

'The Day of the Lord'

General Introduction

In the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed. Satan watches to catch away every impression that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of trouble will find them unready.

When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message. The fearful judgments denounced against the worship of the beast and his image (Revelation 14:9-11), should lead all to a diligent study of the prophecies to learn what the mark of the beast is, and how they are to avoid receiving it. But the masses of the people turn away their ears from hearing the truth and are turned unto fables. The apostle Paul declared, looking down to the last days: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." 2 Timothy 4:3. That time has fully come. The multitudes do not want Bible truth, because it interferes with the desires of the sinful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love.

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority, not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord" in its support.

Great Controversy, pages 594-595.

Lesson 1: 'What shall be the sign of Thy coming?'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.' Matthew 24:32-33.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, pages 631-636.

Introduction

'God has always given men warning of coming judgments. Those who had faith in His message for their time, and who acted out their faith, in obedience to His commandments, escaped the judgments that fell upon the disobedient and unbelieving. The word came to Noah, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before Me." Noah obeyed and was saved. The message came to Lot, "Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city." Genesis 7:1; 19:14... So now we are given warning of Christ's second coming and of the destruction to fall upon the world. Those who heed the warning will be saved.' *Desire of Ages*, page 634.

'A great earthquake'

1. Which was the first sign to take place to show the approach of Christ's coming? Revelation 6:12, first part.

NOTE: 'In fulfilment of this prophecy there occurred, in the year 1755, the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded. Though commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa, and America. It was felt in Greenland, in the West Indies, in the island of Madeira, in Norway and Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland. It pervaded an extent of not less than four million square miles. In Africa the shock was almost as severe as in Europe. A great part of Algiers was destroyed; and a short distance from Morocco, a village containing eight or ten thousand inhabitants was swallowed up. A vast wave swept over the coast of Spain and Africa engulfing cities and causing great destruction. It was in Spain and Portugal that the shock manifested its extreme violence. At Cadiz the inflowing wave was said to be sixty feet high. Mountains, "some of the largest in Portugal, were impetuously shaken, as it were, from their very foundations, and some of them opened at their summits, which were split and rent in a wonderful manner, huge masses of them being thrown down into the adjacent valleys. Flames are related to have issued from these mountains." Sir Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology*, page 495. At Lisbon "a sound of thunder was heard underground, and immediately afterwards a violent shock threw down the greater part of that city. In the course of about six minutes sixty thousand persons perished... It has been estimated that ninety thousand persons lost their lives on that fatal day.' *Great Controversy*, pages 304-305.

2. What other earthquake will accompany the Second Coming of Christ? Revelation 6:14. Compare Revelation 16:17-20 & Isaiah 24:19-21.

NOTE: 'An earthquake marked the hour when Christ laid down His life, and another earthquake witnessed the moment when He took it up in triumph. He who had vanquished death and the grave came forth from the tomb with the tread of a conqueror, amid the reeling of the earth, the flashing of lightning, and the roaring of thunder. When He shall come to the earth again, He will shake "not the earth only, but also heaven." "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage." "The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll;" "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." But "the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Hebrews 12:26; Isaiah 24:20; 34:4; 2 Peter 3:10; Joel 3:16.' *Desire of Ages*, page 780.

‘Signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars’

3. Following the great earthquake, what signs would be seen in the heavens? Revelation 6:12, last part. Compare Joel 2:10, Matthew 24:29, Acts 2:20.

NOTE: ‘The intense darkness of the day was succeeded, an hour or two before evening, by a partially clear sky, and the sun appeared, though it was still obscured by the black, heavy mist. “After sundown, the clouds came again overhead, and it grew dark very fast.” “Nor was the darkness of the night less uncommon and terrifying than that of the day; notwithstanding there was almost a full moon, no object was discernible but by the help of some artificial light, which, when seen from the neighbouring houses and other places at a distance, appeared through a kind of Egyptian darkness which seemed almost impervious to the rays.” Isaiah Thomas, *Massachusetts Spy*; or, *American Oracle of Liberty*, vol. 10, No. 472 (May 25, 1780). Said an eyewitness of the scene: “I could not help conceiving at the time, that if every luminous body in the universe had been shrouded in impenetrable shades, or struck out of existence, the darkness could not have been more complete.” Letter by Dr. Samuel Tenney, of Exeter, New Hampshire, December, 1785 (in *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 1792, 1st series, vol. 1, p. 97). Though at nine o’clock that night the moon rose to the full, “it had not the least effect to dispel the deathlike shadows.” After midnight the darkness disappeared, and the moon, when first visible, had the appearance of blood. May 19, 1780, stands in history as “The Dark Day.” Since the time of Moses no period of darkness of equal density, extent, and duration, has ever been recorded. The description of this event, as given by eyewitnesses, is but an echo of the words of the Lord, recorded by the prophet Joel, twenty-five hundred years previous to their fulfilment: “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.” Joel 2:31.’ *Great Controversy*, page 308.

4. How precisely did Christ locate the time of the darkening of the sun and moon? Mark 13:24. Compare Matthew 24:29.

NOTE: ‘Twenty-five years later appeared the next sign mentioned in the prophecy, the darkening of the sun and moon. What rendered this more striking was the fact that the time of its fulfilment had been definitely pointed out. In the Saviour’s conversation with His disciples upon Olivet, after describing the long period of trial for the church, the 1260 years of papal persecution, concerning which He had promised that the tribulation should be shortened, He thus mentioned certain events to precede His coming, and fixed the time when the first of these should be witnessed: “In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light.” Mark 13:24. The 1260 days, or years, terminated in 1798. A quarter of a century earlier, persecution had almost wholly ceased. Following this persecution, according to the words of Christ, the sun was to be darkened. On the 19th of May, 1780, this prophecy was fulfilled.’ *Great Controversy*, page 306.

5. What further sign in the heavens was to follow the darkening of the sun and moon? Revelation 6:13. Compare Mark 13:25, first part.

NOTE: ‘Said Jesus: “The stars shall fall from heaven.” Matthew 24:29. And John in the Revelation declared, as he beheld in vision the scenes that should herald the day of God: “The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.” Revelation 6:13. This prophecy received a striking and impressive fulfilment in the great meteoric shower of November 13, 1833. That was the most extensive and wonderful display of falling stars which has ever been recorded; “the whole firmament, over all the United States, being then, for hours, in fiery commotion! No celestial phenomenon has ever occurred in this country, since its first settlement, which was viewed with such intense admiration by one class in the community, or with so much dread and alarm by another.” “Its sublimity and awful beauty still linger in many minds. . . . Never did rain fall much thicker than the meteors fell toward the earth; east, west, north, and south, it was the same. In a word, the whole heavens seemed in motion. . . . The display, as described in Professor Silliman’s *Journal*, was seen all over North America. . . . From two o’clock until broad daylight, the sky being perfectly serene and cloudless, an incessant play of dazzlingly brilliant luminosities was kept up in the whole heavens.” R. M. Devens, *American Progress*; or, *The Great Events of the Greatest Century*, ch. 28, pars. 1-5. “No language, indeed, can come up to the splendour of that magnificent display; . . . no one who did not witness it can form an adequate conception of its glory. It seemed as if the whole starry heavens had congregated at one point near the zenith, and were simultaneously shooting forth, with the velocity of lightning, to every part of the horizon; and yet they were not exhausted, thousands swiftly followed in the tracks of thousands, as if created for the occasion.” F. Reed, in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, Dec. 13, 1833. “A more correct picture of a fig tree casting its figs when blown by a mighty wind, it was not possible to behold.” “The Old Countryman,” in *Portland Evening Advertiser*, Nov. 26, 1833. In the *New York Journal of Commerce* of November 14, 1833, appeared a long article regarding this wonderful phenomenon, containing this statement: “No philosopher or scholar has told or recorded an event, I suppose, like that of yesterday morning. A prophet eighteen hundred years ago foretold it exactly, if we will be at the trouble of understanding stars falling to mean falling stars, . . . in the only sense in which it is possible to be literally true.” *Great Controversy*, page 334.

‘Distress of nations with perplexity’

6. What signs in the political world did Jesus speak of? Matthew 24:6.

NOTE: ‘Today the signs of the times declare that we are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Everything in our world is in agitation. Before our eyes is fulfilling the Saviour’s prophecy of the events to precede His coming: “Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places” (Matthew 24:6, 7). The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all

living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognise that something great and decisive is about to take place, that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis. The Bible, and the Bible only, gives a correct view of these things. Here are revealed the great final scenes in the history of our world, events that already are casting their shadows before, the sound of their approach causing the earth to tremble and men's hearts to fail them for fear.' *Lift Him Up*, page 364.

7. What further signs in the world did Jesus speak of? Luke 21:25, last part.

NOTE: 'The exact day and hour of Christ's coming have not been revealed. The Saviour told His disciples that He Himself could not make known the hour of His second appearing. But He mentioned certain events by which they might know when His coming was near... Upon the earth, He said, there shall be "distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." "And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." The signs in the sun, moon, and stars have been fulfilled. Since that time earthquakes, tempests, tidal waves, pestilence, and famine have multiplied. The most awful destructions, by fire and flood, are following one another in quick succession. The terrible disasters that are taking place from week to week speak to us in earnest tones of warning, declaring that the end is near, that something great and decisive will soon of necessity take place.' *Review & Herald*, November 22, 1906.

'Perilous times'

8. What signs did Paul describe among religious people? 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

NOTE: 'The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord there will exist a state of religious declension similar to that in the first centuries. "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Timothy 3:1-5. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1. Satan will work "with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." And all that "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," will be left to accept "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11. When this state of ungodliness shall be reached, the same results will follow as in the first centuries.' *Great Controversy*, page 444.

9. What movement to enforce a worldwide religion in the last days does the Bible foretell? Revelation 13:11-14.

NOTE: 'When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.' *Great Controversy*, page 445.

10. In what ways will this worldwide religion be enforced? Revelation 13:15-17.

NOTE: 'Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The Papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so. We need the same spirit that was manifested by God's servants in the conflict with paganism. Giving an account of the treatment of the Christians by the emperor of Rome, Tertullian says, "We are thrown to the wild beasts to make us recant; we are burned in the flames; we are condemned to prisons and to mines; we are banished to islands, such as Patmos, and all have failed." So it was in the case of the three Hebrew worthies; their eye was single to the glory of God; their souls were steadfast; the power of the truth held them firmly to their allegiance to God. It is in the power of God alone that we shall be enabled to be loyal to Him.' *Signs of the Times*, May 6, 1897.

'Take heed that no man deceive you'

11. What warnings did Jesus give concerning the last days? Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24. Compare 2 Timothy 3:13.

NOTE: 'We are living in the most solemn period of the world's history. The coming of the Lord is at the doors, and the perils of the last days are all around us. Said Jesus, speaking of this very time, "There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." And if we are wise we shall give earnest heed to this warning, and try every man's words by the great standard of truth. Our lives must be brought into harmony with the law of God, if we would be truly sanctified. This law is to govern all intelligences in Heaven and upon earth. And when we can say from the heart, as did our divine Lord, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within my heart," then we are sanctified through the truth. We have the mind that was in Christ, and by faith we have drawn vital force from the source of infinite power and purity.' *Signs of the Times*, April 13, 1888.

12. How did Paul describe these false teachings that would arise in the last days? 1 Timothy 4:1. Compare Revelation 18:1-2.

NOTE: 'Let the truths that are the foundation of our faith be kept before the people. Some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. They talk science, and the enemy comes in and gives them an abundance of science; but it is not the science of salvation. It is not the science of humility, of consecration, or of the sanctification of the Spirit. We are now to understand what the pillars of our faith are, the truths that have made us as a people what we are, leading us on step by step.' *Review & Herald*, May 25, 1905.

'Many are comforted with the assurance that their loved ones are enjoying the bliss of heaven, and without suspicion of danger, they give ear "to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."' *Great Controversy*, page 552.

'As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches.' *Great Controversy*, page 603.

'As it was in the days of Noah'

13. What comparison did Christ make in describing the last days? Matthew 24:37-39.

NOTE: 'There is in itself no sin in eating and drinking, or in marrying and giving in marriage. It was lawful to marry in the time of Noah, and it is lawful to marry now, if that which is lawful is properly treated and not carried to sinful excess. But in the days of Noah men married without consulting God or seeking His guidance and counsel.' *The Adventist Home*, page 121.

'The Bible declares that in the last days men will be absorbed in worldly pursuits, in pleasure and money-getting. They will be blind to eternal realities. Christ says, "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:37-39. So it is today. Men are rushing on in the chase for gain and selfish indulgence as if there were no God, no heaven, and no hereafter. In Noah's day the warning of the flood was sent to startle men in their wickedness and call them to repentance. So the message of Christ's soon coming is designed to arouse men from their absorption in worldly things. It is intended to awaken them to a sense of eternal realities.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 228.

14. What similar comparison did Christ make? Luke 17:28-30.

NOTE: 'Before the destruction of Sodom, God sent a message to Lot, "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." The same voice of warning was heard by the disciples of Christ before the destruction of Jerusalem: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains." Luke 21:20, 21. They must not tarry to secure anything from their possessions, but must make the most of the opportunity to escape. There was a coming out, a decided separation from the wicked, an escape for life. So it was in the days of Noah; so with Lot; so with the disciples prior to the destruction of Jerusalem; and so it will be in the last days. Again the voice of God is heard in a message of warning, bidding His people separate themselves from the prevailing iniquity.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 166.

Lesson 2: 'By this shall all men know'

MEMORY VERSE: 'By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.' John 13:35

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 49-51.

Introduction

'Christ is the foundation of every true church. We have His unalterable promise that His presence and protection will be given to His faithful ones who walk in His counsel. To the end of time Christ is to be first. He is the source of life and strength, of righteousness and holiness. And He is all this to those who wear His yoke and learn of Him how to be meek and lowly.' *Gospel Workers*, page 485.

'A lamp unto my feet'

1. What has God given to guide His church? Psalm 119:105. Compare verse 11.

NOTE: 'Those who study the word of God with hearts open to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, will not remain in darkness as to the meaning of the word. "If any man willeth to do His will," Christ said, "he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself." John 7:17, R.V. All who come to Christ for a clearer knowledge of the truth will receive it. He will unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and these mysteries will be understood by the heart that longs to know the truth. A heavenly light will shine into the soul temple, and will be revealed to others as the bright shining of a lamp on a dark path.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 35.

2. What particular aspect of God's Word is given to guide His church? 2 Peter 1:19.

NOTE: 'It was not the scholarly theologians who had an understanding of this truth, and engaged in its proclamation. Had these been faithful watchmen, diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures, they would have known the time of night;

the prophecies would have opened to them the events about to take place. But they did not occupy this position, and the message was given by humbler men. Said Jesus: "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35. Those who turn away from the light which God has given, or who neglect to seek it when it is within their reach, are left in darkness. But the Saviour declares: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. Whoever is with singleness of purpose seeking to do God's will, earnestly heeding the light already given, will receive greater light; to that soul some star of heavenly radiance will be sent to guide him into all truth.' *Maranatha*, page 17.

'If they speak not according to this Word'

3. What two aspects of God's Word must the true church uphold? Isaiah 8:20.

NOTE: 'All Thy commandments are righteousness. Psalm 119:172. The Spirit of God will lead us in the path of the commandments; for the promise is that "when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." We should try the spirits by the test of God's Word; for there are many spirits in the world. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." God holds every one of us to an individual accountability, and calls upon us to serve Him from principle, to choose Him for ourselves.' *Reflecting Christ*, page 52.

4. How was John shown these same two aspects as identifying God's remnant church? Revelation 12:17. Compare Revelation 19:10 & 22:8-9.

NOTE: 'In clear terms the prophet John speaks of "the Remnant", or the last church, as those who 'keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.'" Revelation 12:17. In another passage the same writer gives a plain definition of what he means by the "testimony of Jesus." When on one occasion John attempted to worship the angel who appeared to him in vision, the angel said: "See thou do it not. I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God." Revelation 19:10. Under similar circumstances the same angel said, as recorded in another place: "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." Revelation 22:9. The thought expressed is the same in both these passages. In one, however, John's "brethren" are said to have "the testimony of Jesus;" in the other these "brethren" are called "the prophets." Therefore it is the prophets who have "the testimony of Jesus;" and the angel who appeared to John is evidently the special messenger who conveys instruction to all the prophets, doubtless the angel Gabriel, who is mentioned as having appeared to Daniel. See Daniel 8:16; 9:21. The same angel further said to John, "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10. Comparing the Bible expression, "The testimony of Jesus," with the statement of Revelation 12:17 concerning the "remnant . . . which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," we conclude that prior to Christ's Second Coming His true church will be keeping His Commandments, and that they will have the Spirit of prophecy.' *Christian Experience & Teachings*, pages 242-243.

'Worship Him that made heaven and earth'

5. What particular aspect of God's Word is His church to proclaim in the last days? Revelation 14:7, last part. Compare Acts 4:24, Acts 14:15, Acts 17:24-25.

NOTE: 'The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. "All the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens" (Psalm 96:5). "To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it: . . . I am the Lord; and there is none else" (Isaiah 40:25, 26; 45:18). Says the psalmist: "Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker" (Psalm 100:3; 95:6). And the holy beings who worship God in heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things" (Revelation 4:11).' *Lift Him Up*, page 51.

6. How did God design that this great truth should always be remembered by His church? Exodus 20:8-11. Compare Genesis 2:2-3.

NOTE: 'So long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as an object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, "Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment.' *Lift Him Up*, page 51.

'The everlasting Gospel'

7. What special work did Christ entrust to His church? Mark 16:15. Compare Revelation 14:7.

NOTE: 'This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human

agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.' *Evangelism*, page 190.

8. How did Paul define what the Gospel is? Romans 1:16.

NOTE: 'In the gospel of Christ Jesus, proclaimed by the angels as glad tidings of great joy, the terms of salvation were fully revealed. The law stands in all its original force and purity; not one jot or tittle was to be set aside or altered; for the law is the transcript of the character of God. But the Lord made a covenant of grace whereby His mercy is extended to fallen man, and provision is made so ample and powerful that souls ruined by the fall may be uplifted to glory, honour, and immortality. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Encircling the throne of God is the rainbow of the covenant, a symbol of the pledged word of God that He will receive every sinner who gives up all hope of eternal life on the ground of his own righteousness, and accepts the righteousness of the world's Redeemer, believing that Christ is his personal Saviour, able to save him from his sin, and to keep him from falling. Unless Christ is the ground of our hope, we shall not inherit eternal life.' *Signs of the Times*, September 5, 1892.

'The faith of Jesus'

9. What further identifying feature of Christ's true church is revealed? Revelation 14:12. Note the last phrase.

NOTE: 'Let every one who desires to be a partaker of the divine nature appreciate the fact that he must escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. There must be a constant, earnest struggling of the soul against the evil imaginings of the mind. There must be a steadfast resistance of temptation to sin in thought or act. The soul must be kept from every stain, **through faith in Him who is able to keep you from falling.** We should meditate upon the Scriptures, thinking soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. The infinite mercy and love of Jesus, the sacrifice made in our behalf, call for most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should seek to comprehend the meaning of the plan of salvation. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins. By constantly contemplating heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger. Our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 109. [Emphasis added.]

10. How did Paul explain how the faith of Jesus brings hope to sinners? Galatians 3:22.

NOTE: "'The faith of Jesus.'" It is talked of, but not understood. What constitutes the faith of Jesus, that belongs to the third angel's message? Jesus becoming our sin-bearer that He might become our sin-pardoning Saviour. He was treated as we deserve to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins that we might take His righteousness. And faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus.' *Selected Messages Book 3*, page 172.

'Love one another'

11. What will be the character of those who are members of the true church of Christ? John 13:35.

NOTE: 'The more closely we resemble our Saviour in character, the greater will be our love toward those for whom He died. Christians who manifest a spirit of unselfish love for one another are bearing a testimony for Christ which unbelievers can neither gainsay nor resist. It is impossible to estimate the power of such an example. Nothing will so successfully defeat the devices of Satan and his emissaries, nothing will so build up the Redeemer's kingdom, as will the love of Christ manifested by the members of the church.' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 167.

12. How did Peter emphasise this important truth? 1 Peter 3:8.

NOTE: 'If we would be true lights in the world, we must manifest the loving, compassionate spirit of Christ. To love as Christ loved means that we must practice self-control. It means that we must show unselfishness at all times and in all places. It means that we must scatter round us kind words and pleasant looks. These cost the giver nothing, but they leave behind a precious fragrance. Their influence for good cannot be estimated. Not only to the receiver, but to the giver, they are a blessing; 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. God desires His children to remember that in order to glorify Him, they must bestow their affection on those who need it most. None with whom we come in contact are to be neglected. No selfishness in look, word, or deed is to be manifested to our fellow beings, whatever their position, whether they be high or low, rich or poor. The love that gives kind words to only a few, while others are treated with coldness and indifference, is not love, but selfishness. It will not in any way work for the good of souls or the glory of God. We are not to confine our love to one or two objects. Those who gather the sunshine of Christ's righteousness, and refuse to let it shine into the lives of others, will soon lose the sweet, bright rays of heavenly grace, selfishly reserved to be lavished upon a few. Self should not be allowed to gather to itself a select few, giving nothing to those who need help the most. Our love is not to be sealed up for special ones. Break the bottle, and the fragrance will fill the house.' *My Life Today*, page 80.

Lesson 3: 'The everlasting Gospel'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Mark 16:15.

STUDY HELP: *Evangelism*, pages 185-193.

Introduction

'The science of salvation is to be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Let nothing be brought into the preaching of the Word to supplement Christ, the Word and power of God. Let His name, the only name given under heaven whereby we may be saved, be exalted in every discourse, and from Sabbath to Sabbath let the trumpet of the watchmen give a certain sound. Christ is the science and eloquence of the gospel, and His ministers are to hold forth the Word of life, presenting hope to the penitent, peace to the troubled and desponding, and grace and completeness and strength to the believing.' *Manuscript 107*, 1898.

'The power of God unto salvation'

1. What is the heart of God's final message to the world? Revelation 14:6.

NOTE: 'The work of preaching the gospel has not been committed to angels, but has been entrusted to men. Holy angels have been employed in directing this work, they have in charge the great movements for the salvation of men; but the actual proclamation of the gospel is performed by the servants of Christ upon the earth. Faithful men, who were obedient to the promptings of God's Spirit and the teachings of His word, were to proclaim this warning to the world. They were those who had taken heed to the "sure word of prophecy," the "light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise." 2 Peter 1:19. They had been seeking the knowledge of God more than all hid treasures, counting it "better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold." Proverbs 3:14. And the Lord revealed to them the great things of the kingdom. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant." Psalm 25:14. It was not the scholarly theologians who had an understanding of this truth, and engaged in its proclamation. Had these been faithful watchmen, diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures, they would have known the time of night; the prophecies would have opened to them the events about to take place. But they did not occupy this position, and the message was given by humbler men. Said Jesus: "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35. Those who turn away from the light which God has given, or who neglect to seek it when it is within their reach, are left in darkness. But the Saviour declares: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. Whoever is with singleness of purpose seeking to do God's will, earnestly heeding the light already given, will receive greater light; to that soul some star of heavenly radiance will be sent to guide him into all truth.' *Great Controversy*, page 312.

2. How does Paul explain what the Gospel is? Romans 1:16.

NOTE: 'Men may profess to believe the gospel; but unless they are sanctified by the gospel their profession is of no avail. If they do not gain the victory over sin, then sin is gaining the victory over them.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 50.

'The message proclaimed by the angel flying in the midst of heaven is the everlasting gospel, the same gospel that was declared in Eden when God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). Here was the first promise of a Saviour who would stand on the field of battle to contest the power of Satan and prevail against him. Christ came to our world to represent the character of God as it is represented in His holy law; for His law is a transcript of His character. Christ was both the law and the gospel. The angel that proclaims the everlasting gospel proclaims the law of God; for the gospel of salvation brings men to obedience of the law, whereby their characters are formed after the divine similitude.' *Selected Messages Book 2*, page 106.

'The hour of His judgement is come'

3. The arrival of what event gives the proclamation of the gospel special urgency? Revelation 14:7, middle part.

NOTE: 'The announcement, "The hour of His judgement is come," points to the closing work of Christ's ministration for the salvation of men. It heralds a truth which must be proclaimed until the Saviour's intercession shall cease, and He shall return to the earth to take His people to Himself.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 283.

'The hour of God's judgment has come, and upon the members of His church on earth rests the solemn responsibility of giving warning to those who are standing as it were on the very brink of eternal ruin. All can do something in the work. None will be pronounced guiltless before God unless they have worked earnestly and unselfishly for the salvation of souls. Your duty cannot be shifted upon another. No one but yourself can do your work. If you withhold your light, someone must be left in darkness through your neglect.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 290.

4. How did God reveal when the hour of His judgement was to begin? Daniel 8:14. Compare Amos 3:7.

NOTE: 'In the typical system, which was a shadow of the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, the cleansing of the sanctuary was the last service performed by the high priest in the yearly round of ministration. It was the closing work of the atonement, a removal or putting away of sin from Israel. It prefigured the closing work in the ministration of our High Priest in heaven, in the removal or blotting out of the sins of His people, which are registered in the heavenly records. This service involves a work of investigation, a work of judgment; and it immediately precedes the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; for when He comes, every case has been decided. Says Jesus: "My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12. It is this work of judgment, immediately preceding the second advent, that is announced in the first angel's message of Revelation 14:7: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come."' *Great Controversy*, page 352.

'The 2300 days had been found to begin when the commandment of Artaxerxes for the restoration and building of Jerusalem went into effect, in the autumn of B.C. 457. Taking this as the starting point, there was perfect harmony in the application of all

the events foretold in the explanation of that period in Daniel 9:25-27. The seventy weeks, or 490 years, were to pertain especially to the Jews. At the expiration of this period, the nation sealed its rejection of Christ by the persecution of His disciples, and the apostles turned to the Gentiles, A.D. 34. The first 490 years of the 2300 having then ended, 1810 years would remain. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. "Then," said the angel, "shall the sanctuary be cleansed." *The Faith I Live By*, page 208.

'Fear God'

5. What is the first part of this message of warning? Revelation 14:7, first part.

NOTE: 'In order to do this, they must obey His law. Says the wise man: "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. Without obedience to His commandments no worship can be pleasing to God. "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." 1 John 5:3; Proverbs 28:9.' *Great Controversy*, page 436.

6. What does it mean to fear God? Psalm 34:11-14. Compare Deuteronomy 5:29, Deuteronomy 6:2, Deuteronomy 8:6, Deuteronomy 13:4, Psalm 111:10, Ecclesiastes 12:13.

NOTE: 'In order to be prepared for the judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. That law will be the standard of character in the judgment. The apostle Paul declares: "As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law, . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." And he says that "the doers of the law shall be justified" (Romans 2:12-16). Faith is essential in order to the keeping of the law of God; for "without faith it is impossible to please Him." And "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23).' *Lift Him up*, page 342.

'Give glory to Him'

7. What further things are men called upon to do? Revelation 14:7, next part. Compare Matthew 5:16.

NOTE: 'To give glory to God is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God.' *Signs of the Times*, October 17, 1892.

8. How was Moses shown that God's glory is His character? Exodus 33:18-19. Compare Exodus 34:6-7.

NOTE: 'The glory of God is His character. While Moses was in the mount, earnestly interceding with God, he prayed, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." In answer God declared, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." The glory of God, His character, was then revealed: "The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 33:18, 19; 34:6, 7).' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 322.

9. How did Jesus give glory to His Father? John 17:4, John 14:9.

NOTE: 'Christ exalted the character of God, attributing to Him the praise, and giving to Him the credit, of the whole purpose of His own mission on earth, to set men right through the revelation of God. In Christ was arrayed before men the paternal grace and the matchless perfections of the Father. In His prayer just before His crucifixion, He declared, "I have manifested Thy name." "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." When the object of his mission was attained, the revelation of God to the world, the Son of God announced that His work was accomplished, and that the character of the Father was made manifest to men.' *Signs of the Times*, January 20, 1890.

'Worship Him that made heaven and earth'

10. Who are all mankind called upon to worship? Revelation 14:7, last part.

NOTE: 'The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. "All the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens." Psalm 96:5. "To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it: . . . I am the Lord; and there is none else." Isaiah 40:25, 26; 45:18. Says the psalmist: "Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." Psalms 100:3; 95:6. And the holy beings who worship God in heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things." Revelation 4:11.' *Great Controversy*, page 436.

11. How did God design that this great truth should always be remembered by mankind? Exodus 20:8-11. Compare Genesis 2:1-3.

NOTE: "'The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God", because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. "The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and

His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.” (J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27.) It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man’s thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, “Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment.’ *Great Controversy*, page 437.

‘Here are they’

12. What further warning is given to mankind? Revelation 14:8, Revelation 18:1-4.

NOTE: ‘Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ’s true followers are still to be found in their communion. There are many of these who have never seen the special truths for this time. Not a few are dissatisfied with their present condition and are longing for clearer light. They look in vain for the image of Christ in the churches with which they are connected. As these bodies depart further and further from the truth, and ally themselves more closely with the world, the difference between the two classes will widen, and it will finally result in separation. The time will come when those who love God supremely can no longer remain in connection with such as are “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Revelation 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work.’ *Great Controversy*, page 390.

13. How are God’s people, who refuse to participate in false worship, described? Revelation 14:12.

NOTE: ‘When the law of God is made void the church will be sifted by fiery trials, and a larger proportion than we now anticipate, will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. Instead of being strengthened when brought into strait places, many prove that they are not living branches of the True Vine. But when the world makes void the law of God, what will be the effect upon the truly obedient and righteous? Will they be carried away by the strong current of evil? Because so many rank themselves under the banner of the prince of darkness, will God’s commandment-keeping people swerve from their allegiance? Never! Not one who is abiding in Christ will fail or fall. His followers will bow in obedience to a higher authority than that of any earthly potentate. While the contempt placed upon God’s commandments leads many to suppress the truth and show less reverence for it, the faithful ones will with greater earnestness hold aloft its distinguishing truths. We are not left to our own direction. We should consult His Word with humble hearts, ask His counsel, and give up our will to His. We can do nothing without God.’ *Maranatha*, page 28.

Lesson 4: ‘Take heed that no man deceive you.’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘For false christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.’ Mark 13:22.

STUDY HELP: *In Heavenly Places*, pages 347-350.

Introduction

‘If ever there was a time when we needed faith and spiritual enlightenment, it is now. Those who are watching unto prayer and are searching the Scriptures daily with an earnest desire to know and do the will of God, will not be led astray by any of the deceptions of Satan. We want the truth on every point. We want it unadulterated with error and unpolluted by the maxims, customs, and opinions of the world. We want the truth with all its inconvenience. The acceptance of truth ever involves a cross.’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 350.

‘Behold, I have told you before’

1. What warnings did Jesus give about last-day deceptions? Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 23-26.

NOTE: ‘The coming of Christ will take place in the darkest period of this earth’s history. The days of Noah and Lot pictured the condition of the world just before the coming of the Son of man. The Scriptures pointing forward to this time declare that Satan will work with all power and “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.” 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10. His working is plainly revealed by the rapidly increasing darkness, the multitudinous errors, heresies, and delusions of these last days. Not only is Satan leading the world captive, but his deceptions are leavening the professed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. The great apostasy will develop into darkness deep as midnight, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair. To God’s people it will be a night of trial, a night of weeping, a night of persecution for the truth’s sake. But out of that night of darkness God’s light will shine.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 414.

2. How widespread will these deceptions be? Revelation 16:13-14.

NOTE: 'Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. The foundation of his work was laid by the assurance given to Eve in Eden: "Ye shall not surely die." "In the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:4, 5. Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of spiritualism. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet: "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; . . . they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Revelation 16:13, 14. Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His word, the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion. The people are fast being lulled to a fatal security, to be awakened only by the outpouring of the wrath of God.' *Great Controversy*, page 561.

'Great signs and wonders'

3. In what ways will people be convinced by Satan's deceptions? Matthew 24:24, 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9. Compare John 4:48.

NOTE: 'It was by satanic aid that Pharaoh's magicians were enabled to counterfeit the work of God. Paul testifies that before the second advent of Christ there will be similar manifestations of satanic power. The coming of the Lord is to be preceded by "the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10. And the apostle John, describing the miracle-working power that will be manifested in the last days, declares: "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do." Revelation 13:13, 14. No mere impostures are here foretold. Men are deceived by the miracles which Satan's agents have power to do, not which they pretend to do.' *Great Controversy*, page 553.

4. How did John foresee this last great work of deception? Revelation 13:13-14.

NOTE: 'We must not trust the claims of men. They may, as Christ represents, profess to work miracles in healing the sick. Is this marvellous, when just behind them stands the great deceiver, the miracle worker who will yet bring down fire from heaven in the sight of men? It is the lying wonders of the devil that will take the world captive, and he will cause fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men. He is to work miracles, and this wonderful, miracle-working power is to sweep in the whole world. Satan will come in to deceive if possible the very elect. He claims to be Christ, and he is coming in, pretending to be the great medical missionary. He will cause fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men to prove that he is God. It is stated in the Word that the enemy will work through his agents who have departed from the faith, and they will seemingly work miracles, even to the bringing down of fire out of heaven in the sight of men.' *Last Day Events*, page 167.

'False christ's'

5. What specific warning about deception did Christ give? Mark 13:22.

NOTE: 'In the wilderness of temptation Satan came to Christ as an angel from the courts of God. It was by his words, not by his appearance, that the Saviour recognised the enemy. The time is coming when Satan will work miracles right in your sight, claiming that he is Christ; and if your feet are not firmly established upon the truth of God, then you will be led away from your foundation. The only safety for you is to search for the truth as for hid treasures. Dig for the truth as you would for treasures in the earth, and present the Word of God, the Bible, before your heavenly Father, and say, Enlighten me; teach me what is truth. And when His Holy Spirit shall come into your hearts, to impress the truth into your souls, you will not let it go easily. You have gained such an experience in searching the Scriptures that every point is established. Without the enlightenment of the Spirit of God we shall not be able to discern truth from error and shall fall under the masterful temptations and deceptions that Satan will bring upon the world. We are near the close of the controversy between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness, and soon the delusions of the enemy will try our faith, of what sort it is.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 350.

6. What specific warning did John give concerning those preaching a false christ? 1 John 4:2-3.

NOTE: '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.' *Selected Messages Book 1*, page 408.

'Believe it not'

7. What warning did Christ give concerning His Second Coming? Matthew 24:26-27.

NOTE: In the early 19th century, the teaching began to be preached that Christ would return secretly to 'rapture' His church from the earth. The origin of this teaching is to be found in the writings of a Chilean Jesuit called Manuel de Lacunza, but it was popularised by a former Anglican, John Nelson Darby, who joined the Plymouth Brethren and later founded the Exclusive Brethren, when the main Brethren movement refused to accept his 'private interpretations' of the Scriptures. Darby's teachings

concerning the secret return of Christ are now widely accepted among Evangelicals, thanks to the popularity of the 'Scofield Bible, produced by one of Darby's followers.

8. What clear statements are given concerning the Second Coming of Christ? Revelation 1:7, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 2 Peter 3:10.

NOTE: 'At Christ's ascension the angels declared to the disciples that He would "so come in like manner" as they had seen Him go into Heaven. Acts 1:11. He ascended bodily, and they saw Him as He left them and was received by the cloud. He will return on a great white cloud, and "every eye shall see Him." Revelation 1:7.' *The Story of Jesus*, page 175.

'Showing himself that he is God'

9. What form of false worship will be practised in the last days? Revelation 13:14-15. Compare 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

NOTE: 'The pope has changed the day of rest from the seventh to the first day. He has thought to change the very commandment that was given to cause man to remember his Creator. He has thought to change the greatest commandment in the Decalogue and thus make himself equal with God, or even exalt himself above God. The Lord is unchangeable, therefore His law is immutable; but the pope has exalted himself above God, in seeking to change His immutable precepts of holiness, justice, and goodness. He has trampled underfoot God's sanctified day, and, on his own authority, put in its place one of the six labouring days.' *Early Writings*, page 65.

Does the Catholic Church admit this charge? For this question, let the Roman Catholic Church answer for itself. The answer comes from *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, page 50, a book used to instruct converts to Roman Catholicism.)

Question: Which is the Sabbath day?

Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

Answer: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday **because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.** (Emphasis added.)

10. What warning is given to those who practise this false worship? Revelation 14:9-11.

NOTE: 'This message was designed to put the children of God upon their guard, by showing them the hour of temptation and anguish that was before them. This symbol (the beast), as most Protestants have believed, represents the Papacy. The "image to the beast" represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas. As the sign of the authority of the Catholic Church, papist writers cite "the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday." What then is the change of the Sabbath, but the sign, or mark, of the authority of the Roman Church, "the mark of the beast"? Sunday-keeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath. And it is not until the issue is plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast." When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 286.

11. What is meant by 'the wrath of God'? Revelation 15:1. Read Revelation 16.

'That they might be saved'

12. Why will so many people be led astray by these last-day deceptions? 2 Thessalonians 2:10. Compare 1 Timothy 4:1-2.

NOTE: 'Men cannot with impunity reject the warning which God in mercy sends them. A message was sent from heaven to the world in Noah's day, and their salvation depended upon the manner in which they treated that message. Because they rejected the warning, the Spirit of God was withdrawn from the sinful race, and they perished in the waters of the Flood. In the time of Abraham, mercy ceased to plead with the guilty inhabitants of Sodom, and all but Lot with his wife and two daughters were consumed by the fire sent down from heaven. So in the days of Christ. The Son of God declared to the unbelieving Jews of that generation: "Your house is left unto you desolate." Matthew 23:38. Looking down to the last days, the same Infinite Power declares, concerning those who "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved": "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12. As they reject the teachings of His word, God withdraws His Spirit and leaves them to the deceptions which they love.' *Great Controversy*, page 431.

13. What will be the result of love of the truth? 1 Peter 1:22.

NOTE: 'There is a terrible amount of guilt for which the church is responsible. Why are not those who have the light putting forth earnest efforts to give that light to others? They see that the end is near. They see multitudes daily transgressing God's law; and they know that these souls cannot be saved in transgression. Yet they have more interest in their trades, their farms, their houses, their merchandise, their dress, their tables, than in the souls of men and women whom they must meet face to face in the judgment. The people who claim to obey the truth are asleep. They could not be at ease as they are if they were awake. The love of the truth is dying out of their hearts. Their example is not such as to convince the world that they have truth in advance of every other people upon the earth. At the very time when they should be strong in God, having a daily, living

experience, they are feeble, hesitating, relying upon the preachers for support, when they should be ministering to others with mind and soul and voice and pen and time and money.' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 457.

Lesson 5: 'The hour of His judgement is come'

MEMORY VERSE: 'But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.' Romans 14:10.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 479-491.

Introduction

'May [God] help you to prepare for the judgment. Let self be crucified. Let the precious graces of the Spirit live in your hearts. Turn out the world with its corrupting lust. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." *Testimonies Volume 2*, page 59.

'He hath appointed a day'

1. How are we shown that a judgement will take place? Acts 17:31.

NOTE: 'In His teachings Christ sought to impress men with the certainty of the coming judgment and with its publicity. This is not the judgment of a few individuals, or even of a nation, but of a whole world of human intelligences, of accountable beings. It is to be held in the presence of other worlds, that the love, the integrity, the service, of man for God, may be honoured to the highest degree. There will be no lack of glory and honour. The law of God will be revealed in its majesty; and those who have stood in defiant rebellion against its holy precepts will understand that the law that they have discarded and despised is God's standard of character.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 359.

2. How many are to be judged? 2 Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:10-12.

NOTE: 'When you stand before this grand and awful tribunal, from whose decisions there will be no appeal and where there will be no misinterpretation, no misconception, then you will be silent. You will not have one word to say in vindication of your course. You will stand guilty, condemned, and hopeless, unless you now put away your sins, make diligent work of repentance, and clothe yourself in the robe of Christ's righteousness.' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 510.

'According to his works'

3. On what basis does God judge? Matthew 16:27. Compare Revelation 20:12-13.

NOTE: 'Let me emphasise the importance of making Christ our hope and refuge every day of our lives. It is a pleasing fable that is presented to us in this age, that if we only believe in Christ, that is all that is required; works have nothing to do with our acceptance with God. Many trample the law of God under their feet, cherishing in their hearts the delusive thought that it is not binding on them. This is not the truth. In the resurrection all will come forth, they that have done good and they that have done evil, and the fate of each will be decided according as his works have been. All good works spring from genuine faith, and the fruits in the works show the character of the faith. Hence it is by our works that we shall be judged.' *Bible Echo & Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1889.

4. On what basis does Christ award eternal life or death? John 5:28-29.

NOTE: 'The judgment will be conducted in accordance with the rules God has laid down. By the law which men are now called upon to obey, but which many refuse to accept, all will be judged. As by it character is tested, every man will find his proper place in one of two classes. He will either be holy to the Lord through obedience to His law, or be stained with sin through transgression. He will either have done good, co-operating in faith with Jesus to restore the moral image of God in man, or he will have done evil, denying the Saviour by an ungodly life. Christ will separate them from one another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left. Then men and women will see that their course of action has decided their destiny. They will be rewarded or punished according as they have obeyed or violated the law of God.' *Review & Herald*, June 18, 1901.

'For the time is come that judgement must begin'

5. What prophecy revealed the time for God's judgement to begin? Daniel 8:14.

NOTE: 'The beginning of the seventy weeks is fixed beyond question at 457 B.C., and their expiration in A.D. 34. From this data there is no difficulty in finding the termination of the 2300 days. The seventy weeks, 490 days, having been cut off from the 2300, there were 1810 days remaining. After the end of 490 days, the 1810 days were still to be fulfilled. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. Consequently the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 terminate in 1844. At the expiration of this great prophetic period, upon the testimony of the angel of God, "the sanctuary shall be cleansed."' *Great Controversy*, page 328. 'In 1844 our great High Priest entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, to begin the work of the investigative judgment. As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review

before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life.' *Maranatha*, page 93.

6. How are we shown that judgement does not take place at death? Acts 17:31.

NOTE: 'Before any can enter the mansions of the blessed, their cases must be investigated, and their characters and their deeds must pass in review before God. All are to be judged according to the things written in the books and to be rewarded as their works have been. This judgment does not take place at death. Mark the words of Paul: "He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." Acts 17:31. Here the apostle plainly stated that a specified time, then future, had been fixed upon for the judgment of the world.' *Great Controversy*, page 548.

7. What message of warning has God given to prepare mankind for judgement? Revelation 14:6-7.

NOTE: 'The announcement, "The hour of His judgment is come," points to the closing work of Christ's ministration for the salvation of men. It heralds a truth which must be proclaimed until the Saviour's intercession shall cease, and He shall return to the earth to take His people to Himself.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 283.

'As John the Baptist, in preparing a people for Christ's first advent, called their attention to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgement is come." With the earnestness that characterised Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ's second advent. The hour of God's judgement has come, and upon the members of His church on earth rests the solemn responsibility of giving warning to those who are standing as it were on the very brink of eternal ruin. All can do something in the work. None will be pronounced guiltless before God unless they have worked earnestly and unselfishly for the salvation of souls. Your duty cannot be shifted upon another. No one but yourself can do your work. If you withhold your light, someone must be left in darkness through your neglect. The Lord has a place for everyone in His great plan.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 290.

'The Ancient of days did sit'

8. How is God's judgement pictured in the Scriptures? Daniel 7:9-14.

NOTE: 'Thus was presented to the prophet's vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth, and to every man should be rendered "according to his works." The Ancient of days is God the Father. It is He, the source of all being, and the fountain of all law, that is to preside in the judgment. And holy angels, as ministers and witnesses, in number "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (Rev. 5:11), attend this great tribunal. "And, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." Dan. 7:13. The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the earth. He comes to the Ancient of days in heaven to receive dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, which will be given Him at the close of His work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not His second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies, and there appears in the presence of God to perform the work of investigative judgment, and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 209.

9. Who is to be our Judge? John 5:22-27.

NOTE: 'The world has been committed to Christ, and through Him has come every blessing from God to the fallen race. He was the Redeemer before as after His incarnation. As soon as there was sin, there was a Saviour. He has given light and life to all, and according to the measure of light given, each is to be judged. And He who has given the light, He who has followed the soul with tenderest entreaty, seeking to win it from sin to holiness, is in one its advocate and judge. From the opening of the great controversy in heaven, Satan has maintained his cause through deception; and Christ has been working to unveil his schemes and to break his power. It is He who has encountered the deceiver, and who through all the ages has been seeking to wrest the captives from his grasp, who will pass judgment upon every soul. And God "hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." Because He has tasted the very dregs of human affliction and temptation, and understands the frailties and sins of men; because in our behalf He has victoriously withstood the temptations of Satan, and will deal justly and tenderly with the souls that His own blood has been poured out to save, because of this, the Son of man is appointed to execute the judgement.' *Desire of Ages*, page 210.

'Let him be righteous still'

10. What is the verdict in God's judgement? Revelation 22:11.

NOTE: 'When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:11, 12. The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state, men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him

in and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. "So," says the Saviour, "shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men.' *Great Controversy*, page 491.

11. How does the Bible teach that we are judged according to our response to the light shed on us? Matthew 11:21-24, Matthew 12:41-42.

NOTE: 'All will be judged according to the light that has been given. The Lord sends forth His ambassadors with a message of salvation, and those who hear He will hold responsible for the way in which they treat the words of His servants. Those who are sincerely seeking for truth will make a careful investigation, in the light of God's word, of the doctrines presented to them.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 232.

'We have more light than they [our fathers] had in their day; and if we would be accepted of God, we must be as faithful in obeying the light and walking in it as they were in receiving and obeying the light that God sent to them. We must accept and improve the light that shines upon our pathway as faithfully as they accepted and improved the light that fell upon their pathway in their generation. We shall be judged according to the light that shines into the soul-temple in our day; and if we follow the light, we shall be free men and women in Christ Jesus.' *Faith & Works*, page 122.

'Behold I come quickly'

12. What event follows quickly after this verdict? Revelation 22:12.

NOTE: 'Soon the last prayer for sinners will have been offered, the last tear shed, the last warning given, the last entreaty made, and the sweet voice of mercy will be heard no more. This is why Satan is making such mighty efforts to secure men and women in his snare. He has come down with great power, knowing that his time is short. His special work is to secure professed Christians in his ranks, that through them he may allure and destroy souls. The enemy is playing the game of life for every soul. He is working to remove from us everything of a spiritual nature, and in the place of the precious graces of Christ to crowd our hearts with the evil traits of the carnal nature, hatred, evil surmising, jealousy, love of the world, love of self, love of pleasure, and the pride of life. We need to be fortified against the incoming foe, who is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; for unless we are watchful and prayerful, these evils will enter the heart, and crowd out all that is good.' *Review & Herald*, January 2, 1900.

13. What did Jesus say about the way we will be judged? Matthew 7:2. Compare Matthew 5:19.

NOTE: 'All who are followers of Christ should deal with one another exactly as we wish the Lord to deal with us in our errors and weaknesses, for we are all erring and need His pity and forgiveness. Jesus consented to take human nature, that He might know how to pity, and how to plead with His Father in behalf of sinful, erring mortals. He volunteered to become man's Advocate, and He humiliated Himself to become acquainted with the temptations wherewith man was beset, that He might succour those who should be tempted, and be a tender and faithful high priest.' *Testimonies Volume 3*, page 93.

Lesson 6: 'A Refiner and Purifier of silver'

MEMORY VERSE: 'For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.' Amos 9:9.

STUDY HELP: *Early Writings*, pages 269-273.

Introduction

'Divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest. There will be a shaking of the sieve. The chaff must in time be separated from the wheat. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. It is the very time when the genuine will be the strongest. The Lord is soon to come. There must be a refining, winnowing process in every church, for there are among us wicked men who do not love the truth or honour God. We are in the shaking time, the time when everything that can be shaken will be shaken. The Lord will not excuse those who know the truth if they do not in word and deed obey His commands.' *Last Day Events*, page 173.

'A glorious church'

1. What is Christ's desire for His church? Ephesians 5:27.

NOTE: 'The Lord God is a jealous God; yet He bears long with the sins and transgressions of His people in this generation. If the people of God had walked in His counsel, the work of God would have advanced, the messages of truth would have been borne to all people that dwell on the face of the whole earth. But because the people are disobedient, unthankful, unholy, as were ancient Israel, time is prolonged that all may hear the last message of mercy proclaimed with a loud voice. The Lord's work has been hindered, the sealing time delayed. Many have not heard the truth. But the Lord will give them a chance to hear and be converted. What are you doing in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mould and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before

God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth, these are receiving the heavenly mould and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity. Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God--candidates for heaven.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 288.

2. What similar picture does Zephaniah give of the faithful remnant of God's people? Zephaniah 3:13.

NOTE: 'While Christ is at work to preserve a pure church in the earth, Satan ever seeks to counteract his agency and work. Spurious Christians are found in the church of God; for we find men, while professing the name of Christ, more firmly united to Satan than they are united with pure and holy influences. They gather darkness and unbelief from Satan, and they communicate it to the church. They profess to have the power of discernment, and discover spots and stains in the character of their brethren, and are not slow to communicate their suspicions to other members of the church. They distribute the leaven of distrust, of malice and accusation. And as a result, alienation and estrangement come in between brethren. All these false accusers, though their names are on the church records, are under the control of Satan, and work as his agents to weaken and confuse the church, and divide the brethren of Christ on earth. When this has been accomplished, Satan exults over the divided state of the church, and points the world to the professed followers of Christ, thus bringing the name of Christ into dishonour before the world, and entrenching men in their unbelief and rebellion against God.' *Review & Herald*, January 3, 1893.

'Because thou art lukewarm'

3. How does the Lord describe the actual state of His end-time people? Revelation 3:15-17.

NOTE: 'The message to the Laodicean church is applicable to all who have had great light and many opportunities, and yet have not appreciated them. There are a large number of professing Christians who do not really follow Jesus. They do not bear the cross by proper self-denial and self-sacrifice. Although making a great profession of being earnest Christians, they weave into the fabric of their character so many of the threads of their own imperfections that the beautiful pattern is spoiled. Of them Christ says: "You boast of being rich and increased with supposed spiritual attainments. In reality you are neither cold nor hot, but are filled with vain conceit. Unless converted, you cannot be saved; for you would mar heaven with your unsanctified wisdom. I cannot endorse your spirit and your work. You do not act according to the divine Example. You are following a pattern merely of your own invention. Because you are lukewarm, I must spew you out of My mouth.'" *The Faith I Live By*, page 306.

4. What similar warning did Christ concerning the Pharisees of His own day? Matthew 23:25-28.

NOTE: 'How plainly is pictured the position of those who think they have all the truth, who take pride in their knowledge of the Word of God, while its sanctifying power has not been felt in their lives. The fervour of the love of God is wanting in their hearts. Many are Laodiceans, living in a spiritual self-deception. They clothe themselves in the garments of their own righteousness, imagining themselves to be rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, when they need daily to learn of Jesus, His meekness and lowliness. What is it that constitutes the wretchedness, the nakedness, of those who feel rich and increased with goods? It is the want of the righteousness of Christ. In their own righteousness they are represented as clothed with filthy rags, and yet in this condition they flatter themselves that they are clothed upon with Christ's righteousness. They may be crying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we," while their hearts are filled with unholy traffic and unrighteous barter. The courts of the soul temple may be the haunt of envy, pride, passion, evil surmising, bitterness, and hollow formalism. Christ looks mournfully upon His professed people who feel rich and increased in the knowledge of the truth, and who are yet destitute of the truth in life and character.' *Our High Calling*, page 349.

'Whence hath it tares?'

5. How did the Lord describe the mixed nature of His church? Matthew 13:24-26.

NOTE: 'In the East, men sometimes took revenge upon an enemy by strewing his newly sown fields with the seeds of some noxious weed that, while growing, closely resembled wheat. Springing up with the wheat, it injured the crop and brought trouble and loss to the owner of the field. So it is from enmity to Christ that Satan scatters his evil seed among the good grain of the kingdom. The fruit of his sowing he attributes to the Son of God. By bringing into the church those who bear Christ's name while they deny His character, the wicked one causes that God shall be dishonoured, the work of salvation misrepresented, and souls imperilled.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 71.

'It has been the continual endeavour of the enemy to introduce into the church persons who assent to much that is truth, but who are not converted. Professed Christians who are false to their trust are channels through whom Satan works. He can use unconverted church members to advance his own ideas and retard the work of God. Their influence is always on the side of wrong. They place criticism and doubt as stumbling blocks in the way of reform. They introduce unbelief because they have closed their eyes to the righteousness of Christ and have not the glory of the Lord as their reward.' *Selected Messages Book 2*, p.159.

6. What action did the Lord advise concerning this situation? Matthew 13:27-30.

NOTE: 'Tares will appear among the wheat; but it would do more harm to weed out the tares, unless in God's appointed way, than to leave them alone. While the Lord brings into the church those who are truly converted, Satan at the same time brings persons who are not converted into its fellowship. While Christ is sowing the good seed, Satan is sowing the tares. There are

two opposing influences continually exerted on the members of the church. One influence is working for the purification of the church, and the other for the corrupting of the people of God.' *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 46.

'Those things which cannot be shaken'

7. How then will the church ever be purified? Hebrews 12:25-27.

NOTE: 'Everything that can be shaken will be shaken, and those things that cannot be shaken will remain. The Lord requires our undivided affections. If men are not wholehearted, they will fail in the day of test and proving and trial. When the enemy shall put his forces in array against him, and the battle seems to go hard, at the very time when all the strength of intellect and capability, and all the tact of wise generalship is needed to repulse the enemy, those who are half-hearted will turn their weapons against their own soldiers; they weaken the hands that should be strong for warfare. God is testing all who have a knowledge of the truth to see if they can be depended on to fight the battles of the Lord when hard pressed by principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world and wicked spirits in high places. Perilous times are before us, and our only safety is in having the converting power of God every day, yielding ourselves fully to Him to do His will, and walk in the light of His countenance (see 1 Peter 2:9).' *This Day With God*, page 13.

8. What message will bring about this shaking process among God's people? Revelation 3:18.

NOTE: 'I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God's people.' *Testimonies Volume 1*, page 181.

'They were not of us'

9. Why will people choose to leave God's people? 1 John 2:19.

NOTE: 'Do not wonder if the men who felt themselves capable of handling the consciences of their fellowman, and of controlling the minds and talents God has given them should go back, and walk no more with these who believe the truth. The truth makes too great a demand upon them. When they see that they must die to self, and practice the principles of self-denial, they are displeased because they cannot gratify their ambitious desire to rule other men. Their true characters will appear. Some will make total shipwreck of the faith. "They went out from us, but they were not of us," said John, and so it will be again.' *Christian Leadership*, page 64.

10. How did Paul describe those who would forsake the truth in the end times? 1 Timothy 4:1.

NOTE: 'From time to time we need unitedly to examine the reasons of our faith. It is essential that we study carefully the truths of God's Word; for we read that "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." We are in grave danger when we lightly regard any truth; for then the mind is opened to error. We must take heed how and what we hear. We need not seek to understand the arguments that men offer in support of their theories, when it may be readily discerned that these theories are not in harmony with the Scriptures. Some who think that they have scientific knowledge are by their interpretations giving wrong ideas both of science and of the Bible. Let the Bible decide every question that is essential to man's salvation.' *Daughters of God*, page 78.

'His wife hath made herself ready'

11. How is the eventual purification of the church pictured in prophecy? Revelation 19:7-8.

NOTE: 'Some have been, and are still refusing to put on the wedding garment. They still wear their citizen's dress, and despise the garment woven in the loom of heaven, which is "Christ our Righteousness." "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Who are friends of Christ today? Do you feel an intense desire for the robe of Christ's righteousness? Are you sensible of the filthy rags of your own righteousness? Then let the truth come into your practical life. If you are friends of Christ, show it in words, in spirit; manifest love to Jesus, and love for the souls for whom Christ has died. The sentiments of truth are the elements that constitute a symmetrical Christian character. We are far, far from being Christians, which is to be Christlike. We need the Holy Spirit's efficiency.' *Special Testimonies Series A, No. 6*, page 24.

12. What assurance did John give that Christ's people will be ready for His coming? 1 John 3:2-3.

NOTE: 'Then, in the results of His work, Christ will behold its recompense. In that great multitude which no man could number, presented "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24), He whose blood has redeemed and whose life has taught us, "shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." Isaiah 53:11.' *Education*, page 309.

Lesson 7: 'The seal of the living God'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.' Revelation 7:3.

Introduction

'Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads, it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved, just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming.' *Maranatha*, page 200.

'Till we have sealed the servants of God'

1. What urgent work is to take place before the final tribulation on the earth? Revelation 7:1-3.

NOTE: 'At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. [See Ezekiel 9:4.] But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church, because its members are doing after the manner of the world. The earnest prayers of this faithful few will not be in vain. When the Lord comes forth as an avenger, He will also come as a protector of all those who have preserved the faith in its purity, and kept themselves unspotted from the world. It is at this time that God has promised to avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them. The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land. Those who link in sympathy with the world are eating and drinking with the drunken, and will surely be destroyed with the workers of iniquity. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry;" but "the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Psalm 34:15, 16. Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God, or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Already a few drops of God's wrath have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent, and find shelter. No atoning blood will then wash away the stains of sin.' *Christian Experience & Teachings*, pages 186-187.

2. In what other way is the seal of God described? Revelation 14:1.

NOTE: 'John saw a Lamb on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000, having His Father's name written in their foreheads. They bore the signet of heaven. They reflected the image of God. They were full of the light and the glory of the Holy One. If we would have the image and superscription of God upon us, we must separate ourselves from all iniquity. We must forsake every evil way, and then we must trust our cases in the hands of Christ. While we are working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, God will work in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure. While you must do your part, yet it is God that must give you aid, and sanctify you. Christ makes us penitent that He may forgive us. We have an idea that we must do some part of the work alone. We have thought that there are two or three steps that we must take without any help or support. But this is not so. The Spirit of God is continually wooing and drawing the soul to right purposes, and into harmony with the law of God. The invitation is given to the helpless, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price." As soon as we separate ourselves from evil, and choose to serve God, we shall respond to this invitation.' *Review & Herald*, March 19, 1889.

'In their mouth was found no guile'

3. How are those who receive the seal of the living God described? Revelation 14:4-5.

NOTE: 'Some have concluded that the 144,000 must all be males, but in the Greek "virgins" applies to both male and female. It does not mean that the 144,000 are unmarried, because Scripture is clear that marriage does not defile. "Marriage is honourable and the bed is undefiled." Hebrews 13:4. What then is the significance of the statement: "They are virgins"? We suggest at least two reasons. The first reason is that they are morally pure. The blood of Christ has cleansed them from all sin. In a time of extreme moral corruption and perversion, the 144,000 have resisted the all-pervading immorality and have overcome. The second reason is that women in prophecy represent churches. When we read Revelation 17, there is brought to view "Babylon the Great", the counterfeit religious organisation inspired by Satan, she is called "the mother of harlots". This means that there are daughters, daughter churches, who are following in the steps of the Mother Church. On analysing Revelation 17, we find that the great Mother church is none other than the Church of Rome, and the harlot daughters are those churches which have come out of Rome but who now follow in the Mother's footsteps. The 144,000... have obeyed the call: "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:4.' A. Cooke, *The 144,000*, pages 9-10.

4. What are we further told about these people? Revelation 14:5.

NOTE: 'Only those who receive the seal of the living God will have the passport through the gates of the Holy City. The seal of the living God will be placed upon those only who bear a likeness to Christ in character. As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ. Many will not receive the seal of God because they do not keep His commandments or bear the fruits of righteousness. The great mass of professing Christians will meet with bitter disappointment in the day of God. They have not upon their foreheads the seal of the living God. Lukewarm and half-hearted, they dishonour God far more than the avowed unbeliever. They grope in darkness, when they might be walking in the noonday light of the Word, under the guidance of One who never errs. Those whom the Lamb shall lead by the fountains of living waters, and from whose eyes He shall wipe away all tears, will be those now receiving the

knowledge and understanding revealed in the Bible, the Word of God. We are to copy no human being. There is no human being wise enough to be our criterion. We are to look to the man Christ Jesus, who is complete in the perfection of righteousness and holiness. He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the pattern man. His experience is the measure of the experience that we are to gain. His character is our model. Let us, then, take our minds off the perplexities and the difficulties of this life, and fix them on Him, that by beholding we may be changed into His likeness. We may behold Christ to good purpose. We may safely look to Him; for He is all-wise. As we look to Him and think of Him, He will be formed within, the hope of glory. Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand.' *Maranatha*, page 241.

'In their foreheads'

5. Where are the servants of God to be sealed? Revelation 7:3.

NOTE: 'What is the seal of the living God, which is placed in the foreheads of His people? It is a mark which angels, but not human eyes, can read; for the destroying angel must see this mark of redemption. The intelligent mind has seen the sign of the cross of Calvary in the Lord's adopted sons and daughters. The sin of the transgression of the law of God is taken away. They have on the wedding garment, and are obedient and faithful to all God's commands.' *Maranatha*, page 243.

6. How is the parallel work of evil described? Revelation 13:16.

NOTE: 'The worshipers of the beast (Revelation 13) are said to receive his mark in their foreheads or in their hands. As the forehead represents the intellect, the hand represents power, as Psalm 89:48, "Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" Compulsory worship is not acceptable to God; His servants are sealed only in their foreheads. But it is acceptable to wicked powers; it has always been craved by the Romish hierarchy.' *Great Controversy* [1888 ed.], page 691.

'Having this seal'

7. What is the purpose of a seal? Compare 1 Kings 21:8, Nehemiah 9:38, Esther 3:12, Esther 8:8.

NOTE: The Oxford Dictionary defines a seal as "something that authenticates or confirms, something impressed or attached as evidence of authenticity or attestation or as a claim to possession.' When God places His seal upon a person, God acknowledges that person as His. In the same way, when the mark of the beast is placed upon a person, this is a public statement by that person of loyalty to the beast and his image. Thus the whole world is to be brought to the point of deciding publicly whether to follow God or a manmade form of religion.

8. How does the Bible speak of the seal of God? 2 Timothy 2:19. Compare John 6:27, 2 Corinthians 1:22.

NOTE: 'Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth, these are receiving the heavenly mould and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity. Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God, candidates for heaven. Every individual soul, if he would receive the seal of the living God, must hear the Word of the Lord, and do it with exactitude. There must be no such thing as haphazard religion if men would have a place in the family of God. Now is the time, while the four angels are holding the four winds, to make our calling and election sure.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 288.

'Remember'

9. What elements are normally to be found on a king's seal?

NOTE: A seal normally contains at least the following three elements: the **name** of the one holding authority, his rank or **title** and the scope of his **dominion**. Thus at the beginning of the King James Bible, will be found the following: To the most high and mighty prince, **James [his name]** by the grace of God **King [his title]** of **Great Britain, France and Ireland [his dominion]**. Even today in Britain, the King James Bible can only be printed by Royal authority.

10. Where did God Himself state these three things concerning Himself? Exodus 20:8-11.

NOTE: In confirming the obligation upon mankind to 'remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, God Himself sealed this pronouncement by placing it under the authority of His **name: 'the Lord thy God, His title 'Creator' and the extent of His dominion, 'heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is.'** It is therefore no surprise that, in contrast to the proclamation of the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:16-17), a message should come from heaven calling men back to the worship of their Creator (Revelation 14:7) and the identification of His saints as "they that keep the commandments of God" (Revelation 14:12).

'Holding the four winds'

11. What is to happen as soon as the sealing work is accomplished? Revelation 7:1. Compare Jeremiah 25:31-33, 49:35-39.

NOTE: 'Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, until the world shall be warned of its coming doom; but a storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth, and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife

as no pen can picture. A moment of respite has been graciously given us of God. Every power lent us of heaven is to be used in doing the work assigned us by the Lord for those who are perishing in ignorance. The warning message is to be sounded in all parts of the world. A great work is to be done, and this work has been entrusted to those who know the truth for this time.' *Maranatha*, page 266.

12. How is this great tribulation described? Revelation 16.

NOTE: 'Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Already a few drops of God's wrath have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent and find shelter. No atoning blood will then wash away the stains of sin.' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 212.

13. What precious promises of protection do God's people have to rely on during this fearful time? Psalm 91.

NOTE: "'And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.'" When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people. This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict with the powers of earth that are marshalled by the dragon host, make God their defence. The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death. May God help His people now, for what can they then do in such a fearful conflict without His assistance!' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 212.

Lesson 8: 'The man of sin'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.' Daniel 7:25.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 563-581.

Introduction

'The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvellous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.' *Great Controversy*, page 593.

'Ye have heard that antichrist shall come,'

1. What does the word 'antichrist' mean? Consider Matthew 24:5, 24.

NOTE: The word 'antichrist' is the equivalent of the Greek word 'antichristos', which combines 'Christos' meaning 'Christ', the anointed one, with the prefix 'anti-'. While 'anti-' in Latin means 'opposed to', the Greek 'anti-' can mean either 'opposed to' or 'in place of'. The majority of Christians today assume that Antichrist will be an open opponent of Christ. But the Bible states in several places that this power will first work against God's people by deception. Thus, as Greswell maintains, the correct understanding of 'antichrist' is 'counterfeit Christ', rather as the Catholics describe certain popes as 'antipopes.'

2. What passages have been understood to refer to the Antichrist? Daniel 7:24-26, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12, Revelation 13:1-10, 17-18, Revelation 17:1-18

NOTE: 'The word Antichrist is used by St. John in his first and second Epistles, and by him alone. Elsewhere it does not occur in Scripture. Nevertheless, by an almost universal consent, the term has been applied to the Man of Sin of whom St. Paul speaks in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, to the Little Horn and to the fierce-countenanced King of whom Daniel prophesies, and to the Beast of the Apocalypse, as well as to the false christs whose appearance our Lord predicts in his prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives.' *Smith's Revised Bible Dictionary, 1999*, art. 'Antichrist.'

'Another shall arise after them'

3. What seven identifying marks of the Antichrist was Daniel given? Daniel 7:24-25.

NOTE: To identify the 'little horn' several identifying features are given in Daniel 7:24-25:

1. It would rise after Rome had split up.
2. Three kingdoms would be overthrown in its rise to power.
3. It would be a different kind of kingdom (diverse) from the others which came before it.
4. It would blaspheme against God.
5. It would persecute God's people.
6. It would claim the right to change God's law and times.
7. Its period of power would be 'a time, times, and the dividing of time.'

4. What power has fulfilled each of these identifying marks?

NOTE: SEVEN IDENTIFICATION POINTS OF THE LITTLE HORN

- 1. Location and time of its rise.** The Roman Empire became divided into 10 nations. The Little Horn would come up among these divided nations, represented by the 10 horns on the fourth beast.
- 2. Three kingdoms overthrown.** The Little Horn came to power after the Roman Empire split into smaller kingdoms. The three powers overthrown to make way for the 'Little Horn' were the Heruls, 493 AD, the Vandals, 534 AD, and the Ostrogoths in 538 AD. In 538 AD, when the last of the three horns in its way had been overthrown, pagan Rome became Papal Rome. The pope assumed the title of the Caesars, Pontifex Maximus or Supreme Pontiff*. The elimination of these powers, which held a form of Christianity different from that of the papacy, cleared the way for the papacy to become both the spiritual and political leader of Rome. (*Pontiff means 'bridge-builder'. Europeans will notice the bridges pictured on the new European bank notes.)
- 3. Its characteristics.** It was a different type of kingdom from all its predecessors. It was primarily a religious power which was heavily involved in political matters. For the first time a Christian church was also a political power, thus setting aside the words of Christ. John 18:36. It was a unique power.
- 4. Attitude towards God.** It blasphemed against God, with great words, claiming to be 'God on earth' and to forgive sins.
- 5. Attitude towards God's people.** They were persecuted as heretics by this power, which set up the Inquisition, imprisoning and killing millions of Christians.
- 6. Attitude towards God's law.** It claimed to have the right to change God's eternal law. The Ten Commandments were rewritten, one being omitted and another being fundamentally changed.
- 7. Length of its supremacy.** It would rule for 1260 years, from 538-1798.

'Was and is not and shall ascend'

5. What three phases of the antichrist's career were revealed in prophecy? John 17:8. Compare verse 11.

NOTE: 'The woman, Babylon, of Revelation 17, is described as "arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness. . . . And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots." Says the prophet, "I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." [Revelation 17:4-6.] Babylon is further declared to be "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." [Revelation 17:18.] The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. The purple and scarlet colour, the gold and precious stones and pearls, vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of Rome. And no other power could be so truly declared "drunken with the blood of the saints" as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ.' *Great Controversy*, page 382.

6. How are these three phases earlier described? Revelation 13:2-3.

NOTE: "Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." [Revelation 13:5] And, says the prophet, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death." And again: "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." " *Great Controversy*, page 439.

'The infliction of the deadly wound points to the downfall of the papacy in 1798. After this, says the prophet, "his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Paul states plainly that the "man of sin" will continue until the Second Advent. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8. To the very close of time he will carry forward the work of deception. And the Revelator declares, also referring to the papacy: "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life." Revelation 13:8.' *Great Controversy*, page 578.

'Showing himself that he is God'

7. How was John shown the characteristics of the antichrist? Revelation 13:5, first part. Compare Daniel 7:25

NOTE: The Bible identifies several things as blasphemous. For a man to make himself God is blasphemous. See John 10:33. Paul prophesied that the antichrist would claim to be God. See 2 Thessalonians 2:4. This claim has been made by the supposedly infallible popes. For example: *The Catholic Encyclopaedia Vol. 6*, page 48, describes the pope as: '**not a mere man, but as it were God and the vicar of God.**' Pope Leo XIII in one of his encyclical letters wrote: '**We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.**' Pope Innocent III wrote: '**The pope is not simply a man but rather God on earth.**' He also wrote: 'The pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ **but he is Jesus Christ Himself hidden under the veil of flesh.**' 'The Pope is crowned with a triple crown as king of heaven and earth and of the lower regions. Moreover the superiority and the power of the Roman pontiff by no means pertains only to earthly things, but even over angels, than whom he is greater....If angels err in the faith, or think contrary to the faith, they could be judged and excommunicated by the Pope, for he is of so great dignity and power that he forms one and the same tribunal with Christ...The Pope is as it were God on earth, chief king of kings.' *Prompta Bibliotheca Canonica Moralis Theologica, Vol. 6*, pages 25-29.

Matthew 9:2-3 speaks of a man claiming to forgive sins as blasphemy. This blasphemy is made daily by the priests of the Roman Catholic Church.

8. What other characteristic was John shown? Revelation 13:7, first part. Compare Daniel 7:25.

NOTE: 'No computation can reach the numbers who have been put to death, in different ways, on account of their maintaining the profession of the Gospel, and opposing the corruptions of the Church of Rome. A million of poor Albigenses perished in

France; nine hundred thousand orthodox Christians were slain in less than thirty years after the institution of the order of the Jesuits. The Duke of Alva boasted of having put to death in the Netherlands thirty-six thousand by the hand of the common executioner during the space of a few years. The Inquisition destroyed, by various tortures, one hundred and fifty thousand within thirty years. These are a few specimens, and but a few, of those which history has recorded. But the total will never be known till the earth shall disclose her blood and no more cover her slain.' Scott, *Church History* (quoted in Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 142.)

9. How long was the antichrist to oppress God's people? Revelation 13:5, last part. Compare Daniel 7:25.

NOTE: 'The forty and two months are the same as the "time and times and the dividing of time," three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7, the time during which the papal power was to oppress God's people. This period, as stated in preceding chapters, began with the supremacy of the papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time the pope was made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity.'" *Great Controversy*, page 439.

'To receive a mark'

10. In what way will worship of the antichrist lead to the persecution of God's people? Revelation 13:16.

NOTE: 'The time is coming when we cannot sell at any price. The decree will soon go forth prohibiting men to buy or sell of any man save him that hath the mark of the beast. In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. Religious powers, allied to heaven by profession, and claiming to have the characteristics of a lamb, will show by their acts that they have the heart of a dragon and that they are instigated and controlled by Satan. The time is coming when God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day. There is a time coming when commandment-keepers can neither buy nor sell. Make haste to dig out your buried talents. If God has entrusted you with money, show yourselves faithful to your trust; unwrap your napkin, and send your talents to the exchangers, that when Christ shall come, He may receive His own with interest.' *Maranatha*, page 183.

11. What will be the ultimate threat against the people of God? Revelation 13:15, last part.

NOTE: 'God is going to bring around a condition of things where the good men and the men in authority will have an opportunity to know what is truth indeed. And because a people will not bow the knee to the image, and receive the mark of the beast in the hand or the forehead, but will stand to the truth because it is truth, there will be oppression, and an attempt to compel the conscience; but those who have known the truth will be afraid to yield to the powers of darkness. God has a people who will not receive the mark of the beast in their right hand or in their forehead.' *Review & Herald*, April 15, 1890.

'The Dragon gave him his power'

12. Who is the power behind the antichrist? Revelation 13:2, last part & 4.

NOTE: 'Paganism had given place to the Papacy. The Dragon had given to the Beast 'his power, and his seat, and great authority.' That is, Satan then began to work through the papacy, just as he had formerly worked through paganism. But the Papacy is not represented by the Dragon, because it is necessary to introduce another symbol in order to show the change in the form of the opposition to God. Previous to the rise of the Papacy, all opposition to the Law of God had been in the form of paganism, God had been openly defied; but from that time the opposition was carried on under the guise of professed allegiance to Him. The Papacy, however, was no less the instrument of Satan than was pagan Rome for all the power, the seat, and the great authority of the Papacy, were given it by the Dragon. And so, although the pope professes to be the vicegerent of Christ, he is, in reality, the vicegerent of Satan, he is Antichrist.' *Great Controversy*, 1888 ed., page 680.

13. How will the antichrist at last be overthrown? 2 Thessalonians 2:8. Compare Revelation 19:20. See also Revelation 17:16-17.

NOTE: 'God's judgments will be visited upon those who are seeking to oppress and destroy His people. His long forbearance with the wicked emboldens men in transgression, but their punishment is nonetheless certain and terrible because it is long delayed. "The Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act." Isaiah 28:21. To our merciful God the act of punishment is a strange act. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Ezekiel 33:11. The Lord is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Yet He will "by no means clear the guilty." "The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked." Exodus 34:6, 7; Nahum 1:3. By terrible things in righteousness He will vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. The severity of the retribution awaiting the transgressor may be judged by the Lord's reluctance to execute justice. The nation with which He bears long, and which He will not smite until it has filled up the measure of its iniquity in God's account, will finally drink the cup of wrath unmixed with mercy.' *Great Controversy*, page 627.

Lesson 9: 'To receive a mark'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.' Revelation 13:12.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 438-450.

Introduction

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

'If any man worship'

1. What is the main issue in the final conflict? Compare Revelation 13:12 & Revelation 14:7.

NOTE: 'An apostate church will unite with the powers of earth and hell to place upon the forehead or in the hand, the mark of the beast, and prevail upon the children of God to worship the beast and his image. They will seek to compel them to renounce their allegiance to God's law, and yield homage to the papacy. Then will come the times which will try men's souls; for the confederacy of apostasy will demand that the loyal subjects of God shall renounce the law of Jehovah, and repudiate the truth of His word. Then will the gold be separated from the dross, and it will be made apparent who are the godly, who are the loyal and true, and who are the disloyal, the dross and the tinsel. What clouds of chaff will then be borne away by the fan of God! Where now our eyes can discover only rich floors of wheat, will be chaff blown away with the fan of God. Every one who is not centred in Christ will fail to stand the test and ordeal of that day.' *Maranatha*, page 204.

2. What is the basis of the choice placed before mankind? Compare Revelation 14:12 & Matthew 15:9.

NOTE: 'The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The observance of the false sabbath will be urged upon us. The contest will be between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. Those who have yielded step by step to worldly demands, and conformed to worldly customs, will then yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. At that time the gold will be separated from the dross. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliance will then go out in darkness. Those who have assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will then appear in the shame of their own nakedness.' *Prophets and Kings*, page 188.

'And yet offend in one point'

3. How does God call upon men to worship Him as Creator? Exodus 20:8-11. Compare Genesis 2:2-3.

NOTE: 'The seal of God's law is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all the ten, brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given. When the Sabbath was changed by the papal power, the seal was taken from the law. The disciples of Jesus are called upon to restore it by exalting the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to its rightful position as the Creator's memorial and the sign of His authority.' *Great Controversy*, page 452.

4. How many of the commandments need to be broken in order to become a transgressor of God's law? James 2:10-11.

NOTE: 'When Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honour popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome, and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshipping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honour in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome, "the mark of the beast." And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast." The change of the Sabbath is the sign or mark of the authority of the Romish church. Those who, understanding the claims of the fourth commandment, choose to observe the false sabbath in the place of the true, are thereby paying homage to that power by which alone it is commanded. The mark of the beast is the papal sabbath, which has been accepted by the world in the place of the day of God's appointment. No one has yet received the mark of the beast. The testing time has not yet come. There are true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion. None are condemned until they have had the light and have seen the obligation of the fourth commandment. But when the decree shall go forth enforcing the counterfeit sabbath, and the loud cry of the third angel shall warn men against the worship of the beast and his image, the line will be clearly drawn between the false and the true. Then those who still continue in transgression will receive the mark of the beast.' *Evangelism*, pages 233-234.

5. Has Rome chosen Sunday observance as the mark of its authority?

NOTE: 'The Sunday, as a day of the week set apart for the obligatory public worship of Almighty God, to be sanctified by suspension of all servile labour, trade and worldly avocations, and by exercises of devotion, is **purely a creation of the**

Catholic Church... Nothing in the New Testament forbids work, travel, trade, amusement, on the first day of the week. There is nothing which implies such a prohibition. The day, as one especially set apart, **had no authority but that of the Catholic Church; the laws requiring its observance were passed to enforce decrees of councils of the Catholic Church...** For ages all Christian nations looked to the Catholic Church, and, as we have seen, the various states enforce by law her ordinances as to worship and cessation of labour on Sunday. Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the [Catholic] church, had no good reason for its Sunday theory, and ought, logically, to keep Saturday as the Sabbath, with the Jews and the Seventh Day Baptists. For their present practice, Protestants in general **have no authority but that of a church which they disown.** *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, January 1883. (Emphasis added.)

‘In their right hand or in their foreheads’

6. Where will the mark of the beast be placed? Revelation 13:16.

NOTE: ‘The Sabbath is the sign of God; it is the seal of His law. Isaiah 8:16. It is the token of His authority and power. It is a sign whereby we may know that He is God, and therefore it is appropriately said to be placed in the forehead. The worshipers of the beast (Revelation 13) are said to receive his mark in their foreheads or in their hands. As the forehead represents the intellect, the hand represents power, as Psalm 89:48, “Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?” Compulsory worship is not acceptable to God; His servants are sealed only in their foreheads. But it is acceptable to wicked powers; it has always been craved by the Romish hierarchy.’ *Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 4*, page 505.

7. How will this mark be enforced? Revelation 13:15-16.

NOTE: ‘History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan’s plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation. The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world. In a limited degree, it has already gone forth. In several places the civil power is speaking with the voice of a dragon, just as the heathen king spoke to the Hebrew captives. Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to the Word of God, refuse to worship this false sabbath. Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The Papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so.’ *Signs of the Times*, May 6, 1897.

‘All that dwell upon the earth’

8. How widely will this false worship be enforced? Revelation 13: 8, 12, 16-17. Compare Revelation 14:6.

NOTE: ‘The United States is the power represented by the beast with lamblike horns, and that this prophecy will be fulfilled when the United States shall enforce Sunday observance, which Rome claims as the special acknowledgment of her supremacy. But in this homage to the papacy the United States will not be alone. The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a restoration of her power. “I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” Verse 3. The infliction of the deadly wound points to the downfall of the papacy in 1798. After this, says the prophet, “his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” Paul states plainly that the “man of sin” will continue until the Second Advent. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8. To the very close of time he will carry forward the work of deception. And the Revelator declares, also referring to the papacy: “All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life.” Revelation 13:8. In both the Old and the New World, the papacy will receive homage in the honour paid to the Sunday institution, that rests solely upon the authority of the Roman Church.’ *Great Controversy*, page 578.

9. Can one worship the beast and his image and still be saved? Revelation 13:8. Revelation 14:9-11.

NOTE: ‘The message containing this warning is the last to be proclaimed before the revelation of the Son of man. The signs which He Himself has given declare His coming to be near at hand. For well-nigh forty years has the message of the third angel been sounding. In the issue of the great contest two parties are developed, those who “worship the beast and his image,” and receive his mark, and those who receive “the seal of the living God,” who have the Father’s name written in their foreheads. This is not a visible mark. The time has come when all who have an interest in their soul’s salvation should earnestly and solemnly inquire, What is the seal of God? and What is the mark of the beast? How can we avoid receiving it?’ *Signs of the Times*, November 1, 1899

‘Not one is made to suffer the wrath of God until the truth has been brought home to his mind and conscience, and has been rejected. There are many who have never had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. He who reads every heart and tries every motive will leave none who desire a knowledge of the truth, to be deceived as to the issues of the controversy. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Everyone is to have sufficient light to make his decision intelligently. The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.’ *Great Controversy*, page 605.

‘He doeth great wonders’

10. How will the majority be induced to take part in this false worship? Revelation 13:13-14.

NOTE: ‘Satanic delusions and deceptions will increase as we near the end of earth’s history. Jesus warned his followers as to what should take place just prior to his coming. He said: “Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.” The deceiving power of Satan will continually increase to the very end. Through his agencies he will do great wonders, “so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do.’ *Signs of the Times*, June 4, 1894.

11. How effective will these lying wonders be? Revelation 16:14. Compare Matthew 24:24.

NOTE: ‘The saints must get a thorough understanding of present truth, which they will be obliged to maintain from the Scriptures. They must understand the state of the dead; for the spirits of devils will yet appear to them, professing to be beloved friends and relatives, who will declare to them that the Sabbath has been changed, also other unscriptural doctrines. They will do all in their power to excite sympathy and will work miracles before them to confirm what they declare. The people of God must be prepared to withstand these spirits with the Bible truth that the dead know not anything, and that they who appear to them are the spirits of devils. Our minds must not be taken up with things around us, but must be occupied with the present truth and a preparation to give a reason of our hope with meekness and fear. We must seek wisdom from on high that we may stand in this day of error and delusion.’ *Early Writings*, page 87.

‘If any worship the beast and his image’

12. What will be the fate of those who worship the beast and his image? Revelation 14:9-11, Revelation 15:1, Revelation 16:1-21.

NOTE: ‘When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (Revelation 14:9, 10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God’s people. Says the Revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: “There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.” The sea “became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.” And “the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood.” Terrible as these inflictions are, God’s justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: “Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.” Revelation 16:2-6. By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands. In the plague that follows, power is given to the sun “to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat.” Verse 8, 9. These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmingled with mercy.’ *Maranatha*, page 267.

13. What is promised for those who refuse to worship the beast and his image? Revelation 15:2, Revelation 20:4.

NOTE: ‘In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel “all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond” (Revelation 13:16), to receive “the mark of the beast,” yet the people of God will not receive it. The prophet of Patmos beholds “them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God” and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Revelation 15:2, 3.’ *Great Controversy*, page 450.

Lesson 10: ‘Come out of her, My people’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.’ Revelation 18:4.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 603-612.

Introduction

‘Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Revelation 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to

separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work.' *Great Controversy*, page 390.

'The mother of harlots'

1. What proclamation is given from heaven and how will this message be repeated before Christ returns? Revelation 14:8, Revelation 18:1-4.

NOTE: 'The woman (Babylon) of Revelation 17 is described as "arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness:...and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots." Says the prophet: "I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." Babylon is further declared to be "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Revelation 17:4-6, 18. The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. The purple and scarlet colour, the gold and precious stones and pearls, vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of Rome. And no other power could be so truly declared "drunken with the blood of the saints" as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ. Babylon is also charged with the sin of unlawful connection with "the kings of the earth." It was by departure from the Lord, and alliance with the heathen, that the Jewish church became a harlot; and Rome, corrupting herself in like manner by seeking the support of worldly powers, receives a like condemnation.' *Great Controversy*, page 382.

2. What particular titles is Babylon given? Revelation 18:5.

'Babylon is said to be "the mother of harlots." By her daughters must be symbolised churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14 announcing the fall of Babylon must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God's people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith. At the time of their rise these churches took a noble stand for God and the truth, and His blessing was with them. Even the unbelieving world was constrained to acknowledge the beneficent results that followed an acceptance of the principles of the gospel. In the words of the prophet to Israel: "Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." But they fell by the same desire which was the curse and ruin of Israel, the desire of imitating the practices and courting the friendship of the ungodly. "Thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown." Ezekiel 16:14, 15.' *Great Controversy*, page 382.

'Babylon is fallen'

3. Why has Babylon fallen? Revelation 14:8, last part.

NOTE: 'The great sin charged against Babylon is that she "made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." This cup of intoxication which she presents to the world represents the false doctrines that she has accepted as the result of her unlawful connection with the great ones of the earth. Friendship with the world corrupts her faith, and in her turn she exerts a corrupting influence upon the world by teaching doctrines which are opposed to the plainest statements of Holy Writ.' *Great Controversy*, page 388.

4. What does fornication symbolise? Ezekiel 16:26 & 29. Read this chapter and compare Jeremiah 3:6-10.

NOTE: 'In the Bible the sacred and enduring character of the relation that exists between Christ and His church is represented by the union of marriage. The Lord has joined His people to Himself by a solemn covenant, He promising to be their God, and they pledging themselves to be His and His alone. He declares: "I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies." Hosea 2:19. And, again: "I am married unto you." Jeremiah 3:14. And Paul employs the same figure in the New Testament when he says: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:2. The unfaithfulness of the church to Christ in permitting her confidence and affection to be turned from Him, and allowing the love of worldly things to occupy the soul, is likened to the violation of the marriage vow. The sin of Israel in departing from the Lord is presented under this figure... In the New Testament, language very similar is addressed to professed Christians who seek the friendship of the world above the favour of God. Says the apostle James: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.'" *Great Controversy*, page 382.

'That ye be not partakers of her sins'

5. How is Babylon's spiritual state described? Revelation 18:2.

NOTE: 'A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred. Christ is set at nought in the contempt placed upon His word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion

will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches.' *Great Controversy*, page 603.

6. What urgent call then comes from heaven? Revelation 18:4. Compare Genesis 19:15, 17.

NOTE: 'God has honest children among the nominal Adventists and the fallen churches, and before the plagues shall be poured out, ministers and people will be called out from these churches and will gladly receive the truth. Satan knows this; and before the loud cry of the third angel is given, he raises an excitement in these religious bodies, that those who have rejected the truth may think that God is with them. He hopes to deceive the honest and lead them to think that God is still working for the churches. But the light will shine, and all who are honest will leave the fallen churches, and take their stand with the remnant.' *Early Writings*, page 261.

'This message must be given; but while it must be given, we should be careful not to thrust and crowd and condemn those who have not the light that we have. We should not go out of our way to make hard thrusts at the Catholics. Among the Catholics there are many who are most conscientious Christians and who walk in all the light that shines upon them, and God will work in their behalf.' *Testimonies Volume 9*, page 243.

'The everlasting Gospel'

7. What message is most needed by God's people still in Babylon? Revelation 14:6.

NOTE: 'This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 91.

8. What precious truth lies at the heart of the everlasting Gospel? Hebrews 7:25.

NOTE: 'The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised. Let the glorious conceptions of God possess your mind. Let your life be knit by hidden links to the life of Jesus. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness is willing to shine in your heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will take the things of God and show them unto you, conveying them as a living power into the obedient heart. Christ will lead you to the threshold of the Infinite. You may behold the glory beyond the veil, and reveal to men the sufficiency of Him who ever liveth to make intercession for us.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 149.

'God hath remembered'

9. What fearful fate awaits those who do not heed the call to come out? Revelation 18:4, last part, Revelation 18:8.

NOTE: 'These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy.' *Great Controversy*, pages 628-629.

10. What particular sin of Babylon is mentioned? Revelation 18:24.

NOTE: 'A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred. Christ is set at nought in the contempt placed upon His word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches.' *Great Controversy*, page 603.

'Rejoice over her'

11. How is the fall of Babylon described? Revelation 18:21. Compare Matthew 18:6.

NOTE: The expression "no more at all" is employed repeatedly in verses 21-23. Thus is expressed the finality of Babylon's fall. Nor will it be a gradual decline. The fall of Babylon will be violent. See Revelation 17:16.

12. How is the suddenness of Babylon's fall described? Revelation 18:19, last part. Compare Revelation 18:7-8.

NOTE: Some have speculated that the clause: 'Therefore shall her plagues come in one day' should be interpreted using the year-day principle and that therefore the duration of the Seven Last Plagues will be one year. Verse 19 speaks of the desolation of Babylon coming in one hour. As with all unfulfilled prophecy, it behoves the student of God's Word not to be dogmatic but to watch 'the steady tread of events.' What is clear is that Babylon's fall will be sudden.

13. What is the response of God's people to Babylon's fall? Revelation 18:20.

NOTE: It may seem strange that both heaven and the people of God on earth rejoice at the sudden and violent end of Babylon. But Babylon has long been the great enemy of God and His people and this enemy is destroyed forever. The great oppression that Babylon was responsible for has finally ceased. The people of God have gained the final victory over the beast and his image through the Lord Jesus Christ.

'Here is Heaven's estimate of Babylon's influence:

No matter what her appearance – she corrupts.

No matter what she claims – she corrupts.

No matter what she teaches – she corrupts.

No matter what she performs – she corrupts.

No matter what people are in her – she corrupts.

This is why God calls His people out of Babylon.' Cooke, *God's Final Call & Babylon's Final Fall*, page 31.

Lesson 11: 'And then shall the end come'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.' Matthew 24:14.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 506-513.

Introduction

'The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close.' *Great Controversy*, page 611.

'I will pour out My Spirit'

1. How did God empower the early church for its mission? Acts 2:2-4.

NOTE: 'What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world. As the disciples proclaimed the message of redeeming grace, hearts yielded to the power of this message. The Church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price. Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 218.

2. How did Peter explain to the people what was happening? Acts 2:16-18.

NOTE: 'In immediate connection with the scenes of the great day of God, the Lord by the prophet Joel has promised a special manifestation of His Spirit. Joel 2:28. This prophecy received a partial fulfilment in the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; but it will reach its full accomplishment in the manifestation of divine grace which will attend the closing work of the gospel.' *Great Controversy*, page ix.

'With one accord'

3. What condition were the believers in when they became filled with the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:1.

NOTE: 'The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be labourers together with God. When we have entire, whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognise the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not labourers together with God. God cannot pour out His Spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?"' *Review & Herald*, July 21, 1896.

4. What practical demonstration of this seen in those converted to the truth? Acts 2:44-45.

NOTE: 'Believers were reconverted. Sinners united with Christians in seeking the pearl of great price. The prophecy was fulfilled, The weak shall be "as David," and the house of David "as the angel of the Lord." Zechariah 12:8. Every Christian saw in his brother the divine similitude of benevolence and love. One interest prevailed. One object swallowed up all others. All hearts beat in harmony. The only ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character, and to labour for the enlargement of His kingdom. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. . . . With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." Acts 4:32, 33. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47. The Spirit of Christ animated the whole congregation; for they had found the pearl of great price.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 120.

'That the world might know'

5. What prayer did Christ express for all subsequent Christians? John 17:20-21.

NOTE: 'Could our Lord speak these words, so gracious, so full of meaning, of the churches in their present state of feeble love, of dissension and petty trial, churches that are calling ministers from important work to settle their little manufactured difficulties, thus showing that they have no connection with God? No. The members of the church must come into unity; and in order to do this, they must have less of self, and more of Jesus. They must learn of Christ. They must be meek and lowly of heart. Their selfish pride must die. Then their mountains of difficulty will be reduced to mole-hills. *Review & Herald*, Jan. 6, 1891.

6. What is the purpose of this unity among God's people? John 17:23.

NOTE: 'The unity of the church is the convincing evidence that God has sent Jesus into the world as its Redeemer. This is an argument which worldlings cannot controvert. Therefore Satan is constantly working to prevent this union and harmony, that unbelievers, by witnessing backsliding, dissension, and strife among professed Christians, may become disgusted with religion and be confirmed in their impenitence. God is dishonoured by those who profess the truth while they are at variance and enmity with one another. Satan is the great accuser of the brethren, and all who engage in this work are enlisted in his service.' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 619.

'The Lord added to the church'

7. What was the result of this Pentecostal infilling of the Spirit? Acts 2:41.

NOTE: 'After the disciples had received the Holy Spirit, they went out to give to others the light and knowledge they had received. They were few in numbers, but under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they did more for the conversion of those in Jerusalem than the large religious organisations had ever done. They extended their work to the remote parts of the earth. God blessed their efforts, and thousands of such as should be saved were added to the church. So the Lord would have us labour.' *Review & Herald*, March 29, 1898.

8. What work are we today to bring to completion? Mark 16:15.

NOTE: 'These scenes are to be repeated, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the former rain, but the latter rain will be more abundant. The Spirit awaits our demand and reception. Christ is again to be revealed in His fullness by the Holy Spirit's power.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 121.

'Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain'

9. In Joel's prophecy, what symbol was used for this outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Compare Joel 2:28 & 23.

NOTE: 'In the East the former rain falls at the sowing time. It is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilising showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain and prepares it for the sickle. The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit. As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ. The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 506.

10. What work of preparation did Joel say was necessary? Joel 2:12-13.

NOTE: 'Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realise his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 507.

11. What was the attitude of some Jews to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:13.

NOTE: 'Only those who are living up to the light they have, will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognise the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 333.

'Preached in all the world'

12. What assurance is given that the Gospel work will be finished? Matthew 24:14. Compare Romans 9:28.

NOTE: 'Christ tells us when that day shall be ushered in. He does not say that all the world will be converted, but that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord's return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God. 2 Peter 3:12, margin. Had the church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this have been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory.' *Maranatha*, page 19.

13. What precious promise is given to those who accept the Gospel commission? Matthew 28:18-20.

NOTE: 'Those who work for God will meet with discouragement, but the promise is always theirs: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:20. God will give a most wonderful experience to those who will say: "I believe Thy promise; I will not fail nor become discouraged."' *Testimonies Volume 6*, page 335.

Lesson 11: 'A time of trouble'

MEMORY VERSE: 'For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock.' Psalm 27:5.

STUDY HELP: *Conflict & Courage*, page 68.

Introduction

'When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people.' *Christian Experience & Teachings*, page 187.

'At that time shall Michael stand up'

1. How will the end of human probation be announced? Revelation 22:11.

NOTE: 'Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth. I saw that the anger of the nations, the wrath of God, and the time to judge the dead were separate and distinct, one following the other, also that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced. The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out.' *Early Writings*, page 36.

2. When Christ's mediatorial work is concluded, what immediately follows? Daniel 12:1.

NOTE: 'The "time of trouble, such as never was," is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal.' *Great Controversy*, page 622.

'As many as would not worship the image of the beast'

3. What decree will then be passed against all those who refuse to enter into false worship? Revelation 13:15.

NOTE: 'As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal execration. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness. The same argument eighteen hundred years ago was brought against Christ by the "rulers of the people." "It is expedient for us," said the wily Caiaphas, "that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." John 11:50. This argument will appear conclusive; and a decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death. Romanism in the Old World and apostate Protestantism in the New will pursue a similar course toward those who honour all the divine precepts. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble.' *Great Controversy*, pages 615-616.

4. What promise is given to God's people during this time? Daniel 12:1, last part. Compare Jeremiah 30:7.

NOTE: 'Jacob's history is also an assurance that God will not cast off those who have been deceived and tempted and betrayed into sin, but who have returned unto Him with true repentance. While Satan seeks to destroy this class, God will send His angels to comfort and protect them in the time of peril. The assaults of Satan are fierce and determined, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God's love for His children

during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.' *Great Controversy*, page 621.

'The wrath of God'

5. How is the time of trouble for the wicked described? Revelation 14:9-11. Compare Revelation 16:1-21.

NOTE: 'God's patience and mercy will not always wait. Let not one soul think that he can hide from God's wrath behind a lie, for God will strip from the soul the refuge of lies. The bolts of God's wrath are soon to fall, and when He shall begin to punish the transgressors, there will be no period of respite until the end. The storm of God's wrath is gathering, and those only will stand who are sanctified through the truth in the love of God. They shall be hid with Christ in God till the desolation shall be overpast. He shall come forth to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 182.

6. How did Isaiah prophesy of this time? Isaiah 26:20-21.

NOTE: 'The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Malachi 3:17. If the blood of Christ's faithful witnesses were shed at this time, it would not, like the blood of the martyrs, be as seed sown to yield a harvest for God. Their fidelity would not be a testimony to convince others of the truth; for the obdurate heart has beaten back the waves of mercy until they return no more. If the righteous were now left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness. Says the psalmist: "In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me." Psalm 27:5. Christ has spoken: "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Isaiah 26:20, 21. Glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming and whose names are written in the book of life.' *Great Controversy*, page 634.

'Transformed into an angel of light'

7. What great delusion will deceive the inhabitants of the world? 2 Corinthians 11:14.

NOTE: 'As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, "Christ has come! Christ has come!" The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 346.

8. What assurance is given that God's people need not be deceived? 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5.

NOTE: 'Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures, and who have received the love of the truth, will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 346.

'Armageddon'

9. What will the nations of the world unite to do? Revelation 16:13-16.

NOTE: 'All the world will be on one side or the other of the question. The battle of Armageddon will be fought. And that day must find none of us sleeping. Wide awake we must be, as wise virgins having oil in our vessels with our lamps. The power of the Holy Ghost must be upon us and the Captain of the Lord's host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle. The enmity of Satan against good will be manifested more and more as he brings his forces into activity in his last work of rebellion, and every soul that is not fully surrendered to God and kept by divine power will form an alliance with Satan against heaven and join in battle against the Ruler of the universe. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of heaven.' *Last Day Events*, pages 250-251.

10. How are the armies of heaven described? Revelation 19:11-14.

NOTE: 'Not now a "Man of Sorrows," to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. "Faithful and True," "in righteousness He doth judge and make war." And "the armies which were in heaven" (Revelation 19:11, 14) follow Him. With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms, "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendour. "His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light." Habakkuk 3:3-4. As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head; but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun. "And He hath

on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” Revelation 19:16.’ *Great Controversy*, page 640.

11. What description is given of the battle of Armageddon? Revelation 19:17-21. Compare Revelation 6:15-17 & Isaiah 24:19-21.

NOTE: ‘The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field. The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white [Revelation 19:11-16]. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness, are swallowed up by the angry waters. The proudest cities of the earth are laid low. The lordly palaces, upon which the world’s great men have lavished their wealth in order to glorify themselves, are crumbling to ruin before their eyes. Prison walls are rent asunder, and God’s people, who have been held in bondage for their faith, are set free.’ *Last Day Events*, page 251.

‘Abide under the shadow of the almighty’

12. Who will be preserved in this fearful time? Psalm 91:1-10.

NOTE: ‘In the time of trouble just before the coming of Christ, the righteous will be preserved through the ministration of heavenly angels; but there will be no security for the transgressor of God’s law. Angels cannot then protect those who are disregarding one of the divine precepts.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 87.

13. With what words will God’s people greet their deliverance? Isaiah 25:9.

NOTE: ‘The heavens are rolled together as a scroll, the earth trembles before Him, and every mountain and island is moved out of its place. The wicked pray to be buried beneath the rocks of the mountains rather than meet the face of Him whom they have despised and rejected. Those who would have destroyed Christ and His faithful people now witness the glory which rests upon them. In the midst of their terror they hear the voices of the saints in joyful strains exclaiming: “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us” (Isaiah 25:9).’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 356.

Lesson 13: ‘Behold He cometh’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.’ Revelation 1:7.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 640-645.

Introduction

‘There will be no probation after the coming of the Lord. Those who say that there will be are deceived and misled. Before Christ comes just such a state of things will exist as existed before the Flood. And after the Saviour appears in the clouds of heaven no one will be given another chance to gain salvation. All will have made their decisions.’ *Last Day Events*, page 237.

‘Every eye shall see Him’

1. What are we told about the manner of Christ’s return? Acts 1:10-11.

NOTE: ‘Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ’s advent. The Saviour has warned His people against deception upon this point, and has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming. “There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect... Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matthew 24:24-27, 31; 25:31; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This coming there is no possibility of counterfeiting. It will be universally known, witnessed by the whole world.’ *Great Controversy*, page 625.

2. How many will witness Christ’s Second Coming? Revelation 1:7. Compare Matthew 24:27.

NOTE: ‘The Scriptures teach that “as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;” [Matthew 24:27] that He “cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him;” [Revelation 1:7] that He will “descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God;” [1 Thessalonians 4:16] that He will “come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him,” [Matthew 25:31] and will “send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect.” [Matthew 24:31] Those who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the testimony of the Scriptures they will detect the deceiver in his disguise.’ *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 4*, page 443.

‘With a great noise’

3. What will be heard when Christ comes? 1 Thessalonians 4:16 (compare Exodus 19:16-19), Psalm 50:3-4.

NOTE: 'In the day of the Lord, just before the coming of Christ, God will send lightnings from Heaven in His wrath, which will unite with fire in the earth. The mountains will burn like a furnace, and will pour forth terrible streams of lava, destroying gardens and fields, villages and cities; and as they pour their melted ore, rocks and heated mud into the rivers, will cause them to boil like a pot, and send forth massive rocks and scatter their broken fragments upon the land with indescribable violence. Whole rivers will be dried up. The earth will be convulsed, and there will be dreadful eruptions and earthquakes everywhere. God will plague the wicked inhabitants of the earth until they are destroyed from off it. 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 earth's crust will be rent by the outbursts of the elements concealed in the bowels of the earth. These elements, once broken loose, will sweep away the treasures of those who for years have been adding to their wealth by securing large possessions at starvation prices from those in their employ. The great general conflagration is but just ahead, when all this wasted labour of life will be swept away in a night and day.' *Maranatha*, page 283.

4. What will happen to the earth when Christ comes? 2 Peter 3:10. Compare Isaiah 24:19-20, Micah 1:3-4, Revelation 16:20-21.

NOTE: "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." "The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word." "Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned." Isaiah 24:1, 3, 5, 6. The whole earth appears like a desolate wilderness. The ruins of cities and villages destroyed by the earthquake, uprooted trees, ragged rocks thrown out by the sea or torn out of the earth itself, are scattered over its surface, while vast caverns mark the spot where the mountains have been rent from their foundations.' *Great Controversy*, page 657.

'The dead in Christ shall rise'

5. What will happen to the dead in Christ when Jesus returns? 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Compare 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.

NOTE: 'Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven, He cries: "Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!" Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live. And the whole earth shall ring with the tread of the exceeding great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. From the prison house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory, crying: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"' 1 Corinthians 15:55. And the living righteous and the risen saints unite their voices in a long, glad shout of victory. All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. But all arise with the freshness and vigour of eternal youth. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave.' *Maranatha*, page 299.

6. By contrast, what happens to the remainder of the dead? Revelation 20:5-6. Compare John 5:28-29.

NOTE: 'At the close of the thousand years the second resurrection will take place. Then the wicked will be raised from the dead, and appear before God. Thus the Revelator, after describing the resurrection of the righteous, says, "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Revelation 20:5.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 184.

'Many of them that sleep shall awake'

7. Which ones will be specially raised to behold His coming? Mark 14:61-62. Compare Revelation 1:7.

NOTE: "They also which pierced Him" (Revelation 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honour placed upon the loyal and obedient... When Christ comes the second time, not as a prisoner surrounded by a rabble will they see Him. They will see Him as heaven's King. Then the priests and rulers will remember distinctly the scene in the judgement hall. Every circumstance will appear before them as if written in letters of fire.' *Maranatha*, page 282.

8. What other group will be specially honoured by God? Revelation 14:13.

NOTE: 'Graves are opened, and "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth . . . awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Daniel 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. Those who had died in faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath, came forth from their dusty beds.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 182.

'In My Father's house'

9. Where will the Lord take His people when He returns? John 14:2-3.

NOTE: 'In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also' (John 14:1-3). Thank God! It is these mansions that I am looking to. It is not the earthly mansions here, for they are to be shaken down by the mighty earthquake ere long; but it is those heavenly mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for the

faithful. We have no home here. We are only pilgrims and strangers here, passing to a better country, even an heavenly.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 354.

10. For how long will His people remain in heaven? Revelation 20:4.

NOTE: 'The saints will rest in the Holy City and reign as kings and priests one thousand years; then Jesus will descend with the saints upon the Mount of Olives, and the mount will part asunder and become a mighty plain for the Paradise of God to rest upon. The rest of the earth will not be cleansed until the end of the one thousand years, when the wicked dead are raised, and gather up around the city. The feet of the wicked will never desecrate the earth made new. Fire will come down from God out of heaven and devour them, burn them up root and branch. Satan is the root, and his children are the branches. The same fire that will devour the wicked will purify the earth.' *Early Writings*, page 51.

'What manner of persons ought ye to be?'

11. In view of all these facts, what should be the response of God's people? 2 Peter 3:11-14.

NOTE: 'The time has come when a large portion of those who once rejoiced and shouted aloud for joy in view of the immediate coming of the Lord are on the ground of the churches and the world who once derided them for believing that Jesus was coming, and circulated all manner of falsehoods to raise prejudice against them and destroy their influence... Many of these professed Christians dress, talk, and act like the world, and the only thing by which they may be known is their profession. Though they profess to be looking for Christ, their conversation is not in heaven, but on worldly things.' *Early Writings*, page 108.

12. What are we told about the people who will be able to behold the Lord face to face? 1 John 3:2-3.

NOTE: 'When Christ shall come in His glory, the wicked cannot endure to behold Him. The light of His presence, which is life to those who love Him, is death to the ungodly. When He shall appear, they will pray to be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. But to hearts that have become purified through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, all is changed. These can know God. Moses was hid in the cleft of the rock when the glory of the Lord was revealed to him; and it is when we are hid in Christ that we behold the love of God. By faith we behold Him here and now. In our daily experience we discern His goodness and compassion in the manifestation of His providence. We recognise Him in the character of His Son. The pure in heart see God in a new and endearing relation, as their Redeemer; and while they discern the purity and loveliness of His character, they long to reflect His image. They see Him as a Father longing to embrace a repenting son, and their hearts are filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The pure in heart live as in the visible presence of God during the time He apportions them in this world. And they will also see Him face to face in the future, immortal state, as did Adam when he walked and talked with God in Eden.' *Maranatha*, page 88.