

# I AM THAT I AM

## General Introduction

I AM means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike with God. He sees the most remote events of past history and the far distant future with as clear a vision as we do those things which are transpiring daily. We know not what is before us, and if we did, it would not contribute to our eternal welfare. God gives us an opportunity to exercise faith and trust in the great I AM. . . . Our Saviour says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). Fifteen hundred years before Christ laid off His royal robe, His kingly crown, and left His position of honour in the heavenly courts, assumed humanity, and walked a man among the children of men, Abraham saw His day, and was glad. "Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (verses 57, 58).

Christ was using the great name of God that was given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence {See Exodus 3:14.} Isaiah also saw Christ, and his prophetic words are full of significance. He says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). Speaking through him, the Lord says, "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. . . . Fear not: for I am with thee. . . . I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no saviour. . . . Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, before the day was I am He. . . . I am the Lord, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King" (Isaiah 43:3-15). . . . When Jesus came to our world, He proclaimed Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6).

The Lord must be believed and served as the great "I AM," and we must trust implicitly in Him.

*That I May Know Him*, page 12.

## Lesson 1: 'I am the Almighty God'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect.' Genesis 17:1.

STUDY HELP: *God's Amazing Grace*, page 333.

### Introduction

'The temptations of Satan are greater now than ever before, for he knows that his time is short and that very soon every case will be decided, either for life or for death. It is no time now to sink down beneath discouragement and trial; we must bear up under all our afflictions and trust wholly in the Almighty God of Jacob. The Lord has shown me that His grace is sufficient for all our trials; and although they are greater than ever before, yet if we trust wholly in God, we can overcome every temptation and through His grace come off victorious.' *Early Writings*, page 46.

### 'I AM'

#### 1. By what name did the Lord reveal Himself to Moses at the burning bush? Exodus 3:13-14.

NOTE: This name, sometimes rendered as 'Jehovah', is usually rendered as LORD in the King James Bible.

'I AM means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike with God. He sees the most remote events of past history and the far distant future with as clear a vision as we do those things which are transpiring daily. We know not what is before us, and if we did, it would not contribute to our eternal welfare. God gives us an opportunity to exercise faith and trust in the great I AM.' *That I May Know Him*, page 12.

#### 2. On what occasion did Christ apply this name to Himself? John 8:58.

NOTE: 'Silence fell upon the vast assembly. The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Micah 5:2, margin. Again the priests and rabbis cried out against Jesus as a blasphemer. His claim to be one with God had before stirred them to take His life, and a few months later they plainly declared, "For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." John 10:33.' *Desire of Ages*, pages 469-470.

### 'I AM the Son of God'

#### 3. On what other occasions did Christ apply this name to Himself? John 6:35, John 8:12, John 10:9, John 11:25, John 15:5.

NOTE: 'It was Christ who from the bush on Mount Horeb spoke to Moses saying, "I AM THAT I AM. . . . Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Exodus 3:14. This was the pledge of Israel's deliverance. So when He came "in the likeness of men," He declared Himself the I AM. The Child of Bethlehem, the meek and lowly Saviour, is God "manifest in the flesh." 1 Timothy 3:16. And to us He says: "I AM the Good Shepherd." "I AM the living Bread." "I AM

the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.” John 10:11; 6:51; 14:6; Matthew 28:18. I AM the assurance of every promise. I AM; be not afraid. “God with us” is the surety of our deliverance from sin, the assurance of our power to obey the law of heaven.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 24.

#### **4. How did Jesus identify Himself to John? Revelation 1:17. Compare Isaiah 48:12.**

NOTE: ‘In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. “He that hath the Son hath life.” 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life. All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam understood the gospel. Jesus was the light of His people, the light of the world, before He came to earth in the form of humanity. The first gleam of light that pierced the gloom in which sin had wrapped the world, came from Christ. And from Him has come every ray of heaven’s brightness that has fallen upon the inhabitants of the earth. In the plan of redemption, Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 47.

‘So long as we are united to Him [Christ] by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 123.

### **‘The Almighty God’**

#### **5. How did the Lord identify Himself to Abram? Genesis 17:1.**

NOTE: ‘No finite mind can fully comprehend the existence, the power, the wisdom, or the works of the Infinite One. Says the sacred writer: “Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.” Job 11:7-9. The mightiest intellects of earth cannot comprehend God. Men may be ever searching, ever learning, and still there is an infinity beyond. Yet the works of creation testify of God’s power and greatness. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork.” Psalm 19:1. Those who take the written word as their counsellor will find in science an aid to understand God. “The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.” Romans 1:20.’ *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 116.

#### **6. How does God Himself contrast His power with human power? Isaiah 40:12-17.**

NOTE: ‘Fathers and mothers, teach your children of the wonder-working power of God. His power is manifest in every plant, in every tree that bears fruit. Take the children into the garden and explain to them how He causes the seed to grow. The farmer ploughs his land and sows the seed, but he cannot make the seed grow. He must depend upon God to do that which no human power can do. The Lord puts His own Spirit into the seed, causing it to spring into life. Under His care the germ breaks through the case enclosing it and springs up to develop and bear fruit. As the children study the great lesson book of nature, God will impress their minds. As they are told of the work that He does for the seed, they learn the secret of growth in grace. Rightly understood, these lessons lead to the Creator, teaching those simple, holy truths that bring the heart into close touch with God.’ *Testimonies*, volume 8, page 326.

### **‘They are without excuse’**

#### **7. What clear evidence of the power of God may be seen by everyone? Romans 1:20. Compare Psalm 19:1.**

NOTE: ‘The most profound intellects of the world, when not enlightened by God’s Word, become bewildered and lost while trying to investigate the matters of science and revelation. The Creator and His works are beyond finite comprehension, and men conclude that because they cannot explain the works and ways of God from natural causes, the Bible history is not reliable. Many are so intent upon excluding God from the exercise of sovereign will and power in the established order of the universe, that they demean men, the noblest of His creatures. The theories and speculations of philosophy would make us believe that man has come by slow degrees, not merely from a savage state, but from the very lowest form of the brute creation. They destroy man’s dignity because they will not admit God’s miraculous power. God has illuminated human intellects, and poured a flood of light on the world through discoveries in art and science. But those who view these from a merely human standpoint will most assuredly come to wrong conclusions. The thorns of error, scepticism, and infidelity are disguised by being covered with the garments of philosophy and science. Satan has devised this ingenious manner of winning souls away from the living God, away from the truth and religion. He exalts nature above nature’s Creator.’ *The Upward Look*, page 156.

#### **8. What are the results of denying the infinite power of God? Romans 1:21-26.**

NOTE: ‘Satan is the great enemy of God, and it is his constant aim to lead souls away from their allegiance to the King of heaven. He would have minds so trained that men and women will exert their influence on the side of error and moral corruption, instead of using their talents in the service of God. His object is effectually gained, when, by perverting their ideas of education, he succeeds in enlisting parents and teachers on his side; for a wrong education often starts the mind on the road to infidelity. In many of the schools and colleges of today, the conclusions which learned men have reached as the result of their scientific investigations are carefully taught and fully explained; while the impression is distinctly made that if these learned men are correct, the Bible cannot be. The thorns of scepticism are disguised; they are concealed by the bloom and verdure of science and philosophy. Scepticism is attractive to the human mind. The young see in it an independence that captivates the imagination, and they are deceived. Satan triumphs; it is as he meant it should be. He nourishes every seed of doubt that is sown in young hearts, and soon a plentiful harvest of infidelity is reaped. We cannot afford to allow the minds of

our youth to be thus leavened; for it is on these youth we must depend to carry forward the work of the future. We desire for them something more than the opportunity for education in the sciences. The science of true education is the truth, which is to be so deeply impressed on the soul that it cannot be obliterated by the error that everywhere abounds.' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pages 541-542.

## **'Worship Him that made heaven and earth'**

### **9. What special message is to be given to the world just before Jesus returns? Revelation 14:7, last part.**

NOTE: 'In Revelation 14, men are called upon to worship the Creator; and the prophecy brings to view a class that, as the result of the threefold message, are keeping the commandments of God. One of these commandments points directly to God as the Creator. The fourth precept declares: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:10, 11). Concerning the Sabbath, the Lord says, further, that it is "a sign, . . . that ye may know that I am the Lord your God" (Ezekiel 20:20). And the reason given is: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed" (Exodus 31:17). 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.

### **10. When Job dared to question the Almighty, how did God answer him? Job 31:35-37, Job 38:4.**

NOTE: 'The Bible is of the highest value because it is the word of the living God. Of all the books in the world it is the most deserving of study and attention, for it is eternal wisdom. The Bible is a history that tells us of the creation of the world and opens to us past centuries. Without it we should have been left to conjecture and fable in regard to the occurrences of the remote past. It reveals to us the Creator of the heavens and the earth, with the universe that He has brought into being, and it sheds a glorious light over the world to come. The Bible is a field where are concealed heavenly treasures, and they will remain hidden until, by diligent mining, they are discovered and brought to light. The Bible is a casket containing jewels of inestimable value, which should be so presented as to be seen in their intrinsic lustre. But the beauty and excellence of these diamonds of truth are not discerned by the natural eye. The lovely things of the material world are not seen until the sun, dispelling the darkness, floods them with its light. And so with the treasures of God's word; they are not appreciated until they are revealed by the Sun of Righteousness.' *Counsels to Teachers, Parents & Students*, page 421.

## **'The Gospel of Christ'**

### **11. What is the greatest expression of the power of God today? Romans 1:16.**

NOTE: 'Christ promised that the Holy Spirit should abide with those who wrestle for victory over sin, to demonstrate the power of divine might by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Of what avail would it be to us that the only begotten Son of God humbled Himself, endured the temptations of the wily foe, and died, the just for the unjust, if the Spirit had not been given as a constant, working, regenerating agent, to make effectual in each individual case what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer?' *Gospel Workers*, page 286.

### **12. What assurance are we given that God's people may be kept from sin by the power of God unto salvation? 1 Peter 1:3-5.**

NOTE: 'Jesus offers Himself to every sin-sick soul, to every soul who is struggling to overcome. The Holy Spirit is making intercession for every sincere wrestler, and Christ will make His words to be spirit and life, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' *Our High Calling*, page 101.

'Those who are unwilling to forsake every sin and to seek earnestly for God's blessing, will not obtain it. But all who will lay hold of God's promises as did Jacob, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded.' *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 203.

## **Lesson 2: 'I am the bread of life'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.' John 6:35.

STUDY HELP: *That I May Know Him*, pages 106-107.

### **Introduction**

'As in the natural, so in the spiritual world. The natural life is preserved moment by moment by divine power; yet it is not sustained by a direct miracle, but through the use of blessings placed within our reach. So the spiritual life is sustained by the

use of those means that Providence has supplied. If the follower of Christ would grow up “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13), he must eat of the bread of life, and drink of the water of salvation.’ *Review & Herald*, August 31, 1911.

### **‘Bread from heaven for you’**

#### **1. How did the Lord supply the physical needs of His people in the wilderness? Exodus 16:35.**

NOTE: When God led the children of Israel out of Egypt, it was His purpose to establish them in the land of Canaan a pure, happy, healthy people. Let us look at the means by which He would accomplish this. He subjected them to a course of discipline, which, had it been cheerfully followed, would have resulted in good, both to themselves and to their posterity. He removed flesh food from them in a great measure. He had granted them flesh in answer to their clamours, just before reaching Sinai, but it was furnished for only one day. God might have provided flesh as easily as manna, but a restriction was placed upon the people for their good. It was His purpose to supply them with food better suited to their wants than the feverish diet to which many of them had been accustomed in Egypt. The perverted appetite was to be brought into a more healthy state, that they might enjoy the food originally provided for man, the fruits of the earth, which God gave to Adam and Eve in Eden. Had they been willing to deny appetite in obedience to His restrictions, feebleness and disease would have been unknown among them. Their descendants would have possessed physical and mental strength. They would have had clear perceptions of truth and duty, keen discrimination, and sound judgment.’ *Counsels on Diet & Foods*, pages 377-378.

#### **2. What was the purpose of the miracle of the manna? Exodus 16:4, 22-28.**

NOTE: ‘Let us seek to follow the counsel of God in all things, for He is infinite in wisdom. Though in the past we have come short of doing what we might have done... let us now repent and redeem the time. The Lord says: “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword.” Isaiah 1:18-20. The message, “Go forward,” is still to be heard and repeated. The varying circumstances taking place in our world call for labour that will meet these peculiar developments. The Lord has need of men who are spiritually sharp and clear-sighted, men who are certainly receiving manna fresh from heaven. The Holy Spirit works upon the hearts of such men, and God’s word flashes light into the mind, revealing to them more than ever before the true wisdom.’ *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 149.

### **‘The golden pot that had manna’**

#### **3. What permanent reminder was made of the Lord’s miraculous provision for His people? Exodus 16:33-34. See Hebrews 9:3-4.**

NOTE: ‘Christians should not allow themselves to be troubled with anxious care as to the necessities of life. If men love and obey God, and do their part, God will provide for all their wants. Although your living may have to be obtained by the sweat of your brow, you are not to distrust God; for in the great plan of His providence, He will supply your need from day to day... Do your duty, and trust in God; for He knows of what things you have need.’ *Review & Herald*, September 18, 1888.

#### **4. How did Jesus remind His disciples of this important truth? Matthew 6:31-33.**

NOTE: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.” Often the follower of Christ is brought where he cannot serve God and carry forward his worldly enterprises. Perhaps it appears that obedience to some plain requirement of God will cut off his means of support. Satan would make him believe that he must sacrifice his conscientious convictions. But the only thing in our world upon which we can rely is the word of God. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33. Even in this life it is not for our good to depart from the will of our Father in heaven. When we learn the power of His word, we shall not follow the suggestions of Satan in order to obtain food or to save our lives. Our only questions will be, What is God’s command? and what [is] His promise? Knowing these, we shall obey the one, and trust the other.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 121.

‘Christ has given us no promise of help in bearing today the burdens of tomorrow. He has said, “My grace is sufficient for thee”; but, like the manna given in the wilderness, His grace is bestowed daily, for the day’s need. Like the hosts of Israel in their pilgrim life, we may find morning by morning the bread of heaven for the day’s supply.’ *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 119.

### **‘To prepare it every Sabbath’**

#### **5. What continual reminder of God’s provision for His people was in the sanctuary? Exodus 25:30.**

NOTE: ‘The showbread was kept ever before the Lord as a perpetual offering. It was called showbread, or “bread of the presence,” because it was ever before the face of the Lord. It was an acknowledgment of man’s dependence upon God for both temporal and spiritual food, and that it is received only through the mediation of Christ. Both the manna and the showbread pointed to Christ, the living bread, who is ever in the presence of God for us.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 197.

#### **6. How often was new bread provided? 1 Chronicles 9:32.**

NOTE: ‘As you meet from Sabbath to Sabbath, sing praises to Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood” let the heart’s adoration be given. Let the love of Christ be the burden of the speaker’s utterance. Let it be expressed in simple language in every song of praise. Let the inspiration of the Spirit of God dictate your prayers. As the word of life is spoken, let your heartfelt response testify that you

receive the message as from heaven. This is very old-fashioned, I know; but it will be a thank offering to God for the bread of life given to the hungry soul. This response to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will be a strength to your own soul and an encouragement to others.' *Testimonies, volume 6, page 367.*

'The word of God, spoken by Christ in the Old and New Testaments, is the bread from heaven; but much that is called science is as dishes of human invention, adulterated food; it is not the true manna.' *Testimonies, volume 6, page 132.*

### **'Not by bread alone'**

#### **7. How did the tempter seek to lead the Saviour into sin? Matthew 4:1-3.**

NOTE: 'These first words betray his character. "If Thou be the Son of God." Here is the insinuation of distrust. Should Jesus do what Satan suggests, it would be an acceptance of the doubt. The tempter plans to overthrow Christ by the same means that were so successful with the human race in the beginning. How artfully had Satan approached Eve in Eden! "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Genesis 3:1. Thus far the tempter's words were truth; but in his manner of speaking them there was a disguised contempt for the words of God. There was a covert negative, a doubt of the divine truthfulness. Satan sought to instil into the mind of Eve the thought that God would not do as He had said; that the withholding of such beautiful fruit was a contradiction of His love and compassion for man. So now the tempter seeks to inspire Christ with his own sentiments.' *Desire of Ages, page 118.*

#### **8. What reply did Jesus make? Matthew 4:4. (See Deuteronomy 8:2-3.)**

NOTE: 'When Christ said to the tempter, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," He repeated the words that, more than fourteen hundred years before, He had spoken to Israel: "The Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness. . . . And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." Deuteronomy 8:2, 3. In the wilderness, when all means of sustenance failed, God sent His people manna from heaven; and a sufficient and constant supply was given. This provision was to teach them that while they trusted in God and walked in His ways He would not forsake them. The Saviour now practiced the lesson He had taught to Israel. By the word of God succour had been given to the Hebrew host, and by the same word it would be given to Jesus. He awaited God's time to bring relief. He was in the wilderness in obedience to God, and He would not obtain food by following the suggestions of Satan. In the presence of the witnessing universe, He testified that it is a less calamity to suffer whatever may befall than to depart in any manner from the will of God.' *Desire of Ages, page 121.*

### **'I AM the bread of life'**

#### **9. What lesson did Jesus seek to teach about the manna? John 6:30-35.**

NOTE: 'The figure which Christ used was a familiar one to the Jews. Moses, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, had said, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." And the prophet Jeremiah had written, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Deuteronomy 8:3; Jeremiah 15:16. The rabbis themselves had a saying, that the eating of bread, in its spiritual significance, was the study of the law and the practice of good works; and it was often said that at the Messiah's coming all Israel would be fed. The teaching of the prophets made plain the deep spiritual lesson in the miracle of the loaves. This lesson Christ was seeking to open to His hearers in the synagogue. Had they understood the Scriptures, they would have understood His words when He said, "I am the bread of life." Only the day before, the great multitude, when faint and weary, had been fed by the bread which He had given. As from that bread they had received physical strength and refreshment, so from Christ they might receive spiritual strength unto eternal life. "He that cometh to Me," He said, "shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." But He added, "Ye also have seen Me, and believe not.'" *Desire of Ages, page 386.*

#### **10. What did Jesus mean by this? John 6:51-57.**

NOTE: "'I am the bread of life," the Author, Nourisher, and Supporter of eternal, spiritual life. Christ represents Himself under the similitude of heavenly bread. To eat His flesh and to drink His blood means to receive Him as a heaven-sent teacher. Belief in Him is essential to spiritual life. Those who feast on the Word never hunger, never thirst, never desire any higher or more exalted good. Christ explained the meaning of His words so clearly that none need stumble over them. His statement regarding eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God is to be taken in a spiritual sense. We eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood when by faith we lay hold upon Him as our Saviour. Christ used the figure of eating and drinking to represent that nearness to Him which all must have who are at last partakers with Him in His glory. The temporal food we eat is assimilated, giving strength and solidity to the body. In a similar manner, as we believe and receive the words of the Lord Jesus, they become a part of our spiritual life, bringing light and peace, hope and joy, and strengthening the soul as physical food strengthens the body.' *Lift Him Up, page 105.*

### **'As often as ye eat this bread'**

#### **11. How did Christ seek to remind His disciples of this lesson? Matthew 26:26.**

NOTE: 'No human agent can supply that which will satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul. But Jesus says, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." John 6:35. The more we know of God, the higher will be our ideal of character and the more earnest our longing to reflect His likeness. A divine element

combines with the human when the soul reaches out after God and the longing heart can say, "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." Psalm 62:5. The continual cry of the heart is, "More of Thee," and ever the Spirit's answer is, "Much more." Romans 5:9, 10. It was the good pleasure of the Father that in Christ should "all the fullness dwell," and "in Him ye are made full." Colossians 1:19, R.V.; 2:10, R.V. Christ is the great depository of justifying righteousness and sanctifying grace. All may come to Him, and receive of His fullness.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 109.

## **12. What promise is made to the overcomer? Revelation 2:17.**

NOTE: 'The manna, falling from heaven for the sustenance of Israel, was a type of Him who came from God to give life to the world. Said Jesus, "I am that Bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven. . . . If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." John 6:48-51. And among the promises of blessing to God's people in the future life it is written, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." Revelation 2:17.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 297.

'The work of Christ was to give again to the world the truth in its original freshness and beauty. He represented the spiritual and the heavenly, by the things of nature and experience. He gave fresh manna to the hungry soul, presented a new kingdom which was to be set up among men.' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 236.

'The Christian is to publish the good news of salvation, and he is never to weary of the recital of God's goodness. He is continually to draw with Christ, and continually to draw from Christ, eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man, which Jesus declares are His words, that are spirit and life. Thus he will always have a fresh supply of heavenly manna. Every Christian, high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, is to talk of the kingdom of God, to speak of Christ and Him crucified, to those who are in ignorance and sin. You are to speak to sinners, for you know not but God is moving upon their hearts. Never forget that great responsibility attaches to every word you utter in their presence.' *Publishing Ministry*, page 285.

## **Lesson 3: 'I am the light of the world'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?' Psalm 27:1.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, pages 463-475.

### **Introduction**

'God is light; and in the words, "I am the light of the world," Christ declared His oneness with God, and His relation to the whole human family. It was He who at the beginning had caused "the light to shine out of darkness." 2 Corinthians 4:6. He is the light of sun and moon and star. He was the spiritual light that in symbol and type and prophecy had shone upon Israel. But not to the Jewish nation alone was the light given. As the sunbeams penetrate to the remotest corners of the earth, so does the light of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon every soul.' *Desire of Ages*, page 464.

### **'In Him was light'**

#### **1. Who is the source of all light? Genesis 1:3. Compare John 1:1-3.**

NOTE: 'As the moon and the stars of the solar system shine by the reflected light of the sun, so, as far as their teaching is true, do the world's great thinkers reflect the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Every gem of thought, every flash of the intellect, is from the Light of the world. In these days we hear much about "higher education." The true "higher education" is that imparted by Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." Colossians 2:3; John 1:4. "He that followeth Me," said Jesus, "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."' *Desire of Ages*, page 464.

#### **2. How may we be illuminated by that light? Psalm 119:130. Compare Psalm 119:105.**

NOTE: 'The entrance of God's word is the application of divine truth to the heart, purifying and refining the soul through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The faculties devoted unreservedly to God, under the guidance of the divine Spirit, develop steadily and harmoniously. Devotion and piety establish so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like Him. Through the power of God, his weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. He becomes a person of sound principle, clear perception, and reliable, well-balanced judgment. Having a connection with God, the source of light and understanding, his views, unbiased by his own preconceived opinions, become broader, his discernment more penetrative and farseeing. The knowledge of God, the understanding of His revealed will, as far as human minds can grasp it, will, when received into the character, make efficient men.' *Counsels to Teachers, Parents & Students*, page 37.

### **'All the night with a light'**

#### **3. How did God use light to guide and protect His people? Nehemiah 9:19.**

NOTE: 'Christ was the leader of the children of Israel in their wilderness wanderings. Enshrouded in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, He led and guided them. He preserved them from the perils of the wilderness, He brought them

into the land of promise, and in the sight of all the nations that acknowledged not God He established Israel as His own chosen possession, the Lord's vineyard.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 287.

'Every child of God should be intelligent in the Scriptures, and able, by tracing the fulfilment of prophecy, to show our position in this world's history. The Bible was written for the common people as well as for scholars, and is within the comprehension of all. The great truths which underlie man's duty to his fellow men and to his Maker are clearly revealed; and those who really want the truth need make no mistake. The way is not left in uncertainty, as though we were standing where four roads met, not knowing which one to take. The truth is our guide; it is to us like a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.' *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, page 23.

#### **4. What was the effect of this pillar on the enemies of God's people? Exodus 14:20.**

NOTE: 'As the Egyptian host approached them, expecting to make them an easy prey, the cloudy column rose majestically into the heavens, passed over the Israelites, and descended between them and the armies of Egypt. A wall of darkness interposed between the pursued and their pursuers. The Egyptians could no longer discern the camp of the Hebrews, and were forced to halt. But as the darkness of night deepened, the wall of cloud became a great light to the Hebrews, flooding the entire encampment with the radiance of day... The light from God's pillar of fire shone upon the foam-capped billows, and lighted the road that was cut like a mighty furrow through the waters of the sea, and was lost in the obscurity of the farther shore. "The Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians." The mysterious cloud changed to a pillar of fire before their astonished eyes. The thunders pealed and the lightnings flashed. "The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound: Thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of Thy thunder was in the whirlwind; the lightning lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook." Psalm 77:17, 18, R.V. The Egyptians were seized with confusion and dismay. Amid the wrath of the elements, in which they heard the voice of an angry God, they endeavoured to retrace their steps and flee to the shore they had quitted. But Moses stretched out his rod, and the piled-up waters, hissing, roaring, and eager for their prey, rushed together and swallowed the Egyptian army in their black depths.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, pages 284-287.

### **'To burn continually'**

#### **5. How was the presence of the Light of the world taught through the sanctuary service? Leviticus 24:2-3. Compare Isaiah 60:19-20.**

NOTE: 'The refining influence of the grace of God changes the natural disposition of man. Heaven would not be desirable to the carnal-minded; their natural, unsanctified hearts would feel no attraction toward that pure and holy place, and if it were possible for them to enter, they would find there nothing congenial. The propensities that control the natural heart must be subdued by the grace of Christ before fallen man is fitted to enter heaven and enjoy the society of the pure, holy angels. When man dies to sin and is quickened to new life in Christ, divine love fills his heart; his understanding is sanctified; he drinks from an inexhaustible fountain of joy and knowledge, and the light of an eternal day shines upon his path, for with him continually is the Light of life.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 273.

#### **6. When we walk in the light, what are we called upon to be? Matthew 5:14, 16.**

NOTE: "'Ye are the light of the world," He said. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:14, 16... In the night of spiritual darkness God's glory is to shine forth through His church in lifting up the bowed down and comforting those that mourn. All around us are heard the wails of a world's sorrow. On every hand are the needy and distressed. It is ours to aid in relieving and softening life's hardships and misery. Practical work will have far more effect than mere sermonising. We are to give food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, and shelter to the homeless. And we are called to do more than this. The wants of the soul, only the love of Christ can satisfy. If Christ is abiding in us, our hearts will be full of divine sympathy. The sealed fountains of earnest, Christlike love will be unsealed. God calls not only for our gifts for the needy, but for our cheerful countenance, our hopeful words, our kindly handclasp. When Christ healed the sick, He laid His hands upon them. So should we come in close touch with those whom we seek to benefit. There are many from whom hope has departed. Bring back the sunshine to them. Many have lost their courage. Speak to them words of cheer. Pray for them. There are those who need the bread of life. Read to them from the word of God. Upon many is a soul sickness which no earthly balm can reach nor physician heal. Pray for these souls, bring them to Jesus. Tell them that there is a balm in Gilead and a Physician there.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 416-418.

### **'Light of the glorious gospel'**

#### **7. How did the Light of the world shine upon Saul? Acts 26:12-15. Compare 2 Corinthians 4:4.**

NOTE: 'In Christ is gathered all the glory of the Father. In Him is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. The glory of the attributes of God are expressed in His character. The gospel is glorious because it is made up of His righteousness. It is Christ unfolded, and Christ is the gospel embodied. Every page of the New Testament Scriptures shines with His light. Every text is a diamond, touched and irradiated by the divine rays. We are not to praise the gospel, but praise Christ. We are not to worship the gospel, but the Lord of [the] gospel. Christ is a perfect representation of God on the one hand, and a perfect specimen of sinless humanity on the other hand. Thus He has combined divinity and humanity.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 7*, page 907.

#### **8. What knowledge does the light reveal and what are we to do with this knowledge? 2 Corinthians 4:6, 1 Peter 2:9.**

NOTE: 'This method of presenting the gospel characterized the labours of the apostle throughout his ministry among the Gentiles. Always he kept before them the cross of Calvary... The consecrated messengers who in the early days of Christianity carried to a perishing world the glad tidings of salvation, allowed no thought of self-exaltation to mar their presentation of Christ and Him crucified. They coveted neither authority nor pre-eminence. Hiding self in the Saviour, they exalted the great plan of salvation, and the life of Christ, the Author and Finisher of this plan. Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, was the burden of their teaching. If those who today are teaching the word of God, would uplift the cross of Christ higher and still higher, their ministry would be far more successful. If sinners can be led to give one earnest look at the cross, if they can obtain a full view of the crucified Saviour, they will realize the depth of God's compassion and the sinfulness of sin. Christ's death proves God's great love for man. It is our pledge of salvation. To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. With the relenting compassion of a father's love, Jehovah looks upon the suffering that His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death, and accepts us in the Beloved.' *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 208-209.

### **'A light that shineth in a dark place'**

#### **9. What special light has God given to His people? 2 Peter 1:19. Compare Psalm 43:3, Daniel 2:22, Proverbs 4:18.**

NOTE: 'God cannot display the knowledge of His will and the wonders of His grace among the unbelieving world unless He has witnesses scattered all over the earth. It is His plan that those who are partakers of this great salvation through Jesus Christ should be His missionaries, bodies of light throughout the world, to be as signs to the people, living epistles, known and read of all men, their faith and works testifying to the near approach of the coming Saviour and showing that they have not received the grace of God in vain. The people must be warned to prepare for the coming judgment. To those who have been listening only to fables, God will give an opportunity to hear the sure word of prophecy, whereunto they do well that they take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. He will present the sure word of truth to the understanding of all who will take heed; all may contrast truth with the fables presented to them by men who claim to understand the word of God and to be qualified to instruct those in darkness.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 631.

#### **10. What sad statements did John make concerning the light? John 1:5, John 3:19-20. Compare Isaiah 8:20.**

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.

### **'A light unto me'**

#### **11. What precious promises may we trust in concerning the Light of the world? Micah 7:7-8, Psalm 18:28, Psalm 27:1.**

NOTE: 'Bid the tempted one look not to circumstances, to the weakness of self, or to the power of temptation, but to the power of God's word. All its strength is ours. "Thy word," says the psalmist, "have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." "By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Psalms 119:11; 17:4. Talk courage to the people; lift them up to God in prayer. Many who have been overcome by temptation are humiliated by their failures, and they feel that it is in vain for them to approach unto God; but this thought is of the enemy's suggestion. When they have sinned, and feel that they cannot pray, tell them that it is then the time to pray. Ashamed they may be, and deeply humbled; but as they confess their sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive their sins and cleanse them from all unrighteousness. Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. By prayer, by the study of His word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go.' *Ministry of Healing*, pages 181-182.

#### **12. When the Egyptians were plagued by darkness, how did the Lord care for His people? Exodus 10:22-23.**

NOTE: 'The king chose to receive the plagues rather than to submit to God. Without remorse he saw his whole kingdom under the miracle of these dreadful judgments. The Lord then sent darkness upon Egypt. The people were not merely deprived of light, but the atmosphere was very oppressive, so that breathing was difficult; yet the Hebrews had a pure atmosphere and light in their dwellings.' *The Story of Redemption*, page 117.

#### **13. When the Lord brings this plague upon the world again, will He take care of His people once more? Revelation 16:10-11, Psalm 91:9-11. Compare Psalm 139:12.**

NOTE: 'With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens, and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant, and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness. It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick

succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement on the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance.' *Last Day Events*, page 246.

## Lesson 4: 'I am the door of the sheep'

MEMORY VERSE: 'I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.' John 10:9.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, pages 476-484.

### Introduction

'Christ is the door to the fold of God. Through this door all His children, from the earliest times, have found entrance. In Jesus, as shown in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelation of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples, and in the miracles wrought for the sons of men, they have beheld "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), and through Him they are brought within the fold of His grace.' *Desire of Ages*, page 477.

### 'I am the Door'

#### 1. How did Jesus explain that He is the only means of salvation? John 10:7-10.

NOTE: 'It is those who by faith follow Jesus in the great work of the atonement who receive the benefits of His mediation in their behalf, while those who reject the light which brings to view this work of ministration are not benefited thereby. The Jews who rejected the light given at Christ's first advent, and refused to believe on Him as the Saviour of the world, could not receive pardon through Him. When Jesus at His ascension entered by His own blood into the heavenly sanctuary to shed upon His disciples the blessings of His mediation, the Jews were left in total darkness to continue their useless sacrifices and offerings. The ministration of types and shadows had ceased. That door by which men had formerly found access to God was no longer open. The Jews had refused to seek Him in the only way whereby He could then be found, through the ministration in the sanctuary in heaven. Therefore they found no communion with God. To them the door was shut. They had no knowledge of Christ as the true sacrifice and the only mediator before God; hence they could not receive the benefits of His mediation. The condition of the unbelieving Jews illustrates the condition of the careless and unbelieving among professed Christians, who are willingly ignorant of the work of our merciful High Priest.' *Great Controversy*, page 430.

#### 2. How did Peter express this truth? Acts 4:12.

NOTE: 'Nothing but the righteousness of Christ can entitle us to one of the blessings of the covenant of grace. There are many who have long desired and tried to obtain these blessings, but have not received them, because they have cherished the idea that they could do something to make themselves worthy of them. They have not looked away from self, believing that Jesus is an all-sufficient Saviour. We must not think that our own merits will save us; Christ is our only hope of salvation. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. When we trust God fully, when we rely upon the merits of Jesus as a sin-pardoning Saviour, we shall receive all the help that we can desire. Let none look to self, as though they had power to save themselves. Jesus died for us because we were helpless to do this. In Him is our hope, our justification, our righteousness. When we see our sinfulness we should not despond and fear that we have no Saviour, or that He has no thoughts of mercy toward us. At this very time He is inviting us to come to Him in our helplessness and be saved.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 431.

### 'The door was shut'

#### 3. What other door provided the only means of salvation for sinful men? Genesis 6:16, Genesis 7:16.

NOTE: 'When they saw the beasts come from the forests to the door of the ark, and Noah take them in, they had so long resisted, so long denied the message that God had given them, that conscience had become unimpressible. Mercy had ceased its pleadings for the guilty race. The beasts of the field and the birds of the air had entered the place of refuge. Noah and his household were within the ark, "and the Lord shut him in." The massive door, which it was impossible for those within to close, was slowly swung to its place by unseen hands. Noah was shut in, and the rejecters of God's mercy were shut out. The seal of Heaven was on that door; God had shut it, and God alone could open it. So when Christ shall cease His intercession for guilty men, before His coming in the clouds of heaven, the door of mercy will be shut. Then divine grace will no longer restrain the wicked, and Satan will have full control of those who have rejected mercy. They will endeavour to destroy God's people; but as Noah was shut into the ark, so the righteous will be shielded by divine power.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 39.

#### 4. How did Christ illustrate this same truth? Matthew 25:1-12.

NOTE: 'Let none follow the example of the foolish virgins and think that it will be safe to wait until the crisis comes before gaining a preparation of character to stand in that time. It will be too late to seek for the righteousness of Christ when the guests are called in and examined. Now is the time to put on the righteousness of Christ, the wedding garment that will fit you to enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb. In the parable, the foolish virgins are represented as begging for oil and failing to receive it at their request. This is symbolic of those who have not prepared themselves by developing a character to stand in a time of crisis. It is as if they should go to their neighbours and say, Give me your character or I shall be lost. Those that were

wise could not impart their oil to the flickering lamps of the foolish virgins. Character is not transferable. It is not to be bought or sold; it is to be acquired. The Lord has given to every individual an opportunity to obtain a righteous character, but He has not provided a way by which one human agent may impart to another the character which he has developed.' *That I May Know Him*, page 350.

### **'The LORD will pass over the door'**

#### **5. What vital lesson was taught in the Passover service? Exodus 12:22-23.**

NOTE: 'The Israelites were required to sprinkle the door-posts with the blood of a slain lamb, in order that when the angel of death passed through the land, they might escape destruction. But if instead of doing this simple act of faith and obedience, they had barricaded the door, and taken every precaution to keep the destroying angel out, their pains would have been in vain. When the blood was seen upon the door-post, it was enough. The salvation of the house was assured. So it is in the work of salvation; it is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from all sin. Through the merits of His blood, you may overcome every spiritual foe, and remedy every defect of character.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 227.

'When God was about to smite the first-born of Egypt, He commanded the Israelites to gather their children from among the Egyptians into their own dwellings and strike their door posts with blood, that the destroying angel might see it and pass over their homes. It was the work of parents to gather in their children. This is your work, this is my work, and the work of every mother who believes the truth. The angel is to place a mark upon the forehead of all who are separated from sin and sinners, and the destroying angel will follow, to slay utterly both old and young.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 505.

#### **6. How are we shown the importance of the blood of Jesus shed for us? 1 John 1:7, Hebrews 10:28-29, John 6:53-56.**

NOTE: 'It is not God's will that you should be distrustful, and torture your soul with the fear that God will not accept you because you are sinful and unworthy. Present your case before Him, pleading the merits of the blood shed for you upon Calvary's cross. Satan will accuse you of being a great sinner, and you must admit this, but you can say: "I know I am a sinner, and that is the reason I need a Saviour. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." I have no merit or goodness whereby I may claim salvation, but I present before God the all-atoning blood of the spotless Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is my only plea. The name of Jesus gives me access to the Father. His ear, His heart, is open to my faintest pleading, and He supplies my deepest necessities.'" *Reflecting Christ*, page 75.

### **'He shall also bring him to the door'**

#### **7. What other lesson may we learn from the door? Exodus 21:5-6.**

NOTE: Once every seven years Hebrew slaves were set free. From whatever cause a man may have fallen into servitude, either from having been bought from a foreign owner, or having committed a crime, or become bankrupt, there was a door open for him at the end of the sixth year. This prospect of independence enabled him to bear up through his term of servitude. There was a bright day coming when he would go out a free man. But the law also made provision for the slave who, having served his term of servitude, decided that he loved his master and was willing to continue to serve him. In such a case, a mark was placed upon the willing slave and his service became permanent.

#### **8. What did Jesus say of those who faithfully serve Him? John 12:26.**

NOTE: 'All who have borne with Jesus the cross of sacrifice will be sharers with Him of His glory. It was the joy of Christ in His humiliation and pain that His disciples should be glorified with Him. They are the fruit of His self-sacrifice. The outworking in them of His own character and spirit is His reward, and will be His joy throughout eternity. This joy they share with Him as the fruit of their labour and sacrifice is seen in other hearts and lives. They are workers together with Christ, and the Father will honour them as He honours His Son.' *Desire of Ages*, page 624.

#### **9. How did Paul describe those who are servants of Christ? 1 Corinthians 7:22.**

NOTE: 'The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love, homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service.' *Great Controversy*, page 493.

### **'Thou shalt write them upon the door posts'**

#### **10. What reminder were the Israelites to place upon the doorposts of their homes? Deuteronomy 11:18-20.**

NOTE: 'In the days of the wilderness wandering the Lord had made abundant provision for His children to keep in remembrance the words of His law. After the settlement in Canaan the divine precepts were to be repeated daily in every home; they were to be written plainly upon the doorposts and gates, and spread upon memorial tablets. They were to be set to music and chanted by young and old. Priests were to teach these holy precepts in public assemblies, and the rulers of the land were to make them their daily study. "Meditate therein day and night," the Lord commanded Joshua concerning the book of the law, "that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Joshua 1:8.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 464.

#### **11. What ways has Jesus given for us to remember Him? Luke 22:19-20.**

NOTE: 'In this last act of Christ in partaking with His disciples of the bread and wine, He pledged Himself to them as their Redeemer by a new covenant, in which it was written and sealed that upon all who will receive Christ by faith will be bestowed all the blessings that heaven can supply, both in this life and in the future immortal life. This covenant deed was to be ratified by Christ's own blood, which it had been the office of the old sacrificial offerings to keep before the minds of His chosen people. Christ designed that this supper should be often commemorated, in order to bring to our remembrance His sacrifice in giving His life for the remission of the sins of all who will believe on Him and receive Him. This ordinance is not to be exclusive, as many would make it. Each must participate in it publicly, and thus say: "I accept Christ as my personal Saviour. He gave His life for me, that I might be rescued from death."' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, June 22, 1897.

### **'An open door and no man can shut'**

#### **12. What has Christ set before His people? Revelation 3:8.**

NOTE: 'Salvation is a free gift, and yet it is to be bought and sold. In the market of which divine mercy has the management, the precious pearl is represented as being bought without money and without price. In this market all may obtain the goods of heaven. The treasury of the jewels of truth is open to all. "Behold, I have set before thee an open door," the Lord declares, "and no man can shut it." No sword guards the way through this door. Voices from within and at the door say, Come. The Saviour's voice earnestly and lovingly invites us: "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." Revelation 3:8, 18. The gospel of Christ is a blessing that all may possess. The poorest are as well able as the richest to purchase salvation; for no amount of worldly wealth can secure it. It is obtained by willing obedience, by giving ourselves to Christ as His own purchased possession. Education, even of the highest class, cannot of itself bring a man nearer to God. The Pharisees were favoured with every temporal and every spiritual advantage, and they said with boastful pride, We are "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing"; yet they were "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Revelation 3:17. Christ offered them the pearl of great price; but they disdained to accept it, and He said to them, "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Matthew 21:31. We cannot earn salvation, but we are to seek for it with as much interest and perseverance as though we would abandon everything in the world for it.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 117.

#### **13. What door has Christ opened for His people? Hebrews 10:19.**

NOTE: 'It is those who by faith follow Jesus in the great work of the atonement who receive the benefits of His mediation in their behalf, while those who reject the light which brings to view this work of ministration are not benefited thereby. The Jews who rejected the light given at Christ's first advent and refused to believe on Him as the Saviour of the world, could not receive pardon through Him. When Jesus at His ascension entered by His own blood into the heavenly sanctuary to shed upon His disciples the blessings of His mediation, the Jews were left in total darkness to continue their useless sacrifices and offerings. The ministration of types and shadows had ceased. That door by which men had formerly found access to God was no longer open. The Jews had refused to seek Him in the only way whereby He could then be found, through the ministration in the sanctuary in heaven. Therefore they found no communion with God. To them the door was shut. They had no knowledge of Christ as the true sacrifice and the only mediator before God; hence they could not receive the benefits of His mediation. The condition of the unbelieving Jews illustrates the condition of the careless and unbelieving among professed Christians, who are willingly ignorant of the work of our merciful High Priest. In the typical service, when the high priest entered the most holy place, all Israel were required to gather about the sanctuary and in the most solemn manner humble their souls before God, that they might receive the pardon of their sins and not be cut off from the congregation. How much more essential in this antitypical Day of Atonement that we understand the work of our High Priest and know what duties are required of us.' *Great Controversy*, page 430.

## **Lesson 5: 'I am the good shepherd'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.' Isaiah 40:11.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, page 476-484.

### **Introduction**

'The Bible reveals Christ to us as the Good Shepherd, seeking with unwearied feet for the lost sheep. By methods peculiarly His own He helped all who were in need of help. With tender, courteous grace He ministered to sin-sick souls, bringing healing and strength. The simplicity and earnestness with which He addressed those in need hallowed every word. He proclaimed His message from the mountainside, from the fisherman's boat, in the desert, in the great thoroughfares of travel. Wherever He found those ready to listen He was ready to open to them the treasure house of truth.' *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 261.

### **'The Shepherd and Bishop of your souls'**

#### **1. How did David describe His relationship with the Lord? Psalm 23:1. Compare Psalm 80:1.**

NOTE: The older English translation renders it: 'The Lord is my Shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing.' Much meaning may be gained by saying the first part of the verse four times, emphasising a different word each time: The **Lord** is my shepherd. The Lord **is** my shepherd. The Lord is **my** shepherd. The Lord is my **shepherd**.

**2. How did Peter describe the Lord? 1 Peter 2:25, 1 Peter 5:4.**

NOTE: 'All need to remember that they are pledged to co-operate with Christ, to obey His directions, to follow His guidance. Every hour they are to ask and receive power from on high. They are to cherish a constant sense of the Saviour's love, of His efficiency, His watchfulness, His tenderness. They are to look to Him as the shepherd and bishop of their souls. Then they will have the sympathy and support of the heavenly angels. Christ will be their joy and crown of rejoicing. Their hearts will be controlled by the Holy Spirit, and they will have a knowledge of the truth which merely nominal believers can never gain.' *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 284.

**'I will cause them to lie down'**

**3. What picture of the Good Shepherd's providence and care for His sheep did David speak of? Psalm 23:2.**

NOTE: 'There are three ways in which the Lord reveals His will to us, to guide us, and to fit us to guide others. How may we know His voice from that of a stranger? How shall we distinguish it from the voice of a false shepherd? God reveals His will to us in His word, the Holy Scriptures. His voice is also revealed in His providential workings; and it will be recognized if we do not separate our souls from Him by walking in our own ways, doing according to our own wills, and following the promptings of an unsanctified heart, until the senses have become so confused that eternal things are not discerned, and the voice of Satan is so disguised that it is accepted as the voice of God. Another way in which God's voice is heard is through the appeals of His Holy Spirit, making impressions upon the heart, which will be wrought out in the character. If you are in doubt upon any subject you must first consult the Scriptures.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 512

**4. How did Isaiah picture the Lord's care for His people? Isaiah 40:11. Compare Jeremiah 31:10.**

NOTE: 'Addressing the church elders regarding their responsibilities as undershepherds of Christ's flock, the apostle wrote: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Those who occupy the position of undershepherds are to exercise a watchful diligence over the Lord's flock. This is not to be a dictatorial vigilance, but one that tends to encourage and strengthen and uplift. Ministry means more than sermonizing; it means earnest, personal labour. The church on earth is composed of erring men and women, who need patient, painstaking effort that they may be trained and disciplined to work with acceptance in this life, and in the future life to be crowned with glory and immortality. Pastors are needed, faithful shepherds, who will not flatter God's people, nor treat them harshly, but who will feed them with the bread of life, men who in their lives feel daily the converting power of the Holy Spirit and who cherish a strong, unselfish love toward those for whom they labour.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 526.

**5. What description did the Gospel writers give of the Lord's tender care? Matthew 9:36. Compare Mark 6:34.**

NOTE: 'When Christ saw the multitudes that gathered about Him, "He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." Christ saw the sickness, the sorrow, the want and degradation of the multitudes that thronged His steps. To Him were presented the needs and woes of humanity throughout the world. Among the high and the low, the most honoured and the most degraded, He beheld souls who were longing for the very blessing He had come to bring; souls who needed only a knowledge of His grace, to become subjects of His kingdom. "Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." Matthew 9:36-38. Today the same needs exist. The world is in need of workers who will labour as Christ did for the suffering and the sinful. There is indeed a multitude to be reached. The world is full of sickness, suffering, distress, and sin. It is full of those who need to be ministered unto, the weak, the helpless, the ignorant, the degraded.' *Counsels on Health*, page 13.

**'I will seek that which was lost'**

**6. How is the Good Shepherd's work of salvation described? Psalm 23:3. Compare Hebrews 13:20-21.**

NOTE: 'The church of Christ on earth is to represent Christ's character and work. The aim of Christ's life was to receive of the Father, that He might give, in precept and in unselfish service, that which would save men and women from sinning, and turn the rebellious into paths of righteousness. "For their sakes I sanctify Myself," he said, "that they also might be sanctified through the truth." He stood before the human race as the representative of the Father. He devoted all the powers of His being to the work of redemption. For this He withdrew from the glories of heaven, and set His feet in the path of humiliation and trial. He humbled Himself that He might uplift mankind. As He took up His earthly work and saw the duties and the trials that confronted Him, He did not fail nor become discouraged. His great desire was to establish the cross between divinity and humanity, that man might be reconciled to God.' *Review & Herald*, September 30, 1909.

**7. How did Jesus speak of this work? John 10:2-4, 9-10.**

NOTE: 'Jesus knows us individually, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows us all by name. He knows the very house in which we live, the name of each occupant. He has at times given directions to His servants to go to a certain street in a certain city, to such a house, to find one of His sheep. Every soul is as fully known to Jesus as if he were the only

one for whom the Saviour died. The distress of every one touches His heart. The cry for aid reaches His ear. He came to draw all men unto Himself. He bids them, "Follow Me," and His Spirit moves upon their hearts to draw them to come to Him. Many refuse to be drawn. Jesus knows who they are. He also knows who gladly hear His call, and are ready to come under His pastoral care. He says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." He cares for each one as if there were not another on the face of the earth. "He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. . . . And the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice." The Eastern shepherd does not drive his sheep. He depends not upon force or fear; but going before, he calls them. They know his voice, and obey the call. So does the Saviour-Shepherd with His sheep. The Scripture says, "Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." Through the prophet, Jesus declares, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." He compels none to follow Him. "I drew them," He says, "with cords of a man, with bands of love." Psalm 77:20; Jeremiah 31:3; Hosea 11:4.' *Desire of Ages*, pages 479-480.

### **'I will deliver my flock'**

#### **8. How does the Good Shepherd protect His flock in times of hardship? Psalm 23:4. Compare Ezekiel 34:12.**

NOTE: 'All heaven is interested in the work that is going on in this world. A people is to be prepared for the great day of God, which is right upon us; and we cannot afford to let Satan cast his shadow across our pathway, and intercept our view of Jesus and His infinite love. We should draw from Christ the very help we need. And when do we need His help? It is in times of trial, in times when temptation comes in like flood, when Satan would cast his dark shadow before our souls, that we may not be able to distinguish the sacred from the common. It is then that we need to flee to the Source of our strength. The reason we do not receive more strength is, that we do not respond to the invitation of Christ. You should go right to Him in your difficulties and trials, that you may find the comfort and consolation He is ready to bestow. It is because you do not seek the rest which Jesus is waiting to give, that you walk in the valley of the shadow of death.' *Review & Herald*, January 28, 1890.

#### **9. How does Zechariah contrast the work of false shepherds? Zechariah 11:15-17. Compare John 10:10, 12-13, Ezekiel 34:2-6.**

NOTE: 'Christ warns His followers, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." He exhorts us not to be deceived when false shepherds present their doctrines. These men tell us that the commandments of God were done away at the death of Christ. Shall we believe them, these men who claim to be sanctified, while they refuse to obey God? They say the Lord has told them that they need not keep the Ten Commandments; but has the Lord told them this? No, God does not lie. Satan, who is the father of lies, deceived Adam in a similar way, telling him that he need not obey God, that he would not die if he transgressed the law. But Adam fell, and by his sin he opened the floodgates of woe upon our world. Again, Satan told Cain that he need not follow expressly the command of God in presenting the slain lamb as an offering. Cain obeyed the voice of the deceiver; and because God did not accept his offering, while He showed His approval of Abel's offering, Cain rose up in anger and slew his brother. We need to know for ourselves what voice we are heeding, whether it is the voice of the true and living God or the voice of the great apostate.' *Evangelism*, pages 597-598.

### **'I will feed them in a good pasture'**

#### **10. What picture does David give of the bountiful blessings of the Good Shepherd? Psalm 23:5. Compare Ezekiel 34:14.**

NOTE: 'How wonderfully, with what marvellous beauty, has everything in nature been fashioned. Everywhere we see the perfect works of the great Master Artist. The heavens declare His glory, and the earth, which is formed for the happiness of man, speaks to us of His matchless love. Its surface is not a monotonous plain, but grand old mountains rise to diversify the landscape. There are sparkling streams and fertile valleys, beautiful lakes, broad rivers, and the boundless ocean. God sends the dew and the rain to refresh the thirsty earth. The breezes, that promote health by purifying and cooling the atmosphere, are controlled by His wisdom. He has placed the sun in the heavens to mark the periods of day and night, and by its genial beams give light and warmth to the earth, causing vegetation to flourish. I call your attention to these blessings from the bounteous hand of God. Let the fresh glories of each new morning awaken praise in your hearts for these tokens of His loving care.' *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 312.

#### **11. What parable did Jesus tell of the Shepherd's love and care for His sheep? Luke 15:3-7.**

NOTE: 'The beautiful parable that Christ gave of the one lost sheep, of the shepherd that left the ninety and nine to go in search of that which was lost, illustrates the care of the great Shepherd. He did not look carelessly over the sheep of the fold, and say, "I have ninety and nine, and it will cost me too much trouble to go in search of the straying one; let him come back, and I will open the door of the sheepfold and let him in; but I cannot go after him." No. He counts and recounts the flock, and when he is certain that one sheep is lost, he slumbereth not. He leaves the ninety and nine within the fold; however dark and tempestuous the night, however perilous and unpleasant the way, however long and tedious the search, he does not weary, he does not falter, until the lost is found. But when it is found, does he act indifferently? Does he call the sheep, and command the straying one to follow him? Does he threaten and beat it, or drive it before him, recounting the bitterness and discomfort and anxiety that he has had on its account? No; he lays the weary, exhausted, wandering sheep on his shoulder, and returns it to the fold. His gratitude finds expression in melodious songs of rejoicing, and heavenly choirs respond to the shepherd's note of joy. For "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (John 10:14). Just as a shepherd of earth knows his sheep, so does the chief Shepherd know His flock that are scattered throughout the whole world.

“And ye, my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God” (Ezekiel 34:31). However lowly, however elevated we may be, whether we are in the shadow of adversity or in the sunshine of prosperity, we are His sheep, the flock of His pasture, and under the care of the chief Shepherd.’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 25.

### **‘Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me’**

#### **12. How is the present and future providence of the Good Shepherd described? Psalm 23:6, Luke 12:32.**

NOTE: ‘While we review, not the dark chapters in our experience, but the manifestations of God’s great mercy and unfailing love, we shall praise far more than complain. We shall talk of the loving faithfulness of God as the true, tender, compassionate shepherd of His flock, which He has declared that none shall pluck out of His hand. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like clear-flowing streams, will come from God’s truly believing ones. “Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.” Psalms 23:6; 73:24, 25.’ *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 367.

#### **13. What work of judgement must take place before the Lord’s sheep dwell in His house forever? Matthew 25:31-46. Compare 1 Peter 5:1-4.**

NOTE: ‘Every deed, small and great, is to be brought into recognition. That which has been considered trivial here will then appear as it is. The two mites of the widow will be recognised. The cup of cold water offered, the prison visited, the hungry fed, each will bring its own reward. And that unfulfilled duty, that selfish act, will not be forgotten. In the open court around the throne of God it will appear a very different thing from what it did when it was performed. It will be seen that these selfish pleasures and indulgences have made the human being a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God. But it is not necessary for any to be deceived; and we shall not be if we have fully taken our stand with Christ to follow Him through evil as well as through good report. The character which we now manifest is deciding our future destiny. The happiness of heaven will be found by conforming to the will of God, and if men become members of the royal family in heaven, it will be because heaven has begun with them on earth. The righteous will take every grace, every precious, sanctified ability, into the courts above, and exchange earth for heaven. God knows who are the loyal and true subjects of His kingdom on earth, and those who do His will upon earth as it is done in heaven, will be made the members of the royal family above.’ *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 361.

## **Lesson 6: ‘I am the resurrection and the life’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light.’ Psalm 36:9.

STUDY HELP: *Maranatha*, page 302.

### **Introduction**

‘Jesus declared, “I am the resurrection, and the life.” In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. “He that hath the Son hath life.” The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life. “He that believeth in Me,” said Jesus, “though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.” John 11:25, 26. To the believer, death is but a small matter. Christ speaks of it as if it were of little moment. “If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death,” “he shall never taste of death.” John 8:51, 52. To the Christian, death is but a sleep, a moment of silence and darkness. The life is hid with Christ in God, and “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” Colossians 3:4.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 187.

### **‘The Prince of life’**

#### **1. How did John show that all life derives from Jesus Christ? John 1:3-4, 1 John 1:1-2.**

NOTE: ‘Christ, who created the world and all things that are therein, is the life and light of every living thing. In Jesus is our life derived. In Him is life, that is original, unborrowed, underived life. In us there is a streamlet from the fountain of life. In Him is the fountain of life. Our life is something that we receive, something that the Giver takes back again to Himself. If our life is hid with Christ in God, we shall, when Christ shall appear, also appear with Him in glory. And while in this world we will give to God, in sanctified service, all the capabilities He has given us.’ *Medical Ministry*, page 7.

#### **2. What title did Peter give to Christ? Acts 3:15. Compare Colossians 3:4.**

NOTE: ‘Christ’s words were the water of life. There in the presence of the assembled multitude He set Himself apart to be smitten, that the water of life might flow to the world. In smiting Christ, Satan thought to destroy the Prince of life; but from the smitten rock there flowed living water. As Jesus thus spoke to the people, their hearts thrilled with a strange awe, and many were ready to exclaim, with the woman of Samaria, “Give me this water, that I thirst not.” John 4:15.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 454.

### **‘Thou hast the words of eternal life’**

#### **3. How does Jesus communicate His life to mankind? John 6:63, last part. Compare John 5:38-40 & 2 Peter 1:3-4.**

NOTE: 'We need to understand these words of Christ, "The flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The Holy Word accepted and brought into the practical life. Spiritual life consists in Christ's being the light and life of the soul temple, as the blood is the life of the body. All who study the word are represented as eating the word, feeding on Christ. Even as the bodily necessities must be supplied daily, so the word of God must be daily studied, eaten, and digested, and practised. This sustains the nourishment, to keep the soul in health. The neglect of the word means starvation to the soul. The word describes the blessed man as one meditating day and night upon the truths of God's word. We all are to feast upon the word of God. The relation of the word to the believer is a vital matter. Appropriating the word to our spiritual necessities is the eating of the leaves of the tree of life that are for the healing of the nations. Study the word, and practise the word, for it is your life.' *Counsels on Sabbath School Word*, page 43.

#### **4. How did Peter show His appreciation of this truth? John 6:66-68.**

NOTE: 'To those who obey, the Word of God is the tree of life. It is the word of salvation, received unto eternal life. Those who follow its teachings eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God. On the effect which this word produces on us, depends our destiny for eternity. It possesses the elements necessary for the formation of a perfect character. The Christian is appointed to connect with God in such close relationship that his life is bound up with the life of Christ in the eternal life of God... The word of life is that by which the Christian is to live. From this word we are to receive a continually increasing knowledge of truth. From it we are to gain light, purity, goodness, and a faith which works by love and purifies the soul. It is given us that we may be redeemed and presented faultless before the throne of divine glory. Wondrous victory, gained by Christ in man's behalf!' *This Day With God*, page 120.

### **'More abundantly'**

#### **5. How did Jesus sum up the purpose of His life? John 10:10, last part.**

NOTE: 'There can be no such thing as a narrow life for any soul connected with Christ. Those who love Jesus with heart and mind and soul and their neighbour as themselves have a broad field in which to use their ability and influence. There is no talent to be used for selfish gratification. Self must die, and our lives be hid with Christ in God. The Lord would have us value our souls according to the estimate, as far as we can comprehend it, that Christ has placed upon them. Jesus died that He might redeem man from eternal ruin. Then we are to hold ourselves as property purchased. "Ye are not your own." "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). All our powers of mind and soul and body are the Lord's. Our time belongs to Him. We are to place ourselves in the very best possible condition to do His service, keeping constantly in connection with Christ, and considering daily the costly sacrifice made for us that we should be made the righteousness of God in Him.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 60.

#### **6. What is required of people in order to receive life from Christ? John 3:36.**

NOTE: 'You may say that you believe in Jesus, when you have an appreciation of the cost of salvation. You may make this claim, when you feel that Jesus died for you on the cruel cross of Calvary; when you have an intelligent, understanding faith that His death makes it possible for you to cease from sin, and to perfect a righteous character through the grace of God, bestowed upon you as the purchase of Christ's blood. The eyes of fallen men may be anointed with the eye-salve of spiritual comprehension, and they may see themselves as they really are, poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. They may be brought to realise their need of repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The plan of salvation is not appreciated as it should be. It is not discerned or comprehended. It is made altogether a cheap affair; whereas to unite the human with the divine, required an exertion of Omnipotence.' *Review & Herald*, July 24, 1888.

### **'He laid down His life for us'**

#### **7. What supreme demonstration of God's love has been given? 1 John 3:16.**

NOTE: 'The Lord God of heaven collected all the riches of the universe, and laid them down in order to purchase the pearl of lost humanity. The Father gave all His divine resources into the hands of Christ in order that the richest blessings of heaven might be poured out upon a fallen race. God could not express greater love than He has expressed in giving the Son of His bosom to this world. This gift was given to man to convince him that God had left nothing undone that He could do, that there is nothing held in reserve, but that all heaven has been poured out in one vast gift.' *Lift Him Up*, page 232.

#### **8. What vital change did the death of Christ bring about? Romans 5:10.**

NOTE: 'Jesus did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and exclaimed with His departing breath: "It is finished." Satan was then defeated. He knew that his kingdom was lost. Angels rejoiced as the words were uttered: "It is finished." The great plan of redemption, which was dependent on the death of Christ, had been thus far carried out. And there was joy in heaven that the sons of Adam could, through a life of obedience, be finally exalted to the throne of God. Oh, what love! What amazing love! that brought the Son of God to earth to be made sin for us, that we might be reconciled to God, and elevated to a life with Him in His mansions in glory. Oh, what is man, that such a price should be paid for his redemption!' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 211.

### **'Saved by His life'**

#### **9. Having been reconciled to God by Christ's death, what more vital work is accomplished by the life of Christ? Romans 5:10, last part. Compare 2 Timothy 1:10.**

NOTE: 'The gospel is not without a sign of its divine origin. Is it not a miracle that we can break from the bondage of Satan? Enmity against Satan is not natural to the human heart; it is implanted by the grace of God. When one who has been controlled by a stubborn, wayward will is set free, and yields himself wholeheartedly to the drawing of God's heavenly agencies, a miracle is wrought; so also when a man who has been under strong delusion comes to understand moral truth. Every time a soul is converted, and learns to love God and keep His commandments, the promise of God is fulfilled, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Ezekiel 36:26. The change in human hearts, the transformation of human characters, is a miracle that reveals an ever-living Saviour, working to rescue souls.' *Desire of Ages*, page 407.

**10. How does Paul describe the experience of salvation through Christ's life? Galatians 2:20. Compare Hebrews 7:25.**

NOTE: 'Christ declared, "I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me." John 6:38. His will was put into active exercise to save the souls of men. His human will was nourished by the divine. His servants today would do well to ask themselves, "What kind of will am I individually cultivating? Have I been gratifying my own desires, confirming myself in selfishness and obstinacy?" If we are doing this, we are in great peril, for Satan will always rule the will that is not under the control of the Spirit of God. When we place our will in unison with the will of God, the holy obedience that was exemplified in the life of Christ will be seen in our lives. Paul declares, "I am crucified with Christ." Galatians 2:20. There is nothing so hard as the crucifixion of the will. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are; but His will was ever kept on the side of God's will.' *Our High Calling*, page 107.

### **'I AM the Resurrection and the Life'**

**11. How did Jesus express His power to give life? John 11:25. Compare John 10:28, John 17:2.**

NOTE: 'The resurrection of Jesus was a type of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. He who had said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again," came forth from the grave to life that was in Himself. Humanity died: divinity did not die. In His divinity, Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death. He declares that He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, could say, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." Christ was invested with the right to give immortality. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity. "I am come," He says, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Christ is life itself. He who passed through death to destroy him that had the power of death is the Source of all vitality... The resurrection and ascension of our Lord is a sure evidence of the triumph of the saints of God over death and the grave, and a pledge that heaven is open to those who wash their robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus ascended to the Father as a representative of the human race, and God will bring those who reflect His image to behold and share with Him His glory.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 51.

**12. When will we receive immortality? 1 Corinthians 15:51-54. Compare 1 Corinthians 15:22-23.**

NOTE: 'Jesus is coming as He ascended into heaven, only with additional splendour. He is coming with the glory of His Father, and all the holy angels with Him, to escort Him on His way. Instead of the cruel crown of thorns to pierce His holy temples, a crown of dazzling glory will deck His sacred brow. He will not wear a plain seamless coat, but a garment whiter than snow, of dazzling brightness. Jesus is coming! But not to reign as a temporal prince. He will raise the righteous dead, change the living saints to a glorious immortality, and, with the saints, take the kingdom under the whole heaven.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 351.

**13. What record is kept of those who are to receive eternal life? Revelation 21:27.**

NOTE: 'The book of life contains the names of all who have ever entered the service of God. Jesus bade His disciples, "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:20. Paul speaks of his faithful fellow workers, "Whose names are in the book of life." Philippians 4:3. "A book of remembrance" is written before God, in which are recorded the good deeds of "them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Malachi 3:16. Their words of faith, their acts of love, are registered in heaven. There is a record also of the sins of men. The secret purposes and motives appear in the unerring register. Every man's work passes in review before God. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered, with terrible exactness, every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven-sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel. If your name is registered in the Lamb's book of life, then all will be well with you. Be ready and anxious to confess your faults and forsake them, that your mistakes and sins may go beforehand to judgment and be blotted out. 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, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance. All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life.' *The Faith I Live By*, pages 210 & 212.

## **Lesson 7: 'I am the way the truth and the life'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.' John 14:6.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, pages 25-26.

## Introduction

'Christ's favourite theme was the paternal tenderness and abundant grace of God; He dwelt much upon the holiness of His character and His law; He presented Himself to the people as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Let these be the themes of Christ's ministers. Present the truth as it is in Jesus. Make plain the requirements of the law and the gospel. Tell the people of Christ's life of self-denial and sacrifice; of His humiliation and death; of His resurrection and ascension; of His intercession for them in the courts of God; of His promise, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:3.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 40.

### 'I am the way'

#### 1. How did Peter show that Christ is the only way for mankind to be saved? Acts 4:12.

NOTE: 'Nearly every false religion has been based on the same principle, that man can depend upon his own efforts for salvation. It is claimed by some that the human race is in need, not of redemption, but of development, that it can refine, elevate, and regenerate itself. As Cain thought to secure the divine favour by an offering that lacked the blood of a sacrifice, so do these expect to exalt humanity to the divine standard, independent of the atonement. The history of Cain shows what must be the results. It shows what man will become apart from Christ. Humanity has no power to regenerate itself. It does not tend upward, toward the divine, but downward, toward the satanic. Christ is our only hope. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." "Neither is there salvation in any other." Acts 4:12.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 72.

#### 2. By what name were Christians originally known? Acts 9:2, Acts 22:4.

#### 3. How many will enter the way of life? Matthew 7:13-14.

NOTE: 'When we read that many will seek to enter in and shall not be able, then we want to understand what we shall do in order to succeed. This to us is a mournful statement, that there are those who will fail to enter in at the strait gate because they only seek to enter in, and do not **strive**. We are in a world where sin and iniquity prevail, and we want to know what we shall do in order to inherit life. We cannot any of us afford to miss the great reward that is presented before the overcomer. We want to know that the steps that we are taking are heavenward instead of earthward. A great and solemn responsibility rests upon us who profess to obey God's commandments, to show to the world around us that we are bending our steps heavenward. And as we press against the current that is bearing all down, then we should know for what we should strive. We are to press toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. We cannot remain in listless resistance and yet gain the prize. We are to grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, and we are thus growing up a precious temple unto the Lord. He says, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2 Corinthians 6:16). What we want is the Spirit of God in our souls. We want our faces set constantly heavenward. And when we see that sin in us is striving for the mastery, then we must strive. The pitying Saviour stands right by your side to help you. He would send every angel out of glory while you are struggling to overcome sin, so that Satan cannot have the victory over you. Christ took man's human nature upon Him that He might come right down to man in the temptation wherewith man is beset. The pitiful Redeemer knows just how to help us in every one of our strivings.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 263.

### 'The way of peace'

#### 4. How does Paul describe the way? Romans 3:17. Compare Luke 1:79.

NOTE: 'Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to "the Lamb of God." Lift Him up, the risen Saviour, and say to all who hear, Come to Him who "hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us." Ephesians 5:2. Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Bring nothing into your preaching to supplement Christ, the wisdom and power of God. Hold forth the word of life, presenting Jesus as the hope of the penitent and the stronghold of every believer. Reveal the way of peace to the troubled and the despondent, and show forth the grace and completeness of the Saviour.' *Gospel Workers*, page 160.

#### 5. What other descriptions of the way does the Bible give? Matthew 21:32, Acts 16:17, 2 Peter 2:2.

#### 6. What does Paul tell of this way? Hebrews 9:8.

NOTE: The Greek word translated 'holiest of all' is used eight times in the Book of Hebrews. The King James Bible translates this word five different ways! Its literal meaning is 'holy places' and so it cannot mean just the Holy Place or the Most Holy. It should therefore be translated as 'the sanctuary', which is how it is rendered in Hebrews 8:2, 9:2 & 13:11.

'The subject of the sanctuary should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Heb. 6:20.

There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 203.

### **'The truth is in Jesus'**

#### **7. What did Jesus say about those who know the truth? John 8:32.**

NOTE: 'The means by which we can overcome the wicked one is that by which Christ overcame, the power of the word. God does not control our minds without our consent; but if we desire to know and to do His will, His promises are ours: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Through faith in these promises, every man may be delivered from the snares of error and the control of sin. Every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they can find deliverance in Christ... No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded. Those who will consent to enter into covenant relation with the God of heaven are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature. They are invited by the Saviour, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. The spirits of darkness will battle for the soul once under their dominion, but angels of God will contend for that soul with prevailing power.' *Desire of Ages*, page 258.

#### **8. Where may we find the truth and what will it do for us? John 17:17 & 19.**

NOTE: 'The Scriptures are the great agency in the transformation of character. Christ prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth." John 17:17. If studied and obeyed, the word of God works in the heart, subduing every unholy attribute. The Holy Spirit comes to convict of sin, and the faith that springs up in the heart works by love to Christ, conforming us in body, soul, and spirit to His own image. Then God can use us to do His will. The power given us works from within outwardly, leading us to communicate to others the truth that has been communicated to us.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 100.

### **'The love of the truth'**

#### **9. What is God's desire for all mankind? 1 Timothy 2:4. Compare 2 Timothy 3:7.**

NOTE: 'Only he who receives the Scriptures as the voice of God speaking to himself is a true learner. He trembles at the word; for to him it is a living reality. He opens his understanding and his heart to receive it. Such hearers were Cornelius and his friends, who said to the apostle Peter, "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." Acts 10:33. A knowledge of the truth depends not so much upon strength of intellect as upon pureness of purpose, the simplicity of an earnest, dependent faith. To those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance, angels of God draw near. The Holy Spirit is given to open to them the rich treasures of the truth.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 59.

#### **10. How does Paul describe those who will not receive eternal life? 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.**

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. By the Bible testimony these will detect the deceiver in his disguise. To all the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible and the Bible only? Satan will, if possible, prevent them from obtaining a preparation to stand in that day. He will so arrange affairs as to hedge up their way, entangle them with earthly treasures, cause them to carry a heavy, wearisome burden, that their hearts may be overcharged with the cares of this life and the day of trial may come upon them as a thief.' *Great Controversy*, page 625.

### **'The life was the light of men'**

#### **11. What did John say about the life that is in Christ? John 1:4, Compare 1 John 1:2.**

NOTE: 'The world has had its great teachers, men of giant intellect and wonderful research, men whose utterances have stimulated thought, and opened to view vast fields of knowledge; and these men have been honoured as guides and benefactors of their race. But there is One who stands higher than they. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John 1:12, 18. We can trace the line of the world's great teachers as far back as human records extend; but the Light was before them. As the moon and the stars of the solar system shine by the reflected light of the sun, so, as far as their teaching is true, do the world's great thinkers reflect the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Every gem of thought, every flash of the intellect, is from the Light of the world. In these days we hear much about "higher education." The true "higher education" is that imparted by Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." Colossians 2:3; John 1:4. "He that followeth Me," said Jesus, "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12.' *Desire of Ages*, page 464.

#### **12. How does Paul describe the Christian who experiences the life of Christ? Galatians 2:20. Compare 2 Corinthians 4:10-11.**

NOTE: 'Human nature is ever struggling for expression, ready for contest; but he who learns of Christ is emptied of self, of pride, of love of supremacy, and there is silence in the soul. Self is yielded to the disposal of the Holy Spirit. Then we are not anxious to have the highest place. We have no ambition to crowd and elbow ourselves into notice; but we feel that our highest place is at the feet of our Saviour. We look to Jesus, waiting for His hand to lead, listening for His voice to guide. The apostle Paul had this experience, and he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.'" *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pages 30-31.

## Lesson 8: 'I am the true vine'

MEMORY VERSE: 'I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.' John 15:5.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, page 675-677.

### Introduction

'Christ tells us plainly that the whole power, the whole fruit-bearing quality, is in the parent vine stock. Then let them be abiding in Christ, and drawing the nourishment from Christ, and what shall we see? We shall see something, the world will see something. There is a clear line of distinction between the believing and the unbelieving, between those that obey God, and those that disobey Him; there is a decided and marked difference in the fruit they bear. The fruit is the character.' *Reflecting Christ*, page 355.

### 'I am the vine'

#### 1. In what way did Jesus explain the close connection between Himself and His people? John 15:5.

NOTE: 'Christ alone can help us and give us the victory. Christ must be all in all to us, He must dwell in the heart, His life must circulate through us as the blood circulates through the veins. His spirit must be a vitalising power that will cause us to influence others to become Christlike and holy.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 5*, page 1144.

#### 2. What is the purpose of being united with the vine? John 16:8, 16.

NOTE: 'What is it to bear fruit? It is not all comprised in coming to meeting once a week, and bearing our testimony in prayer or social meeting. We are to be found day by day abiding in the Vine, and bringing forth fruit, with patience, at our home, in our business; and in every relation in life manifesting the Spirit of Christ. There are many who act as though they thought an occasional connection with Christ was all that was necessary, and that they can be accounted living branches because at times they make confession of Christ. But this is a fallacy. The branch is to be grafted into the Vine, and to abide there, uniting itself to the Vine fibre by fibre, drawing its daily supply of sap and nourishment from the root and fatness of the Vine, until it becomes one with the parent stock. The sap that nourishes the Vine must nourish the branch and this will be evident in the life of him who is abiding in Christ; for the joy of Christ will be fulfilled in him who walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 5*, page 1144.

### 'The peaceable fruit of righteousness'

#### 3. How does Paul describe the fruit that should be borne by the Christian? Galatians 5:22-24.

NOTE: 'Move every day under God's mighty working power. The fruit of righteousness is quietness and assurance forever. If we had exercised more faith in God and had trusted less to our own ideas and wisdom, God would have manifested His power in a marked manner on human hearts. By a union with Him, by living faith, we are privileged to enjoy the virtue and efficacy of His mediation. Hence we are crucified with Christ, dead with Christ, risen with Christ, to walk in newness of life with Him.' *Selected Messages, book 3*, page 201.

'Every avenue will need to be faithfully guarded lest selfishness and pride become interwoven with your work. If self has really been crucified, with the affections and lusts, the fruit will appear in good works to the glory of God. I entreat you, in the fear of God, not to let your works degenerate. Be consistent, symmetrical Christians. When the heart has given its affections to Christ, old things have passed away, and all things have become new.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 650.

#### 4. What other description of this fruit does the Bible give? Philippians 1:11.

NOTE: 'In humble, grateful dependence he who has been given a new heart relies upon the help of Christ. He reveals in his life the fruit of righteousness. He once loved himself. Worldly pleasure was his delight. Now his idol is dethroned, and God reigns supreme. The sins he once loved he now hates. Firmly and resolutely he follows in the path of holiness.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 107.

### 'Them that make peace'

#### 5. How is the fruit of righteousness produced? James 3:18.

NOTE: 'Satan will come in among us, and sow discord if he can. How shall we resist him? By each cultivating love and forbearance in his own heart toward his brethren. If you see that one of your brethren is in fault, do not turn from him: and speak against him; but see how much good you can do him by treating him tenderly. Instead of allowing selfish feelings to arise, and seeking to preserve personal dignity, let self drop out of sight. Jesus with His long human arm encircles the fallen race and seeks to connect them with the throne of the Infinite. This is the work that you should be engaged in. Do not disappoint Jesus by your dissensions. Even though you think you are right, you are not to urge your individual ideas to the front, so that they will cause discord. Do not take the position that you cannot err. All are liable to make mistakes; all need to anoint their eyes with the eye-salve spoken of by the True Witness, that they may see themselves as they are in God's sight.' *Historical Sketches*, page 125.

**6. How does the Lord develop the fruit of righteousness in His people? Hebrews 12:11.**

NOTE: 'In order that we may die to self, we are called upon to endure trial, and when the chastening hand of the Lord is laid upon us, we are not to fret and complain, not to rebel, not to worry ourselves out of the hand of Christ. We are to humble ourselves before God, pleading with Him to give us rest and peace. We enter the furnace of affliction with our hearts darkened by selfishness; but if patient under the crucial test, we shall come forth reflecting the divine image, as gold tried in the fire. "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.'" *Signs of the Times*, December 10, 1896.

**'Every tree is known by his own fruit.'**

**7. What does the fruit reveal about the tree? Matthew 12:33.**

NOTE: 'All the true followers of Christ bear fruit to His glory. Their lives testify that a good work has been wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and their fruit is unto holiness. Their lives are elevated and pure. Right actions are the unmistakable fruit of true godliness, and those who bear no fruit of this kind reveal that they have no experience in the things of God. They are not in the Vine.' *Counsels to Teachers, Parents & Students*, page 329.

**8. What fruit did Paul seek in the lives of Christians? Colossians 1:10.**

NOTE: 'All whom God is leading will manifest a high regard for the Scriptures in which His voice is heard. The Bible will be to them "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16). "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). We need no other evidence in order to judge of men's sanctification; if they are fearful lest they shall not obey the whole will of God, if they are listening diligently to His voice, trusting in His wisdom, and making His Word the man of their counsel, then, while they make no boasts of superior goodness, we may be sure that they are seeking to attain to perfection of Christian character. But if the claimants of holiness even intimate that they are no longer required to search the Scriptures, we need not hesitate to pronounce their sanctification spurious. They are leaning to their own understanding instead of conforming to the will of God.' *Faith & Works*, page 51.

**'The axe is laid to the root of the trees'**

**9. What action does the faithful husbandman take when the tree is unfruitful? Matthew 3:10.**

NOTE: 'Not by its name, but by its fruit, is the value of a tree determined. If the fruit is worthless, the name cannot save the tree from destruction. John declared to the Jews that their standing before God was to be decided by their character and life. Profession was worthless. If their life and character were not in harmony with God's law, they were not His people.' *Desire of Ages*, page 107.

**10. How did Paul describe the experience of the Jewish nation? Romans 11:20-21.**

NOTE: 'When the Jews took the first step in the rejection of Christ, they took a dangerous step. When afterward evidence accumulated that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, they were too proud to acknowledge that they had erred. So with the people of our day who reject the truth. They do not take time to investigate candidly, with earnest prayer, the evidences of the truth, and they oppose that which they do not understand. Just like the Jews, they take it for granted they have all the truth, and feel a sort of contempt for anyone who should suppose they had more correct ideas than themselves of what is truth. All the evidence produced they decide shall not weigh a straw with them, and they tell others that the doctrine is not true, and afterward, when they see as light evidence they were so forward to condemn, they have too much pride to say "I was wrong"; they still cherish doubt and unbelief, and are too proud to acknowledge their convictions. Because of this, they take steps that lead to results of which they have never dreamed.' *1888 Materials*, page 169.

**'The harvest of the earth is ripe'**

**11. What will take place when the fruit is ripe? Mark 4:29.**

NOTE: "'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.'" Galatians 5:22, 23. This fruit can never perish, but will produce after its kind a harvest unto eternal life. "When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world

would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 68-69.

## **12. What other harvest will take place at the end of the world? Revelation 14:18-20.**

NOTE: 'Time will last a little longer until the inhabitants of the earth have filled up the cup of their iniquity, and then the wrath of God, which has so long slumbered, will awake, and this land of light will drink the cup of His unmingled wrath. The cup of iniquity is nearly filled, and the retributive justice of God is about to descend upon the guilty. The wickedness of the inhabitants of the world has almost filled up the measure of their iniquity. This earth has almost reached the place where God will permit the destroyer to work his will upon it. Transgression has almost reached its limit. Confusion fills the world, and a great terror is soon to come upon human beings. The end is very near. We who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise.' *Last Day Events*, page 41.

## **Lesson 9: 'I am the first and the last'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.' Revelation 22:13.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 47.

### **Introduction**

'Jesus was the light of His people, the light of the world, before He came to earth in the form of humanity. The first gleam of light that pierced the gloom in which sin had wrapped the world, came from Christ. And from Him has come every ray of heaven's brightness that has fallen upon the inhabitants of the earth. In the plan of redemption, Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 47.

### **'All things were made by Him'**

#### **1. Who created the heavens and the earth? John 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 1:15-16.**

NOTE: 'Our Creator is Jesus Christ. He is the author of our being. He has created the human structure. He is the author of physical laws, as He is the author of the moral law. And the human being who is careless and reckless of the habits and practices that concern his physical life and health, sins against God. Many who profess to love Jesus Christ do not show proper reverence and respect for Him who gave His life to save them from eternal death. He is not revered, or respected, or recognized. This is shown by the injury done to their own bodies in violation of the laws of their being.' *Counsels on Diet & Foods*, page 43.

#### **2. How are we shown that Jesus continues to care for the world He created? Hebrews 1:3, Colossians 1:17.**

NOTE: 'To the death of Christ we owe even this earthly life. The bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body. The water we drink is bought by His spilled blood. Never one, saint or sinner, eats his daily food, but he is nourished by the body and the blood of Christ. The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf. It is reflected in every water spring.' *Desire of Ages*, page 660.

### **'The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world'**

#### **3. When was the plan for man's salvation made? Revelation 13:8, last part.**

NOTE: 'Long continued was that mysterious communing, "the counsel of peace" (Zechariah 6:13) for the fallen sons of men. The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth; for Christ is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8); yet it was a struggle, even with the King of the universe, to yield up His Son to die for the guilty race. But "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. Oh, the mystery of redemption! the love of God for a world that did not love Him! Who can know the depths of that love which "passeth knowledge"? Through endless ages immortal minds, seeking to comprehend the mystery of that incomprehensible love, will wonder and adore.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 63.

#### **4. How was this truth made clear to Adam and Eve? Genesis 3:15 & 21.**

NOTE: 'The Son of God, who had conversed with them in Eden, had been moved with pity as He viewed their hopeless condition, and had volunteered to take upon Himself the punishment due to them, and die for them that man might yet live, through faith in the atonement Christ proposed to make for him. Through Christ a door of hope was opened, that man, notwithstanding his great sin, should not be under the absolute control of Satan. Faith in the merits of the Son of God would so elevate man that he could resist the devices of Satan. Probation would be granted him in which, through a life of repentance and faith in the atonement of the Son of God, he might be redeemed from his transgression of the Father's law, and thus be elevated to a position where his efforts to keep His law could be accepted.' *The Story of Redemption*, page 46.

### **'The Rock that followed them'**

#### **5. How did Christ watch over His people during their wilderness wanderings? 1 Corinthians 10:1-4. Compare John 6:48-51.**

NOTE: 'It was Christ, by the power of His word, that caused the refreshing stream to flow for Israel. "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." 1 Corinthians 10:4. He was the source of all temporal as well as spiritual blessings. Christ, the true Rock, was with them in all their wanderings. "They thirsted not when He led them through the deserts: He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them; He clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out." "They ran in the dry places like a river." Isaiah 48:21; Psalm 105:41.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 411.

**6. How did Moses express His understanding of this truth? Deuteronomy 32:3-4, 15, 18, 30-31.**

NOTE: 'The smitten rock was a figure of Christ, and through this symbol the most precious spiritual truths are taught. As the life-giving waters flowed from the smitten rock, so from Christ, "smitten of God," "wounded for our transgressions," "bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:4, 5), the stream of salvation flows for a lost race. As the rock had been once smitten, so Christ was to be "once offered to bear the sins of many." Hebrews 9:28. Our Saviour was not to be sacrificed a second time; and it is only necessary for those who seek the blessings of His grace to ask in the name of Jesus, pouring forth the heart's desire in penitential prayer. Such prayer will bring before the Lord of hosts the wounds of Jesus, and then will flow forth afresh the life-giving blood, symbolized by the flowing of the living water for Israel.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 411.

**'Behold what manner of love!'**

**7. What supreme sacrifice did Christ make for those He had created? 2 Corinthians 5:21.**

NOTE: "'Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!'" Christ humbled Himself. In Him the infinite and the finite met in a close and mysterious union. Deity was veiled with humanity. The Creator stooped to the created. God was manifest in the flesh. Having become man's substitute and surety, Christ felt a longing of soul, a hunger, for the accomplishment of the salvation of the human race. To rescue them He came to this world, that by humbling Himself, He might reach man in his fallen condition.' *Youth's Instructor*, May 27, 1897.

**8. How was this love received by those He came to save? John 1:11.**

NOTE: 'This inestimable blessing which God bestowed upon them should have called forth their devout acknowledgments. But in blind prejudice they refused the mercies offered them by Jesus. His love was lavished upon them in vain, and they regarded not His wondrous works. Sorrow fled at His approach; infirmity and deformity were healed; injustice and oppression shrunk ashamed from His rebuke; while death and the grave humbled themselves in His presence and obeyed His commands. Yet the people of His choice rejected Him and His mighty miracles with scorn. The Majesty of Heaven came unto His own, and His own received Him not.' *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 3*, page 19.

**'Our great High Priest'**

**9. How does Jesus continue His work of salvation now that He has returned to heaven? Hebrews 7:24-25, Hebrews 4:15-16.**

NOTE: 'The sanctuary in heaven is the very centre of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects, and be able to give to every one that asketh them a reason for the hope that is in them.' *Review & Herald*, November 9, 1905.

**10. What final work in the sanctuary is Christ performing? Daniel 7:9-14.**

NOTE: 'Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man, to perform the work of investigative judgment and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits. In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period. "Judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?" 1 Peter 4:17.' *Great Controversy*, pages 479-480.

'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 judgment.' *Desire of Ages*, page 210.

**'The Lord Himself'**

**11. How will Jesus intervene to bring to an end the reign of sin? Revelation 19:11-16. Compare Daniel 12:1.**

NOTE: 'Before His presence "all faces are turned into paleness;" upon the rejecters of God's mercy falls the terror of eternal despair. "The heart melteth, and the knees smite together, . . . and the faces of them all gather blackness." Jeremiah 30:6; Nahum 2:10. The righteous cry with trembling: "Who shall be able to stand?" The angels' song is hushed, and there is a period of awful silence. Then the voice of Jesus is heard, saying: "My grace is sufficient for you." The faces of the righteous are

lighted up, and joy fills every heart. And the angels strike a note higher and sing again as they draw still nearer to the earth.' *Great Controversy*, page 641.

## **12. What is the culminating work of the Alpha and Omega? Revelation 21:5-6.**

NOTE: 'One reminder alone remains: Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought. Says the prophet, beholding Christ in His glory: "He had bright beams coming out of His side: and there was the hiding of His power." Habakkuk 3:4, margin. That pierced side whence flowed the crimson stream that reconciled man to God--there is the Saviour's glory, there "the hiding of His power." "Mighty to save," through the sacrifice of redemption, He was therefore strong to execute justice upon them that despised God's mercy. And the tokens of His humiliation are His highest honour; through the eternal ages the wounds of Calvary will show forth His praise and declare His power.' *Great Controversy*, page 674.

## **Lesson 10: 'I am the root and offspring of David and the bright and morning star'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.' Revelation 22:16.

STUDY HELP: *Confrontation*, pages 37-40.

### **Introduction**

'It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.' *Desire of Ages*, page 48.

### **'The Son of David'**

#### **1. What prophecy was made of Christ's incarnation? Isaiah 11:1.**

NOTE: 'The Pharisees had gathered close about Jesus as He answered the question of the scribe. Now turning He put a question to them: "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He?" This question was designed to test their belief concerning the Messiah, to show whether they regarded Him simply as a man or as the Son of God. A chorus of voices answered, "The Son of David." This was the title which prophecy had given to the Messiah. When Jesus revealed His divinity by His mighty miracles, when He healed the sick and raised the dead, the people had inquired among themselves, "Is not this the Son of David?" The Syrophenician woman, blind Bartimaeus, and many others had cried to Him for help, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David." Matt. 15:22. While riding into Jerusalem He had been hailed with the joyful shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. 21:9. And the little children in the temple had that day echoed the glad ascription. But many who called Jesus the Son of David did not recognize His divinity. They did not understand that the Son of David was also the Son of God.' *Desire of Ages*, page 608.

'The Jews utterly failed to understand the spiritual connection which identified Christ with both the human and the divine, and gave fallen man a presentation of what he should strive to become. Christ was God in the flesh. As the son of David, he stood forth a perfect type of true manhood, bold in doing his duty, and of the strictest integrity, yet full of love, compassion, and tender sympathy. In his miracles he revealed himself as Lord.' *Pamphlet: Redemption*, page 77.

#### **2. How does Paul describe Christ's human descent? Romans 1:3.**

NOTE: 'The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, "even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations." It is the great and profound mystery of godliness. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Christ took upon Himself human nature, a nature inferior to His heavenly nature. Nothing so shows the wonderful condescension of God as this. He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." John presents this wonderful subject with such simplicity that all may grasp the ideas set forth, and be enlightened. Christ did not make-believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." He was the son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a man, even the Man Christ Jesus.' *Lift Him Up*, page 74.

### **'Made in all things like unto His brethren'**

#### **3. How complete was Christ's taking of humanity upon Himself? Hebrews 2:17-18.**

NOTE: 'Of Christ it is said, "And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." We need to realise the truth of Christ's manhood in order to appreciate the truth of the above words. It was not a make-believe humanity that Christ took upon Himself. He took human nature and lived human nature. Christ worked no miracles in His own behalf. He was compassed with infirmities, but His divine nature knew what was in man. He needed not that any should testify to Him of this.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 5*, page 1124.

**4. What strength and comfort may we draw from knowing that Christ took our human nature upon Himself? Hebrews 4:15-16.**

NOTE: 'The example of Christ shows us that our only hope of victory is in continual resistance of Satan's attacks. He who triumphed over the adversary of souls in the conflict of temptations understands Satan's power over the race, and has conquered him in our behalf. As an overcomer, He has given us the advantage of His victory, that in our efforts to resist the temptations of Satan we may unite our weakness to His strength, our worthlessness to His merits. And sustained by His enduring might under the strength of temptation, we may resist in His all-powerful name, and overcome as He overcame.' *Signs of the Times*, March 4, 1880.

**'He is not ashamed to call them brethren''**

**5. How are we assured that the One who sanctifies us is one with us? Hebrews 2:11.**

NOTE: 'Christ declared He sanctified Himself, that we also might be sanctified. He took upon Himself our nature, and became a faultless pattern for men. He made no mistake, that we also might become victors, and enter into His kingdom as overcomers. He prayed that we might be sanctified through the truth. What is truth? He declared, "Thy word is truth." His disciples were to be sanctified through obedience to the truth.' *My Life Today*, page 252.

**6. What insight are we given into Christ's struggle against temptation? Hebrews 5:7-9.**

NOTE: 'It was not only on the cross that Christ gave Himself for humanity, not only in the wilderness of temptation and in Gethsemane that He overcame in our behalf. Every day's experience was an outpouring of His life; every day He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And because the life of Jesus was a life of perfect trust His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering. He met and resisted all the temptations that man must meet because in His humanity He relied upon divine power.' *Columbia Union Visitor*, October 2, 1912.

**'Until the Daystar arise in your hearts'**

**7. What further title did Jesus apply to Himself? Revelation 22:16, last part.**

NOTE: 'Every true believer catches the beams from the Morning Star and transmits the light to those who sit in darkness. Not only do they shine amid the darkness of their own neighbourhood, but as a church they shine forth to regions beyond. The Lord expects every man to do his duty. Every one who unites with the church is to be one with Christ to diffuse the beams of the Morning Star, and becoming the light of the world, Christ and His people are to be co-partners in the great work of saving the world.' *This Day With God*, page 327.

**8. How did Balaam, under inspiration, prophesy of Christ? Numbers 24:17.**

NOTE: 'Before returning to his people, Balaam uttered a most beautiful and sublime prophecy of the world's Redeemer, and the final destruction of the enemies of God: "I shall see him, but not now. I shall behold him, but not nigh. There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and shall destroy the children of Sheth." He was permitted to look down through the ages to the first advent of Christ, and then forward to His second appearing, in power and glory. He would see the King above all kings, but not at present. He would behold His majesty and glory, but at a great distance. He would be among the number of the wicked dead, who should come forth in the second resurrection, to hear the awful doom, "Depart from me, ye cursed." He would behold the redeemed ones in the city of God, while he himself would be shut out with the wicked.' *Signs of the Times*, December 16, 1880.

**'The more sure word of prophecy'**

**9. What has Christ given us to guide us until the darkness is ended and the day dawns? 2 Peter 1:19.**

NOTE: 'He who knows the end from the beginning has provided for the attack of satanic agencies. And He will fulfil His word to the faithful in every age. That word is sure and steadfast; not one jot or tittle of it can fail. If men will keep under the protection of God, His banner will be over them as an impregnable fortress. He will give evidence that His word can never fail. He will prove a light which shineth in a dark place until the day dawn.' *Reflecting Christ*, page 129.

**10. How can we know that it was Christ who inspired the prophets? 1 Peter 1:10-11.**

NOTE: 'It was Christ that spoke to His people through the prophets. The apostle Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the prophets "prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11. It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10. In His teachings while personally among men Jesus directed the minds of the people to the Old Testament. He said to the Jews, "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me." John 5:39, R.V.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 366.

**'The light shineth in darkness'**

**11. How did John explain Christ's work of revelation? John 1:4-5.**

NOTE: 'The reason men do not understand is because they fasten themselves in a position of questioning and doubt. They do not cultivate faith. If God gives light, you must walk in the light, and follow the light. Light is flashing from the throne of God,

and what is this for? It is that a people may be prepared to stand in the day of God. You who have devoted time and money to the adornment of your apparel and to the decoration of your homes, I would ask you, "Is Christ formed within you the hope of glory?" It is too late in the day to be taken up with the frivolous things of the world.' *Review & Herald*, March 4, 1890.

## **12. How will this Light illuminate the way that God's people must travel? Proverbs 4:18.**

NOTE: 'Saith the prophet: "When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. . . . He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness." "Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." God hath spoken: "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Micah 7:8, 9; Psalms 139:12; 112:4; Isaiah 42:16.' *Great Controversy*, page 346.

'It is the privilege and the duty of every Christian to have a rich and abundant experience in the things of God. "I am the light of the world," said Jesus. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." [John 8:12.] "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." [Proverbs. 4:18.] Every step of faith and obedience brings the soul into closer connection with the Light of the world, in whom "there is no darkness at all.'" *Great Controversy*, page 475.

## **Lesson 11: 'I am the Son of God'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Matthew 16:16.

STUDY HELP: *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pages 177-179.

### **Introduction**

'In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life." 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life.' *Desire of Ages*, page 50.

'Through the plan of redemption, a way has been provided whereby the sinner may be led from the depths of ruin upward to the paradise of God. This provision has been wrought out through an infinite sacrifice on the part of the Father and the Son. The love of God is expressed to man in the priceless gift of His Son; but Christ was given to a lost world, that we might be saved, not in our sins, but from our sins.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, February 10, 1891.

### **'God so loved the world'**

#### **1. How was it prophesied that God would come to earth in the person of the Son? Isaiah 9:6.**

NOTE: "'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'" Isaiah tells us who and what our Redeemer is: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulders: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Christ had two natures, the nature of a man and the nature of God. In Him divinity and humanity were combined. Upon His mediatorial work hangs the hope of the perishing world. No one but Christ has ever succeeded in living a perfect life, in living a pure, spotless character. He exhibited a perfect humanity, combined with deity; and by preserving each nature distinct, He has given to the world a representation of the character of God and the character of a perfect man. He shows us what God is, and what man may become, godlike in character.' *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, October 1, 1899 page 12.

#### **2. How did Jesus express this tremendous truth to Nicodemus? John 3:16-17.**

NOTE: 'It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature.' *Desire of Ages*, page 25.

### **'The Son of the Highest'**

#### **3. How did the angel Gabriel explain to Mary the identity of her Child? Luke 1:32.**

NOTE: 'We cannot appreciate our Redeemer in the highest sense until we can see Him by the eye of faith reaching to the very depths of human wretchedness, taking upon Himself the nature of man, the capacity to suffer, and by suffering putting forth His divine power to save and lift sinners up to companionship with Himself. O why have we so little sense of sin? Why so little penitence? It is because we do not come nearer the cross of Christ. Conscience becomes hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, because we remain away from Christ. Consider the Captain of our salvation. He suffered shame for us that we might not suffer everlasting shame and contempt. He suffered on the cross, that mercy might be granted to fallen man. God's justice is preserved, and guilty man is pardoned. Jesus dies that the sinner might live. Shame is borne by the Son of the Highest for the sake of poor sinners, that they might be ransomed and crowned with eternal glory.' *That I May Know Him*, page 287.

**4. How was this truth explained to Joseph? Matthew 1:20-21.**

NOTE: 'The more we think about Christ's becoming a babe here on earth, the more wonderful it appears. How can it be that the helpless babe in Bethlehem's manger is still the divine Son of God? Though we cannot understand it, we can believe that He who made the worlds, for our sakes became a helpless babe. Though higher than any of the angels, though as great as the Father on the throne of heaven, He became one with us. In Him God and man became one, and it is in this fact that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in the flesh, we look upon God in humanity, and see in Him the brightness of divine glory, the express image of God the Father.' *Selected Message, book 3, page 128.*

**'A virgin shall be with child'**

**5. What prophecy was given of the manner of Christ's birth? Isaiah 7:14.**

NOTE: 'In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race.' *Signs of the Times, July 30, 1896.*

**6. How did Gabriel explain the manner of Christ's conception? Luke 1:34-35.**

NOTE: 'He who was partaker of the Father's glory before the world was, laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and stepped down from His high authority to become a Babe in Bethlehem, that by passing over the ground where Adam stumbled and fell, He might redeem fallen human beings. He subjected Himself to all the temptations that the enemy brings against men and women; and all the assaults of Satan could not make Him swerve from His loyalty to the Father. By living a sinless life He testified that every son and daughter of Adam can resist the temptations of the one who first brought sin into the world. Christ brought men and women power to overcome. He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature. In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God. Said the angel to Mary, "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). While the Son of a human being, He became the Son of God in a new sense. Thus He stood in our world, the Son of God, yet allied by birth to the human race.' *Selected Messages, book 1, page 226.*

**'I have glorified Thee on the earth'**

**7. What was one of the major purposes for Christ's life on earth? John 14:7-9, John 8:19.**

NOTE: 'Christ came into the world to represent the Father to man; for Satan had presented Him before the world in a false light. Because God is a God of justice, of terrible majesty, who has power to destroy as well as to preserve man, Satan caused men to regard Him with fear, to look upon Him as a tyrant. Jesus had been with the Father from the everlasting ages, before the creation of man, and He came to reveal the Father, declaring, "God is love." Jesus represented God as a kind Father, who careth for the subjects of His kingdom. He declared that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of the Father, and that the children of men are of more value in His sight than many sparrows, that the very hairs of their head are all numbered.' *Lift Him Up, page 36.*

**8. How are we shown that Christ was successful in this work? John 17:4.**

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.*

**'I and My Father are one'**

**9. How did Christ proclaim His oneness with the Father? John 10:30.**

NOTE: 'While God's Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding His pre-existence. The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and oneness with His Father. From everlasting He was the Mediator of the covenant, the One in whom all nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, if they accepted Him, were to be blessed. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Before men or angels were created, the Word was with God, and was God. The world was made by Him, "and without Him was not any thing made that was made" (verse 3). If Christ made all things, He existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore.' *Lift Him Up, page 16.*

**10. How did Christ, in His humanity, express His total dependence on His Father? John 4:34, John 5:19 & 30, John 7:16, John 8:28, John 12:49-50, John 14:10.**

NOTE: 'His will was put into active exercise to save the souls of men, but He waited and lived and worked in dependence upon God. In everything He moved in perfect harmony with the Father. The Commander of all heaven, He humbled Himself to stand at the head of fallen humanity, to reveal to human beings perfect obedience to all God's commandments. His servants today would do well to ask themselves, What kind of a will am I cultivating? Have I been gratifying my own desires, confirming myself in selfishness and obstinacy? If we are doing this, we are in peril; for Satan will always rule the will that is not under the control of the Spirit of God. When we place our will in unison with the will of God, the obedience that was exemplified in the life of Christ will be seen in our lives. God requires us to keep His commandments that we may cultivate the attributes which made the Saviour's life pure, holy, and undefiled.' *Signs of the Times*, December 20, 1899.

### **'To them gave He power'**

#### **11. Though Christ was uniquely the Son of God, how may we become sons of God? John 1:12.**

NOTE: 'Not by the decisions of courts or councils or legislative assemblies, not by the patronage of worldly great men, is the kingdom of Christ established, but by the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity through the work of the Holy Spirit. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12, 13. Here is the only power that can work the uplifting of mankind. And the human agency for the accomplishment of this work is the teaching and practicing of the word of God.' *Desire of Ages*, page 509.

#### **12. What distinguishes the sons of God? Romans 8:14.**

NOTE: 'Religion consists in doing the words of Christ; not doing to earn God's favour, but because, all undeserving, we have received the gift of His love. Christ places the salvation of man, not upon profession merely, but upon faith that is made manifest in works of righteousness.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 130.

'God is ever seeking to impress our hearts by His Holy Spirit, that we shall be convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. We may place our will on the side of God's will, and in His strength and grace resist the temptations of the enemy. As we yield to the influence of the Spirit of God, our conscience becomes tender and sensitive, and sin that we have passed by with little thought, becomes exceeding sinful. God calls upon men to oppose the powers of evil. He says: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Romans 6:13, 14. In this conflict of righteousness against unrighteousness, we can be successful only by divine aid. Our finite will must be brought into submission to the will of the Infinite; the human will must be blended with the divine. This will bring the Holy Spirit to our aid; and every conquest will tend to the recovery of God's purchased possession, to the restoration of His image in the soul.' *Our High Calling*, page 153.

## **Lesson 12: 'I am the Lord; I change not'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?' Numbers 23:19.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 516-520.

### **Introduction**

'Jesus has not changed; He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and He still loves and pities the erring, seeking to draw them to Himself, that He may give them divine aid. He knows that a demon power is struggling in every soul, striving for the mastery; but Jesus came to break the power of Satan and to set the captives free.' *My Life Today*, page 300.

### **'I change not'**

#### **1. What does God tell us about His own character? Malachi 3:6.**

NOTE: 'In regard to the personality and prerogatives of God, where He is, and what He is, this is a subject which we are not to dare to touch. On this theme silence is eloquence. It is those who have no experimental knowledge of God who venture to speculate in regard to Him. Did they know more of Him, they would have less to say about what He is. The one who in the daily life holds closest communion with God, and who has the deepest knowledge of Him, realises most keenly the utter inability of human beings to explain the Creator. God always has been. He is the great I AM. The psalmist declares, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. "I am the Lord, I change not,"' *Medical Ministry*, page 92.

#### **2. How is this same quality applied to Christ? Hebrews 13:8.**

NOTE: 'Keep Christ uplifted. He is always the same, yesterday, today, and forever, always seeking to do us good, always encouraging and guiding us, leading us onward step by step. What He is today, a faithful high priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, He will be tomorrow and forevermore. He is our guide, our teacher, our counsellor, our friend, ever bestowing His blessings upon us in response to our faith. He invites us to abide with Him. When we do this, when we make our home with Him, all friction, all ill temper, all irritation, will cease.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 187.

## **‘He is faithful that promised’**

### **3. What assurance are we given that God’s word is to be relied on? Numbers 23:19.**

NOTE: ‘Those who are perpetually talking doubts and demanding additional evidence to banish their cloud of unbelief do not build on the Word. Their faith rests on circumstances; it is founded in feeling. But feeling, be it ever so pleasing, is not faith. God’s Word is the foundation upon which our hopes of heaven must be built.’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 106.

### **4. How did Isaiah express the reliability of God’s Word? Isaiah 40:8.**

NOTE: ‘The Word of God is the only steadfast thing our world knows. It is the sure foundation. “Heaven and earth shall pass away,” said Jesus, “but My words shall not pass away.” “The word of God shall stand for ever.” “All His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.” Isaiah 40:8; Psalm 111:7, 8. Whatever is built upon the authority of man will be overthrown; but that which is founded upon the rock of God’s immutable Word shall stand forever.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 15.

## **‘The faithful God’**

### **5. How does Moses describe God? Deuteronomy 7:9.**

NOTE: ‘Where shall we be before the thousand generations mentioned in this scripture are ended? Our fate will have been decided for eternity. We shall either have been pronounced worthy of a home in the everlasting kingdom of God, or we shall have received sentence of eternal death. Those who have been true and faithful to their covenant with God, those who, remembering Calvary, have stood firmly on the side of truth, ever striving to honour God, will hear the commendation, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” But those who have given God only half-hearted service, allowing their lives to be conformed to the ways and practises of the world, will hear the sad words, “Depart from me; I know you not.”’ *Review & Herald*, August 4, 1904.

### **6. How is God’s faithfulness revealed in times of temptation? 1 Corinthians 10:13.**

NOTE: ‘Our heavenly Father measures and weighs every trial before He permits it to come upon the believer. He considers the circumstances and the strength of the one who is to stand under the proving and test of God, and He never permits the temptations to be greater than the capacity of resistance. If the soul is overborne, the person overpowered, this can never be charged to God, but the one tempted was not vigilant and prayerful and did not appropriate by faith the provisions God had abundantly in store for him. Christ never failed a believer in His hour of combat. The believer must claim the promise and meet the foe in the name of the Lord.’ *Our High Calling*, page 323.

## **‘ God is faithful’**

### **7. How is His faithfulness shown when we repent? 1 John 1:9. Compare Micah 7:18-19.**

NOTE: ‘God requires that we confess our sins and humble our hearts before Him; but at the same time we should have confidence in Him as a tender Father, who will not forsake those who put their trust in Him. Many of us walk by sight and not by faith. We believe the things that are seen but do not appreciate the precious promises given us in God’s Word; and yet we cannot dishonour God more decidedly than by showing that we distrust what He says and question whether the Lord is in earnest with us or is deceiving us. God does not give us up because of our sins. We may make mistakes and grieve His Spirit, but when we repent and come to Him with contrite hearts, He will not turn us away.’ *Faith & Works*, page 35.

### **8. How may we assured that Christ is faithful in His work as our great High Priest? Hebrews 2:17-18.**

NOTE: ‘The Elder Brother of our race is by the eternal throne. He looks upon every soul who is turning his face toward Him as the Saviour. He knows by experience what are the weaknesses of humanity, what are our wants, and where lies the strength of our temptations. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. Are you tempted? He will deliver. Are you weak? He will strengthen. Are you ignorant? He will enlighten. Are you wounded? He will heal. The Lord “tellethe the number of the stars”; and yet “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” Whatever your anxieties and trials, spread out your case before the Lord. Your spirit will be braced for endurance. The way will be open for you to disentangle yourself from embarrassment and difficulty. The weaker and more helpless you know yourself to be, the stronger will you become in His strength. The heavier your burdens, the more blessed the rest in casting them upon your Burden Bearer. Circumstances may separate friends; the restless waters of the wide sea may roll between us and them. But no circumstances, no distance, can separate us from the Saviour. Wherever we may be, He is at our right hand, to support, maintain, uphold, and cheer. Greater than the love of a mother for her child is Christ’s love for His redeemed. It is our privilege to rest in His love; to say, “I will trust Him; for He gave His life for me.” Human love may change, but Christ’s love knows no change. When we cry to Him for help, His hand is stretched out to save. He desires us to realise that He has returned to heaven as our Elder Brother and that the measureless power given Him has been placed at our disposal.’ *My Life Today*, page 297.

## **‘Yea and amen’**

### **9. What assurance have we been given concerning His promises? 2 Corinthians 1:20.**

NOTE: ‘The precious Bible is the garden of God, and His promises are the lilies, and the roses, and the pinks. How I wish that we might all believe in the promises of God. We are not to look into our hearts for a joyful emotion as an evidence of our acceptance with Heaven, but we are to take God’s promises and say, “They are mine. The Lord is letting His Holy Spirit rest

upon me. I am receiving the light; for the promise is, 'Believe that ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them.' By faith I reach within the veil and lay hold of Christ, my strength. I thank God that I have a Saviour." The Scriptures are to be received as God's word to us, not written merely, but spoken. It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. Feed upon the promises; be content to rely on the simple promise of God's Word. Hang in memory's hall the precious words of Christ. They are to be valued far above silver or gold.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 9.

#### **10. How may we know that these promises are trustworthy? Hebrews 10:23.**

NOTE: 'The feelings must not be made the test of the spiritual state, be they good or be they discouraging. The word of God is to be our evidence of our true standing before Him. Many are bewildered on this point. If you confess your sins, believe they are pardoned, because the promise is positive. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Why, then, dishonour God by doubting His pardoning love? Having confessed your sins, believe that the word of God will not fail, but that He is faithful that hath promised. It is just as much your duty to believe that God will fulfil His word and forgive your sins as it is your duty to confess your sins. Your faith must be exercised in God as one who will do just as He has said He would do, pardon all your transgressions. Oh, how very many go mourning, sinning and repenting, but always under a cloud of condemnation! They do not believe the word of the Lord. They do not believe that He will do just as He said He would do. You hurt the heart of Christ by doubting, when He has given us such evidences of His love in giving His own life to save us that we should not perish but have everlasting life. We must trust; we must educate and train our souls to believe the word of God implicitly.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 126.

### **'Thou remainest'**

#### **11. How are we assured that God will never change? Hebrews 1:11-12.**

NOTE: 'The truth of God is not changeable, uncertain, and powerless. It is truth presented in its purity that alone can convict and convert the sinner, and turn him from the error of his ways. The word of God is the only fixed, changeless thing that the world knows. Like its Author in character, it is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." It not only causes men to discern what is truth, but it unmask the soul, and presents men to themselves as perishing sinners, and calls upon them to repent and to be converted, that their sins may be blotted out, and stand no longer against them.' *Bible Echo*, May 28, 1894.

#### **12. How does James show that we may trust in God's gifts of love to us? James 1:17.**

NOTE: 'We are to send our petitions through the darkest clouds that Satan may cast over us, and let our faith pierce to the throne of God encircled by the rainbow of promise, the assurance that God is true, that in Him is no variableness neither shadow of turning. The answer may appear to be delayed, but it is not so. The petition is accepted, and the answer given when it is essential for the best good of the petitioner and when the fulfilment of the request will work most for our eternal interest. God scatters His blessings all along our path to brighten our heavenward journey. We are to come before the mercy seat with reverence, calling up to our mind the promises that God has given, contemplating the goodness of God, and offering up thankful praises for His unchangeable love. We are not to trust in our finite prayers, but in the word of our heavenly Father, in His assurance of His love for us.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 125.

## **Lesson 13: 'I am the Lord thy God'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God.' Revelation 21:3.

STUDY HELP: *God's Amazing Grace*, pages 131-137.

### **Introduction**

'God does not control our minds without our consent; but every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they may find deliverance in Christ.' *Ministry of Healing*, page 93.

### **'I will be their God'**

#### **1. What is God's desire for His people? Genesis 17:8. Compare Revelation 21:3.**

NOTE: 'God desires His people to place themselves in right relation to Him that they may understand what He requires of them. They are to be a commandment-keeping people wherever they are, at home or abroad, and to have the assurance that they are accepted as His children. They are to take their position in the world as a people whose righteousness goes before them, and whose reward is the glory of the Lord. When we live before the world such consistent lives that it can be said of us that our righteousness goes before us, the glory of the Lord will surely be revealed.' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 5, page 33.

#### **2. What did it mean to Israel that the Lord was their God? Exodus 20:1-2.**

NOTE: 'God in His providence brought the Hebrews into the mountain fastnesses before the sea, that He might manifest His power in their deliverance and signally humble the pride of their oppressors. He might have saved them in any other way, but He chose this method in order to test their faith and strengthen their trust in Him. The people were weary and terrified, yet if they had held back when Moses bade them advance, God would never have opened the path for them. It was "by faith" that

“they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land” (Hebrews 11:29). In marching down to the very water, they showed that they believed the word of God as spoken by Moses. They did all that was in their power to do, and then the Mighty One of Israel divided the sea to make a path for their feet. The great lesson here taught is for all time. Often the Christian life is beset by dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before and bondage or death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly, “Go forward.” We should obey this command, even though our eyes cannot penetrate the darkness, and we feel the cold waves about our feet. The obstacles that hinder our progress will never disappear before a halting, doubting spirit. Those who defer obedience till every shadow of uncertainty disappears and there remains no risk of failure or defeat, will never obey at all. Unbelief whispers, “Let us wait till the obstructions are removed, and we can see our way clearly:” but faith courageously urges an advance, hoping all things, believing all things.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 92.

### ‘A new heart’

#### **3. What experience is necessary for Him to become our God and we His people? Jeremiah 31:33. Compare Hebrews 8:10 & Jeremiah 24:7.**

NOTE: ‘The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:16. And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience, the service and allegiance of love, is the true sign of discipleship. Thus the Scripture says, “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 5:3; 2:4. Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience.’ *Steps to Christ*, page 60.

#### **4. How was this experience described to Ezekiel? Ezekiel 36:26.**

NOTE: ‘Be not discouraged because your heart seems hard. Every obstacle, every internal foe, only increases your need of Christ. He came to take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. Look to Him for special grace to overcome your peculiar faults. When assailed by temptation, steadfastly resist the evil promptings. Cry to the dear Saviour for help to sacrifice every idol and to put away every darling sin. Let the eye of faith see Jesus standing before the Father’s throne, presenting His wounded hands as He pleads for you. Believe that strength comes to you through your precious Saviour.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 84.

### ‘An everlasting covenant’

#### **5. What promises does the Lord make to those who are His people? Jeremiah 32:38-40. Compare Deuteronomy 5:29.**

NOTE: ‘True religion is a religion that keeps constantly in view the honour and glory of God. We are to regard our heavenly Father with holy fear and reverence. He requires of His blood-bought heritage a cheerful obedience. As we realise His great love, our hearts will be inspired with gratitude, we shall serve Him with cheerfulness, and firmly, confidently put our trust wholly in Him. I long to express in my life service the joy of Christ. I long to be imbued with His Spirit, that I may be a blessing to others. We have the promise, “I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear Me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me” (Jeremiah 32:39, 40). God is “great in counsel, and mighty in work: for Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (verse 19).’ *This Day With God*, page 116.

#### **6. What gracious invitation does the Lord make? Isaiah 55:1-3.**

NOTE: ‘If Christ is to you as a valuable treasure, if you find in Him your greatest satisfaction, if He is prized and cherished above all others, if you regard everything else as loss that you may win Him, you are eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood, and are becoming conformed to His image. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled.’ *Youth’s Instructor*, March 12, 1896.

‘Have you, reader, chosen your own way? Have you wandered far from God? Have you sought to feast upon the fruits of transgression, only to find them turn to ashes upon your lips? And now, your life plans thwarted, and your hopes dead, do you sit alone and desolate? That voice which has long been speaking to your heart, but to which you would not listen, comes to you distinct and clear, “Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.” Micah 2:10. Return to your Father’s house. He invites you, saying, “Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee.” Isaiah 44:22. “Come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” Isaiah 55:3.’ *Review & Herald*, March 25, 1915.

### ‘That it might be well with them’

#### **7. What is the purpose of the new heart experience? Ezekiel 11:19-20. See Deuteronomy 10:12-13.**

NOTE: ‘In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The followers of Christ are to become like Him, by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 20.

‘Two ways are presented before every soul: the way of obedience to God’s commandments, which brings the rich blessings of heaven; and the way of disobedience, which brings death; for no sinner can inherit eternal life. Those who are awakened by the message of warning have a serious decision to make. They go to their pastors for instruction, and he should never attempt to quench the spirit which is leading his people to seek for more light.’ *Bible Training School*, June 1, 1910.

**8. How did John explain what it means to love God? 1 John 5:2-3. Compare 1 John 2:3-4.**

NOTE: ‘Says Paul: “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.” “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” And John declares: “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.” Romans 3:31; 6:2; 1 John 5:3. In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then “the righteousness of the law” will “be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4. And the language of the soul will be: “O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day.” Psalm 119:97.’ *Great Controversy*, page 468.

**‘Choose ye this day’**

**9. What choice does God place before His people? 1 Kings 18:21. Compare Joshua 24:15.**

NOTE: ‘The will is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or choice. Every human being possessed of reason has power to choose the right. In every experience of life, God’s word to us is, “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” Joshua 24:15. Everyone may place his will on the side of the will of God, may choose to obey Him, and by thus linking himself with divine agencies, he may stand where nothing can force him to do evil. In every youth, every child, lies the power, by the help of God, to form a character of integrity and to live a life of usefulness.’ *Education*, page 289.

**10. How may that choice be made effective in the life of the one who wishes to serve God? Romans 6:16.**

NOTE: ‘Many are inquiring, “How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?” You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections. The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centred upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him. Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians. Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith.’ *Steps to Christ*, pages 47-48.

**‘This is our God’**

**11. What prospect awaits those who have entered into the everlasting covenant with God? Revelation 21:3-4. Compare Psalm 50:3-6.**

NOTE: ‘How blessed will be the lot of those who enter into that glorious abode where there will be no more sin, no more suffering! What a prospect is this for the imagination! What a theme for contemplation! The Bible is full of the richest treasures of truth, of glowing descriptions of that heavenly land. We should search the Scriptures, that we may better understand the plan of salvation, and learn of the righteousness of Christ, until we shall exclaim, in viewing the matchless charms of our Redeemer, “Thy gentleness hath made me great.” There we shall see his infinite compassion. The imagination may reach out in contemplation of the wonders of redeeming love, and yet in its highest exercises we shall not be able to grasp the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of God; for it passeth knowledge.’ *Bible Echo*, June 1, 1892.

**12. How will those who have entered the everlasting covenant greet the Lord when He returns? Isaiah 25:8-9.**

NOTE: ‘To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and familiar friend. They have lived in close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts. With uplifted heads, with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shining upon them, with rejoicing that their redemption draweth nigh, they go forth to meet the Bridegroom, saying, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.” Isaiah 25:9. “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. . . . And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” “He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” Revelation 19:6-9; 17:14.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 421.