

# The Revelation of Jesus Christ, Part 1

## General Introduction

This revelation was given for the guidance and comfort of the church throughout the Christian dispensation. Yet religious teachers have declared that it is a sealed book and its secrets cannot be explained. Therefore many have turned from the prophetic record, refusing to devote time and study to its mysteries. But God does not wish His people to regard the book thus. It is “the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.” “Blessed is he that readeth,” the Lord declares, “and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” Verses 1, 3. “I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly.” Revelation 22:18-20.

In the Revelation are portrayed the deep things of God. The very name given to its inspired pages, “the Revelation,” contradicts the statement that this is a sealed book. A revelation is something revealed. The Lord Himself revealed to His servant the mysteries contained in this book, and He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. Its truths are addressed to those living in the last days of this earth’s history, as well as to those living in the days of John. Some of the scenes depicted in this prophecy are in the past, some are now taking place; some bring to view the close of the great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven, and some reveal the triumphs and joys of the redeemed in the earth made new. Let none think, because they cannot explain the meaning of every symbol in the Revelation, that it is useless for them to search this book in an effort to know the meaning of the truth it contains. The One who revealed these mysteries to John will give to the diligent searcher for truth a foretaste of heavenly things. Those whose hearts are open to the reception of truth will be enabled to understand its teachings, and will be granted the blessing promised to those who “hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.”

In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy; the other a revelation.

*Acts of the Apostles, pages 583-585*

## Lesson 1: ‘Your brother and companion’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets.’ Amos 3:7.

STUDY HELP: *Acts of the Apostles, pages 578-592.*

### Introduction

‘John was sentenced to banishment. Never had his voice been needed by the church as now. Nearly all his former associates in the ministry had suffered martyrdom. The remnant of believers was facing fierce opposition. To all outward appearance the day was not far distant when the enemies of the church of Christ would triumph. But the Lord’s hand was moving unseen in the darkness. In the providence of God, John was placed where Christ could give him a wonderful revelation of Himself and of divine truth for the enlightenment of the churches.’ *Acts of the Apostles, page 581.*

### ‘The Revelation of Jesus Christ’

#### 1. What is the true title of the last book of the Bible? Revelation 1:1, first part.

NOTE: ‘Where did John get the light? Did it originate with the aged disciple? No. “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.’ *Manuscript Releases Volume 19, page 166.*

#### 2. What may we learn from the title of this book? Revelation 1:1, first part.

NOTE: ‘Ministers and people declared that the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation were incomprehensible mysteries. But Christ directed His disciples to the words of the prophet Daniel concerning events to take place in their time, and said: “Whoso readeth, let him understand.” Matthew 24:15. And the assertion that the Revelation is a mystery, not to be understood, is contradicted by the very title of the book: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass. . . . Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” Revelation 1:1-3.’ *Great Controversy, page 341.*

### ‘His servant John’

#### 3. To whom was the Revelation of Jesus Christ given? Revelation 1:1.

NOTE: 'John lived to be very old. He witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem and the ruin of the stately temple. The last survivor of the disciples who had been intimately connected with the Saviour, his message had great influence in setting forth the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world. No one could doubt his sincerity, and through his teachings many were led to turn from unbelief.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 569.

**4. Where was John when he received this revelation and why was he there? Revelation 1:9.**

NOTE: 'By the emperor's decree John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, condemned "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 1:9. Here, his enemies thought, his influence would no longer be felt, and he must finally die of hardship and distress. Patmos, a barren, rocky island in the Aegean Sea, had been chosen by the Roman government as a place of banishment for criminals; but to the servant of God this gloomy abode became the gate of heaven. Here, shut away from the busy scenes of life, and from the active labours of former years, he had the companionship of God and Christ and the heavenly angels, and from them he received instruction for the church for all future time.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 570.

### 'The disciple whom Jesus loved'

**5. What special description was made of John? John 19:26, John 20:2, John 21:7, John 21:20.**

NOTE: 'John is distinguished above the other apostles as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." John 21:20. He seems to have enjoyed to a pre-eminent degree the friendship of Christ, and he received many tokens of the Saviour's confidence and love... The Saviour's affection for the beloved disciple was returned with all the strength of ardent devotion. John clung to Christ as the vine clings to the stately pillar. For his Master's sake he braved the dangers of the judgment hall and lingered about the cross, and at the tidings that Christ had risen, he hastened to the sepulchre, in his zeal out-stripping even the impetuous Peter. The confiding love and unselfish devotion manifested in the life and character of John present lessons of untold value to the Christian church. John did not naturally possess the loveliness of character that his later experience revealed. By nature he had serious defects.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 539.

**6. What nickname had Jesus given to John and his brother? Mark 3:17.**

NOTE: 'He was not only proud, self-assertive, and ambitious for honour, but impetuous, and resentful under injury. He and his brother were called "sons of thunder." Evil temper, the desire for revenge, the spirit of criticism, were all in the beloved disciple. But beneath all this the divine Teacher discerned the ardent, sincere, loving heart. Jesus rebuked this self-seeking, disappointed his ambitions, tested his faith. But He revealed to him that for which his soul longed, the beauty of holiness, the transforming power of love.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 539.

### 'Peter, James and John'

**7. What experiences did Peter, James and John share? Mark 5:37-42, Matthew 17:1-3, Mark 14:32-35.**

NOTE: 'Of the twelve disciples, four were to act a leading part, each in a distinct line. In preparation for this, Christ taught them, foreseeing all. James, destined to swift-coming death by the sword; John, longest of the brethren to follow his Master in labour and persecution; Peter, the pioneer in breaking through the barriers of ages, and teaching the heathen world; and Judas, in service capable of pre-eminence above his brethren, yet brooding in his soul purposes of whose ripening he little dreamed.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 288.

'These disciples had been for some time associated with Jesus in active labour. John and James, Andrew and Peter, with Philip, Nathanael, and Matthew, had been more closely connected with Him than the others, and had witnessed more of His miracles. Peter, James, and John stood in still nearer relationship to Him. They were almost constantly with Him, witnessing His miracles, and hearing His words. John pressed into still closer intimacy with Jesus, so that he is distinguished as the one whom Jesus loved. The Saviour loved them all, but John's was the most receptive spirit. He was younger than the others, and with more of the child's confiding trust he opened his heart to Jesus. Thus he came more into sympathy with Christ, and through him the Saviour's deepest spiritual teaching was communicated to His people.' *Desire of Ages*, page 292.

**8. What special responsibility did Jesus entrust to John? John 19:25-27.**

NOTE: 'The eyes of Jesus wandered over the multitude that had collected together to witness His death, and He saw at the foot of the cross John supporting Mary, the mother of Christ. She had returned to the terrible scene, not being able to longer remain away from her Son. The last lesson of Jesus was one of filial love. He looked upon the grief-stricken face of His mother, and then upon John; said He, addressing the former: "Woman, behold thy son." Then, to the disciple: "Behold, thy mother," John well understood the words of Jesus, and the sacred trust which was committed to him. He immediately removed the mother of Christ from the fearful scene of Calvary. From that hour he cared for her as would a dutiful son, taking her to his own home. O pitiful, loving Saviour! Amid all His physical pain, and mental anguish, He had a tender, thoughtful care for the mother who had borne Him. He had no money to leave her, by which to insure her future comfort, but He was enshrined in the heart of John, and He gave His mother unto the beloved disciple as a sacred legacy. This trust was to prove a great blessing to John, a constant reminder of his beloved Master.' *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 3*, pages 160-161.

### 'The elder'

**9. How did John identify himself in his writings? 2 John 1, 3 John 1.**

NOTE: Peter too identifies himself as an elder. See 1 Peter 5:1. An apostle may use such a title either because of his advanced age or because of the special relationship, both official and fatherly, which he held among the churches and their members in the district where he had laboured for so long. Like Peter, John identifies himself in simplicity and humility.

'The lessons of Christ, setting forth meekness and humility and love as essential to growth in grace and a fitness for His work, were of the highest value to John. He treasured every lesson and constantly sought to bring his life into harmony with the divine pattern. John had begun to discern the glory of Christ, not the worldly pomp and power for which he had been taught to hope, but "the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14. The depth and fervour of John's affection for his Master was not the cause of Christ's love for him, but the effect of that love. John desired to become like Jesus, and under the transforming influence of the love of Christ he did become meek and lowly. Self was hid in Jesus. Above all his companions, John yielded himself to the power of that wondrous life. He says, "The life was manifested, and we have seen it." "And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." 1 John 1:2; John 1:16. John knew the Saviour by an experimental knowledge. His Master's lessons were graven on his soul. When he testified of the Saviour's grace, his simple language was eloquent with the love that pervaded his whole being.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 544.

#### **10. How did John address those entrusted to his care? 1 John 2:1, 12-13, 18. Compare Galatians 4:19,**

NOTE: Six times in this letter John writes this diminutive of tender, caressing love. He was aged and he felt a fatherly care for them as if he were their spiritual father.

'John speaks of Christians as "little children," and this is what all the members of God's family on earth are. In knowledge and understanding we are nothing but babes. Christ volunteered to teach us in a language so simple that all can understand. No one needs to use a dictionary in order to comprehend the meaning of the simple words He uses in telling us how to gain eternal life.' *Sermons & Talks Volume 2*, page 222.

#### **11. From whom did John learn this? John 13:33. Compare Matthew 18:3 & 19:14.**

NOTE: 'Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly, in God. We are His little children, and thus He deals with us. When we draw near to Him, He mercifully preserves us from the assaults of the enemy. Never will He betray one who trusts in Him as a child trusts in its parents. He sees the humble, trusting souls drawing near to Him, and in pity and love He draws near to them, and lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. "Touch them not," He says, "for they are mine. I have graven them upon the palms of my hands." He teaches them to exercise unquestioning faith in His power to work in their behalf. With assurance they say, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4.' *Our High Calling*, page 85.

### **'Your brother and companion in tribulation'**

#### **12. How does John identify with his readers? Revelation 1:9.**

NOTE: 'It was through one who declared himself to be a "brother, and companion in tribulation" (Revelation 1:9), that Christ revealed to His church the things that they must suffer for His sake. Looking down through long centuries of darkness and superstition, the aged exile saw multitudes suffering martyrdom because of their love for the truth. But he saw also that He who sustained His early witnesses would not forsake His faithful followers during the centuries of persecution that they must pass through before the close of time. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer," the Lord declared; "behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation: . . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Revelation 2:10.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 588.

#### **13. Despite his sufferings, with what message did begin his testimony? Revelation 4:1.**

NOTE: 'Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.' Banished to the solitudes of the Isle of Patmos, John was favoured with the presence of Jesus Christ. How comforting are the words of the aged apostle as he wrote to the churches of his Saviour! "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever." *Signs of the Times*, January 28, 1903.

'One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation, that the connection between God and His people is close and decided. John writes, "Grace be unto you, and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come." *Manuscript Releases Volume 18*, page 25.

## **Lesson 2: 'One like unto the Son of man'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.' Revelation 1:3

STUDY HELP: *The Sanctified Life*, pages 70-79.

### **Introduction**

'On the Isle of Patmos John saw in holy vision the One whom he honoured and loved above all others. He says, "I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia." The words uttered were not alone for John on the Isle of Patmos;

they were not for the churches alone; but through these churches was to come the inspired message for the people, to have its powerful impression in every age to the close of this earth's history.' *1888 Materials*, page 779.

### **'Blessed is he'**

#### **1. What blessing is pronounced on those who read this book? Revelation 1:3.**

NOTE: 'As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the New Testament scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many, so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study. But Christ through His servant John has here declared what shall be in the last days, and He says, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." Revelation 1:3.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 133.

#### **2. From whom did the Revelation come? Revelation 1:5-6.**

NOTE: 'A revelation is something revealed. The Lord Himself revealed to His servant the mysteries contained in this book, and He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. Its truths are addressed to those living in the last days of this earth's history, as well as to those living in the days of John. Some of the scenes depicted in this prophecy are in the past, some are now taking place; some bring to view the close of the great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven, and some reveal the triumphs and joys of the redeemed in the earth made new.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 584.

### **'Behold He cometh'**

#### **3. What special insights into the Second Coming of Christ was John shown? Revelation 1:7.**

NOTE: 'Whether we be saved or lost, we shall sometime see the Saviour as He is, in all His glory, and shall understand His character. At His second coming, conviction will be brought to every heart. Those who have turned from Him to the trivial things of this earth, seeking selfish interests and worldly honour, will in the day of His coming acknowledge their mistake. These are the ones spoken of by the Revelator as "all kindreds of the earth," who "shall wail because of Him." Let us not be content to be numbered among the "kindreds of the earth." Remembering that our citizenship is in heaven, let us lay hold on the hope set before us in the Gospel. "And they also which pierced Him." These words apply not only to the men who pierced Christ when He hung on the cross of Calvary, but to those who by evil-speaking and wrong-doing are piercing Him today. Daily He suffers the agonies of the crucifixion. Daily men and women are piercing Him by dishonouring Him, by refusing to do His will.' *Signs of the Times*, January 28, 1903.

#### **4. What promise did Christ make to those who brought about His crucifixion? Mark 14:62.**

NOTE: 'Then every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him. In the place of a crown of thorns, He will wear a crown of glory, a crown within a crown. In place of that old purple kingly robe, He will be clothed in raiment of whitest white, "so as no fuller on earth can white them." Mark 9:3. And on His vesture and on His thigh a name will be written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords." Revelation 19:16. Those who mocked and smote Him will be there. The priests and rulers will behold again the scene in the judgement hall. Every circumstance will appear before them, as if written in letters of fire. Then those who prayed, "His blood be on us, and on our children," will receive the answer to their prayer.' *Desire of Ages*, page 739.

### **'On the Lord's day'**

#### **5. When did John receive this revelation? Revelation 1:10.**

NOTE: 'The Lord's day mentioned by John was the Sabbath, the day on which Jehovah rested after the great work of creation, and which He blessed and sanctified because He had rested upon it. The Sabbath was as sacredly observed by John upon the Isle of Patmos as when he was among the people, preaching upon that day. By the barren rocks surrounding him, John was reminded of rocky Horeb, and how, when God spoke His law to the people there, He said, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."' *My Life Today*, page 259.

#### **6. How did Christ Himself explain that the Sabbath is His day? Mark 2:28. Compare Matthew 12:8, Luke 6:5.**

NOTE: 'Because the Sabbath was made for man, it is the Lord's day. It belongs to Christ. For "all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3. Since He made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. It declares that He who created all things in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things hold together, is the head of the church, and that by His power we are reconciled to God. For, speaking of Israel, He said, "I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them," make them holy. Ezekiel 20:12. Then the Sabbath is a sign of Christ's power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power, the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become a part of the Israel of God.' *Desire of Ages*, page 288.

### **'A great voice as of a trumpet'**

#### **7. How did John describe the One whom he saw in vision? Revelation 1:13-16. Compare Daniel 10:5-6.**

NOTE: 'Now John is once more permitted to behold his Lord. But how changed is His appearance! He is no longer a Man of Sorrows, despised and humiliated by men. He is clothed in a garment of heavenly brightness. "His head and His hairs" are "white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes . . . as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a

furnace.” Revelation 1:14, 15, 17. His voice is like the music of many waters. His countenance shines as the sun. In His hand are seven stars, and out of His mouth issues a sharp two-edged sword, an emblem of the power of His word. Patmos is made resplendent with the glory of the risen Lord.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 582.

#### **8. What was John’s reaction to the vision? Revelation 1:17, first part. Compare Daniel 11:7-9.**

NOTE: ‘When at a later time the Son of God appeared, to give him instruction, Daniel says: “My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.” Daniel 9:18, 15,20; 10:8. When Job heard the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind, he exclaimed: “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” Job 42:6. It was when Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord, and heard the cherubim crying, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts,” that he cried out, “Woe is me! for I am undone.” Isaiah 6:3, 5. Paul, after he was caught up into the third heaven and heard things which it was not possible for a man to utter, speaks of himself as “less than the least of all saints.” 2 Corinthians 12:2-4, margin; Ephesians 3:8. It was the beloved John, who leaned on Jesus’ breast and beheld His glory, that fell as one dead before the feet of the angel. Revelation 1:17. There can be no self-exaltation, no boastful claim to freedom from sin, on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary’s cross. They feel that it was their sin which caused the agony that broke the heart of the Son of God, and this thought will lead them to self-abasement. Those who live nearest to Jesus discern most clearly the frailty and sinfulness of humanity, and their only hope is in the merit of a crucified and risen Saviour.’ *Great Controversy*, page 471.

#### **9. How did Christ identify Himself to John? Revelation 1:11, first part, 17-18. Compare verse 8.**

NOTE: ‘You cannot have a thought without Christ. You cannot have an inclination to come to Him unless He sets in motion influences and impresses His Spirit upon the human mind. And if there is a man on the face of the earth who has any inclination toward God, it is because of the many influences that are set to work to bear upon his mind and heart. Those influences call for the allegiance to God and an appreciation of the great work that God has done for him. Then don’t let us ever say that we can repent of ourselves, and then Christ will pardon. No, indeed. It is the favour of God that pardons. It is the favour of God that leads us by His power to repentance. Therefore, it is all of Jesus Christ, everything of Him, and you want to just give back glory to God. Why don’t you respond more when you meet together in your meetings? Why don’t you have the quickening influence of the Spirit of God when the love of Jesus and His salvation are presented to you? It is because you do not see that Christ is first and last and best, and the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the very Author and Finisher of our faith.’ *Faith & Works*, page 73.

### **‘In the midst of the seven candlesticks’**

#### **10. Where was Christ when John saw Him? Revelation 1:13. Compare Exodus 26:35.**

NOTE: ‘Because Revelation is a book that reveals Jesus and because Jesus is now in the heavenly sanctuary, we are not surprised that the heavenly sanctuary (or temple) is mentioned in Revelation repeatedly. In fact it is referred to fourteen times – and specifically located *in heaven*. It is called the temple in heaven (Revelation 14:17), God’s temple in heaven (Revelation 11:19), the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven (Revelation 15:5)... The heavenly sanctuary is a central pivot of the message of Revelation. Five of the major divisions of the book are introduced with scenes that centre on it. The introductory sanctuary scenes in the first three divisions are related to the Holy Place. The sanctuary vision in the fourth division is related to the Most Holy Place; and in the fifth division, to the temple as a whole.’ C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares* 2, page 164.

#### **11. How is the symbolism of the candlesticks and Christ walking among them explained? Revelation 1:20, last part.**

NOTE: ‘Christ is spoken of as walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Thus is symbolised His relation to the churches. He is in constant communication with His people. He knows their true state. He observes their order, their piety, their devotion. Although He is high priest and mediator in the sanctuary above, yet He is represented as walking up and down in the midst of His churches on the earth. With untiring wakefulness and unremitting vigilance, He watches to see whether the light of any of His sentinels is burning dim or going out. If the candlesticks were left to mere human care, the flickering flame would languish and die; but He is the true watchman in the Lord’s house, the true warden of the temple courts. His continued care and sustaining grace are the source of life and light.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 586.

### **‘Unto the seven churches’**

#### **12. To whom is the Revelation addressed? Revelation 1:4 & 11.**

NOTE: ‘The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the word.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 585.

#### **13. How did Christ explain the symbolism of the seven stars? Revelation 1:20.**

NOTE: ‘Christ is represented as holding the seven stars in His right hand. This assures us that no church faithful to its trust need fear coming to nought, for not a star that has the protection of Omnipotence can be plucked out of the hand of Christ. “These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand.” Revelation 2:1. These words are spoken to the teachers in the church, those entrusted by God with weighty responsibilities. The sweet influences that are to be abundant in the church are bound up with God’s ministers, who are to reveal the love of Christ. The stars of heaven are under His control. He fills them with light. He guides and directs their movements. If He did not do this, they would become fallen stars. So with His ministers. They are but instruments in His hands, and all the good they accomplish is done through His power. Through them

His light is to shine forth. The Saviour is to be their efficiency. If they will look to Him as He looked to the Father they will be enabled to do His work. As they make God their dependence, He will give them His brightness to reflect to the world.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 586.

## Lesson 3: 'I know thy works'

MEMORY VERSE: 'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.' Revelation 2:7.

STUDY HELP: *Selected Messages Book 1*, pages 369-372.

### Introduction

'The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the word.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 585.

Note: the messages to the churches have three applications, to the members of the original churches in the province of Asia, and as a series of pictures of the Christian Church in the seven stages of its history. But in every age of the church aspects of these messages apply to individual Christians.

### 'Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus'

#### 1. How does Jesus identify Himself to the Church of Ephesus? Revelation 2:1. Compare Revelation 1:13, 16.

NOTE: Ephesus represents the church in the apostolic period.

'The church of Christ is very precious in His sight. It is the case which contains His jewels, the fold which encloses His flock. Christ "loved the church, and gave Himself for it." Ephesians 5:25. It is the purchase of His blood. The divine Son of God is seen walking amid the seven golden candlesticks. Jesus Himself supplies the oil to these burning lamps. He it is that kindles the flame. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." John 1:4. No candlestick, no church, shines of itself. From Christ emanates all its light. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the light thereof.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 280.

#### 2. What did the Lord say about the works of the Ephesus Church? Revelation 2:2-3.

NOTE: 'At the first the experience of the church at Ephesus was marked with childlike simplicity and fervour. The believers sought earnestly to obey every word of God, and their lives revealed an earnest, sincere love for Christ. They rejoiced to do the will of God because the Saviour was in their hearts as an abiding presence. Filled with love for their Redeemer, their highest aim was to win souls to Him. They did not think of hoarding the precious treasure of the grace of Christ. They felt the importance of their calling; and, weighted with the message, "On earth peace, good will toward men," they burned with desire to carry the glad tidings of salvation to earth's remotest bounds. And the world took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Sinful men, repentant, pardoned, cleansed, and sanctified, were brought into partnership with God through His Son. The members of the church were united in sentiment and action. Love for Christ was the golden chain that bound them together. They followed on to know the Lord more and still more perfectly, and in their lives were revealed the joy and peace of Christ. They visited the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and kept themselves unspotted from the world, realising that a failure to do this would be a contradiction of their profession and a denial of their Redeemer. In every city the work was carried forward. Souls were converted, who in their turn felt that they must tell of the inestimable treasure they had received. They could not rest till the light which had illumined their minds was shining upon others. Multitudes of unbelievers were made acquainted with the reasons of the Christian's hope. Warm, inspired personal appeals were made to the erring, to the outcast, and to those who, while professing to know the truth, were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.' *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 578-579.

### 'I have somewhat against Thee'

#### 3. What rebuke did the Lord give to the Church in Ephesus? Revelation 2:4-5.

NOTE: 'We need Jesus every moment. To lose His love from our hearts means much. Yet He Himself says: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. The religion of many is very much like an icicle, freezingly cold. The hearts of not a few are still unmelted, unsubdued. They cannot touch the hearts of others, because their own hearts are not surcharged with the blessed love that flows from the heart of Christ.' *Reflecting Christ*, page 77.

#### 4. What error did the Ephesian Church withstand? Revelation 2:6

NOTE: 'The doctrine is now largely taught that the gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by "believing" we are released from the necessity of being doers of the Word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned' *Signs of the Times*, January 2, 1912.

#### 5. What promise is give to those who repent in Ephesus? Revelation 2:7.

NOTE: 'We are seeking for the life that measures with the life of God; therefore our natures must be brought into conformity with the will of God. We must so conduct our life work that we can go to God in confidence and open our hearts before Him, telling Him our necessities and believing that He hears and will give us grace and strength to carry out the principles of the Word of God. What we want is heaven, the victor's crown, an entrance through the gates to the city of God, the right to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God. We want to see the King in His beauty. Then daily let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, the perfection of human character, and laying hold of His divinity we shall have the strength of divinity to aid us in overcoming every evil tendency and desire.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 365.

### **'Unto the angel of the church in Smyrna'**

#### **6. How does Christ identify Himself to the Church in Smyrna? Revelation 2:8. Compare Revelation 1:17-18.**

NOTE: Smyrna represents the Church in the period of persecution by the Roman emperors. The Lord's resurrection is the surety of resurrection for those who perished at the hands of Rome.

'Just what Christ was to John in his exile He will be to His people who are made to feel the hand of oppression for the faith and testimony of Jesus Christ. These were driven by the storm and tempest of persecution to the crevices of the rocks, but were hiding in the Rock of Ages; and in the fastnesses of the mountains, in the caves and dens of the earth, the Saviour reveals His presence and His glory. Yet a little while, and He that is to come will come and will not tarry. His eyes as a flame of fire penetrate into the fast-closed dungeons and hunt out the hidden ones, for their names are written in the Lamb's book of life. These eyes of the Saviour are above us, around us, noting every difficulty, discerning every danger; and there is no place where His eyes cannot penetrate, no sorrows and sufferings of His people where the sympathy of Christ does not reach.' *That I May Know Him*, page 360.

#### **7. What did the Lord say of the works of the Church in Smyrna? Revelation 2:9. Compare Romans 8:35-39.**

NOTE: 'Tribulation we must expect; but we are to commit everything, great and small, to God. He does not become perplexed by the multiplicity of our grievances nor overpowered by the weight of our burdens. His watchcare extends to every household and enriches every individual; He is concerned in all our business and our sorrows. He marks every tear; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. All the afflictions and trials that befall us here are permitted, to work out His purposes of love toward us, "that we might be partakers of his holiness," and thus become participants in that fullness of joy which is found in His presence.' *Lift Him Up*, page 279.

'Jesus denied that the Jews were children of Abraham. He said, "Ye do the deeds of your father." In mockery they answered, "We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God."... Jesus gave no heed to the base insinuation, but said, "If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God." Their works testified of their relationship to him who was a liar and a murderer. "Ye are of your father the devil," said Jesus, "and the lusts of your father it is your will to do.' *Desire of Ages*, page 467.

### **'I will give thee a crown of life'**

#### **8. What encouraging words did the Lord speak to the suffering saints in Smyrna? Revelation 2:9.**

NOTE: 'To follow Christ is not freedom from conflict. It is not child's play. It is not spiritual idleness. All the enjoyment in Christ's service means sacred obligations in meeting oft stern conflicts. To follow Christ means stern battles, active labour, warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Our enjoyment is the victories gained for Christ in earnest, hard, warfare. We are enlisted for labour, "not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6:27). Every soul must count the cost. Not one will succeed but by strenuous effort. We must spiritually exercise all our powers and crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. Crucifixion means much more than many suppose. It is a constant watchfulness to be faithful unto death, to fight the good fight of faith until the warfare is ended and as overcomers we shall receive the crown of life. I can see my Redeemer, in whom I have fresh encouragement to trust as a never-failing Source of strength.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 117.

#### **9. What promise is given to those who are willing to suffer for righteousness' sake? Revelation 2:10.**

NOTE: 'In order to determine how important are the interests involved in the conversion of the soul from error to truth, we must appreciate the value of immortality; we must realise how terrible are the pains of the second death; we must comprehend the honour and glory awaiting the ransomed, and understand what it is to live in the presence of Him who died that He might elevate and ennoble man, and give to the overcomer a royal diadem.' *Maranatha*, page 330.

### **'Unto the angel of the church in Pergamos'**

#### **10. How does Christ identify Himself to the Church in Pergamos? Revelation 2:12. Compare Revelation 1:16.**

NOTE: Pergamos represents the Church when compromises were made with the world and the state.

'There are times when words of reproof and rebuke are called for. Those who are out of the right way must be aroused to see their peril. A message must be given that shall startle them from the lethargy which enchains their senses. Moral renovation must take place, else souls will perish in their sins. Let the message of truth, like a sharp, two-edged sword, cut its way to the heart. Make appeals that will arouse the careless, and bring foolish, wandering minds back to God. The attention of the people must be arrested. Our message is a savour of life unto life or of death unto death. The destinies of souls are balancing. Multitudes are in the valley of decision. A voice should be heard crying, "If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him." 1 Kings 18:21.' *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 13.

### **11. How did Christ commend the Church in Pergamos? Revelation 2:13.**

NOTE: 'In the service of God there is no middle ground.... Let none expect to make a compromise with the world, and yet enjoy the blessing of the Lord. Let God's people come out from this world, and be separate. Let us seek more earnestly to know and do the will of our Father in heaven. Let the light of truth which has shone upon us be so received that its bright rays may go forth from us to the world. Let unbelievers see that the faith we hold makes us better men and better women; that it is a living reality, sanctifying the character, transforming the life. Let our conversation be upon heavenly things. Let us surround ourselves with an atmosphere of Christian cheerfulness. Let us show that our religion can stand the test of trial. Let us by our kindness, forbearance, and love prove to the world the power of our faith.' *Our High Calling*, page 305.

### **'I have a few things against thee'**

### **12. What faults did Christ find in the Church in Pergamos? Revelation 2:14-16.**

NOTE: 'Balak by the advice of Balaam laid the snare. Israel would have bravely met their enemies in battle, and resisted them, and come off conquerors; but when women invited their attention and sought their company and beguiled them by their charms, they did not resist temptations. They were invited to idolatrous feasts, and their indulgence in wine further beclouded their dazed minds. The power of self-control, their allegiance to God's law, was not preserved. Their senses were so beclouded with wine, and their unholy passions had such full sway, overpowering every barrier, that they invited temptation even to the attending of these idolatrous feasts. Those who had never flinched in battle, who were brave men, did not barricade their souls to resist temptation to indulge their basest passions. They first defiled their conscience by lewdness, and then departed from God still farther by idolatry, thus showing contempt for the God of Israel. Near the close of this earth's history Satan will work with all his powers in the same manner and with the same temptations wherewith he tempted ancient Israel just before their entering the land of promise. He will lay snares for those who claim to keep the commandments of God, and who are almost on the borders of the heavenly Canaan. He will use his powers to their utmost in order to entrap souls, and to take God's professed people upon their weakest points. It is now the duty of God's commandment-keeping people to watch and pray, to search the Scriptures diligently, to hide the word of God in the heart, lest they sin against Him in idolatrous thoughts and debasing practices, and thus the church of God become demoralised.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 115.

### **13. What promise was given to the Church of Pergamos? Revelation 2:17.**

NOTE: 'Look to Jesus, your substitute and surety and righteousness. He became sin for us who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. He gives the crown of life to those who are faithful unto death. He it is who gives to eat of the hidden manna. Jesus will not leave you. He loves you with an everlasting love, and as you trust in Him your faith will grow and increase. The more you trust your Redeemer the more you will love Him. He is your friend in life or in death. He is the crown of your rejoicing. He is worthy of your fullest faith. All the sorrows and afflictions we suffer here only constitutes our discipline for a higher life, for through the appropriated grace of Christ trials will be the means whereby we shall be purified and fitted for heaven. Wait only upon God. Lean upon Him in entire dependence, for His everlasting arms hold you up and sustain you. Will not He who says that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of your heavenly Father care for you who trust and love Him? Jesus knows every throb of pain, every throe of anguish and distress, and He will give you grace to endure your affliction in order that your faith fail not, whatever may be your suffering' *Manuscript Releases Volume 10*, page 176.

## **Lesson 4: 'Strengthen the things that remain'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.' Revelation 3:10.

STUDY HELP: *In Heavenly Places*, page 294.

### **Introduction**

'The admonition of the True Witness to the Sardis church is: "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent." The sin especially charged against this church is that they have not strengthened the things that remain, that are ready to die. Does this warning apply to us? Let us individually examine our hearts in the light of God's word, and let our first work be to set our hearts in order by the help of Christ.' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 610.

### **'Unto the angel of the church in Thyatira'**

#### **1. How does Christ identify Himself to the church in Thyatira? Revelation 2:18. Compare Revelation 1:14-15 & Daniel 10:6.**

NOTE: Thyatira represents the church during the long ages of papal persecution.

'The prophet Isaiah had declared that the Lord would cleanse His people from their iniquities "by the spirit of judgement, and by the spirit of burning." The word of the Lord to Israel was, "I will turn My hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross,

and take away all thy tin.” Isaiah 4:4; 1:25. To sin, wherever found, “our God is a consuming fire.” Hebrews 12:29. In all who submit to His power the Spirit of God will consume sin. But if men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 107.

**2. What commendation does the Lord give to the faithful ones in Thyatira? Revelation 2:19.**

NOTE: Notice how often these virtues are commended in the seven churches.

‘Salvation is not to be baptised, not to have our names upon the church books, not to preach the truth. But it is a living union with Jesus Christ to be renewed in heart, doing the works of Christ in faith and labour of love, in patience, meekness, and hope. Every soul united to Christ will be a living missionary to all around him.’ *Evangelism*, page 319.

**‘I have a few things against thee’**

**3. What fault did Christ find with the church in Thyatira? Revelation 2:20-23.**

NOTE: ‘With stern and commanding voice Elijah cries: “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” Not one in that vast assembly dared utter one word for God and show his loyalty to Jehovah. What astonishing deception and fearful blindness had, like a dark cloud, covered Israel! This blindness and apostasy had not closed about them suddenly; it had come upon them gradually as they had not heeded the word of reproof and warning which the Lord had sent to them because of their pride and their sins. And now, in this fearful crisis, in the presence of the idolatrous priests and the apostate king, they remained neutral. If God abhors one sin above another, of which His people are guilty, it is doing nothing in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God.’ *Testimonies Volume 3*, page 280.

**4. What tender counsel did the Lord give to the faithful ones in Thyatira? Revelation 2:24-25.**

NOTE: ‘All who in that evil day would fearlessly serve God according to the dictates of conscience, will need courage, firmness, and a knowledge of God and His word; for those who are true to God will be persecuted, their motives will be impugned, their best efforts misinterpreted, and their names cast out as evil. Satan will work with all his deceptive power to influence the heart and becloud the understanding, to make evil appear good, and good evil. The stronger and purer the faith of God’s people, and the firmer their determination to obey Him, the more fiercely will Satan strive to stir up against them the rage of those who, while claiming to be righteous, trample upon the law of God. It will require the firmest trust, the most heroic purpose, to hold fast the faith once delivered to the saints. God desires His people to prepare for the soon-coming crisis. Prepared or unprepared, they must all meet it; and those only who have brought their lives into conformity to the divine standard, will stand firm at that time of test and trial. When secular rulers unite with ministers of religion to dictate in matters of conscience, then it will be seen who really fear and serve God. When the darkness is deepest, the light of a godlike character will shine the brightest. When every other trust fails, then it will be seen who have an abiding trust in Jehovah. And while the enemies of truth are on every side, watching the Lord’s servants for evil, God will watch over them for good. He will be to them as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 431.

**5. What promise is made to the church in Thyatira? Revelation 2:26-29.**

NOTE: ‘Of our own selves we can do nothing; but through Christ we can do all things. God intends that we shall be a help and blessing to one another, and that we shall be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. In the hour of our deepest trial, Jesus will be our “bright and morning star.” There is in life much sorrow of our own creating. Satan works up distrust and discouragement. But God lives and reigns; and he will give us all the help we need. It is our privilege at all times to draw strength and encouragement from his blessed promise, “My grace is sufficient for you.”’ *Historical Sketches*, page 129.

**‘Unto the angel of the church in Sardis’**

**6. How does Christ identify Himself to the church in Sardis? Revelation 3:1. Compare Revelation 1:4 & 16, Revelation 5:6.**

NOTE: Sardis represents the church in the post-Reformation period, called by historians ‘the high and dry church.’

‘While the wind is itself invisible, it produces effects that are seen and felt. So the work of the Spirit upon the soul will reveal itself in every act of him who has felt its saving power. When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 173.

**7. How did the Lord describe the church in Sardis? Revelation 3:1, last part.**

NOTE: ‘Many who are without spiritual life have their names on the church records, but they are not written in the Lamb’s book of life. They may be joined to the church, but they are not united to the Lord. They may be diligent in the performance of a certain set of duties, and may be regarded as living men; but many are among those who “have a name that thou livest, and art dead.” Unless there is genuine conversion of the soul to God; unless the vital breath of God quickens the soul to spiritual life; unless the professors of truth are actuated by heaven-born principle, they are not born of the incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever. Unless they trust in the righteousness of Christ as their only security; unless they copy his character, labour in his spirit, they are naked, they have not on the robe of his righteousness. The dead are often made to pass for the

living; for those who are working out what they term salvation after their own ideas, have not God working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, January 17, 1893.

### **'I have not found thy works perfect'**

#### **8. What counsel and warning does the Lord give to the church in Sardis? Revelation 3:2-3.**

NOTE: 'This is our work. There are many ready to die spiritually, and the Lord calls upon us to strengthen them. God's people are to be firm to duty. They are to be bound together by the bonds of Christian fellowship and are to be strengthened in the faith by speaking often to one another about the precious truths entrusted to them. Never are they to quarrel and condemn. They are to unite upon the importance of obedience to God's law. In this life there is nothing of greater importance than preparation of character that we may at last enter with joy into the saints' abode on high. Why do we not improve our privilege of being saints here below?' *In Heavenly Places*, page 182.

#### **9. What promises are given to the faithful few in Sardis? Revelation 3:4-6.**

NOTE: '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 divine Intercessor presents the plea that all who have overcome through faith in His blood be forgiven their transgressions, that they be restored to their Eden home, and crowned as joint heirs with Himself to the "first dominion." While Jesus is pleading for the subjects of His grace, Satan accuses them before God as transgressors. Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels, saying, "I know them by name." Their names stand enrolled in the book of life, and concerning them it is written, "They shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy." Revelation 3:4.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 212.

### **'Unto the angel of the church in Philadelphia'**

#### **10. How does the Lord identify Himself to the church in Philadelphia? Revelation 3:7-8.**

NOTE: Philadelphia represents the church of the Advent awakening.

'The True Witness has given us the assurance that He has set before us an open door, which no man can shut. Those who are seeking to be faithful to God may be denied many of the privileges of the world; their way may be hedged up and their work hindered by the enemies of truth; but there is no power that can close the door of communication between God and their souls. The Christian himself may close this door by indulgence in sin, or by rejection of heaven's light. He may turn away his ears from hearing the message of truth, and in this way sever the connection between God and his soul.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, March 26, 1889.

'Keep thinking of the open door that Christ has set before you, that no man can shut. God will close the door to all evil, if you will give Him a chance. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up for you a standard against him.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, April 16, 1889.

#### **11. What prophecy did the Lord make concerning those who masquerade as His people? Revelation 3:9.**

NOTE: 'Consider, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord has a people, a chosen people, His church, to be His own, His own fortress, which He holds in a sin-stricken, revolted world; and He intended that no authority should be known in it, no laws be acknowledged by it, but His own. Satan has a large confederacy, his church. Christ calls them the synagogue of Satan because the members are the children of sin. The members of Satan's church have been constantly working to cast off the divine law, and confuse the distinction between good and evil. Satan is working with great power in and through the children of disobedience, to exalt treason and apostasy as truth and loyalty.' *Christian Experience & Teachings*, pages 206-207.

### **'I will also keep thee'**

#### **12. What promise and counsel did the Lord give to Philadelphia? Revelation 3:10-11.**

NOTE: 'In the time of trial before us God's pledge of security will be placed upon those who have kept the word of His patience. Christ will say to His faithful ones: "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast" (Isaiah 26:20). The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejectors of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of cloud which speaks wrath and terror to the transgressor of God's law is light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments. The arm strong to smite the rebellious will be strong to deliver the loyal. Every faithful one will surely be gathered. "He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:31).' *Conflict & Courage*, page 91.

#### **13. What is in store for the overcomers in Philadelphia? Revelation 3:12-13. Compare Isaiah 62:2, Revelation 2:17.**

NOTE: 'The Lord loves you, and He wants you to have the crown of life. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Revelation 3:5). The white robes are the garments of Christ's righteousness, and all who have this righteousness are partakers of the divine nature. They have written upon them, "The name of my God, and the name of the city of my God,

which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” *The Upward Look*, page 166.

‘The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads were the words God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus’ new name. At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us, who could wash one another’s feet, and salute the brethren with a holy kiss, and they worshiped at our feet. Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man’s hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence we all gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer, and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders, and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle, in His left a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out: “Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?” The angels ceased to sing, and there was a time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: “Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you.”’ *Testimonies Volume 1*, pages 59-60.

## Lesson 5: ‘I stand at the door’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.’ Revelation 3:21.

STUDY HELP: *Our High Calling*, pages 348-353.

### Introduction

‘A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganisation, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.’ *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, February 25, 1902.

### ‘The faithful and true Witness’

#### 1. How does Christ identify Himself to the church of the Laodiceans? Revelation 3:14.

NOTE: Laodicea means ‘a people judged’ and represents the Church living during the time of God’s judgement.

‘The Laodicean message is applicable to the church at this time. Do you believe this message?’ *Selected Messages Book 1*, page 92.

‘God is a God of sincerity and truth. The word of God is a book of truth. Jesus is a faithful and true witness. The church is the witness and ground of the truth. All the precepts of the Most High are true and righteous altogether. How, then, must prevarication and any exaggeration or deception appear in His sight?’ *Testimonies Volume 4*, page 366.

#### 2. What message is given to those who live in the time of God’s judgement? Revelation 14:6-7.

NOTE: Notice how this message, like Revelation 3:14 brings together the judgement and the creation.

‘We do not understand the greatness and majesty of God nor remember the immeasurable distance between the Creator and the creatures formed by His hand. He who sitteth in the heavens, swaying the sceptre of the universe, does not judge according to our finite standard, nor reckon according to our computation. We are in error if we think that that which is great to us must be great to God, and that that which is small to us must be small to Him.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 78.

‘Our Creator justly claims the right to do as He chooses with the creatures of His hand. He has a right to govern as He will, and not as man chooses. But He is not a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He is the very fountain of love, the giver of blessings innumerable.’ *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 314.

### ‘I know thy works’

#### 3. What do the works of the Laodiceans reveal about their spiritual state? Revelation 3:15.

NOTE: ‘In the words spoken to the Laodicean church we can see the sure result of half-hearted service. There are many who claim to believe the truth, who do not obey the truth in a way that the world can take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus and learned of him. This condition of lukewarmness is a pitiable condition in which to be.’ *General Conference Bulletin*, June 6, 1909.

‘All heaven is looking on to see what is being done by those who know the truth. Many are in the condition that Christ speaks of as “neither cold nor hot.” The works of such testify against them that they are not walking, and working, and praying, and teaching the word of life.’ *Manuscript Releases Volume 18*, page 41.

‘The sermons preached by some of our ministers will have to be much more appropriate, and much more to the point than they are now, else many backsliders will carry a tame, pointless message that lulls people to sleep. Every discourse given should be given under a sense of the awful judgement soon to fall on our world. The message of truth is to be proclaimed by lips touched with a live coal from the divine altar. Christ refers to the lifeless, purposeless messages given in our churches, when He says, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot.” *Manuscript Releases Volume 10*, page 221.

#### **4. What does Christ promise to do with the lukewarm? Revelation 3:16.**

NOTE: ‘To those who do not practise it, the Word of God is a dead letter. Christ says of such, “I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth.” He cannot present their case to the Father. If they realised that they were sinners, He could plead on their behalf, and the Lord would arouse them by His Holy Spirit. But they are worse than dead in trespasses and sins. They hear the Word, but make no application of it to themselves; instead, they apply the Word spoken to their neighbours.’ *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 963.

### **‘And knowest not’**

#### **5. How do the Laodiceans regard themselves? Revelation 3:17, first part.**

NOTE: ‘Were you cold, there would be some hope that you would be converted; but where self-righteousness girds one about, instead of the righteousness of Christ, the deception is so difficult to be seen, and the self-righteousness so hard to be put away, that the case is the most difficult to reach. An unconverted, godless sinner stands in a more favourable condition than such.’ *Testimonies Volume 2*, page 175.

#### **6. How does the faithful and true Witness regard the Laodiceans? Revelation 3:17, last part.**

NOTE: ‘What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. The testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake, for it is the True Witness who speaks, and His testimony must be correct. It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, and who believe themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that they are deceived and in need of every spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians, who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience for themselves in the divine life.’ *Testimonies Volume 3*, pages 252- 253.

### **‘I counsel thee’**

#### **7. What divine remedies does the faithful and true Witness offer for Laodicea’s condition? Revelation 3:18.**

NOTE: ‘Now He stands at the door of the heart as a heavenly merchantman; He says, “Open unto me; buy of me the heavenly wares; buy of me the gold tried in the fire.” Buy faith and love, the precious, beautiful attributes of our Redeemer. He invites us to buy the white raiment, which is His glorious righteousness; and the eyesalve, that we may discern spiritual things. Oh, shall we not open the heart’s door to this heavenly visitor? We cannot provide a robe of righteousness for ourselves, for the prophet says, “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” Isaiah 64:6. There is nothing in us from which we can clothe the soul so that its nakedness shall not appear. We are to receive the robe of righteousness woven in the loom of heaven, even the spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness. The eye is the sensitive conscience, the inner light, of the mind. Upon its correct view of things the spiritual healthfulness of the whole soul and being depends. The “eyesalve,” the Word of God, makes the conscience smart under its application, for it convicts of sin. But the smarting is necessary that the healing may follow, and the eye be single to the glory of God. Says Christ, By renouncing your own self-sufficiency, giving up all things, however dear to you, you may buy the gold, the raiment, and the eyesalve that you may see. The Saviour comes with jewels of truth of the richest value in distinction from all counterfeits, all that is spurious. He comes to every house, to every door; He is knocking, presenting His priceless treasure, urging, “Buy of me.”’ *Our High Calling*, page 350.

#### **8. What must Laodicea do to purchase these precious things from the Lord? Revelation 3:19.**

NOTE: ‘The gold of faith and love, the white raiment of a spotless character, and the eyesalve, or the power of clear discernment between good and evil, all these we must obtain before we can hope to enter the kingdom of God. But these precious treasures will not drop upon us without some exertion on our part. We must buy, we must “be zealous and repent” of our lukewarm state. We must be awake to see our wrongs, to search for our sins, and to put them away from us. It is the worthiness of Christ that must save us, His blood that must cleanse us. But we have efforts to make. We must do what we can, be zealous and repent, then believe that God accepts us. All heaven is interested in our salvation; and shall we be indifferent? Shall we be careless, as though it was a small matter whether we are saved or lost? Shall we slight the sacrifice that has been made for us? In the time of peril before us the professed followers of Christ will be tested. None will be able to stand but those who have had a deep and living experience in the things of God. The work of all will then be tried; if it is gold, silver, and precious stones, they will be safely shielded, as in the secret of the Lord’s pavilion. Only those who are willing to sacrifice all for eternal life will have it; but it will be worth suffering for, worth crucifying self and sacrificing every idol for. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory will outweigh every earthly treasure and eclipse every earthly attraction.’ *Our High Calling*, page 351.

## **‘If any man hear My voice’**

### **9. How does the Lord picture Himself with regard to the Laodiceans? Revelation 3:20, first part.**

NOTE: ‘So great is the unwillingness of the Lord to leave you, and such is His love toward you, that notwithstanding your life has not been in accordance with His will, and your works and ways have been offensive to Him, the Majesty of heaven condescends to beg the privilege of making you a visit and leaving you His blessing: “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.” The mansions in glory are His, and the joy of that heavenly abode; yet He humbles Himself to seek an entrance at the door of your heart, that He may bless you with His light and make you to rejoice in His glory. His work is to seek and to save that which is lost and ready to perish. He wishes to redeem as many as He can from sin and death, that He may elevate them to His throne and give them everlasting life.’ *Testimonies Volume 2*, page 224.

### **10. What part must we Laodiceans play to admit the Lord to our lives? Revelation 3:20, middle part.**

NOTE: ‘I saw that many have so much rubbish piled up at the door of their heart that they cannot get the door open. Some have difficulties between themselves and their brethren to remove. Others have evil tempers, selfish covetousness, to remove before they can open the door. Others have rolled the world before the door of their heart, which bars the door. All this rubbish must be taken away, and then they can open the door and welcome the Saviour in.’ *Testimonies Volume 1*, page 143.

## **‘I will come in’**

### **11. What promise does the Lord make to those who open the door to Him? Revelation 3:20, last part.**

NOTE: ‘The Lord Jesus will never leave nor forsake one humble, trembling soul. Shall we believe that God will work in our hearts? that if we allow Him to do so, He will make us pure and holy, by His rich grace qualifying us to be labourers together with Him? Can we with keen, sanctified perception appreciate the strength of the promises of God, and appropriate them to our individual selves, not because we are worthy, but because Christ is worthy, not because we are righteous, but because by living faith we claim the righteousness of Christ in our behalf?’ *Selected Messages Book 1*, page 108.

### **12. What picture is given of one who failed to open the door until too late? Song of Solomon 5:2-6.**

NOTE: ‘But “see that ye refuse not Him that speaketh.” Hebrews 12:25. Jesus said, “None of those men which were bidden shall taste of My supper.” They had rejected the invitation, and none of them were to be invited again. In rejecting Christ, the Jews were hardening their hearts, and giving themselves into the power of Satan so that it would be impossible for them to accept His grace. So it is now. If the love of God is not appreciated and does not become an abiding principle to soften and subdue the soul, we are utterly lost. The Lord can give no greater manifestation of His love than He has given. If the love of Jesus does not subdue the heart, there are no means by which we can be reached. Every time you refuse to listen to the message of mercy, you strengthen yourself in unbelief. Every time you fail to open the door of your heart to Christ, you become more and more unwilling to listen to the voice of Him that speaketh. You diminish your chance of responding to the last appeal of mercy.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 236-237.

### **13. What promise is given to the one who opens the door? Revelation 3:21-22.**

NOTE: ‘Ample provision has been made for all who sincerely, earnestly, and thoughtfully set about the work of perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ, to be brought by ministering angels to the heirs of salvation. None are so low, so corrupt and vile, that they cannot find in Jesus, who died for them, strength and purity and righteousness, if they will put away their sins, turn from their course of iniquity, and with full purpose of heart seek the living God. He is waiting to take away their stained garments, polluted by sin, and to put upon them the pure robe of His righteousness, to bid them live and not die. In Him, as branches of the Living Vine, they may flourish. Their boughs will not wither nor be fruitless. If they abide in Him, they can draw nourishment from Him, be imbued with His spirit, walk as He walked, overcome as He overcame, and be exalted to His own right hand.’ *Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene*, page 140.

## **Lesson 6: ‘Come up hither’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.’ Revelation 4:11.

STUDY HELP: *Our High Calling*, page 167.

### **Introduction**

‘The rainbow of promise encircling the throne on high is an everlasting testimony that “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. It testifies to the universe that God will never forsake His people in their struggle with evil. It is an assurance to us of strength and protection as long as the throne itself shall endure.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 493.

## **‘One sat upon the throne’**

### **1. In what way was the next part of the revelation opened to John? Revelation 4:1.**

NOTE: 'As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne." He saw an angel "having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." Revelation 4:5; 8:3. Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the "seven lamps of fire" and the "golden altar" represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, "the temple of God was opened" (Revelation 11:19), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the holy of holies. Here he beheld "the ark of His testament" (Revelation 11:19), represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 356.

'When Jesus bowed on the banks of Jordan at His baptism, Heaven was opened to His prayer in behalf of humanity. The Spirit, in the form of a dove of burnished gold encircled His head, and a voice from Heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." What does this say to us? It says to every poor tempted soul, Heaven is opened to the prayers of humanity. Christ has encircled the fallen race with His human arm, and with His divine arm He has grasped the throne of the Infinite. Through the merit of Christ, Heaven is opened to man. "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth; I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." The gates are open, and the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shines to man. The light of Heaven may shine upon you, as it shone upon Him.' *Signs of the Times*, July 15, 1889.

## **2. Whom did John behold in vision? John 4:2-3. Compare Ezekiel 1:26-28.**

NOTE: 'The rainbow round about the throne is an assurance that God is true, that in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We have sinned against Him, and are undeserving of His favour; yet He Himself has put into our lips that most wonderful of pleas, "Do not abhor us, for Thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory; remember, break not Thy covenant with us." Jeremiah 14:21. When we come to Him confessing our unworthiness and sin, He has pledged Himself to give heed to our cry. The honour of His throne is staked for the fulfilment of His word unto us.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 148.

'As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of the sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represents the combined power of mercy and justice. It is not justice alone that is to be maintained; for this would eclipse the glory of the rainbow of promise above the throne; men could see only the penalty of the law. Were there no justice, no penalty, there would be no stability to the government of God. It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation complete.' *Maranatha*, page 326.

## **'Four and twenty elders'**

### **3. Whom did John next see? Revelation 4:4. See Revelation 5:8-9. Compare Matthew 27:50-53, Ephesians 4:8, marginal reading.**

NOTE: 'As Christ arose, He brought from the grave a multitude of captives. The earthquake at His death had rent open their graves, and when He arose, they came forth with Him. They were those who had been co-labourers with God, and who at the cost of their lives had borne testimony to the truth. Now they were to be witnesses for Him who had raised them from the dead. During His ministry, Jesus had raised the dead to life. He had raised the son of the widow of Nain, and the ruler's daughter and Lazarus. But these were not clothed with immortality. After they were raised, they were still subject to death. But those who came forth from the grave at Christ's resurrection were raised to everlasting life. They ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave. These, said Christ, are no longer the captives of Satan; I have redeemed them. I have brought them from the grave as the first fruits of My power, to be with Me where I am, nevermore to see death or experience sorrow.' *Desire of Ages*, page 786.

### **4. What song of praise do the twenty-four elders sing? Revelation 4:10-11.**

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

## **'Seven lamps of fire'**

### **5. What shows us that the scene John saw was in the heavenly sanctuary? Revelation 4:5. Compare Revelation 1:12, 20.**

NOTE: 'The things of the kingdom of God have two main applications. In the heavenly realm, they have a literal application but in the earthly realm they have a spiritual application... In heaven there is a literal altar of incense. On earth there is a spiritual altar of incense, the altar of the human heart. In heaven there is a literal incense, on earth there is spiritual incense. In heaven there are literal offerings of Christ's blood and righteousness. He pleads before His Father: "My blood, My blood." His blood and character are literally in His person. His righteousness is literally in heaven. On earth, there are spiritual offerings,

the offerings of prayer, of praise, of thanksgiving. (1 Peter 2:5 and Hebrews 13:15) The righteousness is a spiritual righteousness received through the Holy Spirit. In heaven there are literal lampstands or lamps. On earth there are spiritual lamps or candlesticks. They are the seven churches, in other words, the Christian Church. Revelation 1:20. In heaven there is literal light in the lampstands. On earth there is spiritual light in the lampstands, the light of the Holy Spirit, the light of truth.' A. P. Cooke, *Lightnings, Thunderings and Voices*, pages 14-15.

#### **6. How was Isaiah shown the sevenfold nature of the Spirit of God? Isaiah 11:12.**

NOTE: 'The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of Lord; and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.' Brethren, take heed to these words, for they are of deep importance to every soul connected with the great work to be accomplished in these last days. Unless our eyes, our ears, our tongues, are under the control of the Holy Spirit, and guided by divine power, they cannot be trusted. They will surely mingle the thread of selfishness and the chaff of vanity with the work of God, and commingle with it that which is marred by unsanctified and ambitious projects, and the work will not bear the signature of Heaven; for it will not represent the principles of the law of God, which is a transcript of His character.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, August 13, 1895.

'As the Holy Spirit opens to you the truth, you will treasure up the most precious experiences, and will long to speak to others of the comforting things that have been revealed to you. When brought into association with them, you will communicate some fresh thought in regard to the character or the work of Christ. You will have some fresh revelation of His pitying love to impart to those who love Him and to those who love Him not.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 31.

### **'A sea of glass'**

#### **7. What did John also see before the throne of God? Revelation 4:6, first part.**

NOTE: 'What will be our feelings when we shall stand on the sea of glass? Shall we look back on the hours of our impatience here? Shall we stand upon the eternal hills of paradise and take in the events of our past life and see how many unnecessary trials we had because we thought God was dependent upon us to do everything? God help us to see our own littleness and God's greatness. God forbid that we should have exalted ideas of our own greatness, and exalt self. Magnitude of experience is no measure of worth. God has a standard so unlike human standards, and if we see God's estimate of us, we would see value where we supposed was littleness, and littleness where we supposed was greatness.' *Manuscript Releases volume 17*, page 72.

'Dear brethren and sisters, Christ is soon to come. Will He find you ready and waiting? The bridal lamps must be kept trimmed and burning. His chariot wheels have been delayed because of His long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance and have eternal life. When we shall stand with the redeemed upon the sea of glass, with harps of God and crowns of glory, and before us the unmeasured eternity, we shall then see how short was the waiting period of probation. "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching" (Luke 12:37).' *Manuscript Releases volume 10*, page 266.

#### **8. What wonderful scene will soon take place on the sea of glass? Revelation 15:2-4.**

NOTE: 'That song does not belong to the Jewish people alone. It points forward to the destruction of all the foes of righteousness and the final victory of the Israel of God. The prophet of Patmos beholds the white-robed multitude that have "gotten the victory," standing on the "sea of glass mingled with fire," having "the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb" (Revelation 15:2, 3). In freeing our souls from the bondage of sin, God has wrought for us a deliverance greater than that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Like the Hebrew host, we should praise the Lord with heart and soul and voice for His "wonderful works to the children of men." Those who dwell upon God's great mercies, and are not unmindful of His lesser gifts, will put on the girdle of gladness and make melody in their hearts to the Lord. The daily blessings that we receive from the hand of God, and above all else the death of Jesus to bring happiness and heaven within our reach, should be a theme for constant gratitude.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 93.

### **'Full of eyes'**

#### **9. What beings did John see around God's throne? Revelation 4:6-8, first part. Compare Ezekiel 1:5-14.**

NOTE: The King James rendering 'beasts' is most unfortunate. The Greek word 'zoa' is quite different from the beast of Revelation 13 (therion: a dangerous animal) and means 'living ones' or perhaps 'living creatures.' It is clear that these four are the cherubim, (see Ezekiel 10:1-22) among whose number Satan was once found. See Ezekiel 28:14-16.

'Upon the banks of the river Chebar, Ezekiel beheld a whirlwind seeming to come from the north, "a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber." A number of wheels intersecting one another were moved by four living beings. High above all these "was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." "And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings." Ezekiel 1:4, 26; 10:8. The wheels were so complicated in arrangement that at first sight they appeared to be in confusion; yet they moved in perfect harmony. Heavenly beings, sustained and guided by the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, were impelling those wheels; above them, upon the sapphire throne, was the Eternal One; and round about the throne was a rainbow, the emblem of divine mercy. As the wheel-like complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of this earth.' *Prophets & Kings*, pages 535-536.

**10. What song of praise comes from the cherubim? Revelation 4:8. Compare Isaiah 6:2-3.**

NOTE: 'The seraphim around the throne are so filled with reverential awe as they behold the glory of God, that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with admiration. Their praise is for the Lord of hosts. As they look into the future, when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, the triumphant song is echoed from one to another in melodious chant, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." They are fully satisfied to glorify God; abiding in His presence, beneath His smile of approbation, they wish for nothing more. The world that Satan has claimed and has ruled over with cruel tyranny, the Son of God has, by one vast achievement, encircled in His love and connected again with the throne of Jehovah. Cherubim and seraphim, and the unnumbered hosts of all the unfallen worlds, sang anthems of praise to God and the Lamb when this triumph was assured. They rejoiced that the way of salvation had been opened to the fallen race and that the earth would be redeemed from the curse of sin. How much more should those rejoice who are the objects of such amazing love! How can we ever be in doubt and uncertainty, and feel that we are orphans?' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 72.

**'Full of eyes'**

**11. What particularly did John notice about the four living ones? Revelation 4:6, last part. Compare Ezekiel 1:18, Ezekiel 10:12, 2 Chronicles 16:9, first part, Zechariah 4:10, last part.**

NOTE: 'In this speck of a world the whole heavenly universe manifests the greatest interest, for Christ has paid an infinite price for the souls of its inhabitants. The world's Redeemer has bound earth to heaven by ties of intelligence, for the redeemed of the Lord are here. Heavenly beings still visit the earth as in the days when they walked and talked with Abraham and with Moses. Amid the busy activity of our great cities, amid the multitudes that crowd the thoroughfares and fill the marts of trade where from morning till evening the people act as if business and sport and pleasure were all there is to life, where there are so few to contemplate unseen realities, even here heaven has still its watchers and its holy ones. There are invisible agencies observing every word and deed of human beings. In every assembly for business or pleasure, in every gathering for worship, there are more listeners than can be seen with the natural sight. Sometimes the heavenly intelligences draw aside the curtain which hides the unseen world that our thoughts may be withdrawn from the hurry and rush of life to consider that there are unseen witnesses to all we do or say.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 176.

**12. What word does Daniel use to describe these heavenly witnesses? Daniel 4:13, 17 & 23.**

NOTE: 'We need to understand better than we do the mission of the angel visitants. It would be well to consider that in all our work we have the co-operation and care of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim and angels that excel in strength, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, stand at His right hand, "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Hebrews 1:14.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 176.

## **Lesson 7: 'Who is worthy to open the book?'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.' Revelation 5:13.

STUDY HELP: *God's Amazing Grace*, page 98.

### **Introduction**

'The cost of the redemption of the race can never be fully realised until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer, by the throne of God. And as they have capacity to appreciate the value of immortal life, and the eternal reward, they will swell the song of victory and immortal triumph, "saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature," says John, "which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."' *Confrontation*, page 55.

### **'A book sealed with seven seals'**

**1. Upon what was John's attention now led to focus? Revelation 5:1.**

NOTE: The book is in the Father's right hand. The right hand denotes authority.

'There in His open hand lay the book, the roll of the history of God's providences, the prophetic history of nations and the church. Herein was contained the divine utterances, His authority, His commandments, His laws, the whole symbolic counsel of the Eternal, and the history of all ruling powers in the nations. In symbolic language was contained in that roll the influence of every nation, tongue, and people from the beginning of earth's history to its close.' *Manuscript Releases Volume 9*, page 7.

**2. What question is asked concerning the sealed book? Revelation 5:2.**

NOTE: The very question proclaims the importance of the book.

'Divine inspiration asks many questions which the most profound scholar cannot answer. These questions were not asked supposing that we could answer them, but to call our attention to the deep mysteries of God, and to make men know that their wisdom is limited, that in the common things of daily life there are mysteries past the comprehension of finite minds; that the judgment and purposes of God are past finding out, His wisdom unsearchable. If He reveals Himself to man, it is by shrouding Himself in the thick cloud of mystery. God's purpose is to conceal more of Himself than He makes known to men. Could men fully understand the ways and works of God, they would not then believe Him to be the infinite One. He is not to be comprehended by man in His wisdom, and reasons, and purposes. "His ways are past finding out." His love can never be explained upon natural principles. If this could be done, we would not feel that we could trust Him with the interests of our souls.' *Healthful Living*, page 294.

### **'I wept much'**

#### **3. What response came to the angel's question? Revelation 5:3.**

NOTE: The translation 'no man' actually means no one; 'no being, man or angel, is worthy to enter into the secret counsels of God.

'God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world. He did not make His purposes to fit circumstances, but He allowed matters to develop and work out. He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but He knew that such a condition would exist. The plan that should be carried out upon the defection of any of the high intelligences of heaven, this is the secret, the mystery which has been hid from ages. And an offering was prepared in the eternal purposes to do the very work which God has done for fallen humanity.' *Signs of the Times*, March 25, 1897.

#### **4. How did John describe his reaction when no one was able to open the book or even look upon it? John 5:4.**

NOTE: John Wesley said: 'How far are they from the temper of St John, who inquire after anything rather than the contents of this book.'

'John says: "I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon." The vision as presented to John made its impression upon his mind. The destiny of every nation was contained in that book. John was distressed at the utter inability of any human being or angelic intelligence to read the words, or even to look thereon. His soul was wrought up to such a point of agony and suspense.' *Manuscript Releases Volume 20*, page 197.

### **'The Lion of the tribe of Juda'**

#### **5. What comforting words did one of the elders speak to John? Revelation 5:5.**

NOTE: 'The Saviour is presented before John under the symbols of "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" and of "a Lamb as it had been slain." Revelation 5:5, 6. These symbols represent the union of omnipotent power and self-sacrificing love. The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejecters of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of fire that speaks terror and wrath to the transgressor of God's law is a token of light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments. The arm strong to smite the rebellious will be strong to deliver the loyal. Everyone who is faithful will be saved. "He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:31.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 589.

#### **6. Besides 'Lion of the tribe of Juda', what other title is this Being given? Revelation 5:5. Compare Revelation 22:16, Isaiah 11:1, Isaiah 53:2, Acts 13:22-23.**

NOTE: 'In the Child of Bethlehem was veiled the glory before which angels bow. This unconscious babe was the promised seed, to whom the first altar at the gate of Eden pointed. This was Shiloh, the peace giver. It was He who declared Himself to Moses as the I AM. It was He who in the pillar of cloud and of fire had been the guide of Israel. This was He whom seers had long foretold. He was the Desire of all nations, the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star. The name of that helpless little babe, inscribed in the roll of Israel, declaring Him our brother, was the hope of fallen humanity.' *Desire of Ages*, page 52.

### **'A Lamb as it had been slain'**

#### **7. As John looked for the Lion of the tribe of Juda, whom did he see? Revelation 5:6. Compare Zechariah 3:8-9, 2 Chronicles 16:9.**

NOTE: In the Book of Revelation, the word always denotes a little lamb. (See also John 21:15.) The word is often used of a pet lamb, suggesting the great love there is between the Father and the Son. But this Lamb bears the marks of terrible suffering. Horns are a prophetic symbol for kingship or power. Seven is the number of perfection.

'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.

#### **8. What did the Lamb then do? Revelation 5:7. Compare Revelation 19:10, 1 Peter 1:10-11.**

NOTE: Since prophecy is the testimony of Jesus, it is entirely fitting that Jesus, the Lamb of God, should open the sealed book. '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.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 366.

'The Lord Himself revealed to His servant John the mysteries of the book of Revelation, and He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. In this book are depicted scenes that are now in the past, and some of eternal interest that are taking place around us; other of its prophecies will not receive their complete fulfilment until the close of time, when the last great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven will take place.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, August 31, 1897.

#### **9. By what right was the Lamb permitted to open the book? Revelation 5:5.**

NOTE: 'On the cross He received the wounds that will mark His form through the ceaseless ages of eternity; but those very wounds will be His glory, the insignia of His triumph over him who bruised His heel; for He shall bruise the serpent's head. On the cross He cried, "It is finished," and bowed His head and died. He descended into the grave; but after three days a mighty angel, clothed with the panoply of heaven, parted the darkness from his track, and caused the Roman guard to fall as dead men at his feet. The angel rolled back the stone from the sepulchre, and the Roman seal was broken, and Christ came forth from the prison of death, and, over the rent sepulchre of Joseph, proclaimed Himself "the resurrection and the life." Through Him it was announced that every son and daughter of Adam might be emancipated from their bondage to Satan, to sin and transgression; for, as man's substitute and surety, Jesus had won the victory. The world and its inhabitants were His inheritance, purchased at infinite cost, and every soul who believed in His name, might be an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. When Christ rose from the dead, the victory was proclaimed in triumph by the loftiest order of heavenly intelligence, and joy, inexpressible joy, filled the courts of God.' *Signs of the Times*, March 26, 1894'.

### **'Thou art worthy'**

#### **10. What was the response of the twenty-four elders when Christ took the book? Revelation 5:8-10.**

NOTE: The twenty-four elders are priests (verse 10). In the temple service there were twenty-four courses of priests. See 1 Chronicles 24:1-19. One of the duties of the priest is to offer incense and the elders have golden vials full of incense (see verse 8, marginal reading). They are dressed in white robes. See Exodus 28:39-42. They are taken from among men. Revelation 5:9, compare Hebrews 5:1.

NOTE: 'To make it possible for human beings to be kings and priests to God, the Commander of the angels took the position of a servant. He set us a perfect example. He asks us to learn of Him; for His life was an exemplification of the law. No act of sin marred His conduct. In word and deed He was without blemish. Christ's death shows God's great love for man. It is the pledge of our salvation. To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting out the sun. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. Jehovah looks upon it with the relenting compassion of a Father's love. He looks upon the suffering His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death, and He accepts us in the Beloved.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, April 29, 1902.

#### **11. How did the angels respond to the new song of the elders? Revelation 5:11-12.**

NOTE: 'With the deepest adoration and joy, the hosts of angels bow before Him, while the glad shout rings through the courts of Heaven: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!" Songs of triumph mingle with music from angelic harps, till Heaven seems to overflow with delightful harmony, and inconceivable joy and praise. The Son of God has triumphed over the prince of darkness, and conquered death and the grave. Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming: "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever!"' *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 3*, page 253.

#### **12. What response will one day come from the whole of creation? Revelation 5:13-14. Compare Philippians 2:9-11.**

NOTE: 'For what was the great controversy permitted to continue throughout the ages? Why was it that Satan's existence was not cut short at the outset of his rebellion? It was that the universe might be convinced of God's justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation. In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings... As if entranced, the wicked have looked upon the coronation of the Son of God. They see in His hands the tables of the divine law, the statutes which they have despised and transgressed. Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy has now been made plain. The results of rebellion, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, have been laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The working out of Satan's rule in contrast with the government of God has been presented to the whole universe. Satan's own works have condemned him. God's wisdom, His justice, and His goodness stand fully vindicated. It is seen that all His dealings in the great controversy have been conducted with respect to the eternal good of His people and the good of all the worlds that He has created. With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare: "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints" (Revelation 15:3).' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 373.

## Lesson 8: 'Come and see'

MEMORY VERSE: 'For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? Revelation 6:17.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, pages 344-345.

### Introduction

'The time has come when through God's messengers the scroll is being unrolled to the world. The truth contained in the first, second, and third angels' messages must go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; it must lighten the darkness of every continent, and extend to the islands of the sea. There must be no delay in this work.' *Gospel Workers*, page 470.

### 'The Lamb opened one of the seals'

#### 1. What did the apostle see when the first seal was opened? Revelation 6:1-2.

NOTE: 'The first symbol, a white horse, with a rider who bears a bow, to whom a crown is given, and who goes forth conquering and to conquer, is a fit emblem of the triumphs of the Gospel in the first century of this dispensation. The whiteness of the horse denotes the purity of faith in that age; and the crown which was given to the rider and his going forth conquering and to make still further conquests, the zeal and success with which the truth was promulgated by its earliest ministers.' Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 383.

#### 2. In what words is the warfare of the church described? Ephesians 6:11-13, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

NOTE: 'Let the gospel message ring through our churches, summoning them to universal action. Let the members of the church have increased faith, gaining zeal from their unseen, heavenly allies, from a knowledge of their exhaustless resources, from the greatness of the enterprise in which they are engaged, and from the power of their Leader. Those who place themselves under God's control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch the steady tread of the events ordained by Him to take place. Inspired with the Spirit of Him who gave His life for the life of the world, they will no longer stand still in impotency, pointing to what they cannot do. Putting on the armour of heaven, they will go forth to the warfare willing to do and dare for God, knowing that His omnipotence will supply their need.' *Testimonies Volume 7*, page 14.

#### 3. Was the apostolic church victorious in its warfare? Colossians 1:23.

NOTE: 'What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world. As the disciples proclaimed the message of redeeming grace, hearts yielded to the power of this message. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price. Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions. The prophecy was fulfilled, "He that is feeble. . . shall be as David; and the house of David . . . as the angel of the Lord." Zechariah 12:8. Every Christian saw in his brother a revelation of divine love and benevolence. One interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up all others. The ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character and to labour for the enlargement of His kingdom. "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." Acts 4:33.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 48.

### 'Another horse'

#### 4. What change did John see in the state of the church? Revelation 6:4. Compare Revelation 2:10.

NOTE: 'If the whiteness of the first horse denoted the purity of the Gospel in the period which that symbol covers, the redness of the second horse would signify that in this period that original purity began to be corrupted. The mystery of iniquity already worked in Paul's day; and the professed Church of Christ was now so far corrupted by it as to require this change in the colour of the symbol. Errors began to arise. Worldliness came in.' Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 384.

#### 5. What were some of the corruptions that entered the church?

- **The production of forged writings, which purported to be the writings of apostles.** These included books like the so-called Gospel of Nicodemus, Gospel of Barnabas, Gospel of Peter, Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Andrew, Gospel of Bartholomew, Gospel of Mary, etc.
- **Corrupted bibles.** 'It is no less true to fact than paradoxical in sound that the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected, originated with a hundred years after it was composed; that Irenaeus and the African Fathers and the whole Western, with a portion of the Syrian Church, used far inferior manuscripts to those employed by Stunica or Erasmus or Stephen thirteen centuries later, when moulding the Textus Receptus.' Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament for the Use of the Biblical Student*, Volume 2, pages 264-265.
- **Theological controversies.** 'When Christians consented to unite with those who were but half converted from paganism, they entered upon a path which led further and further from the truth. Satan exulted that he had succeeded in deceiving so large a number of the followers of Christ. He then brought his power to bear more fully upon these, and inspired them to persecute those who remained true to God. None understood so well how to oppose the true Christian faith as did those who had once been its defenders; and these apostate Christians, uniting with their half-pagan companions, directed their warfare against the most essential features of the doctrines of Christ.' *Great Controversy*, page 45.

- **Sunday observance.** ‘The [Catholic] Church took the pagan philosophy and made it the buckler of faith against the heathen... She took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday... There is, in truth, something royal, kingly about the sun, making it a fit emblem for Jesus, the Sun of Justice. Hence the Church in these countries would seem to have said, “Keep that old pagan name. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.” And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus.’ *Catholic World*, March 1894, page 809.

### ‘A black horse’

#### 6. What was revealed when the third seal was opened? Revelation 6:5.

NOTE: ‘What a contrast between this symbol and the first one: a black horse – the very opposite of white. A period of great darkness and moral corruption must be denoted by this symbol. By the events of the second seal, the way was fully opened for that state of things to be brought about which is here represented. The time that intervened between the reign of Constantine and the establishment of the papacy in AD 538 may be justly noted as the time when errors and gross superstitions sprang up in the Church.’ Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 385.

#### 7. How is this period of spiritual famine pictured? Revelation 6:6.

NOTE: ‘Wheat and barley were the staple food products of the day. “A measure” equalled almost one quart. The penny was the denarius which was equal in value to one day’s wages for a labourer. This meant that the cost of common food was exorbitant, 8-10 times above the normal price. This indicated that food was in short supply and denoted a famine. A literal famine or a spiritual famine? Undoubtedly a spiritual famine for the Word of God. The apostate church created such a famine. The Bible was taken away from the people.’ Cooke, *The 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, page 18.

#### 8. What command did the voice give? Revelation 6:6, last part.

NOTE: ‘Oil represents the Holy Spirit [See 1 Samuel 16:13 and compare Matthew 25:1-13]. Wine represents doctrine. [Compare Matthew 9:17 & Revelation 14:8]. Intoxicating wine represents false doctrine. Unfermented wine represents the true doctrines of the Word of God... In the period of the black horse, did the Holy Spirit and true doctrine disappear? Was the righteousness of Christ still available? God decreed, “Hurt not the oil and the wine,” in other words, let them not disappear – let them be preserved.’ Cooke, *The 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, page 19.

### ‘A pale horse’

#### 9. What did John see when the fourth seal was opened? Revelation 6:7-8.

NOTE: The Greek word translated ‘pale’ is ‘chloros’ and denotes the pallid colour that betokens the approach of death. ‘In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Paganism had given place to the papacy. The dragon had given to the beast “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” Revelation 13:2. And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5-7. Christians were forced to choose either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the rack, the fagot, or the headsman’s axe. Now were fulfilled the words of Jesus: “Ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake.” Luke 21:16, 17. Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battlefield. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: “The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three-score days.” Revelation 12:6.’ *Great Controversy*, page 54.

### ‘How long?’

#### 10. What piteous cry was heard when the fifth seal was opened? Revelation 6:9-10. Compare Genesis 4:10 & Psalm 94:1-4.

NOTE: The altar was the place in the sanctuary courtyard where the blood of the sacrifices was poured out. The altar represents Calvary. These martyrs have been partakers with Christ in His sufferings. See 1 Peter 4:12-13.

‘In the thirteenth century was established that most terrible of all the engines of the papacy, the Inquisition. The prince of darkness wrought with the leaders of the papal hierarchy. In their secret councils Satan and his angels controlled the minds of evil men, while unseen in the midst stood an angel of God, taking the fearful record of their iniquitous decrees and writing the history of deeds too horrible to appear to human eyes. “Babylon the great” was “drunken with the blood of the saints.” The mangled forms of millions of martyrs cried to God for vengeance upon that apostate power.’ *Great Controversy*, page 59.

#### 11. What is heaven’s response to this cry? Revelation 6:11. See Luke 18:7-8 and compare Revelation 3:5 & Revelation 14:13.

NOTE: When martyrs were burned at the stake, it was often the custom to clothe them in black.

‘While the apostle [Paul] lost sight of his own near sufferings, he felt a deep solicitude for the disciples whom he was about to leave to cope with prejudice, hatred, and persecution. He endeavoured to strengthen and encourage the few Christians who accompanied him to the place of execution, by repeating the exceeding precious promises given for those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake. He assures them that nothing shall fail of all that the Lord hath spoken concerning his tried and faithful ones. They shall arise and shine; for the light of the Lord shall arise upon them. They shall put on their beautiful garments

when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. For a little season they may be in heaviness through manifold temptations, they may be destitute of earthly comfort; but they must encourage their hearts by saying, I know in whom I have believed. He is able to keep that which I have committed to his trust. His rebuke will come to an end, and the glad morning of peace and perfect day will come.' *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, page 331.

### **“The great day of His wrath is come”**

#### **12. What events did John see as the sixth seal was opened? Revelation 6:12-13. Compare Joel 2:10, 30-31; Matthew 24:29, Mark 13:24-25, Luke 21:25.**

NOTE: ‘By far the most spectacular earthquake of earlier times was that of Lisbon in 1755. This has some claim to be regarded as the greatest earthquake on record... The disaster shocked all Europe.’ Eiby, *About Earthquakes*, page 141.

The effects of this earthquake were felt over any area of 4 million square miles. In six minutes 60 thousand people perished and total casualties have been estimated at 90 thousand dead. Von Humboldt stated that the total area shaken was four times the size of Europe.

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1780 over a large area of New England the sun was remarkably darkened. The only parallel to this event in recorded history was at the time of Christ’s crucifixion when for a period of three hours, from midday to 3 p.m. the whole of the land of Judah was in darkness. According to the contemporary account of Professor Samuel Williams of Harvard, the darkness of the Dark Day of May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1780 lasted at least 14 hours and extended over all the New England states from Portland, Maine in the east to Connecticut and Albany in the west. It is not clear how far north it extended but certainly as far as settlements reached, while it was certainly also dark all along the southern coast of New England. A sea captain 120 miles off shore reported the darkness as so great that the sailors were unable to take in sails. Another reported sailing straight from darkness into clear light. This area is several thousand square miles, many times the size of the land of Judah. Many reported that when the darkness began to lift in the early hours of the morning, the moon appeared blood red.

The greatest star shower of all time took place on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1833. Modern estimates, based on eyewitness reports, suggest that a single observer of this shower could expect to see somewhere between 60,000 & 200,000 shooting stars per hour! That is 1000 - 3200 per minute or 17 - 53 every second!

#### **13. What will be the remaining events of the sixth seal? Revelation 6:14-17. Compare Revelation 16:18-21.**

NOTE: ‘When Christ shall come, the earth will tremble before Him, and the heavens will be rolled together as a scroll, and every mountain and every island will be moved out of its place. “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself” (Psalm 50:3-6). In view of the great day of God, we can see that our only safety will be found in departing from all sin and iniquity. Those who continue in sin will be found among the condemned and perishing.’ *Faith & Works*, page 116.

#### **14. How is the opening of the seventh seal described? Revelation 8:1.**

NOTE: ‘Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man’s hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence we all gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer, and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders, and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle, in His left a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out: “Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?” The angels ceased to sing, and there was a time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: “Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you.”’ *Testimonies Volume 1*, page 60.

## **Lesson 9: November 24-30**

### **‘An hundred and forty and four thousand’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.’ Revelation 7:17.

STUDY HELP: *Maranatha*, page 241.

#### **Introduction**

‘Christ says that there will be those in the church who will present fables and suppositions, when God has given grand, elevating, ennobling truths which should ever be kept in the treasure house of the mind. When men pick up this theory and that theory, when they are curious to know something it is not necessary for them to know, God is not leading them. It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the Word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as, Who is to compose the hundred and

forty-four thousand? This those who are the elect of God will in a short time know without question.’ *Selected Messages Book 1*, page 174.

## ‘Till we have sealed the servants of God’

### 1. Before the seventh seal was opened, what did John see? Revelation 7:1.

NOTE: ‘We feel depressed, greatly depressed, as we see the world and its wickedness. The professed Christian world is enveloped in the darkness that covers the earth. We sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in the land. Why is it that all this wickedness does not break forth in decided violence against righteousness and truth? It is because the four angels are holding the four winds, that they shall not blow upon the earth. But human passions are reaching a high pass, and the Spirit of the Lord is being withdrawn from the earth. Were it not that God has commanded angelic agencies to control the satanic agencies that are seeking to break loose and to destroy, there would be no hope. But the winds are to be held until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads.’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 96.

### 2. What call then came from heaven? Revelation 7:2-3.

NOTE: ‘Four mighty angels are still holding the four winds of the earth. Terrible destruction is forbidden to come in full. The winds will be the stirring up of the nations to one deadly combat, while the angels hold the four winds, forbidding the terrible power of Satan to be exercised in its fury until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. The signs of the times give evidence that the judgements of heaven are being poured out, that the day of the Lord is at hand. The daily papers are full of indications of an intense conflict in the future. Bold robberies are of frequent occurrence. Strikes are common. Thefts and murders are committed on every hand. Men possessed by demons are taking the lives of men, women, and little children. All these things testify that the Lord’s coming is near. The restraining Spirit of God is even now being withdrawn from the world. Hurricanes, storms, tempests, disasters by sea and by land, follow one another in quick succession. The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed to any other than the true cause. The time is right upon us when there will be sorrow in the world that no human balm can heal. Even before the last great destruction comes upon the world, the flattering monuments of man’s greatness will be crumbled in the dust. God’s retributive judgements will fall on those who in the face of great light have continued in sin. Costly buildings, supposed to be fireproof, are erected. But as Sodom perished in the flames of God’s vengeance, so will these proud structures become ashes.’ *Maranatha*, page 175.

## ‘I heard the number’

### 3. What did John hear next? Revelation 7:4-8.

NOTE: ‘There are some things which we need to guard. Letters will come asking questions in regard to the sealing of the people of God, who will be sealed, how many, and other prying questions. I think we must tell them to read and speak of the things that are plainly revealed. We have encouragement in the Word that if we walk humbly with God, we shall receive instruction. But prying curiosity is not to be encouraged. To the second chapter of second Timothy [2 Timothy 2:23] we may refer those who are desirous of originating some new and strange thing, which is the product of the human imagination, and as much below the grand and noble sentiments of Holy Writ as the common is below the sacred. We may answer foolish questions by saying, Wait, and we shall all know what is essential for us to know. Our salvation does not depend on side issues.’ Letter 58, 1900, quoted in *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 918.

### 4. What contrast is made between those who receive the seal of God and those who will receive the mark of the beast? Revelation 7:3, Revelation 14:1, Revelation 13:16.

NOTE: ‘In Ezekiel 9:4 and Revelation 7:2-3, the mark or sign is said to be placed in the foreheads of the servants of God. Both these scriptures refer to a time when utter destruction is coming on the ungodly. The seal is placed upon God’s people as a safeguard to preserve them from the evil impending. But “the forehead” is evidently used as a figure, to denote the intellect or mind, as “the heart” is used to denote the disposition or affections. To mark or seal in the forehead is the same as to “write in the mind.” Hebrews 10:16. The Sabbath is the sign of God; it is the seal of His law. Isaiah 8:16. It is the token of His authority and power. It is a sign whereby we may know that He is God, and therefore it is appropriately said to be placed in the forehead. The worshippers of the beast (Revelation 13) are said to receive his mark in their foreheads or in their hands. As the forehead represents the intellect, the hand represents power, as Psalm 89:48, “Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?” Compulsory worship is not acceptable to God; His servants are sealed only in their foreheads. But it is acceptable to wicked powers; it has always been craved by the Romish hierarchy.’ *Great Controversy, 1888 ed. Appendix*, page 691.

## ‘Set a mark upon the foreheads’

### 5. In what other place in Scripture is this work of sealing God’s people described? Ezekiel 9:1-4.

NOTE: ‘The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God’s professed people. This is forcibly set forth by the prophet’s illustration of the last work under the figure of the men each having a slaughter weapon in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer’s inkhorn by his side. “And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.”’ *Testimonies Volume 3*, page 266.

**6. Why was this work of sealing necessary? Ezekiel 8:15-19.**

NOTE: 'Those that overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, will be the favoured ones who shall receive the seal of the living God. Those whose hands are not clean, whose hearts are not pure, will not have the seal of the living God. Those who are planning sin and acting it will be passed by. Only those who, in their attitude before God, are filling the position of those who are repenting and confessing their sins in the great anti-typical Day of Atonement will be recognised and marked as worthy of God's protection. The names of those who are steadfastly looking and waiting and watching for the appearing of their Saviour, more earnestly and wishfully than they who wait for the morning, will be numbered with those who are sealed. Those who, while having all the light of truth flashing upon their souls, should have works corresponding to their avowed faith, but are allured by sin, setting up idols in their hearts, corrupting their souls before God, and polluting those who unite with them in sin, will have their names blotted out of the book of life, and be left in midnight darkness, having no oil in their vessels with their lamps.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 445.

'Satan is now using every device in this sealing time to keep the minds of God's people from the present truth and to cause them to waver. I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty.' *Early Writings*, page 43.

**'After this I beheld'**

**7. After John had heard the number, what did he then see? Revelation 7:9.**

NOTE: 'All classes, all nations and kindreds and people and tongues will stand before the throne of God and the Lamb with their spotless robes and jewelled crowns. Said the angel, These are they that have come up through great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white, while the lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, the self-indulgent and disobedient, have lost both worlds. They have neither the things of this life nor the immortal life. That triumphant throng, with songs of victory and with crowns and harps, have trodden in the fiery furnace of earthly affliction when it was heated and intensely hot. From destitution, from hunger and torture, they come, from deep self-denial and bitter disappointments. Look upon them now as conquerors, no longer poor, no longer in sorrow, in affliction and hated of all men for Christ's sake. Behold their heavenly garments, white and shining, richer than any kingly robe. Look by faith upon their jewelled crowns; never did such a diadem deck the brow of any earthly monarch.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 371.

'We need to keep ever before us this vision of things unseen. It is thus that we shall be able to set a right value on the things of eternity and the things of time. It is this that will give us power to influence others for the higher life.' *Ministry of Healing*, page 508.

**8. What song of victory did this great multitude sing? Revelation 7:10**

NOTE: 'Of the number of them that shall be sealed will be those who have come from every nation and kindred and tongue and people. From every country will be gathered men and women who will stand before the throne of God and before the Lamb, crying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Revelation 7:10. But before this work can be accomplished, we must experience here in our own country the work of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts.' *Counsels to Teachers, Parents & Students*, page 532.

'Listen to their voices as they sing loud hosannas and as they wave the palm branches of victory. Rich music fills heaven as their voices sing forth these words: "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain and rose again forevermore. Salvation unto our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."' *In Heavenly Places*, page 371.

**9. With what words did the host of heaven respond to this song? Revelation 7:11-12.**

NOTE: 'They are no longer feeble, afflicted, scattered, and oppressed. Henceforth they are to be ever with the Lord. They stand before the throne clad in richer robes than the most honoured of the earth have ever worn. They are crowned with diadems more glorious than were ever placed upon the brow of earthly monarchs. The days of pain and weeping are forever ended. The King of glory has wiped the tears from all faces; every cause of grief has been removed. Amid the waving of palm branches they pour forth a song of praise, clear, sweet, and harmonious; every voice takes up the strain, until the anthem swells through the vaults of heaven: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." And all the inhabitants of heaven respond in the ascription: "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever." Revelation 7:10, 12.' *Great Controversy*, page 650.

**'What are these?'**

**10. What question did one of the twenty-four elders put to John and what was the apostle's response? Revelation 7:13-14, first part.**

NOTE: 'Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. "I counsel thee," He says, "to buy of Me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God was "manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." Sin is defined to be "the transgression of the law." But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." When on earth He said to His disciples, "I have kept My Father's

commandments.” By His perfect obedience, He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ the heart is united with His heart; the will is merged in His will; the mind becomes one with His mind; the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then, as the Lord looks upon us, He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah.’ *Signs of the Times*, November 22, 1905.

#### **11. How did the elder identify this multitude to John? Revelation 7:14.**

NOTE: ‘As John saw the multitude standing around the throne of God, the question was asked, “What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?” “These are they which came out of great tribulation,” the angel answered, “and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” At an infinite cost a fountain has been prepared for our cleansing. In the blood of the Son of God we may wash our garments of character, and make them white. If now we crucify self, and live for Christ, God will give us a place in the mansions He is preparing for those who love Him. Thank God that we have a time in which to get ready, a time in which to wash and iron our garments of character, that we may appear before Christ without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.’ *Signs of the Times*, April 17, 1901

### **‘God shall wipe away all tears’**

#### **12. What lies in store for these faithful ones? Revelation 7:15.**

NOTE: ‘Will we be diligent to make our calling and election sure? Will we patiently climb the ladder of Christian progress, until from the topmost round we step into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ? We may become pure and holy. We may become more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir. And what joy it will be to hear from the lips of Jesus the sweet benediction, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” What a victory to be of that company of whom John speaks: “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?”’ *Signs of the Times*, October 22, 1885.

#### **13. What precious promises are made to those who pass through the time of tribulation? Revelation 7:16-17.**

NOTE: ‘Those whom the Lamb shall lead by the fountains of living waters, and from whose eyes He shall wipe away all tears, will be those now receiving the knowledge and understanding revealed in the Bible, the Word of God. To us has been given the privilege of receiving the wisdom that cometh from God, of seeing the beauty and the glories of that Word which lies at the foundation of all true knowledge. The Bible teaches us what a Christian ought to be, and what he ought to do.’ *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, March 9, 1905.

## **Lesson 10: ‘Seven trumpets’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.’ Revelation 8:4.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 202, Uriah Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, Part 2, Chapter 8.

### **Introduction**

‘Could they [God’s people] look into the censer of the angel that stands at the golden altar before the rainbow-circled throne, they would see that the merit of Jesus must be mingled with our prayers and efforts, or they are as worthless as was the offering of Cain. Could we see all the activity of human instrumentality, as it appears before God, we would see that only the work accomplished by much prayer, which is sanctified by the merit of Christ, will stand the test of the judgment. When the grand review shall take place, then shall ye return and discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.’ *Christian Service*, page 263.

NOTE: This vision reveals God’s answer to those who suffered under the Roman power, the great persecutor of God’s people. (See Revelation 6:10.) Some have noticed parallels between the seven trumpets and the seven last plagues of Revelation 16 and have concluded that the seven trumpets are the seven last plagues. But a careful reading will show the greater number of differences between the two.

### **‘Much incense’**

#### **1. What activity was John next shown in the heavenly sanctuary? Revelation 8:3-5.**

NOTE: ‘True prayer takes hold upon Omnipotence and gives us the victory. Upon his knees the Christian obtains strength to resist temptation. The silent, fervent prayer of the soul will rise like holy incense to the throne of grace and will be as acceptable to God as if offered in the sanctuary. To all who thus seek Him, Christ becomes a present help in time of need. They will be strong in the day of trial.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 86.

#### **2. What prayer especially had been ascending to the altar of incense? Revelation 6:9-10.**

NOTE: ‘The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs’ graves, from the sepulchres of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults:

“How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” The Lord is doing His work. All heaven is astir. The Judge of all the earth is soon to arise and vindicate His insulted authority. The mark of deliverance will be set upon the men who keep God’s commandments, who revere His law, and who refuse the mark of the beast or of his image.’ *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 451.

### ‘To them were given seven trumpets’

#### **3. What was heaven’s response to this prayer? Revelation 8:2, 5-6. See Luke 18:7-8.**

NOTE: ‘Revelation 6 and 7 are full of meaning. Terrible are the judgments of God revealed. The seven angels stood before God to receive their commission. To them were given seven trumpets. The Lord was going forth to punish the inhabitants of the earth.’ *Maranatha*, page 284.

#### **4. What is the significance of the sounding of trumpets? Numbers 10:1-10.**

NOTE: ‘Anciently, the trumpet was used to summon great gatherings as in Israel (Leviticus 23:24), or to herald the approach of disaster or war. So the prophecy of the seven trumpets unfolds seven great warnings; the first four telling of the collapse of Western Rome; the next two, the overthrow of Eastern Rome; and the seventh, the last, revealing the collapse of all human government.’ R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 87.

‘The time is not far distant when God will arise to vindicate His insulted authority. “The Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.” Isaiah 26:21. “But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?” Malachi 3:2. The people of Israel, because of their sinfulness, were forbidden to approach the mount when God was about to descend upon it to proclaim His law, lest they should be consumed by the burning glory of His presence. If such manifestations of His power marked the place chosen for the proclamation of God’s law, how terrible must be His tribunal when He comes for the execution of these sacred statutes. How will those who have trampled upon His authority endure His glory in the great day of final retribution? The terrors of Sinai were to represent to the people the scenes of the judgment. The sound of a trumpet summoned Israel to meet with God. The voice of the Archangel and the trump of God shall summon, from the whole earth, both the living and the dead to the presence of their Judge.’ *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 339.

### ‘The first angel sounded’

#### **5. What events accompanied the sounding of the first trumpet? Revelation 8:7.**

NOTE: In the first four trumpets, frequent reference is made to ‘the third part.’ The Emperor Constantine divided his empire among his three sons, so that Constantius, based in Constantinople, possessed the east, Constantine II possessed the west and Constans the central portion.

#### **6. What was the first judgement on Rome?**

NOTE: In AD 410 the Goths under Alaric captured Rome. The hail, fire and blood form a dramatic description of the terrible slaughter that followed. For six days the armies of Alaric sacked the city, looting it of its priceless treasures.

‘The terrible effects of this Gothic invasion are represented as “hail,” from the fact of the northern origin of the invaders; “fire,” from the destruction by flame of both city and country; and “blood,” from the terrible slaughter of the citizens of the empire by the bold and intrepid warriors.’ Uriah Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation, 1921 ed.*, page 425.

### ‘And the second angel sounded’

#### **7. What further judgement upon Rome is foretold? Revelation 8:8-9.**

NOTE: ‘This second trumpet describes a maritime war. It was as if “a great mountain burning with fire” were cast into the sea so that ‘the third part of the sea became blood.’” R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 88.

‘What figure would better, or even so well, illustrate the collision of navies, and the general havoc of war on the maritime coasts. In explaining this trumpet, we are to look for some events which will have a particular bearing on the commercial world. The symbol used naturally leads us to look for agitation and commotion. Nothing but a fierce maritime warfare would fulfil the prediction. If the sounding of the first four trumpets relates to four remarkable events which contributed to the downfall of the Roman Empire, and the first trumpet refers to the ravages of the Goths under Alaric, in this we naturally look for the next succeeding act of invasion which shook the Roman power and conducted to its fall.’ Uriah Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation, 1921 ed.*, page 429.

#### **8. What was this next judgement upon Rome?**

NOTE: ‘The Vandals invaded Rome from Africa through the Mediterranean. Their ambitious leader possessed no scruples. Once in the waters of the Mediterranean, Genseric set his heart on Rome. In the year 455 he sailed into the mouth of the Tiber, pillaged the city and took thousands of citizens prisoner, including the empress and her two daughters. “Vandalism” is a word in our vocabulary today and it comes to us with all these implications. The fleet of Rome, 1300 ships, far outnumbered the fleet of the invader. Therefore the Romans entered the battle with some assurance of victory. But this clever admiral of the Vandals, under cover of darkness, towed some ships loaded with combustibles among the ships of the Roman fleet, setting fire to them. That night saw more than 1100 ships destroyed. How accurate and descriptive is the divine record.’ R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 88.

## **‘And the third angel sounded’**

### **9. How is the third judgement on Rome described? Revelation 8:10-11.**

NOTE: ‘The great star from heaven is undoubtedly a meteor and it falls upon the third part of the rivers and fountains of waters i.e. a third part of the Roman Empire – Western Rome. In Scripture a star represents a leader, a falling star can represent an apostate leader (Jude v.14). We look therefore for some powerful leader who invaded the Roman Empire and brought great bitterness to the peoples of a particular area. The area is described as “a third part of the rivers and fountains of waters”. This would be the areas where the rivers commence – the Alpine regions. Does history tell of an invasion that fulfils this specification?’ Austin Cooke, *Visigoths, Vandals, Huns & Heruli*, page 29.

### **10. How was this prophecy fulfilled?**

NOTE: ‘In the manner of his [Atilla’s] appearance he strongly resembled a brilliant meteor flashing in the sky. He came from the east gathering his Huns, and poured them down, as we shall see, with the rapidity of a flashing meteor, suddenly on the empire... It is said particularly that the effect would be on “the rivers” and on “the fountains of waters.” If this has a literal application, or if, as was supposed in the case of the second trumpet, the language used was such as had reference to the portion of the empire that would be particularly affected by the hostile invasion, then we may suppose that this refers to those portions of the empire that abounded in rivers and streams and more particularly those in which the rivers and streams had their origin... As a matter of fact the principal operations of Atilla were in the regions of the Alps.’ A. Barnes, *Notes on Revelation viii*, quoted in Uriah Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, 1921 ed., page 432.

‘The star called “Wormwood” denotes the bitter consequences of Atilla’s attacks. The whole breadth of Europe, from the Volga to the Danube, was invaded, occupied and desolated by the hordes of Atilla, who called himself “The Scourge of God.”’ R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 88.

## **‘And the fourth angel sounded’**

### **11. In what words is the fourth judgement upon Rome described? Revelation 8:12.**

NOTE: ‘This is undoubtedly symbolic. It could not be referring to the literal sun because a third part of that would have no significance. What would the sun, moon and stars represent in the Roman Empire? “The third part” would apply to Western Rome. Undoubtedly they refer to the leading lights or rulers of Western Rome. How many bodies comprised its government? There were three – exactly three – the emperor, the consuls and the senate. The Revelator likens them to the sun, moon and stars – the emperor: the sun, the consuls: the moon, and the senate: the stars. Under the fourth trumpet, these ruling powers are put out of action, bringing civil darkness over the third part of the empire.’ Austin Cooke, *Visigoths, Vandals, Huns & Heruli*, page 33.

### **12. How was this part of the prophecy fulfilled?**

NOTE: ‘The Heruli invaded Italy in 476 AD and Odoacer gave orders that the office of emperor of Western Rome be abolished. In response the reigning emperor abdicated and Odoacer was made king of Italy... But what of the moon and stars? The consulship was abolished in 541 AD and in 553 AD the Roman senate represented by the stars resigned because it was so powerless.’ Austin Cooke, *Visigoths, Vandals, Huns & Heruli*, page 33.

## **‘Shall not God avenge His own’**

### **13. What words of Jesus are fulfilled in this prophecy? Luke 18:7-8, first part.**

NOTE: ‘Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ’s patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer. The people of God must of the cup and be baptized with the baptism. The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavour to wait trustingly for the Lord to work they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the elect’s sake the time of trouble will be shortened. “Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him? . . . I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.” Luke 18:7, 8. The end will come more quickly than men expect. The wheat will be gathered and bound in sheaves for the garner of God; the tares will be bound as fagots for the fires of destruction.’ *Great Controversy*, page 630.

### **14. What words of comfort may God’s people turn to in times of persecution? Matthew 5:10-12.**

NOTE: ‘The disciple of Christ will be fitted by His grace for every trial and test as he strives for perfection of character. By looking away from Jesus to some other one, or to something else, he may sometimes make mistakes; but as soon as he is warned of his danger, he again fastens his eyes upon Jesus, in whom his hope of eternal life is centred, and he plants his feet in the footprints of his Lord, and travels on securely. He rejoices, saying, “He is my living intercessor before God. He prays in my behalf. He is my advocate, and clothes me with the perfection of His own righteousness. This is all I require to enable me to bear shame and reproach for His dear name’s sake. If He permits me to endure persecution, He will give me grace and the comfort of His presence, so that His name shall be thereby glorified”’ *Lift Him Up*, page 110.

## Lesson 11: 'Woe, woe, woe'

MEMORY VERSE: 'With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early: for when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.' Isaiah 26:9.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 127.

### Introduction

'Let everyone bear in mind that God delights to listen to the supplications of His people; for the prevailing iniquity calls for more earnest prayer, and God has promised that He will avenge His own elect, who cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them. Men are prone to abuse the long-suffering of God, and to presume on His forbearance. But there is a point in human iniquity when it is time for God to interfere; and terrible are the issues. "The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked" (Nahum 1:3). The long-suffering of God is wonderful, because He puts constraint on His own attributes; but punishment is nonetheless certain.' *Selected Messages Book 2*, page 372.

### 'The fifth angel sounded'

#### 1. How are the final three trumpets described? Revelation 8:13. Compare Revelation 9:12.

NOTE: 'The woe of God will be upon those who have had great light, and yet have chosen to walk in darkness... It is a fearful thing to have great light and blessing, to have many opportunities and privileges, and yet make no saving use of them. Those who do not make a saving use of their opportunities, will be condemned by the privileges God has granted to them' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 258.

#### 2. What did John first see when the fifth trumpet sounded? Revelation 9:1.

NOTE: 'In Scripture, a star denotes a leader [see Revelation 1:20, Daniel 8:10, Daniel 12:3]. In this prediction it is a fallen star and a fallen star represents an apostate religious leader [see Jude v.13]. Some claim that the fallen star represents Satan, but Satan fell centuries before this... In the third trumpet there was also a falling star, a meteor, representing Atilla and his Huns. The fallen star of the fifth trumpet must be another earthly leader, an apostate leader, who appears after the fourth trumpet, 476 AD... The bottomless pit or abyss... is used seven times in the Book of Revelation... In Revelation 11 it describes the region from which the beast emerges to attack the two witnesses. The abyss is also used of the power in Revelation 17 when it comes back, as it were, from death after receiving the deadly wound... In Revelation 20 it is used twice to describe the earth when it becomes a vast worldwide prison house for Satan for 1000 years. In most places where it is used, it represents the place of death and the domain of Satan... Any power emerging from the abyss is inspired by him.' A. Cooke, *Tormented by Locusts for 5 Months*, page 2.

### 'Locusts upon the earth'

#### 3. What emerged from the bottomless pit? Revelation 9:2.

NOTE: 'What does the key represent? It represents power and authority – the ability to unlock, to free or release. What does he release? He releases smoke that darkens the sun and the air. The sun of course represents Christ the Light of the world. [See Malachi 4:2.] It also represents truth. Under this trumpet a leader is given the key to release from the arsenal of Satan falsehood and error that would darken the light of the Gospel – that would obscure Jesus the Light of the world.' A. Cooke, *Tormented by Locusts for 5 Months*, page 3.

One power that emerged after 476 AD, bringing a smoke of error upon the world, and claiming to hold keys was the papacy.

#### 4. What came out of this smoke? Revelation 9:3-4.

NOTE: 'These locusts are undoubtedly symbolic. In this trumpet there are a number of symbolic creatures – at least four: the locust, the horse, the lion and the scorpion. It is significant to notice that these four creatures in their natural habitat are Arabian... This is a further clue in identifying the power represented in the trumpet. The Bible uses the locust as a symbol of the Arab. [See Judges 6:5, Judges 7:12. n.b. the word translated 'grasshoppers' is the word for locusts.]... After the fall of Western Rome on 476 AD did a falling star, a leader of false religion, arise in Arabia and obscure the Christian faith and bring torment to a significant proportion of mankind? The answer is yes! It was the rise of Mohamed and Islam or the Muslim religion.' A. Cooke, *Tormented by Locusts for 5 Months*, pages 3-5.

Notice that this judgement was only upon those who did not have the seal of God in their foreheads. Mohammed's anger was primarily aimed at those 'Christians' who practised idolatry. See also Revelation 9:20.

### 'Tormented five months'

#### 5. For how long was this judgement upon the persecutors of God's people to last? Revelation 9:5-6, 10.

NOTE: 'Heaven decreed that the Arabs were not to kill the Roman Empire but only to torment it... It is significant to note that the period in which the natural desert locusts swarm over the area of the Middle East is exactly five months. This is from the month of May to September inclusive... Likewise when the Revelator describes the period of Arab invasions in which they would torment the apostate Christians of the Roman Empire, it is exactly five months. This period of time is a part of a symbolic prophecy, therefore the allotted time must be symbolic time. Symbolic time must always be reduced to days, because

in prophecy a day equals a year. [Numbers 14:34, Ezekiel 4:6] In a Bible month there are exactly 30 days. [Compare Genesis 7:24 with Genesis 7:11 and Genesis 8:3-4.] Therefore five months would equal 150 days. In symbolic prophecy a day equals a year; therefore the 150 days represent 150 years... Did the period of torment by the Arabs continue for exactly 150 years? "After the year 612 AD Mohomet sought to propagate his religion with all his might." In what year did the Caliph transfer his capital outside the realm of the Roman Empire [to Baghdad]? It was 762 AD. With this transfer came a complete change of attitude on the part of the Arabs. As Waddington says: "The Arab conquerors now settled tranquilly in the countries they had subdued." The period of conquest and torment ceased and it ceased in 762 AD.' A. Cooke, *Tormented by Locusts for 5 Months*, pages 24-28.

#### **6. How were the armies of Islam described? Revelation 9:7-10.**

NOTE: 'The Arabian horse takes the lead throughout the world... The turbans of the Saracens, like unto a coronet, were their ornament and their boast... Long hair is esteemed an ornament by women. The Arabs, unlike other men, had their hair as the hair of women, or uncut... The cuirass (or breastplate) was in use among the Arabs in the days of Mohammed... The charge of the Arabs was not, like that of the Greeks or Romans, the efforts of a firm and compact infantry; their military force was chiefly formed of cavalry and archers.' Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, pages 452-453.

#### **7. What is said of their king? Revelation 9:11.**

NOTE: The names Abaddon and Apollyon both mean 'Destroyer.' (See marginal reading.) Whether this name is applied to the visible leader of the armies of Islam or to the real 'angel of the bottomless pit, Satan, it is an appropriate name since both Satan and his human agents are bent on destruction.

### **'The sixth angel sounded'**

#### **8. What command is next issued from the temple of God in heaven? Revelation 9:13-14. Compare Revelation 6:9-10.**

NOTE: 'In this woe a voice comes from the horns of the golden incense altar in the first apartment of the heavenly temple... First it locates the timing of this trumpet. The ministration in the heavenly sanctuary from 31 AD [Christ's ascension] to 1844 [the beginning of the cleansing of the sanctuary, see Daniel 8:14] was in the first apartment of that temple. There Christ ministered at the incense altar. The fact that the voice is heard from the altar indicates that the priestly ministry is still located there; thus the period in which the sixth trumpet sounds must be prior to 1844.' Cooke, *The Triumph and Tragedy of the Turk*, page 2.

#### **9. For how long were the four angels to loose? Revelation 9:14-15.**

NOTE: In Revelation 7:1 four angels are portrayed as holding back the judgments of God until God's people are sealed. Here four angels are portrayed loosing the judgements of God on 'the third part of men,' a phrase similar to those we have met before in the first four trumpets, the judgements on Rome. This woe is on the last remaining part of the Roman Empire, based in Constantinople. Just as the River Euphrates was the key to the fall of literal Babylon, so it is linked with the fall of symbolic Babylon. Compare Revelation 16:12.

A Bible year is 360 days, which in prophecy represent 360 years. A Bible month is 30 days, representing 30 years. A Bible day in prophecy represents a year while an hour represents  $\frac{1}{24}$  of a year or fifteen days. In total, this represents 391 years and 15 days. In 1449, the Eastern Roman Empire, based in Constantinople or Byzantium, lost its independence when Constantine XI had to seek the permission of the Turkish Sultan before he could be crowned. Constantine XI succeeded to the throne on July 27, 1449. Adding 391 years and 15 days, the prophecy reaches to August 11 1840, when the Turkish Empire lost its independence with the Treaty of London.

'In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfilment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown "in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;" and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: "Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case." Josiah Litch, in *Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy*, Aug. 1, 1840. At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction.' *Great Controversy*, pages 334-335.

### **'I heard the number of them'**

#### **10. What was the size of the army under the sixth trumpet? Revelation 9:16.**

NOTE: Some suggest this represents the total number of Ottoman soldiers over the period of nearly four hundred years. Lest this number, 200 million, should seem incredible, here is a 17<sup>th</sup> century account:

'I well remember that living in the University of Ireland, a gentleman that newly came from Scangrown or Alexandretta told me he saw the Turkish army march by to recover Bagdet or Babylon and that the army was over a week marching by, consisting of fifteen hundred thousand men.' Hezekiah Holland, quoted in Spicer, *Beacon Lights of Prophecy*, page 238.

It was because the Turkish armies were threatening papal Rome that Rome was unable to use all its powers against the Reformation. 'There would have been no Protestantism had there been no Turk.' Thus they were used by God to limit the power of the papacy.

### **11. What description was John given of the cavalry in this army? Revelation 9:17-19.**

NOTE: 'Fire is red, jacinthine is blue and brimstone is yellow. Red, blue and yellow. Were they the colours of the Turkish army? Daubuz, an English scholar, writing of the time says: "From their first appearance, the Ottomans have affected to wear warlike apparel of scarlet, blue and yellow."' Cooke, *The Triumph and Tragedy of the Turk*, page 14.

The reference to fire, smoke and brimstone recalls the Turkish cavalry as being among the first to use firearms successfully in battle. The horsetail was used as the standard in the Ottoman armies.

## **'Yet repented not'**

### **12. Did these judgements cause men to turn from idolatry and their other sins? Revelation 9:20-21.**

NOTE: 'The Lord pardons all who repent of their sins. It is from those who do not repent, those who bolster themselves up in self-confidence, that He turns away. Never will He refuse to listen to the voice of tears and repentance. Never will He turn His face away from the humble soul who comes to Him in repentance and sorrow.' *Reflecting Christ*, page 203.

'Those who complain of His severity are virtually saying: "The way of the Lord is not equal." But He distinctly throws back the imputation upon the sinner: "'Are not your ways unequal?' Can I pardon your transgressions when you do not repent and turn from your sins?'" *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 631.

### **13. How will this experience be repeated in the final judgements of God upon the earth? Revelation 16:8-11.**

NOTE: 'We need now to take heed to ourselves. Warnings have been given. Can we not see the fulfilment of the predictions made by Christ and recorded in the twenty-first chapter of Luke? How many are studying the words of Christ? How many are deceiving their own souls and cheating themselves out of the blessings that others might secure if they would believe and obey? Probation still lingers, and it is our privilege to lay hold of the hope set before us in the gospel. Let us repent and be converted and forsake our sins, that they may be blotted out. "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:33-36. Shall the warnings given by Christ be passed by unheeded? Shall we not make diligent work for repentance now, while Mercy's gracious voice is still heard?' *Testimonies Volume 9*, pages 268- 269.

## **Lesson 12: 'Time no longer'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And He said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.' Revelation 10:11.

STUDY HELP: *Selected Messages Book 2*, pages 107-111.

### **Introduction**

'Light is to shine forth from God's people in clear, distinct rays, bringing Jesus before the churches and before the world. The instrumentalities to be used are those souls who gladly receive the light of truth which God communicates to them. These are God's agencies for communicating the knowledge of truth to the world. If through the grace of Christ His people will become new bottles, He will fill them with the new wine. God will give additional light, and old truths will be recovered, and replaced in the frame-work of truth; and wherever the labourers go, they will triumph. As Christ's ambassadors, they are to search the Scriptures, to seek for the truths that have been hidden beneath the rubbish of error. And every ray of light received is to be communicated to others.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 259.

NOTE: Just as in the vision of the Seven Seals, so in the vision of the Seven Trumpets, there is a pause between the sixth and the seventh, while certain vital matters are revealed concerning God's people.

## **'A rainbow was upon His head'**

### **1. Whom did John see next in His vision? Revelation 10:1.**

NOTE: 'The mighty Angel who instructed John was no less a personage than Jesus Christ. Setting His right foot on the sea, and His left upon the dry land, shows the part which He is acting in the closing scenes of the great controversy with Satan. This position denotes His supreme power and authority over the whole earth. The controversy had waxed stronger and more determined from age to age, and will continue to do so, to the concluding scenes when the masterly working of the powers of darkness shall reach their height. Satan, united with evil men, will deceive the whole world and the churches who receive not the love of the truth.' *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 971.

n.b. The Greek word 'angelos' simply means 'one who carries a message.'

### **2. How is the Angel described? Revelation 10:1. Compare Matthew 17:2, Revelation 1:15-16.**

NOTE: 'In heaven the semblance of a rainbow encircles the throne and overarches the head of Christ. The prophet says, "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about [the throne]. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah." Ezekiel 1:28. The Revelator declares, "Behold, a

throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. . . . There was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.” Revelation 4:2, 3. When man by his great wickedness invites the divine judgments, the Saviour, interceding with the Father in his behalf, points to the bow in the clouds, to the rainbow around the throne and above His own head, as a token of the mercy of God toward the repentant sinner.’ *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 107.

‘The cloud is an emblem of God coming in judgement. In Daniel 7:9-10, 13, where it describes the pre-advent judgement, Jesus is pictured as being conveyed by the clouds into the presence of the Most High. When Christ is described as coming in judgement at the Second Coming, clouds are associated with His coming. [Revelation 1:7] The rainbow is also associated with judgement. At the time of Noah’s Flood, “It represented the union of His [God’s] mercy and justice.” [Education, page 155] “It is the mingling of judgement and mercy that makes salvation so full and complete.” [God’s Amazing Grace, page 70]’ Cooke, *Time No Longer*, page 6.

### **3. What was the significance of the Angel’s stance? Revelation 10:2.**

NOTE: ‘The angel’s position, with one foot on the sea, the other on the land, signifies the wide extent of the proclamation of the message. It will cross the broad waters and be proclaimed in other countries, even to all the world.’ *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 971.

## **‘Seven thunders uttered their voices’**

### **4. How did John describe the Angel’s voice and what further sound accompanied it? Revelation 10:3. (Compare John 12:28-30.**

NOTE: ‘The mighty Angel demands attention. He cries with a loud voice. He is to show the power and authority of His voice to those who have united with Satan to oppose the truth.’ *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 971.

### **5. When John attempted to write down the message of the seven thunders, what command was he given? Revelation 10:4.**

NOTE: ‘After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the injunction comes to John as to Daniel in regard to the little book: “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered.” These relate to future events which will be disclosed in their order. Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel’s prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels’ messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time. The books of Daniel and the Revelation are one. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation; one a book sealed, the other a book opened. John heard the mysteries which the thunders uttered, but he was commanded not to write them. The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels’ messages. It was not best for the people to know these things, for their faith must necessarily be tested. In the order of God most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels’ messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work.’ *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 971.

## **‘The Angel lifted up His hand to heaven’**

### **6. What great oath did the Angel swear? Revelation 10:5-6. Compare Daniel 12:7.**

NOTE: ‘This time, which the Angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world’s history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning [the 2300-day prophecy] reaches to the autumn of 1844.’ *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 971.

### **7. By whom did the Angel swear this oath? Revelation 10:6. Compare Revelation 14:6-7, Exodus 20:8-11, John 1:1-3.**

NOTE: “The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God” - because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. “The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.” J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27. It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man’s thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, “Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” *Great Controversy*, page 437.

### **8. What was to take place during the time of the seventh trumpet? Revelation 10:7. Compare Revelation 22:11-12.**

NOTE: ‘In Scripture there are two mysteries: the mystery of iniquity and the mystery of godliness or the mystery of God. This verse is speaking of the finishing of “the mystery of God.” This is the close of probation, the conclusion of the proclamation of the Gospel, the close of Christ’s priestly ministry in the temple above.’ Cooke, *Time No Longer*, page 15.

## **‘A little book open’**

### **9. What did the Angel hold in His hand? Revelation 10:2.**

NOTE: 'After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the injunction comes to John as to Daniel in regard to the little book: "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered." These relate to future events which will be disclosed in their order. Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel's prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels' messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time.' *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 971.

### **10. What book had been sealed by command of heaven until the time of the end? Daniel 12:4, 9.**

NOTE: 'What are the evidences that this little book is the book of Daniel?'

1. It is a little book. The Book of Daniel contains just twelve chapters.
2. The emphasis is on the word "open" [verses 2 & 8], indicating that the book was not previously open, but closed or "sealed." Has there been any little book that was closed or sealed up and later opened? The answer is yes! Only one book in all of Scripture is described as being sealed, and that is the little book of Daniel the prophet.
3. The Angel raised His hand to heaven and swore an oath that there would be "time no longer". This is derived from Daniel 12:7. In the 8<sup>th</sup> verse of Daniel 12, it indicates that Daniel did not understand the meaning of this oath. In verse 9, Daniel was assured that it would be understood at the time of the end. Revelation 10 shows that the opening of the little book is the fulfilment of the promise to Daniel.
4. The Angel of Revelation 10 is the same Being that swore the oath in Daniel 12:7. He is described in detail in Daniel 10:5. In Revelation 1:13-17, it is shown that this Man is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. This indicates that Daniel 12 and Revelation 10 are very closely connected.
5. The little book of Revelation 10 is concerned with "time". Time shall be no longer. The only other book that specialises in "time" is the book of Daniel.' Taken from Cooke, *Time No Longer*, pages 7-8.

### **11. What was John instructed to do by the voice from heaven? Revelation 10:8. Compare Ezekiel 2:8-10, Ezekiel 3:1-3, Psalm 119:103, Jeremiah 15:16.**

NOTE: 'One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation, that the connection between God and His people is close and decided. A wonderful connection is seen between the universe of heaven and this world. The things revealed to Daniel were afterward complemented by the revelation made to John on the Isle of Patmos. These two books should be carefully studied. Twice Daniel inquired, How long shall it be to the end of time? "And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And He said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." It was the Lion of the tribe of Judah who unsealed the book and gave to John the revelation of what should be in these last days. Daniel stood in his lot to bear his testimony which was sealed until the time of the end, when the first angel's message should be proclaimed to our world. These matters are of infinite importance in these last days; but while "many shall be purified, and made white, and tried," "the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." How true this is! Sin is the transgression of the law of God; and those who will not accept the light in regard to the law of God will not understand the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel's messages. The book of Daniel is unsealed in the revelation to John, and carries us forward to the last scenes of this earth's history. Will our brethren bear in mind that we are living amid the perils of the last days? Read Revelation in connection with Daniel. Teach these things.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 114-115.

### **'I shall make thy belly bitter'**

### **12. When John asked for the little book, what warning did the Angel give him? Revelation 10:9-10.**

NOTE: The sixth trumpet terminated in 1840 at the end of the prophetic period of Revelation 9:15. Towards the end of this prophetic period, beginning in Britain, and spreading to Christians in Europe, America, Asia and Africa, a revival of the truth concerning the Second Advent of Christ took place. This revival was based on a study of the time prophecies of Daniel. Christians throughout the world looked to the period around 1844 as the time for the return of Christ and the establishment of God's kingdom.

'With unspeakable desire those who had received the message watched for the coming of their Saviour. The time when they expected to meet Him was at hand. They approached this hour with a calm solemnity. They rested in **sweet** communion with God, and earnest of the peace that was to be theirs in the bright hereafter. None who experienced this hope and trust can forget those precious hours of waiting. For some weeks preceding the time, worldly business was for the most part laid aside. The sincere believers carefully examined every thought and emotion of their hearts as if upon their deathbeds and in a few hours to close their eyes upon earthly scenes.... The time of expectation passed, and Christ did not appear for the deliverance of His people. Those who with sincere faith and love had looked for their Saviour, experienced a **bitter** disappointment.' *Great Controversy*, page 373 (emphasis added).

### **13. What command did the Angel then give John? Revelation 10:11. Compare Matthew 24:14.**

NOTE: 'How could they prophesy again, when they were so mistaken? How could they go to the world again, when they had been proved so wrong? The solution to this is given in the next verse. "Rise and measure the temple." What temple? In 1844, when this applied, there was no official temple of God on earth. God's people were in darkness as to what the temple signified.

The Greek word for “measure”, when it applied to a building or object, means to preserve or restore it... Why restore the temple and the altar? The answer is that the truth concerning the temple and the altar had been lost to the Christian church.’ Cooke, *Time No Longer*, pages 23-24.

## Lesson 13: ‘Measure them that worship’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.’ Revelation 11:15.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 265-288.

### Introduction

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament” (Revelation 11:19). Beneath the mercy seat, within the ark, were the two tables of stone, containing the law of Jehovah. God’s faithful ones saw the light that shone forth to them from the law, to be given to the world. And now Satan’s intense activity is to close that door of light; but Jesus says that no man can shut it. Men will turn from the light, denounce it, and despise it, but it still shines forth in clear, distinct rays to cheer and bless all who will see it.’ *Faith & Works*, page 46.

Revelation 11 begins with the temple of God and ends with it.

### ‘Rise and measure’

#### 1. What command was given to John by the angel? Revelation 11:1.

NOTE: ‘The temple here cannot mean the Church; for the Church is brought to view in connection with this temple as “them that worship therein.” The temple is therefore the literal temple in heaven [see verse 19] and the worshippers the true Church on earth... They are to be measured as worshippers [see Revelation 14:6-12] and character can be measured only by some standard of right, namely a law or rule of action. We are thus brought to the conclusion that the Ten Commandments, the standard which God has given by which to measure “the whole duty of man”, are embraced in the measuring rod put by the angel into the hands of John.’ Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 475.

n.b. Verse 19 shows the Most Holy Place opened to reveal the ark of His testament, the container for the Ten Commandments. ‘Here is the work going on, measuring the temple and its worshipers to see who will stand in the last day. Those who stand fast shall have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. When we are doing our work, remember there is One that is watching the spirit in which we are doing it. Shall we not bring the Saviour into our everyday lives, into our secular work and domestic duties? Then in the name of God we want to leave behind everything that is not necessary, all gossiping or unprofitable visiting, and present ourselves as servants of the living God.’ *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 972.

#### 2. What is excluded from this work of measurement? Revelation 11:2.

NOTE: While the Holy Place and Most Holy Place constitute the temple in heaven, the courtyard, containing the altar of sacrifice, is on the earth, where Christ laid down His life for man. Thus the place where God’s people come to seek the cleansing blood of Jesus was to be given into the hands of Gentiles.

#### 3. For how long were the Gentiles to oppress the people of God? Revelation 11:2, last part. Compare Daniel 7:25.

NOTE: The worshippers are contrasted with the Gentiles, a word that means heathen. From here onwards in Revelation, these two groups are represented as two cities, the people of God as the holy city, their enemies as Babylon. Here we are introduced to a prophetic period that was first mentioned in Daniel 7:25, Daniel 12:7 and which will be spoken of five times in the Book of Revelation.

### ‘My two witnesses’

#### 4. What witness was to continue to be given during the 1260 years of persecution? Revelation 11:3-4. Compare Zechariah 4:1-6.

NOTE: ‘Concerning the two witnesses the prophet declares further: “These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” “Thy word,” said the psalmist, “is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Revelation 11:4; Psalm 119:105. The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the plan of salvation. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the Old Testament point forward to a Saviour to come. The Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament tell of a Saviour who has come in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy.’ *Great Controversy*, page 267.

During the 1260 years of papal persecution, those who possessed, read or even quoted the Scriptures in their own tongue were subject to merciless penalties.

#### 5. How is the power of the Word of God portrayed? Revelation 11:5-6. Compare 1 Kings 17:1, Exodus 7:19.

NOTE: Here the work of the two witnesses is portrayed as like the work of Moses and Elijah. These two are representative spokesmen for God, Moses, the one through whom God communicated His law and Elijah, one endowed with the Spirit of prophecy. The law and the Spirit of prophecy identify the true Church of God in all generations. See Revelation 12:17 and compare Revelation 19:10.

### **‘When they shall have finished their testimony’**

#### **6. What was to happen towards the end of the 1260 years? Revelation 11:7-10. For ‘Egypt’ compare Exodus 5:2.**

NOTE: ‘According to the words of the prophet, then, a little before the year 1798 some power of satanic origin and character would rise to make war upon the Bible. And in the land where the testimony of God’s two witnesses should thus be silenced, there would be manifest the atheism of the Pharaoh and the licentiousness of Sodom. This prophecy has received a most exact and striking fulfilment in the history of France... “The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.” The atheistical power that ruled in France during the Revolution and the Reign of Terror did wage such a war against God and His holy word as the world had never witnessed. The worship of the Deity was abolished by the National Assembly. Bibles were collected and publicly burned with every possible manifestation of scorn. The law of God was trampled underfoot. The institutions of the Bible were abolished. The weekly rest day was set aside, and in its stead every tenth day was devoted to revelling and blasphemy. Baptism and the Communion were prohibited. And announcements posted conspicuously over the burial places declared death to be an eternal sleep. The fear of God was said to be so far from the beginning of wisdom that it was the beginning of folly. All religious worship was prohibited, except that of liberty and the country.’ *Great Controversy*, pages 269, 273-4.

#### **7. What dramatic change was to take place in the testimony of the two witnesses? Revelation 11:11-12.**

NOTE: ‘Since France made war upon God’s two witnesses, they have been honoured as never before. In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was organised. This was followed by similar organisations, with numerous branches, upon the continent of Europe. In 1816 the American Bible Society was founded. When the British Society was formed, the Bible had been printed and circulated in fifty tongues. It has since been translated into many hundreds of languages and dialects. For the fifty years preceding 1792, little attention was given to the work of foreign missions. No new societies were formed, and there were but few churches that made any effort for the spread of Christianity in heathen lands. But toward the close of the eighteenth century a great change took place. Men became dissatisfied with the results of rationalism and realised the necessity of divine revelation and experimental religion. From this time the work of foreign missions attained an unprecedented growth. The improvements in printing have given an impetus to the work of circulating the Bible. The increased facilities for communication between different countries, the breaking down of ancient barriers of prejudice and national exclusiveness, and the loss of secular power by the pontiff of Rome have opened the way for the entrance of the word of God. For some years the Bible has been sold without restraint in the streets of Rome, and it has now been carried to every part of the habitable globe.’ *Great Controversy*, pages 287-288.

### **‘The Second Woe is past’**

#### **8. What events were prophesied to take place at the same time as the killing of the two witnesses? Revelation 11:13.**

NOTE: ‘What city? (See Revelation 17:18.) That city is the papal Roman power. France is one of the ‘ten horns’ that gave “their power and strength unto the [papal] beast;’ or is one of the ten kingdoms that arose out of the Western Empire... France then was ‘a tenth part of the city’ and was one of the strongest ministers of papal vengeance; but in this revolution it “fell” and with it fell the last civil minister of papal fury. “And in the earthquake were slain of men [margin: names of men or TITLES of men] seven thousand.” France made war, in her revolution of 1793-98 and onward, on all titles of nobility. It is said by those who have examined the French records that just seven thousand titles of men were abolished in that revolution.’ Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 481.

#### **9. How was the ending of the sixth trumpet announced? Revelation 11:14.**

NOTE: ‘The series of seven trumpets is here again resumed. The second woe ended with the sixth trumpet, 11 August, 1840: [see Lesson 11, Question 9] and the third woe occurs under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which commenced in 1844.’ [with the commencement of God’s judgement, the measuring of the worshippers against the temple.] Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 482.

### **‘The seventh angel sounded’**

#### **10. What announcement is made in heaven as the seventh trumpet sounds? Revelation 11:15. Compare Daniel 7:13-14.**

NOTE: ‘The government of the kingdom of Christ is like no earthly government. It is a representation of the characters of those who compose the kingdom. His court is one where holy love presides and whose offices and appointments are graced by the exercise of charity. He charges His servants to bring pity and loving-kindness, His own attributes, into all their office work. The power of Christ alone can work the transformation in heart and mind that all must experience who would partake with Him of the new life in the kingdom of God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind and give us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship.’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 372.

#### **11. What great hymn of praise then ascends from the twenty-four elders? Revelation 11:16-17.**

NOTE: While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The subjects of the kingdom were made up. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.' *Early Writings*, page 280.

### **'The time of the dead that they should be judged'**

#### **12. How is the beginning of God's judgement announced? Revelation 11:18. Compare Revelation 14:6-7.**

NOTE: 'We are standing upon the threshold of great and solemn events. Prophecies are fulfilling. Strange, eventful history is being recorded in the books of heaven. Everything in our world is in agitation. There are wars and rumours of wars. The nations are angry, and the time of the dead has come, that they should be judged. Events are changing to bring about the day of God, which hasteth greatly. Only a moment of time, as it were, yet remains. But while already nation is rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there is not now a general engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle.' *Testimonies Volume 6*, page 14.

#### **13. How is the beginning of Christ's ministry in the Most Holy Place then shown? Revelation 11:19.**

NOTE: 'For eighteen centuries this work of ministration continued in the first apartment of the sanctuary. The blood of Christ, pleaded in behalf of penitent believers, secured their pardon and acceptance with the Father, yet their sins still remained upon the books of record. As in the typical service there was a work of atonement at the close of the year, so before Christ's work for the redemption of men is completed, there is a work of atonement for the removal of sin from the sanctuary. This is the service which began when the 2300 days ended. At that time our High Priest entered the most holy, to perform the last division of His solemn work, to cleanse the sanctuary. The coming of Christ as our high priest to the most holy place, for the cleansing of the sanctuary, brought to view in Daniel 8:14; the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of days, as presented in Daniel 7:13; and the coming of the Lord to His temple, foretold by Malachi, are descriptions of the same event; and this is also represented by the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage, described by Christ in the parable of the ten virgins, of Matthew 25. The cleansing of the sanctuary involves a work of investigation, a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to his works. In the day of final reckoning, position, rank, or wealth will not alter by a hair's breadth the case of any one. By the all-seeing God, men will be judged by what they are in purity, in nobility, in love for Christ.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 207.