall the case be decided according to the Word of God, or shall man’s pretensions be credited? Says Christ, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” If those through whom cures are performed, are disposed, on account of these manifestations, to excuse their neglect of the law of God, and continue in disobedience, though they have power to any and every extent, it does not follow that they have the great power of God. On the contrary, it is the miracle-working power of the great deceiver. He is a transgressor of the moral law, and employs every device that he can master to blind men to its true character. We are warned that in the last days he will work with signs and lying wonders. And he will continue these wonders until the close of probation that he may point to them as evidence that he is an angel of light and not of darkness.

Brethren, we must beware of the pretended holiness that permits transgression of the law of God. Those cannot be sanctified who trample that law under their feet, and judge themselves by a standard of their own devising (*The Review and Herald*, November 17, 1885).

24. See EGW on ch. 7:21-23; 2 Corinthians 11:14.

30. See EGW on ch. 28:2-4.

Chapter 25

1-10. The Wise Arouse From Sleep.—All who wait for the heavenly Bridegroom are represented in the parable as slumbering because their Lord delayed His coming; but the wise roused themselves at the message of His approach, and responded to the message, and their spiritual discernment was not all gone, and they sprang into line. As they took hold of the grace of Christ, their religious experience became vigorous and abundant, and their affections were set upon things above. They discerned where was the source of their supply, and appreciated the love that God had for them. They opened their hearts to receive the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts. Their lights were trimmed and burning, and sent forth steady rays into the moral darkness of the world. They glorified God, because they had the oil of grace in their hearts, and did the very work that their Master did before them—went forth to seek and to save those who were lost (*The Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1910).

7 (Luke 12:35). A Trimmed and Burning Lamp.—The very best credentials we can

carry is love for one another. All strife, all dissension, is to cease. God will not accept the talents of the smartest, the most eloquent man if the inner lamp of the soul is not trimmed and burning. There must be a consecrated heart, and consecrated surrender of the soul (*Letter 119*, 1899).

14, 15 (Luke 19:12, 13; see EGW on John 17:20, 21). Talents Not Restricted to a Few.—To every man is committed individual gifts, termed talents. Some regard these talents as being limited to certain men who possess superior mental endowments and genius. But God has not restricted the bestowal of His talents to a favored few. To every one is committed some special endowment, for which he will be held responsible by the Lord. Time, reason, means, strength, mental powers, tenderness of heart—all are gifts from God, entrusted to be used in the great work of blessing humanity.

Some apparently have but few talents, but by diligent trading on their Lord's goods their endowments will be greatly increased....

The Lord is watching every one to see whether he will use his talents wisely and unselfishly, or whether he will seek his own advancement. The talents are distributed to every man according to his several ability, that he may add to them by wise investment. Each one must give an account to the Master for his own actions.

The Lord will not require from those who are poor that which they have not to give; He will not require from the sick the active energies which bodily weakness forbids. No one need mourn because he cannot glorify God with talents that were never entrusted to Him. But if you have only one talent, use it well, and it will accumulate. If the talents are not buried, they will gain yet other talents.

The goods we receive are not our own. The entrusted capital is to be used, and when the returns are made, they are still the Lord's property. We have no right to hoard these talents; when the Lord Jesus returns He expects to receive His own with usury (*Letter 180*, 1907).

21. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 15:51-55.

Chapter 26

2 (Mark 14:1; Luke 22:1, 2). Attention Called to Sacrifice.—Christ was crowned with thorns. His hands and feet were pierced by nails. Every step onward in the shameful scene was one of intense suffering. But it was God's purpose that publicity should be given to the whole transaction, point after point, scene after scene, one phase of humiliation reaching into another. It was appointed that these events should take place on the occasion of the Passover (*MS 111*, 1897).

3 (Mark 14:53; Luke 22:54; John 18:13). A Corrupted Priesthood.—The priesthood had become so corrupt that the priests had no scruples in engaging in the most dishonest and criminal acts to accomplish their designs. Those who assumed the office of high priest prior to, and at, the time of Christ's first advent, were not men divinely appointed to the sacred work. They had eagerly aspired to the office through love of power and show. They desired a position where they could have authority, and practice fraud under a garb of piety, and thereby escape detection. The high priest held a position of power and importance. He was not only counselor and mediator, but judge; and there was no appeal from his decision. The priests were held in restraint by the authority of the Romans, and were not allowed the power of legally putting anyone to death. This power rested with those who bore rule over the Jews. Men of corrupt hearts sought the distinguished office of high priest, and frequently obtained it by bribery and assassination. The high priest, clad in his consecrated and expensive robes, with the breastplate upon his breast, the light flashing upon the precious stones inlaid in the breastplate, presented a most imposing appearance, and struck the conscientious, true-hearted people with admiration, reverence, and awe. The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, who was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec (*The Review and Herald*, December 17, 1872).

No High Priest.—With Caiaphas the Jewish high priesthood ended. The service had become base and corrupt. It had

no longer any connection with God. Truth and righteousness were hateful in the eyes of the priests. They were tyrannical and deceptive, full of selfish, ambitious schemes. Such ministration could make nothing perfect; for it was itself utterly corrupt. The grace of God had naught to do with it.

Virtually Caiaphas was no high priest. He wore the priestly robes, but he had no vital connection with God. He was uncircumcised in heart. Proud and overbearing, he proved his unworthiness ever to have worn the garments of the high priest. He had no authority from heaven for occupying the position. He had not one ray of light from God to show him what the work of the priest was, or for what the office was instituted (*The Review and Herald*, June 12, 1900).

6-13 (Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8). An Illustration of God's Methods.—There are gifts that we rightly proportion to the character and necessities of the ones upon whom we bestow them. Not many of the poor would appreciate Mary's offering, or our Lord's sacrifice of Himself, which gift was the highest that could be given. That ointment was a symbol of the overflowing heart of the giver. It was an outward demonstration of a love fed by heavenly streams until it overflowed. And that ointment of Mary, which the disciples called waste, is repeating itself a thousand times in the susceptible hearts of others.

The Lord God is profuse in His gifts to our world. The question may be asked, Why does the Lord show such waste, such extravagance in the multitude of His gifts that cannot be enumerated? The Lord would be so bountiful toward His human family that it cannot be said of Him that He could do more. When He gave Jesus to our world, He gave all heaven. His love is without a parallel. It did not stop short of anything....

To human reasoning the whole plan of salvation is a waste of mercies and resources. They are provided to accomplish the restoration of the moral image of God in man. The atonement is abundantly able to secure to all who will receive it, mansions in heaven. The supposed prodigality of Mary is an illustration of the methods of God in the plan of salvation; for nature and grace, related to each other, manifest the ennobling fullness of the Source from which they flow (MS 28, 1897).

14-16 (Mark 14:10, 11; Luke 22:3-5; 1 Timothy 6:10). No Outbreaking Sin.—The love of money in the heart of Judas was growing with the exercise of his shrewd abilities. His practical financiering ability if exercised and enlightened and moulded by the Holy Spirit, would have been of great service to the little church, and by the sanctification of his spirit he would have had a clear insight, a correct discernment to appreciate heavenly things. But worldly policy plans were constantly cherished by Judas. There was no outbreaking sin on his part, but his sharp scheming, the selfish, parsimonious spirit that took possession of him, finally led him to sell his Lord for a small sum of money (MS 28, 1897).

Two Kinds of Experience Confused by Judas.—There are two kinds of experience—the outside showing and the inward working. The divine and human were at work in the character of Judas. Satan was working the human, Christ the divine. The Lord Jesus longed to see Judas rise to his appointed privileges. But the human side of Judas' character was confused with his religious sentiments, and treated by him as essential attributes. By taking this view of things, he left an open door for Satan to enter and take possession of the entire man. If Judas had practiced the lessons of Christ, he would have surrendered to Christ, he would have consecrated his heart fully to God; but his confused experience was misleading him (MS 28, 1897).

A Religious Fraud.—The case of Judas has been presented to me as a lesson for all. Judas was with Christ through the entire period of the Saviour's public ministry. He had all that Christ could give him. Had he used his capabilities with earnest diligence, he could have accumulated talents. Had he sought to be a blessing, instead of a questioning, criticizing, selfish man, the Lord would have used him to advance His kingdom. But Judas was a speculator. He thought that he could manage the finances of the church, and by his sharpness in business get gain. He was

divided in heart. He loved the praise of the world. He refused to give up the world for Christ. He never committed his eternal interests to Christ. He had a superficial religion, and therefore he speculated upon his Master and betrayed Him to the priests, being fully persuaded that Christ would not allow Himself to be taken.

Judas was a religious fraud. He held up a high standard for others, but he himself utterly failed to reach the Bible standard. He did not bring the religion of Christ into his life. How many today are, like Judas, betraying their Lord? Those who follow dishonest practices in business, sacrifice Christ for gain and reveal a wisdom that is after Satan's order. Speculation for selfish gain will not be brought into the life of the man who has that faith which works by love and purifies the soul (*Letter 40*, 1901).

(Mark 3:19.) Jesus Dealt Wisely With Judas.—Christ knew, when He permitted Judas to connect with Him as one of the twelve, that Judas was possessed of the demon of selfishness. He knew that this professed disciple would betray Him, and yet He did not separate him from the other disciples, and send him away. He was preparing the minds of these men for His death and ascension, and He foresaw that should He dismiss Judas, Satan would use him to spread reports that would be difficult to meet and explain.

The leaders of the Jewish nation were watching and searching for something that they could use to make of no effect the words of Christ. The Saviour knew that Judas, if dismissed, could so misconstrue and mystify His statements that the Jews would accept a false version of His words, using this version to bring terrible harm to the disciples, and to leave on the minds of Christ's enemies the impression that the Jews were justified in taking the attitude that they did toward Jesus and His disciples.

Christ did not, therefore, send Judas from His presence, but kept him by His side, where He could counteract the influence that he might exert against His work (*The Review and Herald*, May 12, 1903).

26-29. See EGW on 1 Corinthians 11:18-34, 23-26.

28 (1 Corinthians 11:25; see EGW on Leviticus 17:11). The Peace-making Cup.—The atoning sacrifice is full and sufficient. It is the new covenant, sealed with His blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins. This Christ declared at the last supper. In this cup there is to those who drink in faith, peace-making, soul-cleansing efficacy. It is the balm of Gilead, which God has provided to restore health and soundness to the sin-stricken soul (*Letter 108*, 1899).

31-35 (Mark 14:27-31; Luke 22:31-34; 13:36-38; 1 Corinthians 10:12). The Self-sufficient Go On in Supposed Strength.—Many today stand where Peter stood when in self-confidence he declared that he would not deny his Lord. And because of their self-sufficiency, they fall an easy prey to Satan's devices. Those who realize their weakness trust in a power higher than self. And while they look to God, Satan has no power against them. But those who trust in self are easily defeated. Let us remember that if we do not heed the cautions that God gives us, a fall is before us. Christ will not save from wounds the one who places himself unbidden on the enemy's ground. He lets the self-sufficient one, who acts as if he knew more than his Lord, go on in his supposed strength. Then comes suffering and a crippled life, or perhaps defeat and death (*MS 115*, 1902).

36-46 (Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46; see EGW on Ecclesiastes 8:11). Satan Sought to Crush Christ.—At the thought of the grievous character of the guilt of the world, Christ felt that He must go apart, and be alone. The hosts of darkness are there to make sin appear as extensive, deep, and horrible as possible. In his hatred of God, in falsifying His character, in manifesting irreverence, contempt, and hatred toward the laws of His government, Satan had made iniquity reach unto the heavens, and it was his purpose to swell iniquity to such great proportions, that it would make atonement seem impossible, so that the Son of God, who sought to save a lost world, should be crushed beneath the curse of sin. The working of the vigilant foe in presenting to Christ the vast proportions of transgression, caused such poignant pain

that He felt that He could not remain in the immediate presence of any human being. He could not bear that even His disciples should witness His agony as He contemplated the woe of the world. Even His most dearly loved friends must not be in His companionship. The sword of justice was unsheathed, and the wrath of God against iniquity rested upon man's substitute, Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father.

In the Garden of Gethsemane Christ suffered in man's stead, and the human nature of the Son of God staggered under the terrible horror of the guilt of sin, until from His pale and quivering lips was forced the agonizing cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:" but if there is no other way by which the salvation of fallen man may be accomplished, then "not as I will, but as thou wilt." Human nature would then and there have died under the horror of the sense of sin, had not an angel from heaven strengthened Him to bear the agony.

The power that inflicted retributive justice upon man's substitute and surety, was the power that sustained and upheld the suffering One under the tremendous weight of wrath that would have fallen upon a sinful world. Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God's law.

It is a fearful thing for the unrepenting sinner to fall into the hands of the living God. This is proved by the history of the destruction of the old world by a flood, by the record of the fire which fell from heaven and destroyed the inhabitants of Sodom. But never was this proved to so great an extent as in the agony of Christ, the Son of the infinite God, when He bore the wrath of God for a sinful world. It was in consequence of sin, the transgression of God's law, that the Garden of Gethsemane has become pre-eminently the place of suffering to a sinful world. No sorrow, no agony, can measure with that which was endured by the Son of God.

Man has not been made a sin-bearer, and he will never know the horror of the curse of sin which the Saviour bore. No sorrow can bear any comparison with the sorrow of Him upon whom the wrath of God fell with overwhelming force. Human nature can endure but a limited amount of test and trial. The finite can only endure the finite measure, and human nature succumbs; but the nature of Christ had a greater capacity for suffering; for the human existed in the divine nature, and created a capacity for suffering to endure that which resulted from the sins of a lost world. The agony which Christ endured, broadens, deepens, and gives a more extended conception of the character of sin, and the character of the retribution which God will bring upon those who continue in sin. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ to the repenting, believing sinner (MS 35, 1895).

(Genesis 3:1-24.) Eden and Gethsemane.—The Garden of Eden with its disobedience and the Garden of Gethsemane with its obedience are presented before us. What a costly work was that in Eden! How much was involved in the fatal eating of the forbidden tree! But many are following in the very same footprints, in disobedience, in breaking away from the law of God. When men selfishly enter a course of disobedience to God they go on imperceptibly. They do not calculate what the sure result will be when they enter the path of temptation, and make but feeble efforts to resist, and some make none at all. But when the scroll is unrolled, and God looks over it, He will find that He has been denied in that place, dishonored in another place; and as the roll is opened more and more, the results of un-Christlike actions are revealed. The Word of God was not fed upon, therefore their actions were not the result of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God (*Letter 69*, 1897).

The Garden of Eden with its foul blot of disobedience, is to be carefully studied and compared with the Garden of Gethsemane, where the world's Redeemer suffered superhuman agony when the sins of the whole world were rolled upon Him.... Adam did not stop to calculate the result of His disobedience (MS 1, 1892).

39. See EGW on Romans 8:11.

42 (Mark 14:36; Luke 12:50; 22:42, 53;

Philippians 2:7). Stronger Than Human Desire.—The human nature of Christ was like unto ours, and suffering was more keenly felt by Him; for His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin. Therefore His desire for the removal of suffering was stronger than human beings can experience. How intense was the desire of the humanity of Christ to escape the displeasure of an offended God, how His soul longed for relief, is revealed in the words, “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.”

Yet Christ had not been forced to take this step. He had contemplated this struggle. To His disciples He had said, “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” “Now is your hour, and the power of darkness.” He had volunteered to lay down His life to save the world (*The Signs of the Times*, December 9, 1897).

43 (Mark 14:40; Luke 22:45). Picture of a Sleeping Church.—In this fearful hour of trial Christ’s human nature longed even for the sympathy of His disciples. A second time He rose from the earth and went to them and found them sleeping. This was not a deep sleep. They were in a drowse. They had a limited sense of their Lord’s suffering and anguish. In tenderness Jesus stood for a moment bending over them, and regarding them with mingled feelings of love and pity. In these sleeping disciples He sees a representation of a sleeping church. When they should be watching, they are asleep (*The Sufferings of Christ*, 19, 20).

57 (John 18:13, 14). Need Not Be Instruments of Unrighteousness.—Caiaphas was the one who was to be in office when type met antitype, when the true High Priest came into office. Each actor in history stands in his lot and place; for God’s great work after His own plan will be carried out by men who have prepared themselves to fill positions for good or evil. In opposition to righteousness, men become instruments of unrighteousness. But they are not forced to take this course of action. They need not become instruments of unrighteousness, any more than Cain needed to (*The Review and Herald*, June 12, 1900).

63, 64 (Mark 14:61, 62; Luke 22:70). A Wonderful Moment.—This is one of the times when Christ publicly confessed His claim to be the Messiah, the One for whom the Jews had long looked. Weighted with such great results, it was to Christ one of the most wonderful moments of His life. He realized that all disguise must be swept away. The declaration that He was one with God must be openly made. His judges looked upon Him as only a man, and they thought Him guilty of blasphemous presumption. But He proclaimed Himself as the Son of God. He fully asserted His divine character before the dignitaries who had arraigned Him before their earthly tribunal. His words, spoken calmly, yet with conscious power, showed that He claimed for Himself the prerogatives of the Son of God (MS 111, 1897).

65 (Mark 14:63). Priestly Robes Not to Be Rent.—The pattern of the priestly robes was made known to Moses in the mount. Every article the high priest was to wear, and the way it should be made, were specified. These garments were consecrated to a most solemn purpose. By them was represented the character of the great antitype, Jesus Christ. They covered the priest with glory and beauty, and made the dignity of his office to appear. When clothed with them, the priest presented himself as a representative of Israel, showing by his garments the glory that Israel should reveal to the world as the chosen people of God. Nothing but perfection, in dress and attitude, in spirit and word, would be acceptable to God. He is holy; and His glory and perfection must be represented in the earthly service. Nothing but perfection could properly represent the sacredness of the heavenly service. Finite man might rend his own heart by showing a contrite and humble spirit; but no rent must be made in the priestly robes (*The Youth’s Instructor*, June 7, 1900).

An Outward Appearance.—So perverted had the priesthood become that when Christ declared Himself the Son of God, Caiaphas, in pretended horror, rent his robe, and accused the Holy One of Israel of blasphemy.

Many today who claim to be Christians are in danger of rending their garments,

making an outward show of repentance, when their hearts are not softened nor subdued. This is why so many continue to make failures in the Christian life. An outward appearance of sorrow is shown for wrong, but their repentance is not that which needs not to be repented of (*The Review and Herald*, June 12, 1900).

Christ's Heart Rent.—How different was the true High Priest from the false and corrupted Caiaphas. Christ stood before the false high priest, pure and undefiled, without a taint of sin.

Christ mourned for the transgression of every human being. He bore even the guiltiness of Caiaphas, knowing the hypocrisy that dwelt in his soul, while for pretense he rent his robe. Christ did not rend His robe, but His soul was rent. His garment of human flesh was rent as He hung on the cross, the sin-bearer of the race. By His suffering and death a new and living way was opened (*The Review and Herald*, June 12, 1900).

(Leviticus 10:6.) A Positive Prohibition.—It was the general custom for the garments to be rent at the death of friends. The only exception to this was in the case of the high priest. Even Aaron, when he lost his two sons because they did not glorify God as had been specified, was forbidden to show sorrow and mourning by rending his garments. The prohibition was positive [Leviticus 10:6 quoted] (MS 102, 1897).

The Condemned Pronounced Sentence on the Innocent.—For thus rending his garment in pretended zeal, the high priest might have been arraigned before the Sanhedrin. He had done the very thing that the Lord had commanded should not be done. Standing under the condemnation of God, he pronounced sentence on Christ as a blasphemer. He performed all his actions toward Christ as a priestly judge, as an officiating high priest, but he was not this by the appointment of God. The priestly robe he rent in order to impress the people with his horror of the sin of blasphemy covered a heart full of wickedness. He was acting under the inspiration of Satan. Under a gorgeous priestly dress, he was fulfilling the work of the enemy of God. This has been done again and again by priests and rulers.

The rent garment ended Caiaphas' priesthood. By his own action he disqualified himself for the priestly office. After the condemnation of Christ he was unable to act without showing the most unreasonable passion. His tortured conscience scourged him, but he did not feel that sorrow that leads to repentance.

The religion of those that crucified Christ was a pretense. The supposed holy vestments of the priests covered hearts that were full of corruption, malignity, and crime. They interpreted gain to be godliness. The priests were appointed, not by God, but by an unbelieving government. The position of priest was bought and sold like goods of merchandise. Thus it was that Caiaphas obtained the office. He was not a priest after the order of Melchisedec, by God's appointment. He was bought and sold to work wickedness. He never knew what it was to be obedient to God. He had the form of godliness, and this gave him the power to oppress (MS 102, 1897).

Chapter 27

15-26 (Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:18-25; 18:39, 40). A Symbol of Last Days.—The scene in the judgment hall in Jerusalem is a symbol of what will take place in the closing scenes of this earth's history. The world will accept Christ, the Truth, or they will accept Satan, the first great rebel, a robber, apostate, and murderer. They will either reject the message of mercy in regard to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, or they will accept the truth as it is in Jesus. If they accept Satan and his falsehoods, they identify themselves with the chief of all liars, and with all who are disloyal, while they turn from no less a personage than the Son of the infinite God (*The Review and Herald*, January 30, 1900).

A Matter of Choice.—When Jesus was on earth, Satan led the people to reject the Son of God, and to choose Barabbas, who in character represented Satan, the God of this world. The Lord Jesus Christ came to dispute the usurpation of Satan in the kingdoms of the world. The conflict is not yet ended; and as we draw near the close of time, the battle waxes more intense. As the second appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ draws near, satanic agencies

are moved from beneath. Satan will not only appear as a human being, but he will personate Jesus Christ; and the world that has rejected the truth will receive him as the Lord of lords and King of kings. He will exercise his power, and work upon the human imagination. He will corrupt both the minds and the bodies of men, and will work through the children of disobedience, fascinating and charming, as does a serpent. What a spectacle will the world be for heavenly intelligences! What a spectacle for God, the Creator of the world, to behold!

The form Satan assumed in Eden when leading our first parents to transgress, was of a character to bewilder and confuse the mind. He will work in as subtle a manner as we near the end of earth's history. All his deceiving power will be brought to bear upon human subjects, to complete the work of deluding the human family. So deceptive will be his working, that men will do as they did in the days of Christ; and when asked, Whom shall I release unto you, Christ or Barabbas? the almost universal cry will be, Barabbas, Barabbas! And when the question is asked, "What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?" the cry again will be, "Crucify him!"

Christ will be represented in the person of those who accept the truth, and who identify their interest with that of their Lord. The world will be enraged at them in the same way that they were enraged at Christ, and the disciples of Christ will know that they are to be treated no better than was their Lord. But Christ will surely identify His interest with that of those who accept Him as their personal Saviour. Every insult, every reproach, every false accusation made against them by those who have turned their ears away from the truth and are turned unto fables, will be charged upon the guilty ones as done to Christ in the person of His saints (*The Review and Herald*, April 14, 1896).

When Christ was upon this earth, the world preferred Barabbas. And today the world and the churches are making the same choice. The scenes of the betrayal, the rejection, and the crucifixion of Christ have been re-enacted, and will again be re-enacted on an immense scale. People will be filled with the attributes of the enemy, and with them his delusions will have great power. Just to that degree that light is refused will there be misconception and misunderstanding. Those who reject Christ and choose Barabbas work under a ruinous deception. Misrepresentation and false witness will grow to open rebellion. The eye being evil, the whole body will be full of darkness. Those who give their affections to any leader but Christ will find themselves under the control, body, soul, and spirit, of an infatuation that is so entrancing that under its power souls turn away from hearing the truth to believe a lie. They are ensnared and taken, and by their every action they cry, Release unto us Barabbas, but crucify Christ.

Even now this decision is being made. The scenes enacted at the cross are being re-enacted. In the churches that have departed from truth and righteousness it is being revealed what human nature can do and will do when the love of God is not an abiding principle in the soul. We need not be surprised at anything that may take place now. We need not marvel at any developments of horror. Those who trample under their unholy feet the law of God have the same spirit as had the men who insulted and betrayed Jesus. Without any compunction of conscience, they will do the deeds of their father, the devil. They will ask the question that came from the traitorous lips of Judas, What will you give me if I betray unto you Jesus the Christ? Even now Christ is being betrayed in the person of His saints.

In view of the history of the life and death of Christ, can we be surprised if the world is hollow and insincere? Can we in our day trust in man, or make flesh our arm? Shall we not choose Christ as our Leader? He alone can save us from sin.

When the world is at last brought up for trial before the great white throne, to account for its rejection of Jesus Christ, God's own messenger to our world, what a solemn scene it will be! What a reckoning will have to be made for nailing to the

cross One who came to our world as a living epistle of the law. God will ask each one the question, What have you done with My only-begotten Son? What will those answer who have refused to accept the truth? They will be obliged to say, We hated Jesus, and cast Him out. We cried, Crucify Him, crucify Him. We chose Barabbas in His stead. If those to whom the light of Heaven is presented reject it, they reject Christ. They reject the only provision whereby they may be cleansed from pollution. They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. To them it will be said, "I never knew you: depart from me." God will assuredly avenge the death of His Son (*The Review and Herald*, January 30, 1900).

21. See EGW on Romans 3:19.

21, 22, 29 (Philippians 2:9; Hebrews 2:9; Revelation 6:16; 14:10). Two Kinds of Crowns.—On whose side are we? The world cast Christ out, the heavens received Him. Man, finite man, rejected the Prince of life; God, our sovereign Ruler, received Him into the heavens. God has exalted Him. Man crowned Him with a crown of thorns, God has crowned Him with a crown of royal majesty. We must all think candidly. Will you have this man Christ Jesus to rule over you, or will you have Barabbas? The death of Christ brings to the rejecter of His mercy the wrath and judgments of God, unmixed with mercy. This is the wrath of the Lamb. But the death of Christ is hope and eternal life to all who receive Him and believe in Him (*Letter* 31, 1898).

Under Satan's Black Banner.—Each son and daughter of Adam chooses either Christ or Barabbas as his general. And all who place themselves on the side of the disloyal are standing under Satan's black banner, and are charged with rejecting and despitefully using Christ. They are charged with deliberately crucifying the Lord of life and glory (*The Review and Herald*, January 30, 1900).

22, 23 (Mark 15:12-14; Luke 23:20-23; John 19:14, 15). A Representative Scene.—The scene transacted in Jerusalem at the betrayal and rejection of Christ represents the scene which will take place in the future history of the world, when Christ is finally rejected. The religious world will take sides with the first great rebel, and will reject the message of mercy in regard to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (MS 40, 1897).

25, 26 (Mark 15:14, 15; Luke 23:23, 24; 19:15, 16). Angels Could Not Interfere.—Be astonished, O heaven, and be everlastingly ashamed, O inhabitants of earth! With sorrow and indignation the angels heard the choice made by the people and the sentence passed upon Christ. But they could not interfere; for in the great controversy between good and evil, Satan must be given every opportunity to develop his true character, that the heavenly universe and the race for whom Christ was giving His life might see the righteousness of God's purposes. Those under the control of the enemy must be allowed to reveal the principles of his government (MS 136, 1899).

32 (Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26). A Means of Conversion.—The cross he [Simon] was forced to bear became the means of his conversion. His sympathies were deeply stirred in favor of Jesus; and the events of Calvary, and the words uttered by the Saviour, caused him to acknowledge that He was the Son of God (Undated MS 127).

37 (Psalm 85:10; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19). An Arranged Superscription.—Look at the superscription written above the cross. The Lord arranged it. Written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, it is a call for all, Jew and Gentile, barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, hopeless, helpless, and perishing, to come. Christ has made of none effect the power of Satan. He laid hold of the pillars of Satan's kingdom, and passed through the conflict, destroying him that had the power of death. A way was now opened whereby mercy and truth could meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other (MS 111, 1897).

38 (Mark 15:27; Luke 23:33; 19:18). Christ Placed as Most Notorious Criminal.—Joseph and Nicodemus watched every development at the condemnation and crucifixion of Christ. Not an action escaped them. These men were diligent searchers of the Scriptures, and they were deeply indignant

as they saw this man, whom the judges had pronounced to be entirely without fault, placed in the center of two thieves, “on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.” This instruction had been given by the chief priests and rulers, that by his position all might judge that Christ was the most notorious of the three (MS 103, 1897).

42. See EGW on Luke 24:13-15.

45 (Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44). In Sympathy and Confirmation.—The darkness upon the face of nature expressed her sympathy with Christ in His expiring agony. It evidenced to humanity that the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the world, was withdrawing His beams from the once favored city of Jerusalem, and from the world. It was a miraculous testimony given of God, that the faith of after generations might be confirmed (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:167).

God and Angels Clothed in Darkness.—The dark cloud of human transgression came between the Father and the Son. The interruption of the communion between God and His Son caused a condition of things in the heavenly courts which cannot be described by human language. Nature could not witness such a scene as Christ dying in agony while bearing the penalty of man’s transgression. God and the angels clothed themselves with darkness, and hid the Saviour from the gaze of the curious multitude while He drank the last dregs of the cup of God’s wrath (*Letter* 139, 1898).

45, 46 (verse 54; Mark 15:33, 34, 39; Luke 23:46, 47; John 19:30). Circumstances Sowed Seed.—The conviction forced upon many at the time of Christ’s trial, at the time when the three hours’ darkness enshrouded the cross, without any natural cause for it, and when the last sentences were uttered, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” “It is finished,” “Into thy hands I commend my spirit,” was seed sown that ripened into harvest when at a future date the gospel was boldly proclaimed by His disciples. The shaking earth, the piercing cry, the sudden death which called forth in no whispered tones the cry, “It is finished,” forced from many the words, “Assuredly this man was righteous”; “Truly this was the Son of God.” Many who had scoffed and jeered at, and taunted the Son of God were terribly afraid that the shaking earth, the rent and trembling rocks would put an end to their own lives. They hastened away from the scene, beating upon their breasts, stumbling, falling, in awful terror lest the earth should open and swallow them up. The veil of the temple rent so mysteriously, changed the religious ideas of many of the Jewish priests, and a large company changed their faith. After the day of Pentecost, we read that “the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people (MS 91, 1897).

Father Suffered With Son.—In the scenes that transpired in the judgment hall and at Calvary, we see what the human heart is capable of when under the influence of Satan. Christ submitted to crucifixion, although the heavenly host could have delivered Him. The angels suffered with Christ. God Himself was crucified with Christ; for Christ was one with the Father. Those who reject Christ, those who will not have this man to rule over them, choose to place themselves under the rule of Satan, to do his work as his bondslaves. Yet for them Christ yielded up His life on Calvary (BE Aug. 6, 1894).

50 (Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30; Hebrews 2:14). Satan Overcome by Christ’s Human Nature.—When Christ bowed His head and died, He bore the pillars of Satan’s kingdom with Him to the earth. He vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory. The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Saviour’s Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power. This is the privilege of all. In proportion to our faith will be our victory (*The Youth’s Instructor*, April 25, 1901).

51 (Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45; Ephesians 2:14, 15; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:19, 20; See EGW on John 19:30). The Mercy Seat Opened to All.—Christ was nailed to the cross between the third and sixth hour, that is, between nine and twelve o’clock. In the afternoon He died. This was the hour of the evening

sacrifice. Then the veil of the temple, that which hid God's glory from the view of the congregation of Israel, was rent in twain from top to bottom.

Through Christ the hidden glory of the holy of holies was to stand revealed. He had suffered death for every man, and by this offering the sons of men were to become the sons of God. With open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, believers in Christ were to be changed into the same image, from glory to glory. The mercy seat, upon which the glory of God rested in the holiest of all, is opened to all who accept Christ as the propitiation for sin, and through its medium, they are brought into fellowship with God. The veil is rent, the partition walls broken down, the handwriting of ordinances canceled. By virtue of His blood the enmity is abolished. Through faith in Christ Jew and Gentile may partake of the living bread (*Letter 230*, 1907).

(Ch. 26:65; Daniel 5:5, 25-28; Hebrews 10:19, 20.) Israel a Nation Unchurched.—In Christ the shadow reached its substance, the type its antitype. Well might Caiaphas rend his clothes in horror for himself and for the nation; for they were separating themselves from God, and were fast becoming a people unchurched by Jehovah. Surely the candlestick was being removed out of its place.

It was not the hand of the priest that rent from top to bottom the gorgeous veil that divided the holy from the most holy place. It was the hand of God. When Christ cried out, "It is finished," the Holy Watcher that was an unseen guest at Belshazzar's feast pronounced the Jewish nation to be a nation unchurched. The same hand that traced on the wall the characters that recorded Belshazzar's doom and the end of the Babylonian kingdom, rent the veil of the temple from top to bottom, opening a new and living way for all, high and low, rich and poor, Jew and Gentile. From henceforth people might come to God without priest or ruler (MS 101, 1897).

(Hebrews 6:19; 8:6, 7; Hebrews 10:19, 20.) God's Presence Withdrawn From Earthly Sanctuary.—By the rending of the veil of the temple, God said, I can no longer reveal My presence in the most holy place. A new and living Way, before which there hangs no veil, is offered to all. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest.

Type had met antitype in the death of God's Son. The Lamb of God had been offered as a sacrifice. It was as if a voice had said to the worshipers, "There is now an end to all sacrifices and offerings" (*The Youth's Instructor*, June 21, 1900).

A New Way Opened to Fallen Man.—When Christ on the cross cried out, "It is finished," the veil of the temple was rent in twain. This veil was significant to the Jewish nation. It was of most costly material, of purple and gold, and was of great length and breadth. At the moment when Christ breathed His last, there were witnesses in the temple who beheld the strong, heavy material rent by unseen hands from top to bottom. This act signified to the heavenly universe, and to a world corrupted by sin, that a new and living way had been opened to the fallen race, that all sacrificial offerings terminated in the one great offering of the Son of God. He who had hitherto dwelt in the temple made with hands, had gone forth never again to grace it with His presence (*The Signs of the Times*, December 8, 1898).

52, 53 (see EGW on ch. 28:2-4). Resurrection Known to Priests and Rulers.—The captives brought up from the graves at the time of the resurrection of Jesus were His trophies as a conquering Prince. Thus He attested His victory over death and the grave; thus He gave a pledge and an earnest of the resurrection of all the righteous dead. Those who were called from their graves went into the city, and appeared unto many in their resurrected forms, and testified that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead, and that they had risen with Him....

It was well known to the priests and rulers that certain persons who were dead had risen at the resurrection of Jesus. Authentic reports were brought to them of different ones who had seen and conversed with these resurrected ones, and heard their testimony that Jesus, the Prince of life, whom the priests and rulers had slain, was risen from the dead (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:223).

54 (Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47; see EGW on

verses 45, 46; 1:1-3, 14). The Sermon in Action.—[Matthew 27:54 quoted.] ... What so enlightened and convinced these men that they could not refrain from confessing their faith in Jesus? It was the sermon that was given in every action of Christ and in His silence under cruel abuse. At His trial one seemed to vie with the other in making His humiliation as degrading as possible. But His silence was eloquence. In that lacerated, bruised, broken body hanging on the cross, the centurion recognized the form of the Son of God (MS 115, 1897).

Chapter 28

1. See EGW on Mark 16:1, 2.

2. Mightiest Angel Caused Earthquake.—Before anyone had reached the sepulcher, there was a great earthquake. The mightiest angel from heaven, he who held the position from which Satan fell, received his commission from the Father, and clothed with the panoply of heaven, he parted the darkness from his track. His face was like the lightning, and his garments white as snow. As soon as his feet touched the ground it quaked beneath his tread. The Roman guard were keeping their weary watch when this wonderful scene took place, and they were enabled to endure the sight, for they had a message to bear as witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. The angel approached the grave, rolled away the stone as though it had been a pebble, and sat upon it. The light of heaven encircled the tomb, and the whole heaven was lighted by the glory of the angels. Then his voice was heard, “Thy Father calls Thee; come forth” (MS 115, 1897).

2-4 (chs. 24:30; 27:52, 53; Isaiah 24:20; John 5:28, 29; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 6:14-17). A Lively Image of Glory.—In this scene of the resurrection of the Son of God is given a lively image of the glory that will be revealed at the general resurrection of the just at the second appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Then the dead that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth to life; and not only the earth, but the heavens themselves, shall be shaken. A few graves were opened at the resurrection of Christ; but at His second coming all the precious dead, from righteous Abel to the last saint that dies, shall awake to glorious, immortal life.

If the soldiers at the sepulcher were so filled with terror at the appearance of one angel clothed with heavenly light and strength, that they fell as dead men to the ground, how will His enemies stand before the Son of God, when He comes in power and great glory, accompanied by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels from the courts of heaven? Then the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed as a cottage. The elements shall be in flames, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll (*The Signs of the Times*, April 22, 1913).

5, 6. See EGW on Mark 16:6.

17. Doubt Closes Door to Blessings.—But some doubted. So it will ever be. There are those who find it hard to exercise faith, and they place themselves on the doubting side. These lose much because of their unbelief. If they would control their feelings, and refuse to allow doubt to bring a shadow over their own minds and the minds of others, how much happier and more helpful they would be. They close the door to many blessings that they might enjoy if they would refuse to place themselves on the doubting side, and would, instead, talk hope and courage (*Letter* 115, 1904).

18 (Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1; see EGW on John 20:16, 17). A Friend at Court.—What a Friend we have at court. After His resurrection Christ spoke to His disciples, saying, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” These words were spoken to all who will receive them as a living assurance (MS 13, 1899).

19 (Romans 6:4). Facilities of Heaven Pledged.—The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the three holy dignitaries of heaven, have declared that they will strengthen men to overcome the powers of darkness. All the facilities of heaven are pledged to those who by their baptismal vows have entered into a covenant with God (MS 92, 1901).

19, 20. See EGW on Romans 1:14.

20. See EGW on Acts 1:11.

Mark

Chapter 1 9-11. See EGW on Matthew 3:13-17.

10-13. See EGW on Matthew 4:1-11.

Chapter 2

14, 15. See EGW on Luke 5:29.

17. See EGW on Matthew 9:12, 13.

22. See EGW on Matthew 9:17.

Chapter 3

1-3. See EGW on Luke 1:76, 77.

22. See EGW on Matthew 12:24-32.

28, 29. See EGW on Matthew 12:31, 32.

Chapter 4

30 (Luke 13:18). Not Like Earthly Governments.—The government of the kingdom of Christ is like no earthly government. It is a representation of the characters of those who compose the kingdom. “Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God?” Christ asked, “or with what comparison shall we compare it?” He could find nothing on earth that would serve as a perfect comparison. His court is one where holy love presides, and whose offices and appointments are graced by the exercise of charity. He charges His servants to bring pity and loving-kindness, His own attributes, into all their office work, and to find their happiness and satisfaction in reflecting the love and tender compassion of the divine nature on all with whom they associate (*The Review and Herald*, March 19, 1908).

Chapter 6

26. See EGW on Matthew 14:9.

Chapter 8

34. See EGW on Matthew 16:24; Luke 9:23.

Chapter 9

2-4. See EGW on Matthew 17:1-3.

Chapter 10

13-16. See EGW on Matthew 19:13-15.

45. See EGW on Matthew 9:12, 13.

46-52 (Matthew 20:30-34; Luke 18:35-43). Some With Eyes See Nothing.—It is only when the sinner feels the need of a Saviour, that his heart goes after the One who can help him. When Jesus walked among men, it was the sick that wanted a physician. The poor, the afflicted and distressed, followed after Him, to receive the help and comfort which they could not find elsewhere. Blind Bartimaeus is waiting by the wayside; he has waited long to meet Christ. Throngs of people who possess their sight are passing to and fro, but they have no desire to see Jesus. One look of faith would touch His heart of love, and bring them the blessings of His grace; but they know not the sickness and poverty of their souls, and they feel no need of Christ. Not so with the poor blind man. His only hope is in Jesus. As he waits and watches, he hears the tread of many feet, and he eagerly inquires, What means this noise of travel? The by-standers answer that “Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.” With the eagerness of intense desire, he cries, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!” They try to silence him, but he cries the more vehemently, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!” This appeal is heard. His persevering faith is rewarded. Not only is physical sight restored, but the eyes of his understanding are opened. In Christ he sees his Redeemer, and the Sun of Righteousness shines into his soul. All who feel their need of Christ as did blind Bartimaeus, and who will be as earnest and determined as he was, will, like him, receive the blessing which they crave.

The afflicted, suffering ones who sought Christ as their helper, were charmed with the divine perfection, the beauty of holiness, that shone forth in His character. But the Pharisees could see no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. His simple attire, and humble life, devoid of outward show, rendered Him to them as a root out of dry ground (*The Review and Herald*, March 15, 1887).

Chapter 11 12-14. See EGW on Matthew 21:18-20.

Chapter 12

30 (Ecclesiastes 9:10; Luke 10:27; Romans 12:11; Colossians 3:23). The Service of Every Power.—The physical powers are to be brought into service from love to God. The Lord requires the physical strength, and you can reveal your love for Him by the right use of your physical powers, doing the very work which needs to be done. There is no respect of persons with God....

There is science in the humblest kind of work, and if all would thus regard it, they would see nobility in labor. Heart and soul are to be put into work of any kind; then there is cheerfulness and efficiency. In agricultural or mechanical occupations, men may give evidence to God that they appreciate His gift in the physical powers, and the mental faculties as well. Let the educated ability be employed devising improved methods of work. This is just what the Lord wants. There is honor in any class of work that is essential to be done. Let the law of God be made the standard of action and it ennobles and sanctifies all labor. Faithfulness in the discharge of every duty makes the work noble, and reveals a character that God can approve.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.” God desires the love that is expressed in heart service, in soul service, in the service of the physical powers. We are not to be dwarfed in any kind of service for God. Whatever He has lent us is to be used intelligently for Him. The man who exercises his faculties will surely strengthen them; but he must seek to do his best. There is need of intelligence and educated ability to devise the best methods in farming, in building, and in every other department, that the worker may not labor in vain....

It is the duty of every worker not merely to give his strength but his mind and intellect to that which he undertakes to do.... You can choose to become stereo-typed in a wrong course of action because you have not the determination to take yourselves in hand and reform, or you may cultivate your powers to do the very best kind of service, and then you will find yourselves in demand anywhere and everywhere. You will be appreciated for all that you are worth. “Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord” (MS 8, 1894).

30, 31. See EGW on Matthew 22:37-39.

37. See EGW on Luke 4:18, 19.

Chapter 13

21, 22. See EGW on Matthew 24:23, 24.

34. See EGW on John 17:20, 21.

Chapter 14

1. See EGW on Matthew 26:2.

3-9. See EGW on Matthew 26:6-13; 12:3.

10, 11. See EGW on Matthew 26:14-16; Luke 22:3-5.

27-31. See EGW on Matthew 26:31-35.

29-31. See EGW on Luke 22:31-34.

32-42. See EGW on Matthew 26:36-46.

36. See EGW on Matthew 26:42; Luke 22:42; Romans 8:11.

40. See EGW on Matthew 26:43.

53. See EGW on Matthew 26:3.

61, 62. See EGW on Matthew 26:63, 64; Luke 22:70.

63. See EGW on Matthew 26:65.

Chapter 15

6-15. See EGW on Matthew 27:15-26.

12-14. See EGW on Matthew 27:22, 23.

14, 15. See EGW on Matthew 27:25, 26.

21. See EGW on Matthew 27:32.

26. See EGW on Matthew 27:37.

27. See EGW on Matthew 27:38.

31. See EGW on Luke 24:13-15.

33. See EGW on Matthew 27:45.

33, 34, 39. See EGW on Matthew 27:45, 46.

37. See EGW on Matthew 27:50; John 19:30.

38. See EGW on Matthew 27:51; 19:30.

39. See EGW on Matthew 27:54.

Chapter 16

1, 2 (Matthew 28:1; Luke 24:1; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:26). Resurrection Did Not Consecrate First Day.—Christ rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day, and when holy beings of both heaven and earth were astir on the morning of the first day of the week, He rose from the grave to renew His work of teaching His disciples. But this fact does not consecrate the first day of the week, and make it a Sabbath. Jesus, prior to His death, established a memorial of the breaking of His body and the spilling of His blood for the sins of the world, in the ordinance of the Lord's supper, saying "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." And the repentant believer, who takes the steps required in conversion, commemorates in his baptism the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. He goes down into the water in the likeness of Christ's death and burial, and he is raised out of the water in the likeness of His resurrection—not to take up the old life of sin, but to live a new life in Christ Jesus (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:204).

6 (John 1:1-3, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:6, 8; 2:14-17; Hebrews 4:15). Deity Did Not Die.—Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the two natures were mysteriously blended in one person—the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible. Christ, the sinless One, will save every son and daughter of Adam who accepts the salvation proffered them, consenting to become the children of God. The Saviour has purchased the fallen race with His own blood.

This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely understood in all its greatness until the translation of the redeemed shall take place. Then the power and greatness and efficacy of the gift of God to man will be understood. But the enemy is determined that this gift shall be so mystified that it will become as nothingness (*Letter* 280, 1904).

(Matthew 28:5, 6; Luke 24:5, 6; 2:19; John 10:17, 18; Acts 13:32, 33.) When the voice of the angel was heard saying, "Thy Father calls thee," He who had said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again," "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," came forth from the grave to life that was in Himself. Deity did not die. Humanity died, but Christ now proclaims over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, "I am the resurrection, and the life." In His divinity Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death. He declares that He had life in Himself to quicken whom He will.

"I am the resurrection, and the life." This language can be used only by the Deity. All created things live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capabilities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, could say, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." All the human beings in our world take their life from Him. He is the spring, the fountain of life (*MS* 131, 1897).

"I am the resurrection, and the life." He who had said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again," came forth from the grave to life that was in Himself. Humanity died: divinity did not die. In His divinity, Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death. He declares that He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will.

All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, could say, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." ...

Christ was invested with the right to give immortality. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took

up and gave to humanity. “I am come,” He says, “that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (*The Youth’s Instructor*, August 4, 1898).

Only the Father Could Release Christ.—He who died for the sins of the world was to remain in the tomb the allotted time. He was in that stony prison house as a prisoner of divine justice. He was responsible to the Judge of the universe. He was bearing the sins of the world, and His Father only could release Him. A strong guard of mighty angels kept watch over the tomb, and had a hand been raised to remove the body, the flashing forth of their glory would have laid him who ventured powerless on the earth.

There was only one entrance to the tomb, and neither human force nor fraud could tamper with the stone that guarded the entrance. Here Jesus rested during the Sabbath. But prophecy had pointed out that on the third day Christ would rise from the dead. Christ Himself had assured His disciples of this. “Destroy this temple,” He said, “and in three days I will raise it up.” Christ never committed sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. His body was to come forth from the tomb untarnished by corruption (MS 94, 1897).

Luke

Chapter 1

1-4. See EGW on Acts 1:1-5.

5-17. An Answer to Prayer.—Throughout his married life, Zacharias had prayed for a son. He and his wife were now old, and as yet their prayer had remained unanswered; but he murmured not. God had not forgotten. He had his appointed time for answering this prayer, and when the case seemed hopeless, Zacharias received his answer...

As Zacharias entered the holy place, and performed the required service with solemn reverence, another form appeared, standing between the altar and the table of shewbread. It was Gabriel, the mighty messenger of God ... [Luke 1:12-17 quoted].

The answer had come. God had not forgotten the prayer of His servants. He had written it in His record book, to be answered in His own good time. Looking at outward appearances, Zacharias and Elisabeth had buried their hopes; but the Lord had not forgotten. He knew of the long years of disappointment, and when His own name could best be glorified, their son was born. How tender, how kind, how full of love and compassion, is the great heart of infinite love. God gave Zacharias as a son no ordinary person, but one who should hold a high place in His work, and from whom the light from heaven should shine in clear, distinct rays (MS 27, 1898).

17. See EGW on Matthew 11:14.

22. Shining With Reflected Light.—When Zacharias came out of the temple, his countenance was shining with the light which the heavenly angel had reflected upon him. But he could not speak to the people. He made signs to them that an angel had appeared to him in the temple, and because of his unbelief he was deprived of the power of speech, until the prediction of the angel should be fulfilled (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:45).

31-35. See EGW on John 1:1-3, 14.

35 (see EGW on John 1:1-3, 14). The Son of God in a New Sense.—Christ brought men and women power to overcome. He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature. In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God. Said the angel to Mary, “The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” While the Son of a human being, He

became the Son of God in a new sense. Thus He stood in our world—the Son of God, yet allied by birth to the human race....

From all eternity Christ was united with the Father, and when He took upon Himself human nature, He was still one with God. He is the link that unites God with humanity [Hebrews 2:14 quoted] (*The Signs of the Times*, August 2, 1905).

76, 77 (ch. 3:2-4; Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:1-3; Mark 1:1-3; 1:19-23). John Born for a Special Work.—In every stage of this earth's history God has had His agencies to carry forward His work, which must be done in His appointed way. John the Baptist had a special work, for which he was born and to which he was appointed—the work of preparing the way of the Lord.... His wilderness ministry was a most striking, literal fulfillment of prophecy (MS 112, 1901).

80. No Suitable School.—There was a great work appointed for the prophet John, but there was no school on the earth with which he could connect. His learning must be obtained away from the cities, in the wilderness. The Old Testament Scriptures, God, and the nature which God had created, were to be his study books. God was fitting John for his work of preparing the way of the Lord. His food was simply locusts and wild honey. The customs and practices of men were not to be the education of this man. Worldly engrossment was to act no part in the formation of his character (MS 131, 1901).

Satan Had Access Despite Closed Avenues.—John did not feel strong enough to stand the great pressure of temptation he would meet in society. He feared his character would be molded according to the prevailing customs of the Jews, and he chose the wilderness as his school, in which his mind could be properly educated and disciplined from God's great book of nature. In the wilderness, John could the more readily deny himself and bring his appetite under control, and dress in accordance to natural simplicity. And there was nothing in the wilderness that would take his mind from meditation and prayer. Satan had access to John, even after he had closed every avenue in his power through which he would enter. But his habits of life were so pure and natural that he could discern the foe, and had strength of spirit and decision of character to resist him.

The book of nature was open before John with its inexhaustible store of varied instruction. He sought the favor of God, and the Holy Spirit rested upon him, and kindled in his heart a glowing zeal to do the great work of calling the people to repentance, and to a higher and holier life. John was fitting himself, by the privations and hardships of his secluded life, to so control all his physical and mental powers that he could stand among the people as unmoved by surrounding circumstances as the rocks and mountains of the wilderness that had surrounded him for thirty years (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:47).

Satan Could Not Move John.—The childhood, youth, and manhood of John, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah to do a special work in preparing the way for the world's Redeemer, was marked with firmness and moral power. Satan could not move him from his integrity (*The Review and Herald*, March 3, 1874).

Chapter 2

9. Strengthened to Endure Greater Light.—[Luke 2:8, 9 quoted.] ... Suddenly the heavens are lighted up with a brightness which alarms the shepherds. They know not the reason of this grand display. They do not at first discern the myriads of angels that are congregated in the heavens. The brightness and glory from the heavenly host illuminate and glorify the entire plain. While the shepherds are terrified at the glory of God, the leading angel of the throng quiets their fears by revealing himself to them, saying, "Fear not..."

As their fears are dispelled, joy takes the place of astonishment and terror. They could not, at first, bear the radiance of glory, which attended the whole heavenly host, to break upon them suddenly. One angel only appears to the gaze of the watching shepherds to dissipate their fears, and make known their mission. As the light of the angel encircles them, the glory rests upon them, and they are strengthened to endure the greater light and glory attending the myriads of heavenly angels (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:17, 18).

13, 14, 29-32. Satan Filled With Frenzy.—The heavenly heralds aroused all the wrath of the synagogue of Satan. He followed the steps of those who had charge of the infant Jesus. He heard the prophecy of Simeon in the temple courts, who had long been waiting for the consolation of Israel. The Holy Ghost was upon him and he came by the Spirit into the temple. Taking the infant Saviour in his arms, he blessed God, and said, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” Satan was filled with frenzy as he saw that the aged Simeon recognized the divinity of Christ (*The Review and Herald*, October 29, 1895).

25-32. In the Atmosphere of Heaven.—Simeon no sooner saw the infant in the priest’s arms than he was divinely impressed ... [Luke 2:29-32 quoted].

Simeon realized that he held in his arms One who was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. There was at this time nothing in Christ’s outward appearance to give him this assurance, but Simeon had lived in the atmosphere of heaven. The bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness gave him spiritual discernment. His one desire had been to see Christ. The purity of his life corresponded to the light he had received, and he was prepared for the revelation of the great truth that this helpless infant was the Lord’s anointed, even the Messiah. Joy and exultation transfigured his face as he held in his arms God’s most precious gift to men. His illumined mind received the light flowing from the Source of all light. He saw that Christ was to be the hope of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. The walls of tradition built up by Jewish prejudice did not exist in his mind. He realized that the Messiah was to bring redemption to all (*The Review and Herald*, April 2, 1901).

Two Classes Represented.—Simeon and the priests represent two classes—those who are guided by the Spirit of God because they are willing to be instructed, and those who, refusing to receive the light which would lead them into all truth, are guided by the spirit of the power of darkness, and are daily being led into deeper darkness.

By divine illumination Simeon understood Christ’s mission. The Holy Spirit impressed his heart. But the priests and rulers were imbued with the spirit of the enemy of God; and today the same spirit influences human minds, controlling with power the hearts of men, and making of none effect the appeals of the Spirit (*The Review and Herald*, April 2, 1901).

38. Pious Jews Waited Day and Night.—The pious Jews were looking, believing, and earnestly praying, for the coming of the Messiah. God could not manifest His glory and power to His people through a corrupt priesthood. The set time to favor His people had come. The faith of the Jews had become clouded, in consequence of their departure from God. Many of the leaders of the people brought in their own traditions, and enforced them upon the Jews, as the commandments of God. The pious Jews believed, and trusted in God that He would not leave His people in this condition, to be a reproach to the heathen. He had, in time past, raised them up a deliverer when in their distress they had called upon Him. From the predictions of the prophets, they thought the time appointed of God had arrived when Messiah would come. And when He should come, they would have a clear revelation of the divine will, and that their doctrines would be freed from the traditions and needless ceremonies which had confused their faith. The pious, aged Jews waited day and night for the coming Messiah, praying that they might see the Saviour before they died. They longed to see the cloud of ignorance and bigotry dispelled from the minds of the people (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:41, 42).

40. An Example of What Children May Strive to Be.—It is not correct to say, as many writers have said, that Christ was like all children. He was not like all children. Many children are misguided and mismanaged. But Joseph, and especially Mary, kept before them the remembrance of their child’s divine Fatherhood. Jesus was instructed in accordance with the sacred character of His mission. His

inclination to right was a constant gratification to His parents. The questions He asked them led them to study most earnestly the great elements of truth. His soul-stirring words about nature and the God of nature opened and enlightened their minds.

On the rocks and knolls about His home the eye of the Son of God often rested. He was familiar with the things of nature. He saw the sun in the heavens, the moon and the stars fulfilling their mission. With the voice of singing He welcomed the morning light. He listened to the lark caroling forth music to its God, and joined His voice with the voice of praise and thanksgiving....

[Luke 2:40 quoted.] He was an example of what all children may strive to be if parents will seek the Lord most earnestly, and if children will cooperate with their parents. In His words and actions He manifested tender sympathy for all. His companionship was as a healing, soothing balm to the disheartened and depressed.

No one, looking upon the childlike countenance, shining with animation, could say that Christ was just like other children. He was God in human flesh. When urged by His companions to do wrong, divinity flashed through humanity, and He refused decidedly. In a moment He distinguished between right and wrong, and placed sin in the light of God's commands, holding up the law as a mirror which reflected light upon wrong. It was this keen discrimination between right and wrong that often provoked Christ's brothers to anger. Yet His appeals and entreaties, and the sorrow expressed in His countenance, revealed such a tender, earnest love for them that they were ashamed of having tempted Him to deviate from His strict sense of justice and loyalty (*The Youth's Instructor*, September 8, 1898).

40, 52. Growth in Knowledge and Service.—Though He increased in knowledge, and the grace of God was upon Him, yet He did not become lifted up in pride, or feel that He was above doing the most humble toil. He took His share of the burden, together with His father, mother, and brethren. He toiled to sustain the family, and shared in the work that would meet the expenses of the household. Though His wisdom had astonished the doctors, yet He meekly subjected Himself to His human guardians, bore His part in the family burdens, and worked with His own hands as any toiler would work. It is stated of Jesus that (as He advanced in years) He “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”

The knowledge He was daily obtaining of His wonderful mission did not disqualify Him for performing the most humble duties. He cheerfully took up the work that devolves upon youth who dwell in humble households pressed by poverty. He understood the temptations of children; for He bore their sorrows and trials. Firm and steadfast was His purpose to do the right. Though enticed to evil, He refused to depart in a single instance from the strictest truth and rectitude. He maintained perfect filial obedience; but His spotless life aroused the envy and jealousy of His brethren. His childhood and youth were anything but smooth and joyous. His brethren did not believe on Him, and were annoyed because He did not in all things act as they did, and become one of them in the practice of evil. In His home life He was cheerful, but never boisterous. He ever maintained the attitude of a learner. He took great delight in nature, and God was His teacher (*The Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896).

The Light and Joy of the Family.—Christ is the ideal for all humanity. He has left a perfect example for childhood, youth, and manhood. He came to this earth, and passed through the different phases of human life. He talked and acted like other children and youth, except that He did no wrong. Sin found no place in His life. Ever He lived in an atmosphere of heavenly purity. From childhood to manhood He preserved unsullied His trust in God. The Word says of Him, ... He “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”

In the sanctuary of the home, Jesus received His education, not merely from His parents, but from His heavenly Father. As He grew older, God opened to Him more and more of the great work before Him. But notwithstanding His knowledge of this, He assumed no airs of superiority. Never

did He by disrespect cause His parents pain or anxiety. He delighted to honor and obey them. Although He was not ignorant of His great mission, He consulted their wishes, and submitted to their authority.

Christ had been Commander of the heavenly host; but He did not because of this excuse Himself from labor, allowing His parents to support Him. While still quite young, He learned a trade, and faithfully discharged His daily duties, contributing to the support of the family.

Christ was the light and joy of the family circle (*The Youth's Instructor*, August 22, 1901).

41-49. No Lesson to Be Lost.—Not one act in the life of Christ was unimportant. Every event of His life was for the benefit of His followers in future time. This circumstance of the tarry of Christ in Jerusalem teaches an important lesson to those who should believe on Him....

Jesus was acquainted with hearts. He knew that, as the crowd returned in company from Jerusalem, there would be much talking and visiting which would not be seasoned with humility and grace, and the Messiah and His mission would be nearly forgotten. It was His choice to return from Jerusalem with His parents alone; for in being retired, His father and mother would have more time for reflection, and for meditation upon the prophecies which referred to His future sufferings and death. He did not wish the painful events which they were to experience in His offering up His life for the sins of the world, to be new and unexpected to them. He was separated from them in their return to Jerusalem. After the celebration of the Passover, they sought Him sorrowing three days. When He should be slain for the sins of the world, He would be separated from them, lost to them, for three days. But after that, He would reveal Himself to them, and be found of them, and their faith rely upon Him as the Redeemer of the fallen race, the advocate with the Father in their behalf.

Here is a lesson of instruction to all the followers of Christ. He designed that none of these lessons should be lost, but be written for the benefit of future generations. There is necessity of carefulness of words and actions when Christians are associated together, lest Jesus be forgotten of them, and they pass along careless of the fact that Jesus is not among them. When they are aroused to their condition, they discover that they have journeyed without the presence of Him who could give peace and joy to their hearts, and days are occupied in returning, and searching for Him whom they should have retained with them every moment. Jesus will not be found in the company of those who are careless of His presence, and who engage in conversation having no reference to their Redeemer, in whom they profess their hopes of eternal life are centered. Jesus shuns the company of such, so also do the angels who do His commands. These heavenly messengers are not attracted to the crowd where minds are diverted from heavenly things. These pure and holy spirits cannot remain in the company where Jesus' presence is not desired and encouraged, and His absence not marked. For this reason, great mourning, grief, and discouragement exist. Through lack of meditation, watchfulness, and prayer, they have lost all that is valuable. The divine rays of light emanating from Jesus are not with them, cheering them with their loving, elevating influence. They are enshrouded in gloom, because their careless, irreverent spirit has separated Jesus from their company, and driven the ministering angels from them. Many who attend meetings of devotion, and have been instructed by the servants of God, and been greatly refreshed and blessed in seeking Jesus, have returned to their homes no better than they left them, because they did not feel the importance of praying and watching thereunto, as they returned to their homes. They frequently feel inclined to complain of others, because they realize their loss. Some murmur against God, and do not reproach themselves as being the cause of their own darkness, and sufferings of mind. These should not reflect upon others. The fault is in themselves. They talked and jested, and visited away the heavenly Guest, and themselves they have only to blame. It is the privilege of all to retain Jesus with them. If they do this, their words must be select, seasoned with grace.

The thoughts of their hearts must be disciplined to meditate upon heavenly and divine things (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:35-38).

46. A Pattern in Courtesy.—After Joseph and Mary had searched for Him for three days, they found Him in the court of the temple, “sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.” He asked His questions with a grace that charmed these learned men. He was a perfect pattern for all youth. Ever He manifested deference and respect for age. The religion of Jesus will never lead any child to be rude and uncourteous (*The Youth’s Instructor*, September 8, 1898).

50, 51. A Constant Ministry.—[Luke 2:50, 51 quoted.] Christ did not enter upon His public ministry for eighteen years after this, but He was constantly ministering to others, improving every opportunity offered Him. Even in His childhood He spoke words of comfort and tenderness to young and old. His mother could not but mark His words, His spirit, His willing obedience to all her requirements (*The Youth’s Instructor*, September 8, 1898).

51. See EGW on John 2:1, 2.

Chapter 3

2-4. See EGW on ch. 1:76, 77.

7-9. See EGW on Matthew 3:7, 8.

15, 16 (John 1:26, 27). No Worldly Aspirations.—The people thought that John might be the promised Messiah. His life was so unselfish, marked with humility and self-denial. His teachings, exhortations, and reproofs, were fervent, sincere, and courageous. In his mission, he turned not to the right or to the left to court the favors or applause of any. He did not aspire to worldly honor or worldly dignity, but was humble in heart and life, and did not assume honors that did not belong to him. He assured his followers that he was not the Christ (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:57).

21, 22. See EGW on Matthew 3:13-17; 4:1-11.

Chapter 4

1-4. See EGW on Matthew 4:1-4.

1-13. See EGW on Matthew 4:1-11; 2:1, 2.

2. See EGW on Matthew 4:1, 2.

5-8 (Matthew 4:8-10). Satan Tried to Make a Contract With Christ.—[Luke 4:5-8 quoted.] This presumptuous blasphemy, and insult to Jehovah, excited the indignation of Christ, and led Him to exercise His divine authority, and command Satan in an authoritative, dignified manner to desist. Here Satan, in his pride and arrogance, declared himself to be the rightful and permanent ruler of the world, the possessor of all its glory, as though he had created the world and all the riches and glory contained in it. He endeavored to make a special contract with Christ, to make over to Him at once the whole of his claim, if He would worship him.

Here Satan showed Jesus the kingdoms of the world. They were presented in the most attractive light. He offered them to Jesus if He would there worship him. He told Jesus that he would relinquish his claims of the possessions of earth. Satan knew that his power must be limited, and finally taken away, if the plan of salvation should be carried out. He knew that if Jesus should die to redeem man, his power would end after a season, and he would be destroyed. Therefore it was his studied plan to prevent, if possible, the completion of the great work which had been commenced by the Son of God. If the plan of man’s redemption should fail, he would retain the kingdom which he then claimed. And if he should succeed, he flattered himself that he would reign in opposition to the God of heaven (*Redemption: or The First Advent of Christ*, pages 50, 51).

6. Two Parties and Two Banners.—Satan has called this world his territory. Here his seat is, and he holds in allegiance to himself all who refuse to keep God’s commandments, who reject a plain, “Thus saith the Lord.” They stand under the enemy’s banner; for there are but two parties in the world. All rank either under the banner of the obedient or under the banner of the disobedient (MS 41, 1898).

8. See EGW on Matthew 4:10.

13. See EGW on Matthew 4:11.

18, 19. (Matthew 7:29; 22:29; Mark 12:37). The Gospel to the Poor.—Christ came to

preach the gospel to the poor. He reached the people where they were. He brought plain, simple truth to their comprehension. How simple His language! Even the poorest, the unlearned and ignorant, could understand Him. Not one needed go to a dictionary to obtain the meaning of the high-sounding titles or words that fell from the lips of the greatest Teacher the world ever knew. While the priests, the rulers, and the expounders of the law were considering themselves as the only teachers of the people, He told these learned rabbis that they were both ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God (*The Review and Herald*, July 19, 1887).

Chapter 5

29 (Matthew 9:9, 10; Mark 2:14, 15). Matthew Honored Christ Before Friends.—In his grateful humility, Matthew desired to show his appreciation of the honor bestowed upon him, and, calling together those who had been his associates in business, in pleasure, and sin, he made a great feast for the Saviour. If Jesus would call him, who was so sinful and unworthy, He would surely accept his former companions who were, thought Matthew, far more deserving than himself. Matthew had a great longing that they should share the benefits of the mercies and grace of Christ. He desired them to know that Christ did not, as did the scribes and Pharisees, despise and hate the publicans and sinners. He wanted them to know Christ as the blessed Saviour.

At the feast the Saviour occupied the most honored seat. Matthew was now the servant of Christ, and he would have his friends know in what light he regarded his Leader and Master. He would have them know that he felt highly honored in entertaining so royal a guest.

Jesus never refused an invitation to such a feast. The object ever before Him was to sow in the hearts of His hearers the seeds of truth, through His winning conversation to draw hearts to Himself. In His every act Christ had a purpose, and the lesson which He gave on this occasion was timely and appropriate. By this act He declared that even publicans and sinners were not excluded from His presence. Publicans and sinners could now bear the testimony that Christ honored them with His presence and conversed with them (MS 3, 1898).

30. See EGW on Matthew 9:11.

31, 32. See EGW on Matthew 9:12, 13.

32. See EGW on Matthew 9:13.

37, 38. See EGW on Matthew 9:17.

Chapter 6

37. See EGW on Matthew 7:1, 2.

Chapter 7

29, 30 (Matthew 13:15; John 12:39, 40). Pharisees Did Not Blindly Oppose Christ.—The scribes, Pharisees, and rulers were determined that they would not see the evidences of truth, and they evaded the most manifest conclusions. To justify their course of stubborn unbelief, they lost no possible opportunity of seizing upon anything in the teaching of Jesus that they could misconstrue, misapply, or falsify. When there was no possibility of misapplying the truth of Christ's words, these men who rejected the counsel of God against themselves, started questions that had no reference to the matter in hand, so as to attract the attention of the people away from the lesson that Jesus sought to teach, and adroitly evade the truth. The Pharisees were not blindly opposing the doctrines of Christ; for the truth made deep impressions upon their minds; but they resisted truth, and went contrary to their convictions, closing their eyes lest they should see, hardening the heart, lest they should perceive, and be converted, and Christ should heal them (*The Review and Herald*, October 18, 1892).

Chapter 8

46. See EGW on Acts 19:11, 12, 17.

Chapter 9

23 (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; see EGW on Matthew 11:28-30). Shunning Cross Means Shunning Reward.—[Luke 9:23 quoted.] These words are spoken to every one who desires to be a Christian. He who shuns the cross shuns the reward promised to the faithful (*Letter* 144, 1901).

28-31. See EGW on Matthew 17:1-3.

Chapter 10

- 13-15. See EGW on Matthew 11:20-24.
27. See EGW on Matthew 22:37-39; Mark 12:30.

Chapter 11

15. See EGW on Matthew 12:24-32.
21-23. See EGW on Matthew 12:29, 30.
23. See EGW on Matthew 16:24.
24-26. See EGW on Matthew 12:43-45.
31. See EGW on Matthew 12:42.
42-44. See EGW on Matthew 23:13-33.

Chapter 12

1 (Matthew 16:6). Hypocrisy Is Like Leaven.—[Luke 12:1 quoted.] ... Our Saviour presented before the people of that time the character of their sins. His plain words aroused the consciences of the hearers, but Satan's counter-working agencies were seeking for a place for their theories, to attract minds from the plainly spoken truth. As the great Teacher would speak impressive truth, the scribes and Pharisees, under pretense of being interested, would assemble around the disciples and Christ, and divert the minds of the disciples by starting questions to create controversy. They pretended that they wanted to know the truth. Christ was interrupted on this occasion as on many similar occasions. And He wished His disciples to listen to the words He had to say, and not allow anything to attract and hold their attention. Therefore He warned them, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." They feigned a desire to get as close as possible to the inner circle. As the Lord Jesus presented truth in contrast to error, the Pharisees pretended to be desirous of understanding the truth, yet they were trying to lead His mind in other channels.

Hypocrisy is like leaven or yeast. Leaven may be hidden in the flour, and its presence is not known until it produces its effect. By insinuating itself, it soon pervades the whole mass. Hypocrisy works secretly, and if indulged, it will fill the mind with pride and vanity. There are deceptions practiced now similar to those practiced by the Pharisees. When the Saviour gave this caution, it was to warn all who believe in Him to be on guard. Watch against imbibing this spirit, and becoming like those who tried to ensnare the Saviour (MS 43, 1896).

10. See EGW on Matthew 12:31, 32.

16-21. See EGW on 1 Samuel 25:10, 11.

35. See EGW on Matthew 25:7.

48 (John 15:22). God's Tests Differ.—God's test of the heathen, who have not the light, and of those living where the knowledge of truth and light has been abundant, is altogether different. He accepts from those in heathen lands a phase of righteousness which does not satisfy Him when offered by those of Christian lands. He does not require much where much has not been bestowed (MS 130, 1899).

50. See EGW on Matthew 26:42.

51. See EGW on Matthew 10:34.

Chapter 13

18. See EGW on Mark 4:30.

34, 35. See EGW on Matthew 23:37-39.

Chapter 14

16, 17. See EGW on Matthew 22:2-4.

28-33. The Weak May Do Deeds of Omnipotence.—To us as well as to the disciples, Christ has given the work of carrying the truth to the world. But before engaging in this great and aggressive warfare, upon which eternal results depend, Christ invites all to count the cost. He assures them that if they take hold of the work with undivided hearts, giving themselves as light bearers to the world, if they will take hold of His strength, they will make peace with Him, and obtain supernatural assistance that will enable them in their weakness to do the deeds of Omnipotence. If they go forward with faith in God, they will not fail nor become discouraged, but will have the assurance of infallible success (*The Review and Herald*, March 15, 1898).

Chapter 16

13. See EGW on Matthew 6:24.

Chapter 17

5. Increasing Faith.—You have to talk faith, you have to live faith, you have to act faith, that you may have an increase of faith; and thus exercising that living

faith you will grow to strong men and women in Christ Jesus (MS 1, 1889).

10 (Ephesians 1:6; 2:8-10; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 2:14; 3:5; James 2:22). Good Works No Plea for Salvation.—Our acceptance with God is sure only through His beloved Son, and good works are but the result of the working of His sin-pardoning love. They are no credit to us, and we have nothing accorded to us for our good works by which we may claim a part in the salvation of our souls. Salvation is God's free gift to the believer, given to him for Christ's sake alone. The troubled soul may find peace through faith in Christ, and his peace will be in proportion to his faith and trust. He cannot present his good works as a plea for the salvation of his soul.

But are good works of no real value? Is the sinner who commits sin every day with impunity, regarded of God with the same favor as the one who through faith in Christ tries to work in his integrity? The Scripture answers, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." In His divine arrangement, through His unmerited favor, the Lord has ordained that good works shall be rewarded. We are accepted through Christ's merit alone; and the acts of mercy, the deeds of charity, which we perform, are the fruits of faith; and they become a blessing to us; for men are to be rewarded according to their works. It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us. Our works in and of themselves have no merit. When we have done all that it is possible for us to do, we are to count ourselves as unprofitable servants. We deserve no thanks from God. We have only done what it was our duty to do, and our works could not have been performed in the strength of our own sinful natures.

The Lord has bidden us to draw nigh to Him and He will draw nigh to us; and drawing nigh to Him, we receive the grace by which to do those works which will be rewarded at His hands (*The Review and Herald*, January 29, 1895).

28-30 (Genesis 19:24, 25). Rocked in Cradle of Carnal Security.—As the sun arose for the last time upon the cities of the plain, the people thought to commence another day of godless riot. All were eagerly planning their business or their pleasure, and the messenger of God was derided for his fears and his warnings. Suddenly as the thunder peal from an unclouded sky, fell balls of fire on the doomed capital. "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." The people will be eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, until the wrath of God shall be poured out without mixture of mercy. The world will be rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security The multitudes are striving to forget God, and they eagerly accept fables, that they may pursue the path of self-indulgence undisturbed (*The Review and Herald*, October 26, 1886).

Chapter 18

15-17. See EGW on Matthew 19:13-15.

35-43. See EGW on Mark 10:46-52.

Chapter 19

12, 13. See EGW on Matthew 25:14, 15.

41-44. Present Sins Fix Guilt.—The generation that Jesus denounced was not responsible for the sins of their fathers, only so far as they followed their evil practices, and thus made themselves accountable for their course of hatred and revenge in persecuting the ancient messengers of God. It was the present mercies and warnings which that generation were rejecting that fastened upon them guilt which the blood of bulls and goats could not wash away. Proud, self-righteous, and independent, they had separated farther and farther from heaven until they had become willing subjects of Satan. The Jewish nation for centuries had been forging the fetters which that generation were irrevocably fastening upon themselves. (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:10, 11).

42. See EGW on Matthew 23:37-39.

44. See EGW on Matthew 24:2.

Chapter 21

8. See EGW on Matthew 24:23, 24.

16-19. A Desperate Companionship for Evil.—Christ shows that without the controlling power of the Spirit of God humanity is a terrible power for evil. Unbelief,

hatred of reproof, will stir up satanic influences. Principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places will unite in a desperate companionship. They will be leagued against God in the person of His saints. By misrepresentation and falsehood they will demoralize both men and women who to all appearances believe the truth. False witnesses will not be wanting in this terrible work [Luke 21:16-19 quoted] (MS 40, 1897).

20. Scenes to Be Repeated.—After speaking of the end of the world, Jesus comes back to Jerusalem, the city then sitting in pride and arrogance, and saying, “I sit a queen, ... and shall see no sorrow.” As His prophetic eye rested upon Jerusalem, He sees that as she was given up to destruction, the world will be given up to its doom. The scenes that transpired at the destruction of Jerusalem will be repeated at the great and terrible day of the Lord, but in a more fearful manner (MS 40, 1897).

Chapter 22

1, 2. See EGW on Matthew 26:3.

3-5 (Matthew 26:14-16; Mark 14:10, 11; John 13:2, 27). Christ Purchased by Temple Money.—At the Passover the case of Judas was decided. Satan took control of heart and mind. He thought that Christ was either to be crucified, or would have to deliver Himself out of the hands of His enemies. At all events, he would make something out of the transaction, and make a sharp bargain by betraying his Lord. He went to the priests and offered to aid them in searching for Him who was accounted the troubler of Israel. Thus it was that the Lord was sold as a slave, purchased by the temple money used for the buying of the sacrifices (*The Signs of the Times*, December 17, 1912).

31, 32. See EGW on Matthew 16:22, 23.

31-34 (Matthew 26:31-35; Mark 14:29-31). Peter Tempted the Devil.—[Luke 22:31 quoted.] How true was the Saviour’s friendship for Peter! how compassionate His warning! But the warning was resented. In self-sufficiency Peter declared confidently that he would never do what Christ had warned him against. “Lord,” he said, “I am ready to go with thee to prison and to death.” His self-confidence proved his ruin. He tempted Satan to tempt him, and he fell under the arts of the wily foe. When Christ needed him most, he stood on the side of the enemy, and openly denied his Lord (MS 115, 1902).

39-46. See EGW on Matthew 26:36-46.

42 (Matthew 26:42; Mark 14:36; see EGW on Romans 8:11). Father Is Beside Every Struggling Soul.—Christ conquered by divine strength, and so must every tempted soul overcome. God was with Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, and by the experience of Christ we are to learn to trust our heavenly Father; at all times and in all places we are to believe that He is tender, true, and faithful, able to keep that which is committed to His care. In the agonizing struggle of Christ, our Substitute and Surety, the Father was beside His son, and He is beside every soul that struggles with discouragement and difficulty (*Letter* 106, 1896).

42, 43. Gabriel Strengthened Christ.—In the supreme crisis, when heart and soul are breaking under the load of sin, Gabriel is sent to strengthen the divine sufferer, and brace Him to tread His bloodstained path. And while the angel supports His fainting form, Christ takes the bitter cup, and consents to drink its contents. Before the suffering One comes up the wail of a lost and perishing world, and the words come from the blood-stained lips, “Nevertheless, if man must perish unless I drink this bitter cup, Thy will, not Mine, be done” (*The Signs of the Times*, December 9, 1897).

43. Life Hid in Christ Cannot Be Touched.—The strength given to Christ in the hour of bodily suffering and mental anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane, has been and will be given to those who suffer for His dear name’s sake. The same grace given to Jesus, the same comfort, the more than mortal steadfastness, will be given to every believing child of God, who is brought into perplexity and suffering, and threatened with imprisonment and death, by Satan’s agents. Never has a soul that trusts in Christ been left to perish. The rack, the stake, the many inventions of

cruelty, may kill the body, but they cannot touch the life that is hid with Christ in God (*The Signs of the Times*, June 3, 1897).

44 (Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14-17). Christ Took No Make-believe Humanity.—Of Christ it is said, “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” We need to realize the truth of Christ’s manhood in order to appreciate the truth of the above words. It was not a make-believe humanity that Christ took upon Himself. He took human nature and lived human nature. Christ worked no miracles in His own behalf. He was compassed with infirmities, but His divine nature knew what was in man. He needed not that any should testify to Him of this. The Spirit was given Him without measure; for His mission on earth demanded this.

Christ’s life represents a perfect manhood. Just that which you may be, He was in human nature. He took our infirmities. He was not only made flesh, but He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. His divine attributes were withheld from relieving His soul anguish or His bodily pains (*Letter 106*, 1896).

44, 53 (See EGW on Matthew 26:42). Passing Into the Hands of the Powers of Darkness.—Could mortals view the amazement and sorrow of the angels as they watched in silent grief the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory, from His Son, they would better understand how offensive is sin in His sight. As the Son of God in the Garden of Gethsemane bowed in the attitude of prayer, the agony of His Spirit forced from His pores sweat like great drops of blood. It was here that the horror of great darkness surrounded Him. The sins of the world were upon Him. He was suffering in man’s stead, as a transgressor of His Father’s law. Here was the scene of temptation. The divine light of God was receding from His vision, and He was passing into the hands of the powers of darkness. In the agony of His soul He lay prostrate on the cold earth. He was realizing His Father’s frown. The cup of suffering Christ had taken from the lips of guilty man, and proposed to drink it Himself, and, in its place, give to man the cup of blessing. The wrath that would have fallen upon man, was now falling upon Christ (*The Sufferings of Christ*, 17, 18).

45. See EGW on Matthew 26:43.

54. See EGW on Matthew 26:3.

70 (Matthew 10:32; 26:63, 64; Mark 14:61, 62). A Time to Speak.—When Jesus was asked the question, Art thou the Son of God? He knew that to answer in the affirmative would make His death certain; a denial would leave a stain upon His humanity. There was a time to be silent, and a time to speak. He had not spoken until plainly interrogated. In His lessons to His disciples He had declared: “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.” When challenged, Jesus did not deny His relationship with God. In that solemn moment His character was at stake and must be vindicated. He left on that occasion an example for man to follow under similar circumstances. He would teach him not to apostatize from his faith to escape suffering or even death (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:127).

Chapter 23

18-25. See EGW on Matthew 27:15-26.

20-23. See EGW on Matthew 27:22, 23.

23, 24. See EGW on Matthew 27:25, 26.

26. See EGW on Matthew 27:32.

33. See EGW on Matthew 27:38.

38. See EGW on Matthew 27:37.

40-43. Salvation in the Last Hours of Life.—Some among the redeemed will have laid hold of Christ in the last hours of life, and in heaven instruction will be given to these, who, when they died, did not understand perfectly the plan of salvation. Christ will lead the redeemed ones beside the river of life, and will open to them that which while on this earth they could not understand (*Letter 203*, 1905).

42, 43. Dying Sinner Lays Hold on Dying Saviour.—To the last of His work Christ is a sin-pardoner. At deepest midnight, as the Star of Bethlehem was about to sink into oblivion, lo there shines amid the moral darkness with distinct brightness the faith of a dying sinner as he lays hold upon a dying Saviour.

Such faith may be represented by the eleventh hour laborers who receive as much reward as do those who have labored for many hours. The thief asked in faith, in penitence, in contrition. He asked in earnestness, as if he fully realized that Jesus could save him if He would. And the hope in his voice was mingled with anguish as he realized that if He did not, he would be lost, eternally lost. He cast his helpless, dying soul and body on Jesus Christ (MS 52, 1897).

44. See EGW on Matthew 27:45.

45. See EGW on Matthew 27:51.

46. See EGW on Matthew 27:50; 19:30.

46, 47. See EGW on Matthew 27:45, 46.

47. See EGW on Matthew 27:54.

Chapter 24

1. See EGW on Mark 16:1, 2.

5, 6. See EGW on Mark 16:6.

13-15 (Matthew 27:42; Mark 15:31). Grief, Fear, and Wonder Mingled.—Those strong men were so burdened with grief that they wept as they traveled on. Christ's pitying heart of love saw here a sorrow which He could relieve. The disciples were reasoning with each other concerning the events of the past few days, and marveling how the fact of Jesus yielding Himself up to a shameful death could be reconciled with His claims as the Son of God.

One maintained that He could be no pretender, but had been Himself deceived in regard to His mission and His future glory. They both feared that what His enemies had flung in His teeth was too true—"He saved others; himself he cannot save." Yet they wondered how He could be so mistaken in Himself, when He had given them such repeated evidence that He could read the hearts of others. And the strange reports of the women threw them into still greater uncertainty (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:207).

13-31. Understanding Bible of First Importance.—Jesus did not first reveal Himself in His true character to them, and then open the Scriptures to their minds; for He knew that they would be so overjoyed to see Him again, risen from the dead, that their souls would be satisfied. They would not hunger for the sacred truths which He wished to impress indelibly upon their minds, that they might impart them to others, who should in their turn spread the precious knowledge, until thousands of people should receive the light given that day to the despairing disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus.

He maintained His disguise till He had interpreted the Scriptures, and had led them to an intelligent faith in His life, His character, His mission to earth, and His death and resurrection. He wished the truth to take firm root in their minds, not because it was supported by His personal testimony, but because the typical law, and the prophets of the Old Testament, agreeing with the facts of His life and death, presented unquestionable evidence of that truth. When the object of His labors with the two disciples was gained, He revealed Himself to them, that their joy might be full, and then vanished from their sight (*The Signs of the Times*, October 6, 1909).

15, 16. Jesus Smooths Hard Paths.—This mighty conqueror of death, who had reached to the very depths of human misery to rescue a lost world, assumed the humble task of walking with the two disciples to Emmaus, to teach and comfort them. Thus He ever identifies Himself with His suffering and perplexed people. In our hardest and most trying paths, lo, Jesus is with us to smooth the way. He is the same Son of man, with the same sympathies and love which He had before He passed through the tomb and ascended to His Father (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:212).

39 (Acts 1:9-11). Christ Took Humanity With Him.—Christ ascended to heaven, bearing a sanctified, holy humanity. He took this humanity with Him into the heavenly courts, and through the eternal ages He will bear it, as the One who has redeemed every human being in the city of God, the One who has pleaded before the Father, "I have graven them upon the palms of my hands." The palms of His hands bear the marks of the wounds that He received. If we are wounded and bruised, if we meet with difficulties that are hard to manage, let us remember how much Christ suffered for us. Let us sit together with our brethren in heavenly places in Christ. Let us bring heaven's

blessing into our hearts (*The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1905).

Jesus took the nature of humanity, in order to reveal to man a pure, unselfish love, to teach us how to love one another.

As a man Christ ascended to heaven. As a man He is the substitute and surety for humanity. As a man He liveth to make intercession for us. He is preparing a place for all who love Him. As a man He will come again with power and glory, to receive His children. And that which should cause us joy and thanksgiving is, that God “hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.” Then we may have the assurance forever that the whole unfallen universe is interested in the grand work Jesus came to our world to accomplish, even the salvation of man (MS 16, 1890).

50, 51. See EGW on Acts 1:9-11.

John

Chapter 1

1-3 (Proverbs 8:22-27; Romans 9:5; Philippians 2:6; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:8). The Eternity of Christ.—If Christ made all things, He existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity. God over all, blessed forevermore.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by Him as His right. This was no robbery of God [Proverbs 8:22-27 quoted].

There are light and glory in the truth that Christ was One with the Father before the foundation of the world was laid. This is the light shining in a dark place, making it resplendent with divine, original glory. This truth, infinitely mysterious in itself, explains other mysterious and otherwise unexplainable truths, while it is enshrined in light unapproachable and incomprehensible (*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906).

1-3, 14 (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:6, 8; 2:14-17; see EGW on Mark 16:6). Divine-Human Saviour.—The apostle would call our attention from ourselves to the Author of our salvation. He presents before us His two natures, divine and human. Here is the description of the divine: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” He was “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.”

Now, of the human: He “was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death.” He voluntarily assumed human nature. It was His own act, and by His own consent. He clothed His divinity with humanity. He was all the while as God, but He did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstrations of Deity, which had commanded the homage, and called forth the admiration, of the universe of God. He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man. He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for a while relinquished. Though He walked among men in poverty, scattering His blessings wherever He went, at His word legions of angels would surround their Redeemer, and do Him homage. But He walked the earth unrecognized, unconfessed, with but few exceptions, by His creatures. The atmosphere was polluted with sin and curses, in place of the anthem of praise. His lot was poverty

and humiliation. As He passed to and fro upon His mission of mercy to relieve the sick, to lift up the depressed, scarce a solitary voice called Him blessed, and the very greatest of the nation passed Him by with disdain.

Contrast this with the riches of glory, the wealth of praise pouring forth from immortal tongues, the millions of rich voices in the universe of God in anthems of adoration. But He humbled Himself, and took mortality upon Him. As a member of the human family, He was mortal; but as a God, He was the fountain of life to the world. He could, in His divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but He voluntarily laid down His life, that in so doing He might give life and bring immortality to light. He bore the sins of the world, and endured the penalty, which rolled like a mountain upon His divine soul. He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will. This was humility. The whole treasure of heaven was poured out in one gift to save fallen man. He brought into His human nature all the life-giving energies that human beings will need and must receive.

Wondrous combination of man and God! He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature. He did this that the Scripture might be fulfilled; and the plan was entered into by the Son of God, knowing all the steps in His humiliation, that He must descend to make an expiation for the sins of a condemned, groaning world. What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man! It was a wonderful humility.

But He stepped still lower; the man must humble Himself as a man to bear insult, reproach, shameful accusations, and abuse. There seemed to be no safe place for Him in His own territory. He had to flee from place to place for His life. He was betrayed by one of His disciples; He was denied by one of His most zealous followers. He was mocked. He was crowned with a crown of thorns. He was scourged. He was forced to bear the burden of the cross. He was not insensible to this contempt and ignominy. He submitted, but, oh! He felt the bitterness as no other being could feel it. He was pure, holy, and undefiled, yet arraigned as a criminal! The adorable Redeemer stepped down from the highest exaltation. Step by step He humbled Himself to die—but what a death! It was the most shameful, the most cruel the death upon the cross as a malefactor. He did not die as a hero in the eyes of the world, loaded with honors, as men in battle. He died as a condemned criminal, suspended between the heavens and the earth—died a lingering death of shame, exposed to the tauntings and revilings of a debased, crime-loaded, profligate multitude! “All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head.” Psalm 22:7. He was numbered with the transgressors, He expired amid derision, and His kinsmen according to the flesh disowned Him. His mother beheld His humiliation, and He was forced to see the sword pierce her heart. He endured the cross, despised the shame. He made it of small account in consideration of the results that He was working out in behalf of, not only the inhabitants of this speck of a world, but the whole universe, every world which God had created.

Christ was to die as man's substitute. Man was a criminal under the sentence of death for transgression of the law of God, as a traitor, a rebel; hence a substitute for man must die as a malefactor, because He stood in the place of the traitors, with all their treasured sins upon His divine soul. It was not enough that Jesus should die in order to fully meet the demands of the broken law, but He died a shameful death. The prophet gives to the world His words, “I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

In consideration of this, can men have one particle of exaltation? As they trace down the life and sufferings and humiliation of Christ, can they lift their proud heads as if they were to bear no trials,

no shame, no humiliation? I say to the followers of Christ, Look to Calvary, and blush for shame at your self-important ideas. All this humiliation of the Majesty of heaven was for guilty, condemned man. He went lower and lower in His humiliation, until there were no lower depths that He could reach, in order to lift man up from his moral defilement. All this was for you who are striving for the supremacy—striving for human praise, for human exaltation; you who are afraid you will not receive all that deference, that respect from human minds, that you think is your due. Is this Christlike?

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” He died to make an atonement, and to become a pattern for every one who would be His disciple. Shall selfishness come into your hearts? And will those who set not before them the pattern, Jesus, extol your merits? You have none except as they come through Jesus Christ. Shall pride be harbored after you have seen Deity humbling Himself, and then as man debasing Himself, till there was no lower point to which He could descend? “Be astonished, O ye heavens,” and be amazed, ye inhabitants of the earth, that such returns should be made to our Lord! What contempt! what wickedness! what formality! what pride! what efforts made to lift up man and glorify self, when the Lord of glory humbled Himself, agonized, and died the shameful death upon the cross in our behalf (*The Review and Herald*, September 4, 1900)!

Christ could not have come to this earth with the glory that He had in the heavenly courts. Sinful human beings could not have borne the sight. He veiled His divinity with the garb of humanity, but He did not part with His divinity. A divine-human Saviour, He came to stand at the head of the fallen race, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood (*The Review and Herald*, June 15, 1905).

Christ had not exchanged His divinity for humanity; but He had clothed His divinity in humanity (*The Review and Herald*, October 29, 1895).

(Ch. 14:30; Luke 1:31-35; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45; Hebrews 4:15.) Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden.

Bro. _____, avoid every question in relation to the humanity of Christ which is liable to be misunderstood. Truth lies close to the track of presumption. In treating upon the humanity of Christ, you need to guard strenuously every assertion, lest your words be taken to mean more than they imply, and thus you lose or dim the clear perceptions of His humanity as combined with divinity. His birth was a miracle of God; for, said the angel, “Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

These words do not refer to any human being, except to the Son of the infinite God. Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ, or that He in any way yielded to corruption. He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted, yet He is called “that holy thing.” It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that

Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be without sin. The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain a mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be. The exact time when humanity blended with divinity, it is not necessary for us to know. We are to keep our feet on the Rock Christ Jesus, as God revealed in humanity.

I perceive that there is danger in approaching subjects which dwell on the humanity of the Son of the infinite God. He did humble Himself when He saw He was in fashion as a man, that He might understand the force of all temptations wherewith man is beset.

The first Adam fell; the second Adam held fast to God and His Word under the most trying circumstances, and His faith in His Father's goodness, mercy, and love did not waver for one moment. "It is written" was His weapon of resistance, and it is the sword of the Spirit which every human being is to use. "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me"—nothing to respond to temptation. On not one occasion was there a response to his manifold temptations. Not once did Christ step on Satan's ground, to give him any advantage. Satan found nothing in Him to encourage his advances (*Letter 8*, 1895).

(Matthew 27:54; 1 Timothy 3:16.) But although Christ's divine glory was for a time veiled and eclipsed by His assuming humanity, yet He did not cease to be God when He became man. The human did not take the place of the divine, nor the divine of the human. This is the mystery of godliness. The two expressions "human" and "divine" were, in Christ, closely and inseparably one, and yet they had a distinct individuality. Though Christ humbled Himself to become man, the Godhead was still His own. His deity could not be lost while He stood faithful and true to His loyalty. Surrounded with sorrow, suffering, and moral pollution, despised and rejected by the people to whom had been intrusted the oracles of heaven, Jesus could yet speak of Himself as the Son of man in heaven. He was ready to take once more His divine glory when His work on earth was done.

There were occasions when Jesus stood forth while in human flesh as the Son of God. Divinity flashed through humanity, and was seen by the scoffing priests and rulers. Was it acknowledged? Some acknowledged that He was the Christ, but the larger portion of those who upon these special occasions were forced to see that He was the Son of God, refused to receive Him. Their blindness corresponded to their determined resistance of conviction.

When Christ's indwelling glory flashed forth, it was too intense for His pure and perfect humanity entirely to conceal. The scribes and Pharisees did not speak in acknowledgment of Him, but their enmity and hatred were baffled as His majesty shone forth. The truth, obscured as it was by a veil of humiliation, spoke to every heart with unmistakable evidence. This led to the words of Christ, "Ye know who I am." Men and devils were compelled, by the shining forth of His glory, to confess, "Truly, this is the Son of God." Thus God was revealed; thus Christ was glorified (*The Signs of the Times*, May 10, 1899).

Christ left His position in the heavenly courts, and came to this earth to live the life of human beings. This sacrifice He made in order to show that Satan's charge against God is false—that it is possible for man to obey the laws of God's kingdom. Equal with the Father, honored and adored by the angels, in our behalf Christ humbled Himself, and came to this earth to live a life of lowliness and poverty—to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Yet the stamp of divinity was upon His humanity. He came as a divine Teacher, to uplift human beings, to increase their physical, mental, and spiritual efficiency.

There is no one who can explain the mystery of the incarnation of Christ. Yet we know that He came to this earth and lived as a man among men. The man Christ Jesus was not the Lord God Almighty, yet Christ and the Father are one. The Deity did not sink under the agonizing torture of Calvary, yet it is nonetheless

true that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

In every possible way Satan sought to prevent Jesus from developing a perfect childhood, a faultless manhood, a holy ministry, and an unblemished sacrifice. But he was defeated. He could not lead Jesus into sin. He could not discourage Him, or drive Him from the work He had come to this earth to do. From the desert to Calvary the storm of Satan’s wrath beat upon Him, but the more mercilessly it fell, the more firmly did the Son of God cling to the hand of His Father, and press on in the blood-stained path (MS 140, 1903).

When Jesus took human nature, and became in fashion as a man, He possessed all the human organism. His necessities were the necessities of a man. He had bodily wants to be supplied, bodily weariness to be relieved. By prayer to the Father He was braced for duty and for trial (*Letter 32*, 1899).

4 (chs. 10:18; 17:3). Christ’s Life Was Unborrowed.—“In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.” It is not physical life that is here specified, but eternal life, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual received. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Lifegiver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. “I lay it down of myself,” He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He cannot earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Christ as his personal Saviour. “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3. This is the open fountain of life for the world (*The Signs of the Times*, February 13, 1912).

12, 13. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

14 (Philippians 2:6-8; Colossians 1:26, 27; 2:9; Hebrews 1:3; 2:14-18; see EGW on Luke 2:40, 52). The Incarnation an Unfathomable Mystery.—In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem’s manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God, and see in Him the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person (*The Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896).

(Hebrews 2:14; 3:3.) The Wonderful Condescension of God.—The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, “even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.” It is the great and profound mystery of godliness. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Christ took upon Himself human nature, a nature inferior to His heavenly nature. Nothing so shows the wonderful condescension of God as this....

Christ did not make-believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. “As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” He was the Son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a man, even the man Christ Jesus. “This man,” writes Paul, “was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house” (*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906).

(See EGW on Romans 5:12-19; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 1:1-3.) The Human Characteristics of Jesus.—Jesus was the Commander of heaven, one equal with God, and yet He condescended to lay aside His kingly crown, His royal robe, and clothed His divinity

with humanity. The incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery. He could have come to earth as one with a remarkable appearance, unlike the sons of men. His countenance could have shone with glory, and His form could have been of remarkable grace. He could have presented such an appearance as to charm the beholder; but this was not according to the plan devised in the courts of God. He was to bear the characteristics of the human family, and the Jewish race. In all respects the Son of God was to wear the same features as did other human beings. He was not to have such beauty of person as would make Him singular among men. He was to manifest no wonderful charms by which to attract attention to Himself. He came as a representative of the human family before heaven and earth. He was to stand as man's substitute and surety. He was to live the life of humanity in such a way as to contradict the assertion that Satan had made that humanity was his everlasting possession, and that God Himself could not take man out of His adversary's hands (*The Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896).

Veiled Glory of Christ.—Had Christ come in His divine form, humanity could not have endured the sight. The contrast would have been too painful, the glory too overwhelming. Humanity could not have endured the presence of one of the pure, bright angels from glory; therefore Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He came in the likeness of men.

But thirty years was all that the world could endure of its Redeemer. For thirty years He dwelt in a world all seared and marred with sin, doing the work that no other one ever had done or ever could do (*The Signs of the Times*, February 15, 1899).

(Genesis 3:15; Matthew 8:17; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 1:19.) Perfect Sinlessness of Christ's Human Nature.—In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He "knew no sin." He was the lamb "without blemish and without spot." Could Satan in the least particular have tempted Christ to sin, he would have bruised the Saviour's head. As it was, he could only touch His heel. Had the head of Christ been touched, the hope of the human race would have perished. Divine wrath would have come upon Christ as it came upon Adam. Christ and the church would have been without hope.

We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning sacrifice (*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898).

16. See EGW on Colossians 2:9, 10.

18. Manifestation of the Father.—What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, that man might bear the image of the invisible God. He made known in His words, His character, His power and majesty, the nature and attributes of God. Divinity flashed through humanity in softening, subduing light. He was the embodiment of the law of God, which is the transcript of His character (MS 77, 1899).

19-23. See EGW on Luke 1:76, 77.

26, 27. See EGW on Luke 3:15, 16.

29 (Leviticus 14:4-8; Revelation 7:14; see EGW on John 12:32). Washing and Ironing Time.—Remember that just as you are in your family, so will you be in the church. Just as you treat your children, so will you treat Christ. If you cherish an un-Christlike spirit, you are dishonoring God.... Position does not make the man. It is Christ formed within that makes a man worthy of receiving the crown of life, that fadeth not away....

This is our washing and ironing time—the time when we are to cleanse our robes of character in the blood of the Lamb. John says, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." ... Shall we not let Him take them away? Shall we not let our sins go (*The General Conference Bulletin*, April 6, 1903, p. 89)?

32, 33. See EGW on Matthew 3:13-17.

Chapter 2

1, 2 (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 2:51; 4:1-13). Between the Temptation of Christ and the Marriage at Cana.—There was to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The parties were relatives of Joseph and Mary. Christ knew of this family gathering, and that many influential persons would be brought together there, so, in company with His newly made disciples, He made His way to Cana. As soon as it was known that Jesus had come to the place, a special invitation was sent to Him and His friends. This was what He had purposed, and so He graced the feast with His presence.

He had been separated from His mother for quite a length of time. During this period He had been baptized by John and had endured the temptations in the wilderness. Rumors had reached Mary concerning her son and His sufferings. John, one of the new disciples, had searched for Christ and had found Him in His humiliation, emaciated, and bearing the marks of great physical and mental distress. Jesus, unwilling that John should witness His humiliation, had gently yet firmly dismissed him from His presence. He wished to be alone; no human eye must behold His agony, no human heart be called out in sympathy with His distress.

The disciple had sought Mary in her home and related to her the incidents of this meeting with Jesus, as well as the event of His baptism, when the voice of God was heard in acknowledgment of His Son, and the prophet John had pointed to Christ, saying “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” For thirty years this woman had been treasuring up evidences that Jesus was the Son of God, the promised Saviour of the world. Joseph was dead, and she had no one in whom to confide the cherished thoughts of her heart. She had fluctuated between hope and perplexing doubts, but always feeling more or less of an assurance that her son was indeed the Promised One (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2:99, 100).

19. See EGW on Mark 16:6.

Chapter 3

3-7. See EGW on Ezekiel 36:25, 26.

5-8. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

14, 15. See EGW on John 12:32.

14-17(ch. 1:29; Galatians 6:14; Hebrews 2:14). The Efficacy of the Cross.—The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God.

The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. The gift of God in His beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of His law, and still save the transgressor. Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of His shed blood, and they would

be cleansed and saved from sin (*The Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889).

(1 Corinthians 2:2; Colossians 1:20.) Light From the Cross.—Without the cross, man could have no connection with the Father. On it hangs our every hope. In view of it the Christian may advance with the steps of a conqueror; for from it streams the light of the Saviour's love. When the sinner reaches the cross, and looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ; and the words of pardon are spoken: Live, O ye guilty sinners, live. Your repentance is accepted; for I have found a ransom.

Through the cross we learn that our heavenly Father loves us with an infinite and everlasting love, and draws us to Him with more than a mother's yearning sympathy for a wayward child. Can we wonder that Paul exclaimed, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"? It is our privilege also to glory in the cross of Calvary, our privilege to give ourselves wholly to Him who gave Himself for us. Then with the light of love that shines from His face on ours, we shall go forth to reflect it to those in darkness (*The Review and Herald*, April 29, 1902).

Love Is Stronger Than Death.—Jesus placed the cross in line with the light coming from heaven, for it is there that it shall catch the eye of man. The cross is in direct line with the shining of the divine countenances, so that by beholding the cross men may see and know God and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. In beholding God we behold the One who poured out His soul unto death. In beholding the cross the view is extended to God, and His hatred of sin is discerned. But while we behold in the cross God's hatred of sin, we also behold His love for sinners, which is stronger than death. To the world the cross is the incontrovertible argument that God is truth and light and love (*The Signs of the Times*, March 7, 1895).

16. The Science of Redemption.—The scheme of redemption far exceeds the comprehension of the human mind. The great condescension on the part of God is a mystery that is beyond our fathoming. The greatness of the plan cannot be fully comprehended, nor could infinite Wisdom devise a plan that would surpass it. It could only be successful by the clothing of divinity with humanity, by Christ becoming man, and suffering the wrath which sin has made because of the transgression of God's law. Through this plan the great, the dreadful God can be just, and yet be the justifier of all who believe in Jesus, and who receive Him as their personal Saviour. This is the heavenly science of redemption, of saving men from eternal ruin, and can be carried out only through the incarnation of the Son of God in humanity, through His triumph over sin and death, and in seeking to fathom this plan all finite intelligences are baffled (*Letter 43*, 1895).

(Genesis 9:13-17; Revelation 4:3.) Bow Shows Righteousness of Christ, Mercy, and Justice.—In the rainbow above the throne is an everlasting testimony that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish...." Whenever the law is presented before the people, let the teacher of truth point to the throne arched with the rainbow of promise, the righteousness of Christ. The glory of the law is Christ; He came to magnify the law, and to make it honorable. Make it appear distinct that mercy and peace have met together in Christ, and righteousness and truth have embraced each other....

As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of the sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. It is not justice alone that is to be maintained; for this would eclipse the glory of the rainbow of promise above the throne; men could see only the penalty of the law. Were there no justice, no penalty, there would be no stability to the government of God. It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation complete. It is the blending of the two that leads us, as we view the world's Redeemer, and the law of Jehovah, to exclaim, "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (*The Review and Herald*, December 13, 1892).

Chapter 4

14. No Thirst for the World.—“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst”—never crave the world’s advantages and attractions—“but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life” (*Letter 5*, 1900).

A Channel.—You must seek to have an indwelling Saviour, who will be to you as a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. The water of life flowing from the heart always waters the hearts of others (MS 69, 1912).

A Revelation of Grace.—The water that Christ referred to was the revelation of His grace in His Word. His Spirit, His teaching, is as a satisfying fountain to every soul.... In Christ is fullness of joy forevermore.... Christ’s gracious presence in His Word is ever speaking to the soul, representing Him as the well of living water to refresh the thirsting. It is our privilege to have a living, abiding Saviour. He is the source of spiritual power implanted within us, and His influence will flow forth in words and actions, refreshing all within the sphere of our influence, begetting in them desires and aspirations for strength and purity, for holiness and peace, and for that joy which brings with it no sorrow. This is the result of an indwelling Saviour (*Letter 73*, 1897).

35. Christ Was Above All Prejudice.—[John 4:35 quoted.] He here referred to the gospel field, to the work of Christianity among the poor, despised Samaritans. His hand reached out to gather them into the garner; they were ready for the harvest.

The Saviour was above all prejudice of nation or people; He was willing to extend the blessings and privileges of the Jews to all who would accept the light which He came to the world to bring. It caused Him great joy to behold even one soul reaching out to Him from the night of spiritual blindness. That which Jesus had withheld from the Jews and enjoined upon His disciples to keep secret, was distinctly opened before the inquiring woman of Samaria; for He who knew all things perceived that she would make a right use of her knowledge and be the means of leading others to the true faith (*The Spirit of Prophecy 2:147*).

Chapter 5

17. See EGW on Acts 17:28.

22 (see EGW on 2 Corinthians 5:10). Christ Appointed as Judge.—To His Son the Father has committed all judgment. Christ will declare the reward of loyalty. “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.... And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.” Christ accepted humanity and lived on this earth a pure, sanctified life. For this reason He has received the appointment of judge. He who occupies the position of judge is God manifest in the flesh (*The Review and Herald*, June 18, 1901).

He Alone Is the Judge.—To Christ has been committed all judgment, because He is the Son of man. Nothing escapes His knowledge. However high the rank and great the power of spiritual apostates, One higher and greater has borne the sin of the whole world. He is infinite in righteousness, in goodness, and in truth. He has power to withstand principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. Armed and equipped as the Captain of the Lord’s host, He comes to the front in defense of His people. His righteousness covers all who love and trust Him. The General of armies, He leads out the heavenly host to stand as a wall of fire about His people. He alone is the judge of their righteousness, for He created them, and at infinite cost to Himself redeemed them. He will see that obedience to God’s commandments is rewarded, and that transgressors receive according to their works (*Letter 19*, 1901).

28, 29. See EGW on Matthew 28:2-4.

39 (Revelation 22:2). Scriptures Testify of Christ.—In the Word the Saviour is revealed in all His beauty and loveliness. Every soul will find comfort and consolation in the Bible, which is full of promises concerning what God will do for the one who comes into right relation to Him. Especially will the sick be comforted by hearing the Word; for in giving the Scriptures God has given to mankind a leaf from the tree of life, which is for the

healing of the nations. How can anyone who reads the Scriptures or who has heard them read, lose his interest in heavenly things, and find pleasure in amusements and enchantments of the world (MS 105, 1901)?

40. See EGW on ch. 15:22.

Chapter 6

35. A Heaven-sent Teacher.—“I am the bread of life,” the Author, Nourisher, and Supporter of eternal, spiritual life. In the thirty-fifth verse of the sixth chapter of John, Christ represents Himself under the similitude of heavenly bread. To eat His flesh and to drink His blood means to receive Him as a heaven-sent teacher. Belief in Him is essential to spiritual life. Those who feast on the Word never hunger, never thirst, never desire any higher or more exalted good (MS 81, 1906).

53-57. Eating and Drinking Represents Nearness to Christ.—Christ explained the meaning of His words so clearly that none need stumble over them. His statement regarding eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God, is to be taken in a spiritual sense. We eat Christ’s flesh and drink His blood when by faith we lay hold upon Him as our Saviour.

Christ used the figure of eating and drinking to represent that nearness to Him which all must have who are at last partakers with Him in His glory. The temporal food we eat is assimilated, giving strength and solidity to the body. In a similar manner, as we believe and receive the words of the Lord Jesus, they become a part of our spiritual life, bringing light and peace, hope and joy, and strengthening the soul as physical food strengthens the body (MS 33, 1911).

(Revelation 22:2.) A Practical Application.—It is not enough for us to know and respect the words of the Scriptures. We must enter into the understanding of them, studying them earnestly, eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God. Christians will reveal the degree to which they do this by the healthiness of their spiritual character. We must know the practical application of the Word to our own individual character-building. We are to be holy temples, in which God can live and walk and work. Never must we strive to lift ourselves above the servants whom God has chosen to do His work and to honor His holy name. “All ye are brethren.” Let us apply this Word to our individual selves, comparing scripture with scripture.

In our daily lives, before our brethren and before the world, we are to be living interpreters of the Scriptures, doing honor to Christ by revealing His meekness and His lowliness of heart. Christ’s teachings are to be to us as the leaves of the tree of life. As we eat and digest the bread of life, we shall reveal a symmetrical character. By our unity, by esteeming others better than ourselves, we are to bear to the world a living testimony of the power of the truth....

When men submit entirely to God, eating the bread of life and drinking the water of salvation, they will grow up into Christ. Their characters are composed of that which the mind eats and drinks. Through the Word of life, which they receive and obey, they become partakers of the divine nature. Then their entire service is after the divine similitude, and Christ, not man, is exalted (*Letter 64*, 1900).

53-57, 63. Eating of the Tree of Life.—“Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood,” says Christ, “hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.... It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” This is eating the fruit of the tree of life (MS 112, 1898).

63. See EGW on Genesis 3:24.

Chapter 7

1-5. Relatives Dimly Understood Christ’s Mission.—[John 7:1-5 quoted.] The brethren here referred to were the sons of Joseph, and their words were spoken in irony. It was very painful to Christ that His nearest relatives should so dimly understand His mission, and should entertain

the ideas suggested by His enemies. But the Saviour did not answer the cruel sarcasm with words of like character. He pitied the spiritual ignorance of His brethren, and longed to give them a clear understanding of His mission (MS 33, 1911).

1-53. See EGW on Exodus 23:16.

16. Rescued From Error.—“Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.” My words are in perfect harmony with the Old Testament Scriptures, and with the law spoken from Sinai. I am not preaching a new doctrine. I am presenting old truths rescued from the framework of error, and placed in a new setting (MS 33, 1911).

41, 50-52. Priests and Rulers Deceived.—[John 7:51 quoted.] The lesson that Christ had given to Nicodemus had not been in vain. Conviction had fastened upon his mind, and in his heart he had accepted Jesus. Since his interview with the Saviour, he had earnestly searched the Old Testament Scriptures, and he had seen truth placed in the true setting of the gospel.

The question asked by him was wise, and would have commended itself to those presiding at the council had they not been deceived by the enemy. But they were so filled with prejudice that no argument in favor of Jesus of Nazareth, however convincing, had any weight with them. The answer that Nicodemus received, was, “Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.”

The priests and rulers had been deceived, as Satan meant them to be, into believing that Christ came out of Galilee. Some who knew that he was born in Bethlehem, kept silent, that the falsehood might not be robbed of its power (MS 33, 1911).

Chapter 8

31-38. Some Under Satan’s Training.—[John 8:31-37 quoted.] What stern truth is here spoken. How many there are who boast that they are not in bondage to any one, when they are bound to the most cruel of all tyrants. They have placed themselves under Satan’s training, and they treat God’s people as he directs them to. How many there are who hear the word of truth, but hate the message and the messenger, because the truth disturbs them in their deceptive practices!

“I speak that which I have seen with my Father,” Christ continued, “and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.” Two classes are plainly brought to view in these words—the children of light, who obey the truth, and the children of darkness, who reject the truth (MS 136, 1899).

44 (see EGW on Genesis 2:17; Malachi 4:1). Satan’s Masterpiece.—The forces of the powers of darkness will unite with human agents who have given themselves unto the control of Satan, and the same scenes that were exhibited at the trial, rejection and crucifixion of Christ will be revived. Through yielding to satanic influences men will be merged into fiends, and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an apostate race his masterpiece of evil—men who reflect his own image (MS 39, 1894).

Devilish Songs.—When a soul is captured from the ranks of Christ the synagogue of Satan sing in hellish triumph (*Letter* 12a, 1893).

Chapter 10

2-5. See EGW on Matthew 24:23, 24.

4. See EGW on 2 Corinthians 11:14.

17, 18 (Isaiah 6:8; Philippians 2:6-8; see EGW on Mark 16:6). Christ Man’s Surety.—Not one of the angels could have become surety for the human race: their life is God’s; they could not surrender it. The angels all wear the yoke of obedience. They are the appointed messengers of Him who is the Commander of all heaven. But Christ is equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. He could pay the ransom for man’s freedom. He is the eternal self-existing Son, on whom no yoke had come; and when God asked, “Whom shall I send?” He could reply, “Here am I; send Me.” He could pledge Himself to become man’s surety; for He could say that which the highest angel could not say,—I have power over My own life, “power to lay it down, and ... power to take it again” (*The Youth’s Instructor*, June 21, 1900).

18. See EGW on ch. 1:4; 20:17.

Chapter 11

50, 51 (John 18:14). Caiaphas Prophesied Unknowingly.—[John 11:50, 51 quoted.] These words were uttered by one who knew not their significance. He had lost the sense of the sacredness of the sacrifices and offerings. But his words meant more than he or those connected with him knew. By them he bore testimony that the time had come for the Aaronic priesthood to cease forever. He was condemning One who had been prefigured in every sacrifice made, but One whose death would end the need of types and shadows. Unknowingly he was declaring that Christ was about to fulfill that for which the system of sacrifices and offerings had been instituted (*The Review and Herald*, June 12, 1900).

Chapter 12

1-8. See EGW on Matthew 26:6-13.

3 (Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9). Love and Talents Blended.—Pure, sanctified love, expressed by Christ's lifework, is as sacred perfume. Like an opened bottle of perfume, it fills the whole house with fragrance. Eloquence, an extended knowledge of the truth, outward devotion, rare talents, if mingled with sacred, humble love, will become as fragrant as the opened box of ointment. But gifts alone, ability alone, the choicest endowments alone, cannot take the place of love [1 Corinthians 13:1-3 quoted] (MS 22, 1897).

12-15, 19. Multitudes Acclaim Christ.—The dignitaries of the temple are dumb with astonishment. Where now is the boasted power of priests and rulers over the people! The authorities had announced that whoever should acknowledge Jesus to be the Christ was to be put out of the synagogue and deprived of its sacred privileges. Yet here are the enthusiastic multitude shouting loud hosannas to the Son of David, and recounting the titles given Him by the prophets. As well might the priests and rulers attempt to deprive the earth of the shining face of the sun, as to shut from the world the beams of glory from the Sun of Righteousness. In spite of all opposition, the kingdom of Christ was confessed by the people.

When the priests and rulers recovered their voices, they murmured among themselves, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after Him." But they soon shook off the paralyzing effect of the strange exhibition which they had witnessed, and tried to intimidate the crowd by threatening to complain of them to the civil authorities as raising an insurrection (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:14, 15).

32 (ch. 1:29; 3:14, 15; see EGW on Galatians 6:14). No Rest for Some.—Never before was there such a general knowledge of Jesus as when He hung upon the cross. He was lifted up from the earth, to draw all to Him. Into the hearts of many who beheld that crucifixion scene, and who heard Christ's words, was the light of truth to shine. With John they would proclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." There were those who never rested until, searching the Scriptures and comparing passage with passage, they saw the meaning of Christ's mission. They saw that free forgiveness was provided by Him whose tender mercy embraced the whole world. They read the prophecies regarding Christ, and the promises so free and full, pointing to a fountain opened for Judah and Jerusalem (MS 45, 1897).

Study All in Light From Cross.—The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light which streams from the cross of Calvary, and in connection with the wondrous, central truth of the Saviour's atonement. Those who study the Redeemer's wonderful sacrifice grow in grace and knowledge.

I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption—the Son of God uplifted on the cross of Calvary. This is to be the theme of every discourse. Christ declares, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (MS 70, 1901).

The Cross Planted Between Earth and Heaven.—When Christ came to this world, He found that Satan had everything as he wanted it. The adversary of God and

man thought that he was indeed the prince of the earth, but Jesus laid hold of the world to take it out of the power of Satan. He came to redeem it from the curse of sin and the penalty of transgression, that the transgressor might be forgiven. He planted the cross between earth and heaven, and between divinity and humanity; and as the Father beheld the cross, He was satisfied. He said, "It is enough, the offering is complete." God and man may be reconciled. Those who have lived in rebellion against God, may become reconciled, if as they see the cross, they become repentant, and accept the great propitiation that Christ has made for their sins. In the cross they see that "mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (*The Signs of the Times*, September 30, 1889).

(Galatians 6:14.) The Cross a Center in the World.—The cross stands alone, a great center in the world. It does not find friends, but it makes them. It creates its own agencies. Christ proposes that men shall become laborers together with God. He makes human beings His instrumentalities for drawing all men unto Himself. A divine agency is sufficient only through its operation on human hearts with its transforming power, making men colaborers with God (*The Review and Herald*, September 29, 1891).

39, 40. See EGW on Luke 7:29, 30.

45. See EGW on Acts 1:11.

Chapter 13

2 (ch. 15:1-8; see EGW on Luke 22:3-5). Judas a Dry Sapling.—Judas ... did not become transformed, and converted into a living branch through connection with the True Vine. This dry sapling adhered not to the Vine until it grew into a fruitful, living branch. He revealed that he was the graft that did not bear fruit—the graft that did not, fiber by fiber and vein by vein, become knit with the Vine, and partake of its life.

The dry, disconnected sapling can become one with the parent vine stock only by being made a partaker of the life and nourishment of the living vine, by being grafted into the vine, by being brought into the closest relationship possible. Fiber by fiber, vein by vein, the twig holds fast to the life-giving vine, until the life of the vine becomes the life of the branch, and it produces fruit like that of the vine (*The Review and Herald*, November 16, 1897).

10, 11. A Test of Heart-cleansing.—Christ gave His disciples to understand that the washing of their feet did not cleanse away their sin, but that the cleansing of their heart was tested in this humble service. If the heart was cleansed, this act was all that was essential to reveal the fact. He had washed the feet of Judas; but He said, "Ye are not all clean." Judas brought a traitor's heart to this scene, and Christ revealed to all that He knew him to be the betrayer of his Lord, and that the washing of his feet was not an ordinance to cleanse the soul from its moral defilement...

Jesus would give convincing proof that He understood perfectly the character of Judas, and that He had not withheld His ministry even from him whom He knew to be working to betray Him into the hands of His enemies. And we have, in His example, the lesson that the ordinance of feet-washing is not to be deferred because there are some professed believers who are not cleansed from their sins. Christ knew the heart of Judas, yet He washed his feet. Infinite love could do no more to bring Judas to repentance, and save him from taking this fatal step. If this service of his Master, in humbling Himself to wash the feet of the worst sinner, did not break his heart, what more could be done? It was the last act of love that Jesus could evidence in behalf of Judas. Infinite love could not compel Judas to repent, confess his sin, and be saved. Every opportunity was granted him. Nothing was left undone that could be done to save him from the snare of Satan (*The Review and Herald*, June 14, 1898).

13-17. A Dedication to Service.—The ordinance of feet washing is an ordinance of service. This is the lesson the Lord would have all learn and practice. When this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into holy relationship with each other, to help and bless each other.

That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the

natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set us an example of humility. He would not leave this great subject in man's charge. Of so much consequence did He regard it that He Himself, One equal with God, washed the feet of His disciples [John 13:13-17 quoted].

This ceremony means much to us. God would have us take the whole scene, not only the single act of outward cleansing. This lesson does not merely refer to the one act. It is to reveal the great truth that Christ is an example of what we through His grace are to be in our intercourse with each other. It shows that the entire life should be one of humble, faithful ministry.... The ordinance of feet washing most forcibly illustrates the necessity of true humility. While the disciples were contending for the highest place, in the promised kingdom, Christ girded Himself, and performed the office of a servant by washing the feet of those who called Him Lord. He, the pure, spotless Lamb of God, was presenting Himself as a sin-offering; and as He now ate the Passover with His disciples, He put an end to the sacrifices which for four thousand years had been offered. In the place of the national festival which the Jewish people had observed, He instituted a memorial service, in the ceremony of feet washing, and the sacramental supper, to be observed by His followers through all time and in every country. These should ever repeat Christ's act, that all may see that true service called for unselfish ministry (MS 43, 1897).

14, 15 (Matthew 23:8; 1 Corinthians 11:28). Humility an Active Principle.—Humility is an active principle growing out of a thorough consciousness of God's great love, and will always show itself by the way in which it works. By taking part in the ordinance of feet washing we show that we are willing to perform this act of humility. We are doing the very thing Christ did, but this is not to be talked of as an act of humiliation. It is an act which symbolizes the condition of the mind and heart.

"All ye are brethren." As brethren we are identified with Christ and with one another. As brethren we are identical with Christ, and through His grace identical with one another. And as we wash the feet of Christ's followers, it is as though we were indeed touching the Son of God. We do this act because Christ told us to do it, and Christ Himself is among us. His Holy Spirit does the work of uniting our hearts. To become one with Christ requires self-denial and self-sacrifice at every step.

The performance of the ordinance of humility calls for self-examination. The noble principles of the soul are strengthened on every such occasion. Christ lives in us, and this draws heart to heart. We are led to love as brethren, to be kind, tender, courteous in daily service, having hearts that can feel another's woe (*Letter 210*, 1899).

(1 Corinthians 11:23-25.) To Feel the Pulse of Conscience.—In this ordinance, Christ discharged His disciples from the cares and burdens of the ancient Jewish obligations in rites and ceremonies. These no longer possessed any virtue; for type was meeting antitype in Himself, the authority and foundation of all Jewish ordinances that pointed to Him as the great and only efficacious offering for the sins of the world. He gave this simple ordinance that it might be a special season when He Himself would always be present, to lead all participating in it to feel the pulse of their own conscience, to awaken them to an understanding of the lessons symbolized, to revive their memory, to convict of sin, and to receive their penitential repentance. He would teach them that brother is not to exalt himself above brother, that the dangers of disunion and strife shall be seen and appreciated; for the health and holy activity of the soul are involved.

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. It was Christ's desire to leave to His disciples an ordinance that would do for them the very thing they needed—that would serve to disentangle them from the rites and ceremonies which they had hitherto engaged in as essential, and which

the reception of the gospel made no longer of any force. To continue these rites would be an insult to Jehovah. Eating of the body, and drinking of the blood, of Christ, not merely at the sacramental service, but daily partaking of the bread of life to satisfy the soul's hunger, would be in receiving His Word and doing His will (*The Review and Herald*, June 14, 1898).

34 (see EGW on 1 John 3:16-18). A New Conception of Love.—Why was this called “a new commandment”? The disciples had not loved one another as Christ had loved them. They had not yet seen the fullness of the love that He was to reveal in man's behalf. They were yet to see Him dying on the cross for their sins. Through His life and death they were to receive a new conception of love. The command to “love one another” was to gain a new meaning in the light of His self-sacrifice. In the light shining from the cross of Calvary they were to read the meaning of the words, “As I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (*The Review and Herald*, June 30, 1910).

To Reveal Especially Tender Love.—[John 13:34, 35 quoted.] Why should this commandment be new to the disciples? The words, “As I have loved you” were yet to be fulfilled by the offering He was about to make for the sins of the world. As Christ had loved them, the disciples were to love one another. They were to show forth the love abiding in their hearts for men, women, and children, by doing all in their power for their salvation. But they were to reveal a specially tender love for all of the same faith (MS 160, 1898).

(Ch. 15:12; James 3:17.) Love Is a Permanent Power.—Jesus says, “Love one another, as I have loved you.” Love is not simply an impulse, a transitory emotion, dependent upon circumstances; it is a living principle, a permanent power. The soul is fed by the streams of pure love that flow from the heart of Christ, as a well-spring that never fails. O, how is the heart quickened, how are its motives ennobled, its affections deepened, by this communion! Under the education and discipline of the Holy Spirit, the children of God love one another, truly, sincerely, unaffectedly—“without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” And this because the heart is in love with Jesus. Our affection for one another springs from our common relation to God. We are one family, we love one another as He loved us. When compared with this true, sanctified, disciplined affection, the shallow courtesy of the world, the meaningless expressions of effusive friendship, are as chaff to the wheat (*Letter* 63, 1896).

A Practical, Working Love.—To love as Christ loved means to manifest unselfishness at all times and in all places, by kind words and pleasant looks. These cost those who give them nothing, but they leave behind a fragrance that surrounds the soul. Their effect can never be estimated. Not only are they a blessing to the receiver, but to the giver; for they react upon him. Genuine love is a precious attribute of heavenly origin, which increases in fragrance in proportion as it is dispensed to others....

Christ's love is deep and earnest, flowing like an irrepressible stream to all who will accept it. There is no selfishness in His love. If this heaven-born love is an abiding principle in the heart, it will make itself known, not only to those we hold most dear in sacred relationship, but to all with whom we come in contact. It will lead us to bestow little acts of attention, to make concessions, to perform deeds of kindness, to speak tender, true, encouraging words. It will lead us to sympathize with those whose hearts hunger for sympathy (MS 17, 1899).

Love One Another.—Selfishness and pride hinder the pure love that unites us in spirit with Jesus Christ. If this love is truly cultivated, finite will blend with finite, and all will center in the Infinite. Humanity will unite with humanity, and all will be bound up with the heart of Infinite Love. Sanctified love for one another is sacred. In this great work Christian love for one another—far higher, more constant, more courteous, more unselfish, than has been seen—preserves Christian tenderness, Christian benevolence, and politeness, and enfolds the human brotherhood in the embrace of God, acknowledging the dignity with which God has invested the rights of man. This dignity

Christians must ever cultivate for the honor and glory of God....

The only begotten Son of God recognized the nobility of humanity by taking humanity upon Himself, and dying in behalf of humanity, testifying throughout all ages that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (*Letter 10*, 1897).

A Fatal Deception.—True sanctification unites believers to Christ and to one another in the bonds of tender sympathy. This union causes to flow continually into the heart rich currents of Christlike love, which flows forth again in love for one another.

The qualities which it is essential for all to possess are those which marked the completeness of Christ's character—His love, His patience, His unselfishness, and His goodness. These attributes are gained by doing kindly actions with a kindly heart....

It is the greatest and most fatal deception to suppose that a man can have faith unto life eternal, without possessing Christlike love for his brethren. He who loves God and his neighbor is filled with light and love. God is in him and all around him. Christians love those around them as precious souls for whom Christ has died. There is no such thing as a loveless Christian; for "God is love," and "hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."....

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." This is the fruit that is to be given back to God (MS 133, 1899).

Poor Chance for Satan.—The powers of darkness stand a poor chance against believers who love one another as Christ has loved them, who refuse to create alienation and strife, who stand together, who are kind, courteous, and tender-hearted, cherishing the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. We must have the Spirit of Christ, or we are none of His (MS 103, 1902).

A Golden Chain.—The love of Christ is a golden chain that binds finite, human beings who believe in Jesus Christ to the Infinite God. The love that the Lord has for His children passeth knowledge. No science can define or explain it. No human wisdom can fathom it. The more we feel the influence of this love, the more meek and humble shall we be (*Letter 43*, 1896).

34, 35. The Disciples' Credentials.—[John 13:34, 35 quoted.] How broad, how full is this love. The new part of that commandment the disciples did not understand. They were to love one another as Christ had loved them. These were their credentials that Christ was formed within, the hope of glory. After the sufferings of Christ, after His crucifixion and resurrection and proclamation over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, "I am the resurrection and the life," after His words to the five hundred who assembled to see Him in Galilee, and after His ascension to heaven, the disciples had some idea of what the love of God comprehended, and of the love they were to exercise one toward another. When the Holy Spirit rested on them on the day of Pentecost, that love was revealed (MS 82, 1898).

36-38. See EGW on Matthew 26:31-35.

Chapter 14

2, 3. See EGW on Acts 1:11.

6. See EGW on Romans 8:34.

8-10. God Cannot Be Seen in External Form.—[John 14:8-10 quoted.] Philip's doubt was answered with words of reproof. He wished Christ to reveal the Father in bodily form; but in Christ God had already revealed Himself. Is it possible, Christ said, that after walking with Me, hearing My words, seeing the miracle of feeding the five thousand, of healing the sick of the dread disease leprosy, of bringing the dead to life, of raising Lazarus, who was a prey to death, whose body had indeed seen corruption, you do not know Me? Is it possible that you do not discern the Father in the works that He does by Me?....

Christ emphatically impressed upon them the fact that they could see the Father

by faith alone. God cannot be seen in external form by any human being. Christ alone can represent the Father to humanity. This representation the disciples had been privileged to behold for over three years.

As Christ was speaking these words, the glory of God was shining in His countenance, and all present felt a sacred awe as they listened with rapt attention to His words. They felt their hearts more decidedly drawn to Him, and as they were drawn to Christ in greater love, they were drawn to one another. They felt that heaven was very near them, that the words to which they listened were a message to them from the heavenly Father (MS 41, 1897).

9-11. The Divine Authority of Jesus.—The world's Redeemer was equal with God. His authority was as the authority of God. He declared that He had no existence separate from the Father. The authority by which He spoke, and wrought miracles, was expressly His own, yet He assures us that He and the Father are one....

As Legislator, Jesus exercised the authority of God; His commands and decisions were supported by the Sovereignty of the eternal throne. The glory of the Father was revealed in the Son; Christ made manifest the character of the Father. He was so perfectly connected with God, so completely embraced in His encircling light, that he who had seen the Son, had seen the Father. His voice was as the voice of God (*The Review and Herald*, January 7, 1890).

11. Preparation for the Storm of Temptation.—“Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.” Their faith might safely rest upon the evidence given by Christ's works, works that no man had ever done or ever could do. They could reason that humanity alone could not do these wonderful works. Christ was seeking to lead them up from their low state of faith to the experience that they might have received by seeing what He had done in giving a higher education, and in imparting a knowledge of what He was, God in human flesh. How earnestly and perseveringly our compassionate Saviour sought to prepare His followers for the storm of temptation that was soon to beat about them. He would have had them hid with Him in God (MS 41, 1897).

15 (see EGW on Exodus 20:1-17; Romans 3:31). Obedience Possible in Our Humanity.—We are not to serve God as if we were not human, but we are to serve Him in the nature we have, that has been redeemed by the Son of God; through the righteousness of Christ we shall stand before God pardoned, and as though we had never sinned. We will never gain strength in considering what we might do if we were angels. We are to turn in faith to Jesus Christ, and show our love to God through obedience to His commands (MS 1, 1892).

21. God Loves the Obedient as His Own Son.—The believer may bear the testimony in his life and character that God loves the human agent who obeys His commands as He loves His Son. How amazing is this statement—almost beyond the comprehension of the finite mind (*Letter* 11a, 1894)!

26. See EGW on Romans 2:4.

30 (See EGW on John 1:1-3, 14). Christ's Purity Annoyed Satan.—Amid impurity, Christ maintained His purity. Satan could not stain or corrupt it. His character revealed a perfect hatred for sin. It was His holiness that stirred against Him all the passion of a profligate world; for by His perfect life He threw upon the world a perpetual reproach, and made manifest the contrast between transgression and the pure, spotless righteousness of One that knew no sin. This heavenly purity annoyed the apostate foe as nothing else could do, and he followed Christ day by day, using in his work the people that claimed to have superior purity and knowledge of God, putting into their hearts a spirit of hatred against Christ, and tempting His disciples to betray and forsake Him (*The Signs of the Times*, May 10, 1899).

Chapter 15

1, 2. Fruit-bearing Testifies to Abiding.—“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.”

“In me.” This does not mean that those who are really in Christ do not bear any

fruit. God has purchased us through Christ, that He might be a propitiation for our sins. We are within the bounds of His mercy; for in mercy His arm encircles the whole human race. Since Christ has paid the price for all the service that we should give Him, we are His servants by purchase. Although we are in Christ Jesus by His covenant of promise, yet if we stand in a position of perfect indifference, without acknowledging Him as our Saviour, we bear no fruit. If by failing to be a partaker of His divine nature we bear no fruit, we are taken away. Worldly influences take us away from Christ, and our portion is the same as that of the unfruitful branch—"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away."

"Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Our fruit-bearing testifies whether we are really abiding in Christ....

We are Christ's property. "Ye are not your own," "ye are bought with a price." Are we in Him by living faith? If we do not bear any fruit, the powers of darkness take possession of our minds, our affections, our service, and we are of the world, though we profess to be children of God. This is neither a safe nor a pleasant position, because we lose all the beauty and the glory and the satisfaction that it is our privilege to have. By abiding in Christ, we may have His sweetness, His fragrance, His light. Christ is the Light of the world. He shines in our hearts. His light in our hearts shines forth from our faces. By beholding the beauty and the glory of Christ, we become changed into the same image (MS 85, 1901).

1-5. Identity With Christ Needed.—The branches in the True Vine are the believers who are brought into oneness by connection with the Vine.

The connection of the branches with one another and with the Vine constitutes them a unity, but this does not mean uniformity in everything. Unity in diversity is a principle that pervades the whole creation. While there is an individuality and variety in nature, there is a oneness in their diversity; for all things receive their usefulness and beauty from the same Source. The great Master Artist writes His name on all His created works, from the loftiest cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop upon the wall. They all declare His handiwork, from the lofty mountain and the grand ocean to the tiniest shell upon the seashore.

The branches of the vine cannot blend into each other; they are individually separate; yet every branch must be in fellowship with every other if they are united in the same parent stock. They all draw nourishment from the same source; they drink in the same life-giving properties. So each branch of the True Vine is separate and distinct, yet all are bound together in the parent stock. There can be no division. They are all linked together by His will to bear fruit wherever they can find place and opportunity. But in order to do this, the worker must hide self. He must not give expression to his own mind and will. He is to express the mind and will of Christ. The human family are dependent upon God for life and breath and sustenance. God has designed the web, and all are individual threads to compose the pattern. The Creator is one, and He reveals Himself as the great Reservoir of all that is essential for each separate life.

Christian unity consists in the branches being in the same parent stock, the vitalizing power of the center supporting the grafts that have united to the Vine. In thoughts and desires, in words and actions, there must be an identity with Christ, a constant partaking of His spiritual life. Faith must increase by exercise. All who live near to God will have a realization of what Jesus is to them and they to Jesus. As communion with God is making its impress upon the soul, and shining out in the countenance as an illuminating light, the steadfast principles of Christ's holy character will be reflected in humanity (*The Review and Herald*, November 9, 1897).

1-8. See EGW on ch. 13:2.

4. Detachment as Well as Attachment.—A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first, and last,

and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a relation of utter dependence to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment, as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome, if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is, they try to attach themselves to Christ without detaching themselves from these cherished idols....

Believers become one in Christ; but one branch cannot be sustained by another. The nourishment must be obtained through vital connection with the Vine. We must feel our utter dependence on Christ. We must live by faith in the Son of God. That is the meaning of the injunction, "Abide in me." The life we live in the flesh is not to the will of men, not to please our Lord's enemies, but to serve and honor Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us. A mere assent to this union, while the affections are not detached from the world, its pleasures and its dissipations, only emboldens the heart in disobedience (*The Signs of the Times*, November 29, 1910).

God Makes No Compromise.—Until the heart is surrendered unconditionally to God, the human agent is not abiding in the True Vine, and cannot flourish in the Vine, and bear rich clusters of fruit. God will not make the slightest compromise with sin. If He could have done this, Christ need not have come to our world to suffer and die. No conversion is genuine which does not change both the character and the conduct of those who accept the truth. The truth works by love, and purifieth the soul (*Letter* 31a, 1894).

4, 5. See EGW on Matthew 11:29.

5 (See EGW on 2 Corinthians 4:3-6). The Circulation of Life.—Christ alone can help us and give us the victory. Christ must be all in all to us, He must dwell in the heart, His life must circulate through us as the blood circulates through the veins. His spirit must be a vitalizing power that will cause us to influence others to become Christlike and holy (*Letter* 43, 1895).

8. A Day by Day Experience.—[John 15:8 quoted] What is it to bear fruit? It is not all comprised in coming to meeting once a week, and bearing our testimony in prayer or social meeting. We are to be found day by day abiding in the Vine, and bringing forth fruit, with patience, at our home, in our business; and in every relation in life manifesting the Spirit of Christ. There are many who act as though they thought an occasional connection with Christ was all that was necessary, and that they can be accounted living branches because at times they make confession of Christ. But this is a fallacy. The branch is to be grafted into the Vine, and to abide there, uniting itself to the Vine fiber by fiber, drawing its daily supply of sap and nourishment from the root and fatness of the Vine, until it becomes one with the parent stock. The sap that nourishes the Vine must nourish the branch and this will be evident in the life of him who is abiding in Christ; for the joy of Christ will be fulfilled in him who walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Our professions are worthless unless we abide in Christ; for we cannot be living branches unless the vital qualities of the Vine abound in us. In the genuine Christian the characteristics of his Master will appear, and when we reflect the graces of Christ in our lives and characters, the Father loves us as He loves His Son. When this condition is fulfilled in those who profess to believe the present truth, we shall see a prosperous church; for its members will not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and they will be flourishing branches of the living Vine (*The Signs of the Times*, April 18, 1892).

10. See EGW on Matthew 24:23, 24.

11 (Acts 2:28). Light Brings Gladness.—When the light of heaven shines upon the human agent, his countenance will express the joy of the Lord within. It is the absence of Christ from the soul that makes people sad and of a doubtful mind. It is the want of Christ that makes the countenance sad, and their life is a

pilgrimage of sighs. Rejoicing is the very keynote of the Word of God for all who receive Him. Why? Because they have the Light of life. Light brings gladness and joy, and that joy is expressed in the life and the character (MS 96, 1898).

12. See EGW on ch. 13:34.

22 (ch. 5:40; Luke 12:48). No Provision for Willful Blindness.—[John 15:22 quoted.]... Those who have an opportunity to hear the truth, and yet take no pains to hear or understand it, thinking that if they do not hear, they will not be accountable, will be judged guilty before God the same as if they had heard and rejected. There will be no excuse for those who choose to go in error when they might understand what is truth. In His sufferings and death Jesus has made atonement for all sins of ignorance, but there is no provision made for willful blindness....

We shall not be held accountable for the light that has not reached our perception, but for that which we have resisted and refused. A man could not apprehend the truth which had never been presented to him, and therefore could not be condemned for light he had never had. But if he had opportunity to hear the message, and to become acquainted with the truth, and yet refused to improve his opportunity, he will be among the number of whom Christ said, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Those who deliberately place themselves where they will not have an opportunity of hearing the truth, will be reckoned among those who have heard the truth, and persistently resisted its evidences (*The Review and Herald*, April 25, 1893).

Light That Has Shone, Will Condemn.—None will be condemned for not heeding light and knowledge that they never had, and they could not obtain. But many refuse to obey the truth that is presented to them by Christ's ambassadors, because they wish to conform to the world's standard; and the truth that has reached their understanding, the light that has shone in the soul, will condemn them in the judgment (*The Review and Herald*, November 25, 1884).

Judged According to Light.—Men will not be judged for light they have never had. But those who have kept Sunday, whose attention has been called to this error, but who would not open their eyes to behold wondrous things out of the law, will be judged according to the light that has come to them (*The Review and Herald*, September 13, 1898).

26, 27. See EGW on Acts 1:8.

Chapter 16

24. See EGW on Acts 1:11.

Chapter 17

Illustration of Jesus' Intercession in Heavenly Sanctuary.—This chapter contains the intercessory prayer offered by Christ to His Father just before His trial and crucifixion. This prayer is a lesson regarding the intercession that the Saviour would carry on within the veil, when His great sacrifice in behalf of men, the offering of Himself, should have been completed. Our Mediator gave His disciples this illustration of His ministration in the heavenly sanctuary in behalf of all who will come to Him in meekness and humility, emptied of all selfishness, and believing in His power to save (MS 29, 1906).

1-6. The Prayer Before Gethsemane.—[John 17:1-6 quoted.] ... This was Christ's last prayer with His disciples. It was offered just before He went into the Garden of Gethsemane, where He was to be betrayed and taken. When He reached Gethsemane, He fell prostrate upon the ground, in an agony of distress. What caused His agony? The weight of the sins of the whole world was resting upon His soul. As we study this prayer, let us remember that it was just before this experience and just before His betrayal and trial, that these words were uttered (MS 52, 1904).

2, 3. Relation of Father and Son.—The seventeenth chapter of John speaks plainly regarding the personality of God and of Christ, and of their relation to each other. "Father, the hour is come," Christ said: "glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." [John 17:23, 3, 5-11 quoted.] Here is personality, and individuality (MS 124, 1903).

3 (see EGW on ch. 1:4; Romans 11:33). To Know Christ Is to Practice His Words.—[John 17:3 quoted.] These words mean much. It is only by knowing Christ that we

can know God. The Sent of God calls upon all to listen to these words. They are the words of God, and all should give heed to them; for by them they will be judged. To know Christ savingly is to be vitalized by spiritual knowledge, to practice His words. Without this, all else is valueless (*The Signs of the Times*, January 27, 1898).

4-10. Glorified in Those Who Believe.—In the intercessory prayer of Jesus with His Father, He claimed that He had fulfilled the conditions which made it obligatory upon the Father to fulfill His part of the contract made in heaven, with regard to fallen man. He prayed: “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. [That is, He had wrought out a righteous character on earth as an example for men to follow.] And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” In this prayer He further goes on to state what is comprehended by the work which He has accomplished, and which has given Him all those who believe on His name. He values this recompense so highly that He forgets the anguish it has cost Him to redeem fallen man. He declares Himself glorified in those who believe on Him. The church, in His name, is to carry to glorious perfection the work which He has commenced; and when that church shall be finally ransomed in the Paradise of God, He will look upon the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Through all eternity the ransomed host will be His chief glory (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:260, 261).

5. Let the Veil Be Removed.—[John 17:1-5 quoted.] Christ is not praying for the manifestation of the glory of human nature; for that human nature never had an existence in His pre-existence. He is praying to His Father in regard to a glory possessed in His oneness with God. His prayer is that of a mediator; the favor He entreats in the manifestation of that divine glory which was possessed by Him when He was one with God. Let the veil be removed, He says, and let My glory shine forth—the glory which I had with Thee before the world was (*The Signs of the Times*, May 10, 1899).

5, 24 (Hebrews 1:6; 1 John 2:1; see EGW on John 20:16, 17; Hebrews 3:1-3). Public Reinstatement of Christ in Heaven.—The prayer of Christ was answered. He was glorified with the glory which He had with His Father before the world was. But amid this glory, Christ does not lose sight of His toiling, struggling ones upon earth. He has a request to make of His Father. He waves back the heavenly host until He is in the direct presence of Jehovah, and then He presents His petition in behalf of His chosen ones.

“Father,” He says, “I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am.” And then the Father declares, “Let all the angels of God worship him.” The heavenly host prostrate themselves before Him, and raise their song of triumph and joy. Glory encircles the King of heaven, and was beheld by all the heavenly intelligences. No words can describe the scene which took place as the Son of God was publicly reinstated in the place of honor and glory which He voluntarily left when He became a man.

And today Christ, glorified, and yet our brother, is our Advocate in the courts of heaven (*The Signs of the Times*, May 10, 1899).

6. A Great Honor.—What a glorious commendation—“They have kept thy word.” To have these words said of us would be a great honor. But too often self comes in; self strives for the mastery (MS 52, 1904).

17. Self-satisfaction Is Not Sanctification.—“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” A pleasant, self-satisfied feeling is not an evidence of sanctification. A faithful record is kept of all the acts of the children of men. Nothing can be concealed from the eye of the High and Holy One, who inhabiteth eternity. Some make Christ ashamed by their course of devising, planning, scheming. God does not approve of their conduct; for the Lord Jesus is not honored by their spirit and their works. They forget the words of the apostle: “We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men” (MS 159, 1903).

Adam’s Test Brought to All.—The law of God is the one great standard that will measure every man’s character in the day of God. The prayer of Christ was, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” Therefore the sanctification of the

Spirit of God upon the heart, leads men to walk in the way of God's commandments. The very test that God brought upon Adam in Eden, will be brought upon every member of the human family. Obedience to God was required of Adam, and we stand in the same position that he did to have a second trial, to see whether we will listen to the voice of Satan and disobey God, or to the Word of God and obey (*The Review and Herald*, June 10, 1890).

(1 Thessalonians 4:3; 2 Timothy 3:16.) The Textbook of Sanctification.—The Bible is the standard by which to test the claims of all who profess sanctification. Jesus prayed that His disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and He says, "Thy word is truth;" while the psalmist declares, "Thy law is the truth." All whom God is leading will manifest a high regard for the Scriptures in which His voice is heard. The Bible will be to them "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." "Ye shall know them by their fruits." We need no other evidence in order to judge of men's sanctification; if they are fearful lest they shall not obey the whole will of God, if they are listening diligently to His voice, trusting in His wisdom, and making His Word the man of their counsel, then, while they make no boasts of superior goodness, we may be sure that they are seeking to attain to perfection of Christian character. But if the claimants of holiness even intimate that they are no longer required to search the Scriptures, we need not hesitate to pronounce their sanctification spurious. They are leaning to their own understanding, instead of conforming to the will of God (*The Review and Herald*, October 5, 1886).

Obey God's Requirements.—The truth as it is in Jesus is obedience to every precept of Jehovah. It is heart work. Bible sanctification is not the spurious sanctification of today, which will not search the Scriptures, but trusts to good feelings and impulses rather than to the seeking for truth as for hidden treasure. Bible sanctification is to know the requirements of God and to obey them. There is a pure and holy heaven in store for those who keep God's commandments. It is worth lifelong, persevering, untiring effort. Satan is on your right hand and on your left; he is before and behind; he has a dish of fables cooked up for every soul who is not cherishing the truth as it is in Jesus. The destroyer is upon you to palsy your every effort. But there is a crown of life to be won, a life that measures with the life of God (MS 58, 1897).

The truth if received is capable of constant expansion and new developments. It will increase in brightness as we behold it, and grow in height and depth as we aspire to grasp it. Thus it will elevate us to the standard of perfection, and give us faith and trust in God as our strength for the work before us (MS 153, 1898).

(Hebrews 4:12.) No Soft Tread.—The truth is the truth. It is not to be wrapped up in beautiful adornings, that the outside appearance may be admired. The teacher is to make the truth clear and forcible to the understanding and to the conscience. The word is a two-edged sword, that cuts both ways. It does not tread as with soft, slippers feet.

There are many cases where men who have defended Christianity against skeptics have afterward lost their own souls in the mazes of skepticism. They caught the malaria, and died spiritually. They had strong arguments for the truth, and much outside evidence, but they did not have an abiding faith in Christ. O, there are thousands upon thousands of professed Christians who never study the Bible! Study the sacred Word prayerfully, for your own soul's benefit. When you hear the word of the living preacher, if he has a living connection with God, you will find that the Spirit and the word agree.

The Old and New Testaments are linked together by the golden clasp of God. We need to become familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures. The unchangeableness of God should be clearly seen; the similarity of His dealings with His people of the past dispensation and of the present, should be studied....

By the work of the Holy Spirit the truth is riveted in the mind and printed in the heart of the diligent, God-fearing

student. And not only is he blessed by this kind of labor; the souls to whom he communicates truth, and for whom he must one day give an account, are also greatly blessed. Those who make God their counselor reap the most precious harvest as they gather the golden grains of truth from His Word; for the heavenly Instructor is close by their side. He who obtains his qualification for the ministry in this way will be entitled to the blessing promised to him who turns many to righteousness (*The Review and Herald*, April 20, 1897).

20, 21 (Matthew 25:14, 15; Mark 13:34). Unity in Diversity.—[John 17:20, 21 quoted.] What kind of unity is spoken of in these words?—Unity in diversity. Our minds do not all run in the same channel, and we have not all been given the same work. God has given to every man his work according to his several ability. There are different kinds of work to be done, and workers of varied capabilities are needed. If our hearts are humble, if we have learned in the school of Christ to be meek and lowly, we may all press together in the narrow path marked out for us (MS 52, 1904).

20-23. No Destruction of Personality.—Christ is one with the Father, but Christ and God are two distinct personages. Read the prayer of Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John, and you will find this point clearly brought out. How earnestly the Saviour prayed that His disciples might be one with Him as He is one with the Father. But the unity that is to exist between Christ and His followers does not destroy the personality of either. They are to be one with Him as He is one with the Father (*The Review and Herald*, June 1, 1905).

[John 17:20-23 quoted.] What a wonderful statement! The unity that exists between Christ and His disciples does not destroy the personality of either. In mind, in purpose, in character, they are one, but not in person. By partaking of the Spirit of God, conforming to the law of God, man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ brings His disciples into a living union with Himself and with the Father. Through the working of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind, man is made complete in Christ Jesus. Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin (MS 111, 1903).

24 (see EGW on ch. 20:16, 17). According to Covenant Promise.—O, how the divine Head longed to have His church with Him! They had fellowship with Him in His suffering and humiliation, and it is His highest joy to have them with Him to be partakers of His glory. Christ claims the privilege of having His church with Him. “I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.” To have them with Him is according to covenant promise and agreement with His Father (*The Review and Herald*, October 17, 1893).

Chapter 18

13. See EGW on Matthew 26:3.

13, 14. See EGW on Matthew 26:57.

14. See EGW on ch. 11:50, 51.

20, 21. Two Ways of Working.—[John 18:20, 21 quoted.] Jesus would contrast His manner of work with that of His accusers. This midnight seizure by a mob, this cruel mockery and abuse before He was even accused or condemned, was their manner, not His. His work was open to all. He had nothing in His doctrines that He concealed. Thus He rebuked their position, and unveiled the hypocrisy of the Sadducees (MS 51, 1897).

37. Christ Spoke Truth With the Freshness of a New Revelation.—Truth never languished on His lips, never suffered in His hands for want of perfect obedience to its requirements. “To this end was I born,” Christ declared, “and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” And the mighty principles of truth fell from His lips with the freshness of a new revelation. The truth was spoken by Him with an earnestness proportionate to its infinite importance and to the momentous results depending on its success (MS 49, 1898).

39, 40. See EGW on Matthew 27:15-26.

Chapter 19

10. Pilate Responsible.—[John 19:10 quoted.] “I have power.” By saying this, Pilate showed that he made himself

responsible for the condemnation of Christ, for the cruel scourging, and for the insults offered Him before any wrong was proved against Him. Pilate had been chosen and appointed to administer justice, but he dared not do it. Had he exercised the power that he claimed, and that his position gave him, had he protected Christ, he would not have been accountable for His death. Christ would have been crucified, but Pilate would not have been held guilty (*The Review and Herald*, January 23, 1900).

14, 15. See EGW on Matthew 27:22, 23.

15. Last Hope Gone.—What was Christ's grief to see the Jews fixing their own destiny beyond redemption! He alone could comprehend the significance of their rejection, betrayal, and condemnation of the Son of God. His last hope for the Jewish nation was gone. Nothing could avert her doom. By the representatives of the nation God was denied as their Ruler. By worlds unfallen, by the whole heavenly universe, the blasphemous utterance was heard, "We have no king but Caesar." The God of heaven heard their choice. He had given them opportunity to repent, and they would not. Forty years afterward Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Roman power ruled over the people. Then they had no deliverer. They had no king but Caesar. Henceforth the Jewish nation, as a nation, was as a branch severed from the vine—a dead, fruitless branch, to be gathered up and burned—from land to land throughout the world, from century to century, dead—dead in trespasses and sins—without a Saviour (*The Youth's Instructor*, February 1, 1900)!

15, 16. See EGW on Matthew 27:25, 26.

16. Reactions to Jesus' Condemnation.—Jesus, the Son of God, was delivered to the people to be crucified. With shouts of triumph they led the Saviour away toward Calvary. The news of His condemnation had spread through all Jerusalem, striking terror and anguish to thousands of hearts, but bringing a malicious joy to many who had been reproved by His teachings (Undated MS 127).

18. See EGW on Matthew 27:38.

19. See EGW on Matthew 27:37.

25-27. John and Mary Returned.—Christ, bearing the sin of the world, seemed to be deserted; but He was not wholly left alone. John stood close by the cross. Mary had fainted in her anguish, and John had taken her to his house away from the harrowing scene. But he saw that the end was near, and he brought her again to the cross (MS 45, 1897)

30 (see EGW on Matthew 27:45, 46, 50). The Compact Was Fully Consummated.—When Christ spoke these words, He addressed His Father. Christ was not alone in making this great sacrifice. It was the fulfillment of the covenant made between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the earth was laid. With clasped hands they entered into the solemn pledge that Christ would become the substitute and surety for the human race if they were overcome by Satan's sophistry. The compact was now being fully consummated. The climax was reached. Christ had the consciousness that He had fulfilled to the letter the pledge He had made. In death He was more than conqueror. The redemption price has been paid (MS 111, 1897).

Last Tie of Sympathy Severed.—When Christ cried out, "It is finished," all heaven triumphed. The controversy between Christ and Satan in regard to the execution of the plan of salvation was ended. The spirit of Satan and his works had taken deep root in the affections of the children of men. For Satan to have come into power would have been death to the world. The implacable hatred he felt toward the Son of God was revealed in his manner of treating Him while He was in the world. Christ's betrayal, trial, and crucifixion were all planned by the fallen foe. His hatred, carried out in the death of the Son of God, placed Satan where his true diabolical character was revealed to all created intelligences that had not fallen through sin.

The holy angels were horror-stricken that one who had been of their number could fall so far as to be capable of such cruelty. Every sentiment of sympathy or pity which they had ever felt for Satan in his exile, was quenched in their hearts. That his envy should be exercised in such a revenge upon an innocent person was

enough to strip him of his assumed robe of celestial light, and to reveal the hideous deformity beneath; but to manifest such malignity toward the divine Son of God, who had, with unprecedented self-denial, and love for the creatures formed in His image, come from heaven and assumed their fallen nature, was such a heinous crime against Heaven that it caused the angels to shudder with horror, and severed forever the last tie of sympathy existing between Satan and the heavenly world (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:183, 184).

(Matthew 27:51.) **Satan Fell Like Lightning.**—When Christ cried, “It is finished,” God’s unseen hand rent the strong fabric composing the veil of the temple from top to bottom. The way into the holiest of all was made manifest. God bowed His head satisfied. Now His justice and mercy could blend. He could be just, and yet the justifier of all who should believe on Christ. He looked upon the victim expiring on the cross, and said, “It is finished. The human race shall have another trial.” The redemption price was paid, and Satan fell like lightning from heaven (MS 111, 1897).

38, 39. See EGW on Matthew 27:38.

Chapter 20

16, 17 (ch. 17:24; Isaiah 13:12; Matthew 28:18; Hebrews 1:6). The Contract Ratified.—[John 20:16, 17 quoted.] Jesus refused to receive the homage of His people until He knew that His sacrifice had been accepted by the Father, and until He had received the assurance from God Himself that His atonement for the sins of His people had been full and ample, that through His blood they might gain eternal life. Jesus immediately ascended to heaven and presented Himself before the throne of God, showing the marks of shame and cruelty upon His brow, His hands and feet. But he refused to receive the coronet of glory, and the royal robe, and He also refused the adoration of the angels as He had refused the homage of Mary, until the Father signified that His offering was accepted.

He also had a request to prefer concerning His chosen ones upon earth. He wished to have the relation clearly defined that His redeemed should hereafter sustain to heaven, and to His Father. His church must be justified and accepted before He could accept heavenly honor. He declared it to be His will that where He was, there His church should be; if He was to have glory, His people must share it with Him. They who suffer with Him on earth must finally reign with Him in His kingdom. In the most explicit manner Christ pleaded for His church, identifying His interest with theirs, and advocating, with love and constancy stronger than death, their rights and titles gained through Him.

God’s answer to this appeal goes forth in the proclamation: “Let all the angels of God worship him.” Every angelic commander obeys the royal mandate, and Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain; and that lives again a triumphant conqueror! echoes and re-echoes through all heaven. The innumerable company of angels prostrate themselves before the Redeemer. The request of Christ is granted; the church is justified through Him, its representative and head. Here the Father ratifies the contract with His Son, that He will be reconciled to repentant and obedient men, and take them into divine favor through the merits of Christ. Christ guarantees that He will make a man “more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.” All power in heaven and on earth is now given to the Prince of life; yet He does not for a moment forget His poor disciples in a sinful world, but prepares to return to them, that He may impart to them His power and glory. Thus did the Redeemer of mankind, by the sacrifice of Himself, connect earth with heaven, and finite man with the infinite God (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:202, 203).

17 (John 10:18). All of Christ Remained in Tomb.—Jesus said to Mary, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” When He closed His eyes in death upon the cross, the soul of Christ did not go at once to heaven, as many believe, or how could His words be true—“I am not yet ascended to my Father”? The spirit of Jesus slept in the tomb with His body, and did not wing its way to heaven, there to maintain a separate existence, and to look down upon the mourning disciples embalming the body from

which it had taken flight. All that comprised the life and intelligence of Jesus remained with His body in the sepulcher; and when He came forth it was as a whole being; He did not have to summon His spirit from heaven. He had power to lay down His life and to take it up again (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:203, 204).

21, 22. A Foretaste of Pentecost.—The act of Christ in breathing upon His disciples the Holy Ghost, and in imparting His peace to them, was as a few drops before the plentiful shower to be given on the day of Pentecost. Jesus impressed this fact upon His disciples, that as they should proceed in the work intrusted to them, they would the more fully comprehend the nature of that work, and the manner in which the kingdom of Christ was to be set up on earth. They were appointed to be witnesses for the Saviour; they were to testify what they had seen and heard of His resurrection; they were to repeat the gracious words which proceeded from His lips. They were acquainted with His holy character; He was as an angel standing in the sun, yet casting no shadow. It was the sacred work of the apostles to present the spotless character of Christ to men, as the standard for their lives. The disciples had been so intimately associated with this Pattern of holiness that they were in some degree assimilated to Him in character, and were specially fitted to make known to the world His precepts and example (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:243, 244).

23 (Matthew 16:18, 19; 18:18). Man Cannot Remove One Stain of Sin.—Christ gave no ecclesiastical right to forgive sin, nor to sell indulgences, that men may sin without incurring the displeasure of God, nor did He give His servants liberty to accept a gift or bribe for cloaking sin, that it may escape merited censure. Jesus charged His disciples to preach the remission of sin *in His name* among all nations; but they themselves were not empowered to remove one stain of sin from the children of Adam.... Whoever would attract the people to himself as one in whom is invested power to forgive sins, incurs the wrath of God, for he turns souls away from the heavenly Pardoner to a weak and erring mortal (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:245, 246).

24-29. Tenderness Won Thomas.—Jesus, in His treatment of Thomas, gave His followers a lesson regarding the manner in which they should treat those who have doubts upon religious truth, and who make those doubts prominent. He did not overwhelm Thomas with words of reproach, nor did He enter into a controversy with him; but, with marked condescension and tenderness, He revealed Himself unto the doubting one. Thomas had taken a most unreasonable position, in dictating the only conditions of his faith; but Jesus, by His generous love and consideration, broke down all the barriers he had raised. Persistent controversy will seldom weaken unbelief, but rather put it upon self-defense, where it will find new support and excuse. Jesus, revealed in His love and mercy as the crucified Saviour, will bring from many once unwilling lips the acknowledgment of Thomas, “My Lord, and my God” (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 3:222).

Chapter 21

15-17. Peter Learned to Teach.—There was Peter, who denied his Lord. After he had fallen and been converted, Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” Before Peter’s feet slipped, he had not the spirit of meekness required to feed the lambs; but after he became sensible of his own weakness, he knew just how to teach the erring and fallen; he could come close to their side in tender sympathy, and could help them (*Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 121).

(Luke 22:31, 32.) Genuine Restoration Reaches the Roots.—Peter never forgot the painful scene of his humiliation. He did not forget his denial of Christ, and think that, after all, it was not a very great sin. All was painfully real to the erring disciple. His sorrow for his sin was as intense as had been his denial. After his conversion, the old assertions were not made in the old spirit and manner....

Three times after His resurrection, Christ tested Peter. “Simon, son of Jonas,” He said, “lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest

that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

This heart-searching question was necessary in the case of Peter, and it is necessary in our case. The work of restoration can never be thorough unless the roots of evil are reached. Again and again the shoots have been clipped, while the root of bitterness has been left to spring up and defile many; but the very depth of the hidden evil must be reached, the moral senses must be judged, and judged again, in the light of the divine presence. The daily life will testify whether or not the work is genuine.

When, the third time, Christ said to Peter, “Lovest thou me?” the probe reached the soul center. Self-judged, Peter fell upon the Rock, saying, “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.”

This is the work before the every soul who has dishonored God, and grieved the heart of Christ, by a denial of truth and righteousness. If the tempted soul endures the trying process, and self does not awake to life to feel hurt and abused under the test, that probing knife reveals that the soul is indeed dead to self, but alive unto God.

Some assert that if a soul stumbles and falls, he can never regain his position; but the case before us contradicts this. Before his denial Christ said to Peter, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” In committing to his stewardship the souls for whom He had given His life, Christ gave to Peter the strongest evidence of His confidence in his restoration. And he was commissioned to feed not only the sheep, but the lambs—a broader and more delicate work than had hitherto been appointed him. Not only was he to hold forth the word of life to others, but he was to be a shepherd of the flock (*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 22, 1898).

18, 19 (Matthew 19:28; 25:31; Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 4:13). A Transformed Peter.—[John 21:18-22 quoted.] Peter was now humble enough to understand the words of Christ, and without further questioning, the once restless, boastful, self-confident disciple became subdued and contrite. He followed his Lord indeed—the Lord he had denied. The thought that Christ had not denied and rejected him was to Peter a light and comfort and blessing. He felt that he could be crucified from choice, but it must be with his head downward. And he who was so close a partaker of Christ’s sufferings will also be a partaker of His glory when He shall “sit upon the throne of his glory” (*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 22, 1898).