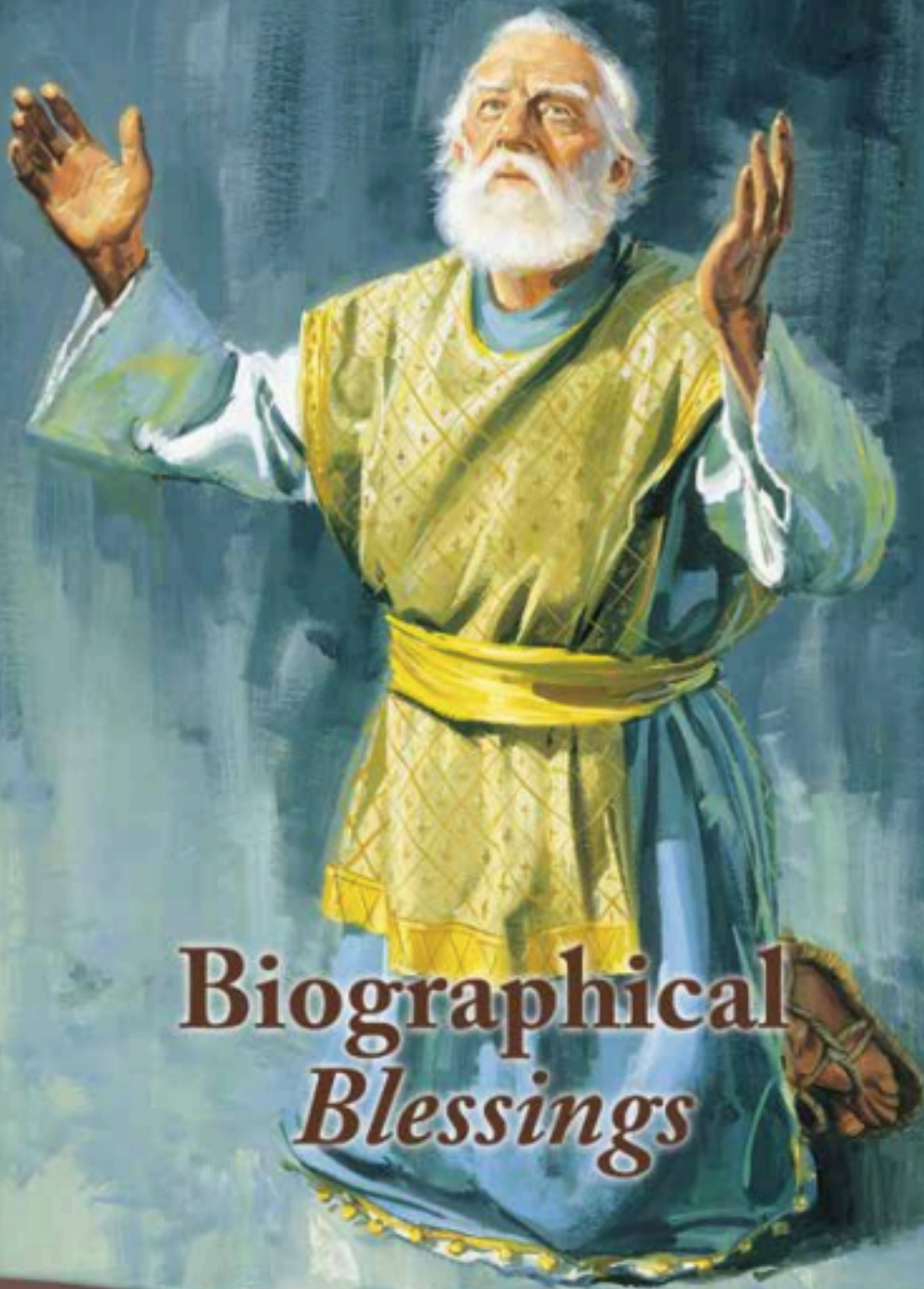


**SABBATH BIBLE LESSONS**  
**Senior Division**



**Biographical**  
*Blessings*

Vol. 94, No. 1

January–March, 2018

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## Lesson 1 - Sabbath January 6, 2018

# A Candidate for Heaven

**“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God” (Hebrews 11:5).**

“How often those who trusted the word of God, though in themselves utterly helpless, have withstood the power of the whole world—Enoch, pure in heart, holy in life, holding fast his faith in the triumph of righteousness against a corrupt and scoffing generation.” —*Education*, p. 254.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 84-89

Sunday, December 31

## 1. IN AN AGE OF MORAL CORRUPTION

**a. What summarizes the experience of the seventh from Adam, and how did his environment compare with ours today? Genesis 5:18–22.**

“There never has been and never will be an age when the moral darkness will be so dense as when Enoch lived a life of irreproachable righteousness.” — The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1088.

“Enoch had temptations as well as we. He was surrounded with society no more friendly to righteousness than is that which surrounds us. The atmosphere he breathed was tainted with sin and corruption, the same as ours; yet he lived a life of holiness.” — Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 122.

“We should not, my brethren and sisters, float along with the popular current. Our present work is to come out from the world and be separate. This is the only way we can walk with God, as did Enoch.” — Ibid., vol. 5, p. 535.

“Enoch’s walk with God was not in a trance or a vision, but in all the duties of his daily life. He did not become a hermit, shutting himself entirely from the world; for he had, in the world, a work to do for God.” — Ibid., vol. 8, pp. 329, 330.

**Genesis 5:18-22:** *18 And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: 19 And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: 20 And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. 21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: 22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:*

Monday, January 1

## 2. A HEALTHY FEAR OF GOD

**a. What should inspire us about Enoch’s experience with God? Genesis 5:23, 24.**

“The Lord loved Enoch because he steadfastly followed Him, and abhorred iniquity, and earnestly sought heavenly knowledge that he might do His will perfectly. He yearned to unite himself still more closely to God, whom he feared, revered, and adored. God would not permit Enoch to die as other men, but sent His angels to take him to Heaven without seeing death.” —Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3, p. 57.

“For three hundred years Enoch had been seeking purity of heart, that he might be in harmony with heaven. . . .

“To such communion God is calling us. As was Enoch’s, so must be their holiness of character who shall be redeemed from among men at the Lord’s second coming.” —Gospel Workers, pp. 53, 54.

**Genesis 5:23-24:** *23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: 24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*

Monday, January 1

## 2. A HEALTHY FEAR OF GOD

**b. What was shown to the first prophet in history, and why was he entrusted with such a vision? Jude 14, 15.**

“Enoch was the first prophet among mankind. . . . His life was a specimen of Christian consistency. Holy lips alone should speak forth the words of God in denunciation and judgments.”—The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1088.

**Jude 1:14-15:** *14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*

Monday, January 1

## 2. A HEALTHY FEAR OF GOD

**c. What types of behavior especially provoke God’s wrath in the Christian era? Jude 5–8, 10, 11, 16; Matthew 11:20, 23, 24.**

“The fate of Sodom is a solemn admonition, not merely to those who are guilty of outbreking sin, but to all who are trifling with Heaven-sent light and privileges. . . .

“It will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for the cities of the plain than for those who have known the love of Christ, and yet have turned away to choose the pleasures of a world of sin.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 165.

**Jude 1:5-8:** *5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. 7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. 8 Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.*

**Jude 1:10-11:** *10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

**Jude 1:16:** *These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.*

*verses continued on next page...*

**Matthew 11:20:** *Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:*

**Matthew 11:23-24:** *23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.*

Tuesday, January 2

### 3. KEEPING OUR PERSPECTIVE

#### a. How did Enoch maintain his purity? 1 Corinthians 15:33; Titus 1:15, 16.

“[Enoch] did not make his abode with the wicked. He did not locate in Sodom, thinking to save Sodom. He placed himself and his family where the atmosphere would be as pure as possible. Then at times he went forth to the inhabitants of the world with his God-given message. Every visit he made to the world was painful to him. He saw and understood something of the leprosy of sin. After proclaiming his message, he always took back with him to his place of retirement some who had received the warning. Some of these became overcomers, and died before the Flood came. But some had lived so long in the corrupting influence of sin that they could not endure righteousness.” —The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, pp. 1087, 1088.

“The greater and more pressing his labors, the more constant and earnest were [Enoch’s] prayers. He continued to exclude himself at certain periods from all society. After remaining for a time among the people, laboring to benefit them by instruction and example, he would withdraw, to spend a season in solitude, hungering and thirsting for that divine knowledge which God alone can impart.” —Gospel Workers, p. 52.

**1 Corinthians 15:33:** *Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*

**Titus 1:15-16:** *15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. 16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*

Tuesday, January 2

### 3. KEEPING OUR PERSPECTIVE

#### b. What can we learn from Enoch's attitude? Hebrews 11:5.

“The infinite, unfathomable love of God through Christ became the subject of [Enoch's] meditations day and night. With all the fervor of his soul he sought to reveal that love to the people among whom he dwelt. . . .

“As the scenes of the future were opened to his view, Enoch became a preacher of righteousness, bearing God's message to all who would hear the words of warning. . . .

“The power of God that wrought with His servant was felt by those who heard. Some gave heed to the warning and renounced their sins, but the multitudes mocked at the solemn message. The servants of God are to bear a similar message to the world in the last days, and it will also be received with unbelief and mockery.” — Testimonies, vol. 8, pp. 329, 330.

**Hebrews 11:5:** *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*

Wednesday, January 3

## 4. BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

**a. In what sense was Enoch's goal a model for us today? Galatians 6:8, 9.**

“As year after year passed, deeper and deeper grew the tide of human guilt, darker and darker gathered the clouds of divine judgment. Yet Enoch, the witness of faith, held on his way, warning, pleading, and teaching, striving to turn back the tide of guilt and to stay the bolts of vengeance.

“The men of that generation mocked the folly of him who sought not to gather gold or silver, or to build up possessions here. But Enoch's heart was upon eternal treasures.” — Testimonies, vol. 8, p. 330.

**Galatians 6:8-9:** *8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

Wednesday, January 3

## 4. BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

### b. What is to guide our daily decisions? 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hosea 14:9.

“The greater the existing iniquity, the more earnest was [Enoch’s] longing for the home of God. While still on earth, he dwelt, by faith, in the realms of light.” — Testimonies, vol. 8, pp. 330, 331.

“Did he [Enoch] see God by his side? Only by faith. He knew that the Lord was there, and he adhered steadfastly to the principles of truth. We, too, are to walk with God. When we do this, our faces will be lighted up by the brightness of His presence, and when we meet one another, we shall speak of His power, saying, Praise God. Good is the Lord, and good is the word of the Lord.

“Those who will be translated at the close of time, will be those who commune with God on earth. Those who make manifest that their life is hid with Christ in God will ever be representing Him in all their life-practices. Selfishness will be cut out by the roots.

“Let us realize the weakness of humanity, and see where man fails in his self-sufficiency. We shall then be filled with a desire to be just what God desires us to be—pure, noble, sanctified. . . .

“To be like God will be the one desire of the soul.

“This is the desire that filled Enoch’s heart. . . . He did not mark out his own course, or set up his own will, as if he thought himself fully qualified to manage matters. He strove to conform himself to the divine likeness.” — The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1087.

**2 Corinthians 5:7:** *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

**Hosea 14:9:** *Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.*

Thursday, January 4

## 5. A PURIFYING PROCESS

### a. Describe the ultimate triumph of all who share Enoch's aim. Matthew 5:8.

“God has a heaven full of blessings that He wants to bestow on those who are earnestly seeking for that help which the Lord alone can give. It was in looking in faith to Jesus, in asking of Him, in believing that every word spoken would be verified, that Enoch walked with God. He kept close by the side of God, obeying His every word.” —The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1087.

“How few are aware that they have darling idols, that they have cherished sins! God sees these sins to which you may be blinded, and He works with His pruning knife to strike deep and separate these cherished sins from you. You all want to choose for yourselves the process of purification. How hard it is for you to submit to the crucifixion of self; but when the work is all submitted to God, to Him who knows our weakness and our sinfulness, He takes the very best way to bring about the desired results. It was through constant conflict and simple faith that Enoch walked with God. You may all do the same. You may be thoroughly converted and transformed, and be indeed children of God, enjoying not only the knowledge of His will, but, by your example, leading others in the same path of humble obedience and consecration.” —Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 543.

“[Enoch] lived in a corrupt age, when moral pollution was teeming all around him; yet he trained his mind to devotion, to love purity. His conversation was upon heavenly things. He educated his mind to run in this channel, and he bore the impress of the divine. His countenance was lighted up with the light which shineth in the face of Jesus.” —Ibid., vol. 2, p. 122.

**Matthew 5:8:** *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*

Friday, January 5

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. What should we realize about Enoch's generation?**
- 2. What are we to learn from the fate of Sodom?**
- 3. Explain Enoch's policy about his environment.**
- 4. With what purpose in mind did Enoch study God's word?**
- 5. How is this week's lesson to bring us hope?**



Sunday, January 7

## 1. AN INNOCENT TARGET

### a. What is written about the character of Job? Job 1:1; 29:15; 31:6.

“Job did not neglect his duty to those outside of his household; he was benevolent, kind, thoughtful of the interest of others.” — The Review and Herald, August 30, 1881.

**Job 1:1:** *There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*

**Job 29:15:** *I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame.*

**Job 31:6:** *Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.*

Sunday, January 7

## 1. AN INNOCENT TARGET

**b. Explain the troublesome influences operating in this world, hidden behind the scenes—and why we need to be aware of them. Ephesians 6:12.**

“From the days of Adam to our own time, our great enemy has been exercising his power to oppress and destroy. He is now preparing for his last campaign against the church. All who seek to follow Jesus will be brought into conflict with this relentless foe. The more nearly the Christian imitates the divine Pattern, the more surely will he make himself a mark for the attacks of Satan.” —The Great Controversy, p. 510.

“If our eyes could be opened to see the good and evil agencies at work, there would be no trifling, no vanity, no jesting or joking.” —Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 41.

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

Monday, January 8

## 2. PARENTAL VIGILANCE

### a. What serious warning should parents learn from Job's vigilance regarding the great controversy between good and evil? Job 1:4, 5.

“It were well for parents to learn from the man of Uz a lesson of steadfastness and devotion. Job . . . labored earnestly for the salvation of his own family. Amid the festivities of his sons and daughters, he trembled lest his children should displease God. As a faithful priest of the household, he offered sacrifices for them individually. He knew the offensive character of sin, and the thought that his children might forget the divine claims, led him to God as an intercessor in their behalf.” —The Review and Herald, August 30, 1881.

“You roll vast responsibilities upon the preacher and hold him accountable for the souls of your children; but you do not sense your own responsibility as parents. . . . Your sons and daughters are corrupted by your own example and lax precepts; and, notwithstanding this lack of domestic training, you expect the minister to counteract your daily work and accomplish the wonderful achievement of training their hearts and lives to virtue and piety. After the minister has done all he can do for the church by faithful, affectionate admonition, patient discipline, and fervent prayer to reclaim and save the soul, yet is not successful, the fathers and mothers often blame him because their children are not converted, when it may be because of their own neglect. The burden rests with the parents; and will they take up the work that God has entrusted to them, and with fidelity perform it? Will they move onward and upward, working in a humble, patient, persevering way to reach the exalted standard themselves and to bring their children up with them?” —Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 494, 495.

“It is the parents' work to give line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. Correct wrong tendencies, not in passion, but in love. The children may be saved if fathers and mothers will do their work faithfully. . . .

“We are teaching lessons to the children which we wish them to copy. If we wish our children to be chaste, pure-minded, and noble, we must be so ourselves. If we are impostors, professing to be children of God, while our impatience, fretfulness, and deception stamp us children of Satan, our children will be no better than we. All efforts of parents should be to go forward to perfection of Christian character.” —The Review and Herald, April 14, 1885.

*verses on next page...*

**Job 1:4-5:** *4 And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. 5 And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.*

Tuesday, January 9

### 3. TRAGEDY STRIKES...

#### a. What incited the devil's wrath against Job? Job 1:6–11.

**Job 1:6-11:** *6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. 7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? 9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? 10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. 11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*

Tuesday, January 9

### 3. TRAGEDY STRIKES...

**b. Despite Job's fidelity, what series of shocks soon came with regard to his earthly possessions and the temporal lives of his children? Job 1:12–19.**

“All suffering is not the result of a perverted life. Job is brought before us as a man whom the Lord permitted Satan to afflict. The enemy stripped him of all he possessed; his family ties were broken; his children were taken from him.” — The Signs of the Times, June 21, 1899.

**Job 1:12-19:** *12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD. 13 And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: 14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: 15 And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. 16 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. 17 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. 18 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: 19 And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*

Tuesday, January 9

### 3. TRAGEDY STRIKES...

#### c. What can we learn from how Job responded to these trials? Job 1:20–22.

“Christ is our Guide and Comforter, who comforts us in all our tribulations. When He gives us a bitter draught to drink, He also holds a cup of blessing to our lips. He fills the heart with submission, with joy and peace in believing, and enables us to say submissively, Not my will, but Thy will, O Lord, be done.” — Selected Messages, bk2, p. 270.

**Job 1:20-22:** *20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, 21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. 22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*

Tuesday, January 9

### 3. TRAGEDY STRIKES...

**d. Even in the face of Satan’s perverse accusations before the heavenly universe, why can we still have hope? Job 2:1–6.**

“There is no power in the whole satanic force that can disable the soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God.

“Christ is our tower of strength, and Satan can have no power over the soul that walks with God in humility of mind. . . . In Christ there is perfect and complete help for every tempted soul. Dangers beset every path, but the whole universe of heaven is standing on guard, that none may be tempted above that which he is able to bear.”—My Life Today, p. 316.

**Job 2:1-6:** *1 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. 2 And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. 4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. 5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. 6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.*

Wednesday, January 10

#### 4. RESPONDING WITH FAITH AND WISDOM

**a. Explain the devil’s next attacks upon Job and how the faithful man of Uz responded. Job 2:8–10.**

“Job was deprived of his worldly possessions and so afflicted in body that he was abhorred by his relatives and friends, yet he preserved his integrity and faithfulness to God.”—Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 525.

**Job 2:8-10:** *8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. 9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. 10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.*

Wednesday, January 10

#### 4. RESPONDING WITH FAITH AND WISDOM

**b. What reveals the tremendous depth of Job's tragic situation? Job 2:11–13.**

**Job 2:11-13:** *11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. 12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. 13 So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.*

Wednesday, January 10

#### 4. RESPONDING WITH FAITH AND WISDOM

**c. What did Job realize about his predicament, and how does the apostle Peter echo these thoughts for our benefit? Job 23:8–10; 1 Peter 1:3, 6, 7.**

“The fact that we are called upon to endure trial proves that the Lord Jesus sees in us something very precious, which He desires to develop. If He saw in us nothing whereby He might glorify His name He would not spend time in refining us. We do not take special pains in pruning brambles. Christ does not cast worthless stones into His furnace. It is valuable ore that He tests.” —Ibid., vol. 7, p. 214.

**Job 23:8-10:** *8 Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: 9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: 10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.*

**1 Peter 1:3:** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

**1 Peter 1:6-7:** *6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

Wednesday, January 10

#### 4. RESPONDING WITH FAITH AND WISDOM

##### d. Why does God want us to understand the value of trial? 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

“The furnace fires are not to destroy, but to refine, ennoble, sanctify. Without trial we should not feel so much our need of God and His help; and we should become proud and self-sufficient. . . .

“Your heavenly Father loves you, and He will draw you to Himself by the trials that seem to you severe.” —Ibid., vol. 8, pp. 123, 124.

“We should not dishonor God by the mournful relation of trials that appear grievous. All trials that are received as educators will produce joy.” —Ibid., vol. 6, p. 365.

**1 Peter 4:12-13:** *12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

Thursday, January 11

## 5. PREPARING FOR GREATER BLESSINGS

**a. In the midst of unexpected trials that may be keen and cutting, what does the Lord want us to bear in mind? Jeremiah 29:11; John 16:33.**

“God leads His children by a way that they know not, but He does not forget or cast off those who put their trust in Him. He permitted affliction to come upon Job, but He did not forsake him. . . . The very trials that task our faith most severely and make it seem that God has forsaken us, are to lead us closer to Christ, that we may lay all our burdens at His feet and experience the peace which He will give us in exchange.

“God has always tried His people in the furnace of affliction. It is in the heat of the furnace that the dross is separated from the true gold of the Christian character. Jesus watches the test; He knows what is needed to purify the precious metal, that it may reflect the radiance of His love. It is by close, testing trials that God disciplines His servants. He sees that some have powers which may be used in the advancement of His work, and He puts these persons upon trial; in His providence He brings them into positions that test their character and reveal defects and weaknesses that have been hidden from their own knowledge. He gives them opportunity to correct these defects and to fit themselves for His service. He shows them their own weakness, and teaches them to lean upon Him; for He is their only help and safeguard. Thus His object is attained. They are educated, trained, and disciplined, prepared to fulfill the grand purpose for which their powers were given them.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 129, 130.

**Jeremiah 29:11:** *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

**John 16:33:** *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

Friday, January 12

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. How is a moment-by-moment sense of the great controversy to affect us?**
- 2. As the great controversy intensifies, what should parents realize?**
- 3. Why was Job able to respond to the attacks against him with relative calm?**
- 4. The next time an unexpected trial comes my way, what should I remember?**
- 5. Why will we grow if we view trials in a more mature way?**

## Lesson 3 - Sabbath January 20, 2018

# The Patience of Job

**“Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job” (James 5:11, first part).**

“[God] permitted trials to come upon you, that, through them, you might experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness.” — Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 416.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 341-348*

Sunday, January 14

## 1. HOPE BEHIND THE CLOUD

**a. Being human, how did Job feel about his predicament? Job 3:1–3, 9–11, 20–22.**

**Job 3:1-3:** *1 After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day. 2 And Job spake, and said, 3 Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived.*

**Job 3:9-11:** *9 Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for light, but havenone; neither let it see the dawning of the day: 10 Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes. 11 Why died I not from the womb?why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?*

**Job 3:20-22:** *20 Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul; 21 Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures; 22 Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave?*

Sunday, January 14

## 1. HOPE BEHIND THE CLOUD

### b. What should we all consider in hard times? Job 5:17–19.

“The very time to exercise faith is when we feel destitute of the Spirit. When thick clouds of darkness seem to hover over the mind, then is the time to let living faith pierce the darkness and scatter the clouds.”—Early Writings, p. 72.

“To every stricken one, Jesus comes with the ministry of healing. The life of bereavement, pain, and suffering may be brightened by precious revealings of His presence.

“God would not have us remain pressed down by dumb sorrow, with sore and breaking hearts. He would have us look up and behold His dear face of love. The blessed Saviour stands by many whose eyes are so blinded by tears that they do not discern Him. He longs to clasp our hands, to have us look to Him in simple faith, permitting Him to guide us. His heart is open to our griefs, our sorrows, and our trials. He has loved us with an everlasting love and with loving-kindness compassed us about. We may keep the heart stayed upon Him and meditate upon His loving-kindness all the day. He will lift the soul above the daily sorrow and perplexity, into a realm of peace.”—Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 12.

**Job 5:17-19:** *17 Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: 18 For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole. 19 He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.*

Monday, January 15

## 2. WHOSE HEART DO WE TEND TO SEARCH?

### a. Why did Job seek to search his heart? Proverbs 26:2; Job 9:1–4; 10:1, 2.

“To a great degree the experiences of life are the fruition of our own thoughts and deeds.” —Education, p. 146.

**Proverbs 26:2:** *As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.*

**Job 9:1-4:** *1 Then Job answered and said, 2 I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God? 3 If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand. 4 He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?*

**Job 10:1-2:** *1 My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. 2 I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

Monday, January 15

## 2. WHOSE HEART DO WE TEND TO SEARCH?

c. Why does Jesus warn us against being quick to judge the cause of others' afflictions? Luke 13:1-5.

**Luke 13:1-5:** *1 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. 4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*

Monday, January 15

## 2. WHOSE HEART DO WE TEND TO SEARCH?

### d. Explain Job's response when friends misjudged his affliction. Job 16:1–3.

“Still another element of bitterness was added to [Job's] cup. His friends, seeing in adversity but the retribution of sin, pressed on his bruised and burdened spirit their accusations of wrongdoing.”—Education, p. 155.

“There is wickedness in our world, but all the suffering is not the result of a perverted course of life. Job is brought distinctly before us as a man whom the Lord allowed Satan to afflict. The enemy stripped him of all he possessed; his family ties were broken; his children were taken from him. For a time his body was covered with loathsome sores, and he suffered greatly. His friends came to comfort him, but they tried to make him see that he was responsible, by his sinful course, for his afflictions. . . . By seeking to make him guilty before God, and deserving of His punishment, they brought a grievous test upon him, and represented God in a false light.”—The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1140.

**Job 16:1-3:** *1 Then Job answered and said, 2 I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all. 3 Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?*

Tuesday, January 16

### 3. REFLECTING THE DIVINE COMFORTER

#### a. What should we learn from Job's attitude toward his friends? Job 16:4, 5.

“Let no Christian be found an accuser of the brethren. Satan is the one who bears this title; he accuses them before God day and night, he stirs up the enemies of our faith to accuse us, and he prompts those of like precious faith to criticise and condemn one another. We are not to take part in his work. These are days of trial and of great peril, the adversary of souls is upon the track of every one; and while we stand out separate from the world, we should press together in faith and love. United, we are strong; divided, we are weak.

“We are exhorted to love as brethren, to be kind, courteous, forbearing, in honor preferring one another.” — Historical Sketches, pp. 213, 214.

**Job 16:4-5:** *4 I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you. 5 But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.*

Tuesday, January 16

### 3. REFLECTING THE DIVINE COMFORTER

**b. How are we, like the psalmist, to be comforted when no human understands and sympathizes with our pain or sorrow? Psalm 27:10; 73:25, 26.**

“Into the experience of all there come times of keen disappointment and utter discouragement—days when sorrow is the portion, and it is hard to believe that God is still the kind benefactor of His earthborn children; days when troubles harass the soul, till death seems preferable to life. It is then that many lose their hold on God and are brought into the slavery of doubt, the bondage of unbelief. Could we at such times discern with spiritual insight the meaning of God’s providences we should see angels seeking to save us from ourselves, striving to plant our feet upon a foundation more firm than the everlasting hills, and new faith, new life, would spring into being.”—Prophets and Kings, p. 162.

“While we review, not the dark chapters in our experience, but the manifestations of God’s great mercy and unfailing love, we shall praise far more than complain. We shall talk of the loving faithfulness of God as the true, tender, compassionate shepherd of His flock, which He has declared that none shall pluck out of His hand. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like clear-flowing streams, will come from God’s truly believing ones.”—Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 367.

**Psalm 27:10:** *When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.*

**Psalm 73:25-26:** *25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. 26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

Wednesday, January 17

## 4. DEVELOPING PATIENCE

### a. What perspective helps us develop patience in trial? James 5:10; Lamentations 3:31–33.

“Life is disciplinary. While in the world, the Christian will meet with adverse influences. There will be provocations to test the temper; and it is by meeting these in a right spirit that the Christian graces are developed. If injuries and insults are meekly borne, if insulting words are responded to by gentle answers, and oppressive acts by kindness, this is evidence that the Spirit of Christ dwells in the heart, that sap from the living Vine is flowing to the branches. We are in the school of Christ in this life, where we are to learn to be meek and lowly of heart; and in the day of final accounts we shall see that all the obstacles we meet, all the hardships and annoyances that we are called to bear, are practical lessons in the application of principles of Christian life. If well endured, they develop the Christlike in the character and distinguish the Christian from the worldling.

“There is a high standard to which we are to attain if we would be children of God, noble, pure, holy, and undefiled; and a pruning process is necessary if we would reach this standard. How would this pruning be accomplished if there were no difficulties to meet, no obstacles to surmount, nothing to call out patience and endurance? These trials are not the smallest blessings in our experience. They are designed to nerve us to determination to succeed. We are to use them as God’s means to gain decided victories over self instead of allowing them to hinder, oppress, and destroy us.” — Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 344, 345.

**James 5:10:** *Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.*

**Lamentations 3:31-33:** *31 For the Lord will not cast off for ever: 32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. 33 For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.*

Wednesday, January 17

## 4. DEVELOPING PATIENCE

### b. How does Scripture connect trials with patience? Romans 5:3, 4.

“The Lord frequently places us in difficult positions to stimulate us to greater exertion. In His providence special annoyances sometimes occur to test our patience and faith. God gives us lessons of trust. He would teach us where to look for help and strength in time of need. Thus we obtain practical knowledge of His divine will, which we so much need in our life experience. Faith grows strong in earnest conflict with doubt and fear.”—Ibid., vol. 4, pp. 116, 117.

**Romans 5:3-4:** *3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:*

Thursday, January 18

## 5. AGONIZING IN PRAYER

### a. Why are today's trials essential for the conflict ahead? Zechariah 13:9.

“God’s love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.

“The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. . . . Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God. . . .

“We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises. Angels record every prayer that is earnest and sincere. We should rather dispense with selfish gratifications than neglect communion with God. The deepest poverty, the greatest self-denial, with His approval, is better than riches, honors, ease, and friendship without it. We must take time to pray. If we allow our minds to be absorbed by worldly interests, the Lord may give us time by removing from us our idols of gold, of houses, or of fertile lands.”—The Great Controversy, pp. 621, 622.

**Zechariah 13:9:** *And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.*

Friday, January 19

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. Where is God when people such as Job are suffering?**
- 2. How might I be guilty of the error of Job's friends?**
- 3. What should we do when there seems to be no answer to our suffering?**
- 4. How do our trials develop patience?**
- 5. Describe the type of experience we need in preparation for the final events.**

## Lesson 4 - Sabbath January 27, 2018

# Glory Only to God

**“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us” (Titus 3:5, first part).**

“We have nothing to recommend us to God; but the plea that we may urge now and ever is our utterly helpless condition that makes His redeeming power a necessity.” — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 317.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Education, pp. 253-261*

Sunday, January 21

## 1. THE SUFFERING OF A VIRTUOUS MAN

**a. Describe the virtues that characterized Job's daily life. Job 29:5, 8–16.**

“God has given in His word a picture of a prosperous man—one whose life was in the truest sense a success, a man whom both heaven and earth delighted to honor. [Job 29:4–16 quoted.]” —Education, p. 142.

**Job 29:5:** *When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me;*

**Job 29:8-16:** *8 The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, and stood up. 9 The princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth. 10 The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. 11 When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: 12 Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. 13 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. 14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. 15 I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. 16 I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.*

Sunday, January 21

## 1. THE SUFFERING OF A VIRTUOUS MAN

**b. What timeless lesson are we to learn from Job's trials? Psalm 34:18, 19.**

“It is very natural for human beings to think that great calamities are a sure index of great crimes and enormous sins; but men often make a mistake in thus measuring character. We are not living in the time of retributive judgment. Good and evil are mingled, and calamities come upon all. Sometimes men do pass the boundary line beyond God's protecting care, and then Satan exercises his power upon them, and God does not interpose. Job was sorely afflicted, and his friends sought to make him acknowledge that his suffering was the result of sin, and cause him to feel under condemnation. They represented his case as that of a great sinner.” —The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1140.

**Psalm 34:18-19:** *18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

Monday, January 22

## 2. THE WAKE-UP CALL

**a. Although Job’s conscience was clean and his life virtuous, what did God want His faithful servant to pause to consider? Job 38:1–7; 40:1, 2.**

“Every opening flower, every leaf with its delicate veins, will testify of the infinite skill of the great Master Artist. The massive rocks and towering mountains that rise in the distance are not the result of chance. They speak in silent eloquence of One who sits upon the throne of the universe, high and lifted up. . . . All His plans are perfect. What awe and reverence should His name inspire!” —Our High Calling, p. 251.

**Job 38:1-7:** *1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. 4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*

**Job 40:1-2:** *1 Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, 2 Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.*

Monday, January 22

## 2. THE WAKE-UP CALL

**b. How did Job respond to God’s wake-up call? How should all respond who, like Job, may have been cruelly misunderstood and unjustly maligned by others? Job 40:3–5; 42:6.**

“Some shortsighted, short-experienced friends cannot, with their narrow vision, appreciate the feelings of one who has been in close harmony with the soul of Christ in connection with the salvation of others. His motives are misunderstood and his actions misconstrued by those who would be his friends, until, like Job, he sends forth the earnest prayer: Save me from my friends. God takes the case of Job in hand Himself. His patience has been severely taxed; but when God speaks, all his pettish feelings are changed. The self-justification which he felt was necessary to withstand the condemnation of his friends is not necessary toward God. He never misjudges; He never errs. Says the Lord to Job, ‘Gird up now thy loins like a man;’ and Job no sooner hears the divine voice than his soul is bowed down with a sense of his sinfulness, and he says before God, ‘I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes’ (Job 38:3; 42:6).” — Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 509.

“We are living in perilous times. Seventh-day Adventists are professedly the commandment-keeping people of God; but they are losing their devotional spirit. This spirit of reverence for God teaches men how to approach their Maker— with sacredness and awe through faith, not in themselves, but in a Mediator. Thus man is kept fast, under whatever circumstances he is placed.” — Notebook Leaflets, vol. 1, p. 121.

**Job 40:3-5:** *3 Then Job answered the LORD, and said, 4 Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. 5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.*

**Job 42:6:** *Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*

Tuesday, January 23

### 3. GOD'S ABUNDANT GRACE

**a. What should we learn from the Lord's final verdict concerning Job and his friends? Job 42:7-9.**

**Job 42:7-9:** *7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. 8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.*

Tuesday, January 23

### 3. GOD'S ABUNDANT GRACE

#### b. What did God then do for Job? Why? Job 42:10–17; Psalm 66:10–12.

“From the depths of discouragement and despondency Job rose to the heights of implicit trust in the mercy and the saving power of God.” —Prophets and Kings, p. 163.

“When Job caught a glimpse of his Creator, he abhorred himself and repented in dust and ashes. Then the Lord was able to bless him abundantly and to make his last years the best of his life.” —Ibid., p. 164.

**Job 42:10-17:** *10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. 11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. 12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. 13 He had also seven sons and three daughters. 14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. 15 And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. 16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. 17 So Job died, being old and full of days.*

**Psalm 66:10-12:** *10 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. 11 Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins. 12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.*

Tuesday, January 23

### 3. GOD'S ABUNDANT GRACE

**c. Why should the attitude of faithful Job be an inspiration to every Christian? James 5:11; Ephesians 2:8–10.**

“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.” — The Great Controversy, p. 471.

“In His divine arrangement, through His unmerited favor, the Lord has ordained that good works shall be rewarded. We are accepted through Christ’s merit alone; and the acts of mercy, the deeds of charity, which we perform, are the fruits of faith; and they become a blessing to us; for men are to be rewarded according to their works. It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us. Our works in and of themselves have no merit. When we have done all that it is possible for us to do, we are to count ourselves as unprofitable servants. We deserve no thanks from God. We have only done what it was our duty to do, and our works could not have been performed in the strength of our own sinful natures.” — The Review and Herald, January 29, 1895.

**James 5:11:** *Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*

**Ephesians 2:8-10:** *8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

Wednesday, January 24

#### 4. CHIRST UPLIFTED

**a. As virtuous a man as Job was, what should we realize about the spiritual needs of this man (or those of any other person)? 1 Peter 1:18, 19.**

“The prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor, who is at God’s right hand, presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ.” —Selected Messages, bk1, p. 344.

“The more of the Spirit of Christ we have, the more humble we shall become. When we obtain clear views of Christ, no words of self-exaltation will escape our lips. When the Lord gave to Job a view of His majesty, Job ceased to vindicate his own righteousness. He felt his sinfulness, and humbled himself before the purity and holiness of God. ‘I abhor myself,’ he said, ‘and repent in dust and ashes’ (Job 42:6). Yet by the pen of inspiration, God presents Job as perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil. ‘There is none like him in the earth’ (Job 1:8).” —The Signs of the Times, August 11, 1898.

**1 Peter 1:18-19:** *18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

Wednesday, January 24

#### 4. CHIRST UPLIFTED

**b. How do we know that Job trusted in Christ as his Saviour? Job 19:25–27. To what inspiring determination should this lead each of us?**

“You now have precious hours of probation granted you to form a right character. . . . You now have a period allotted you in which to redeem the time. You cannot in your own strength put away your errors and wrongs; they have been increasing upon you for years, because you have not seen them in their hideousness and in the strength of God resolutely put them away. By living faith you must lay hold on an arm that is mighty to save. Humble your poor, proud, self-righteous heart before God; get low, very low, all broken in your sinfulness at His feet. Devote yourself to the work of preparation. Rest not until you can truly say: My Redeemer liveth, and, because He lives, I shall live also.” — Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 88.

**Job 19:25-27:** *25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.*

Thursday, January 25

## 5. TRUSTING IN GOD'S GOODNESS

**a. When the outlook is bleak, what attitude strengthens us to follow the faith of Job? Job 13:15, 16.**

“We are justified to walk by sight as long as we can, but when we can no longer see the way clearly, then we need to put our hand in our heavenly Father’s and let Him lead. There are emergencies in the life of all in which we can neither follow sight nor trust to memory or experience. All we can do is simply to trust and wait. We shall honor God to trust Him because He is our heavenly Father.” — Manuscript Releases, vol. 19, p. 186.

“Are you tempted to give way to feelings of anxious foreboding or utter despondency? In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, fear not. Have faith in God.” — Prophets and Kings, p. 164.

**Job 13:15-16:** *15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. 16 He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.*

Thursday, January 25

## 5. TRUSTING IN GOD'S GOODNESS

**b. How does the history of Job illustrate righteousness by faith, and how is this theme to be reflected in our lives? Romans 5:1–5; Titus 3:3–7.**

“It is only as we depend upon the strength and righteousness of Christ that we can stand the testing of God. We shall have to educate the mind, and again and again bring to our remembrance the fact that Christ has his hand upon us. With his own divine lips he has said, ‘Without me ye can do nothing,’ but through Christ we can do all things. It is not for us to mark out the way in which we shall walk; but if we take everything that comes to us as in the providence of God, even our tribulation will work patience, and we need not sink in discouragement while we look by faith to Jesus.”—The Signs of the Times, March 28, 1892.

**Romans 5:1-5:** *1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

**Titus 3:3-7:** *3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. 4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Friday, January 26

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. Why may I be in danger of misjudging the case of a suffering person?**
- 2. What is nearly extinct in the worship of God, yet is nonetheless essential?**
- 3. What startled Job out of his misery?**
- 4. Why is it so important to depend on the divine Redeemer?**
- 5. No matter how bad things get, what should we always keep in mind?**

Lesson 5 - Sabbath February 3, 2018  
**A Time of Spiritual Crisis**

**“Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry” (1 Corinthians 10:14).**

“There was ever a remnant who were true to Jehovah; and from time to time the Lord raised up faithful and valiant men to put down idolatry and to deliver the Israelites from their enemies.” — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 545.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 543-547*

Sunday, January 28

## 1. GUILTY BEFORE GOD

### a. In the settlement of Canaan, what did Israel neglect to do? Judges 1:28–33.

“The Lord had faithfully fulfilled, on His part, the promises made to Israel; Joshua had broken the power of the Canaanites, and had distributed the land to the tribes. It only remained for them, trusting in the assurance of divine aid, to complete the work of dispossessing the inhabitants of the land. But this they failed to do. By entering into league with the Canaanites they directly transgressed the command of God, and thus failed to fulfill the condition on which He had promised to place them in possession of Canaan.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 543.

**Judges 1:28-33:** *28 And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out. 29 Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them. 30 Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries. 31 Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob: 32 But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out. 33 Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, nor the inhabitants of Bethanath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Bethanath became tributaries unto them.*

Sunday, January 28

## 1. GUILTY BEFORE GOD

### b. What shows that this was a very serious matter? Exodus 23:24, 25.

“From the very first communication of God with them at Sinai, [Israel] had been warned against idolatry. . . .

“But regardless of their high destiny, they chose the course of ease and self-indulgence; they let slip their opportunities for completing the conquest of the land.” —Ibid., pp. 543, 544.

**Exodus 23:24-25:** *24 Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images. 25 And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.*

Monday, January 29

## 2. THE HIGH COST OF NEGLIGENCE

**a. By failing to do their duty before God, what happened to Israel, and how was this a fulfilment of prophecy? Psalm 106:35–40; Numbers 33:55.**

“Until the generation that had received instruction from Joshua became extinct, idolatry made little headway; but the parents had prepared the way for the apostasy of their children. The disregard of the Lord’s restrictions on the part of those who came in possession of Canaan sowed seed of evil that continued to bring forth bitter fruit for many generations. The simple habits of the Hebrews had secured them physical health; but association with the heathen led to the indulgence of appetite and passion, which gradually lessened physical strength and enfeebled the mental and moral powers. By their sins the Israelites were separated from God; His strength was removed from them, and they could no longer prevail against their enemies. Thus they were brought into subjection to the very nations that through God they might have subdued.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 544, 545.

**Psalm 106:35-40:** *35 But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. 36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. 37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, 38 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. 39 Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions. 40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.*

**Numbers 33:55:** *But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall bepricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.*

Monday, January 29

## 2. THE HIGH COST OF NEGLIGENCE

**b. What step was the Lord finally compelled to take, and why should we take this matter seriously in our day? Judges 2:12; Psalm 78:58, 60, 61.**

“The most grievous sin of idolatry exists in the church. Anything that interposes between the Christian and the wholehearted service to God, takes the form of an idol, and the most grievous sin of idolatry is idolatry itself.” — The Paulson Collection, p. 343.

“Like ancient Israel the church has dishonored her God by departing from the light, neglecting her duties, and abusing her high and exalted privilege of being peculiar and holy in character. Her members have violated their covenant to live for God and Him only. They have joined with the selfish and world-loving.” — Testimonies, vol. 2, pp. 441, 442.

“God classes as idolaters those who trust in their own wisdom, their own devising, depending for success on their riches and power, striving to strengthen themselves by alliance with men whom the world calls great, but who fail to discern the binding claims of His law.” — The Review and Herald, March 15, 1906.

**Judges 2:12:** *And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.*

**Psalm 78:58:** *For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.*

**Psalm 78:60-61:** *60 So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men; 61 And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.*

Tuesday, January 30

### 3. FLEEING IDOLATRY

**a. What appeals are made in the Christian era regarding idolatry? 1 Corinthians 10:14; Galatians 5:19–21. Describe the startling vision shown to Lord’s messenger about the perils of this evil.**

“A large company of heathen idolaters bore a black banner, upon which were figures of the sun, moon, and stars. This company seemed to be very fierce and angry. I was then shown another company bearing a pure white banner, upon which was written, ‘Purity and holiness unto the Lord.’ Their countenances were marked with firmness and heavenly resignation. I saw the heathen idolaters approach them, and there was a great slaughter. The Christians melted away before them; and yet the Christian company pressed the more closely together, and held the banner more firmly. As many fell, others rallied around the banner and filled their places.

“I saw the company of idolaters consulting together. Failing to make the Christians yield, they agreed to another plan. I saw them lower their banner and then approach that firm Christian company and make propositions to them. At first their propositions were utterly refused. Then I saw the Christian company consulting together. Some said that they would lower the banner, accept the propositions, and save their lives, and at last they could gain strength to raise their banner among the heathen. A few, however, would not yield to this plan, but firmly chose to die holding their banner rather than to lower it. Then I saw many lower the banner and unite with the heathen; but the firm and steadfast would again seize it and bear it on high. I saw that persons were continually leaving the company of those who bore the pure banner, and were uniting with the idolaters under the black banner, to persecute those bearing the white banner. Many were slain, yet the white banner was held high, and believers were raised up to rally around it.” —Early Writings, pp. 211, 212.

*Verses on next page...*

**1 Corinthians 10:14:** *Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.*

**Galatians 5:19-21:** *19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Tuesday, January 30

### 3. FLEEING IDOLATRY

**b. Name another common form of idolatry to be shunned. Colossians 3:5, 6.**

“All covetousness is condemned as idolatry. All selfish indulgence is an offense in God’s sight.”—Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 261.

**Colossians 3:5-6:** *5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:*

Wednesday, January 31

#### 4. A DELIVERER NEEDED

**a. What bitter consequences followed Israel's idolatry during the time of the judges? Judges 6:1–5.**

“The wild, fierce inhabitants of the desert, ‘as locusts for multitude’ (Judges 6:5, R.V.), came swarming into the land, with their flocks and herds. Like a devouring plague they spread over the country, from the river Jordan to the Philistine plain. They came as soon as the harvests began to ripen, and remained until the last fruits of the earth had been gathered. They stripped the fields of their increase and robbed and maltreated the inhabitants and then returned to the deserts. Thus the Israelites dwelling in the open country were forced to abandon their homes, and to congregate in walled towns, to seek refuge in fortresses, or even to find shelter in caves and rocky fastnesses among the mountains.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 546.

**Judges 6:1-5:** *1 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. 2 And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel:and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds. 3 And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them; 4 And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. 5 For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it.*

Wednesday, January 31

#### 4. A DELIVERER NEEDED

**b. What did the Israelites finally do, and what merciful response did they receive? Judges 6:6–10.**

“As the people in their distress gave heed to the Lord’s reproof, and confessed their sins, God again raised up a helper for them.” —Ibid.

**Judges 6:6-10:** *6 And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the LORD. 7 And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites, 8 That the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage; 9 And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land; 10 And I said unto you, I am the LORD your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.*

Wednesday, January 31

#### 4. A DELIVERER NEEDED

**c. Whom did God raise up as the man of the hour? Why? Judges 6:11–14; Proverbs 4:26; Haggai 1:7.**

“As Gideon labored in secrecy and silence, he sadly pondered upon the condition of Israel and considered how the oppressor’s yoke might be broken from off his people.” — Ibid.

“He whose mind is opened to the Word of God will prayerfully consider every way of his feet, so that he may honor God and keep the way of the Lord.” — That I May Know Him, p. 251.

**Judges 6:11-14:** *11 And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. 12 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. 13 And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. 14 And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?*

**Proverbs 4:26:** *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.*

**Haggai 1:7:** *Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.*

Thursday, February 1

## 5. A HUMBLE MAN OF ACTION

**a. What attitude should we learn from the spirit of Gideon when addressed by the Messenger of heaven? Judges 6:15, 22, 23.**

“When God sent His angels anciently to minister or communicate to individuals, and these persons learned that they had seen and talked with an angel, they were struck with awe and were afraid that they should die. They had so exalted views of the terrible majesty and power of God that they thought it would destroy them to be brought into close connection with one direct from His holy presence.” — Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 410.

**Judges 6:15:** *And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.*

**Judges 6:22-23:** *22 And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. 23 And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.*

Thursday, February 1

## 5. A HUMBLE MAN OF ACTION

**b. What important requirement did Gideon perform that was highly essential in order to begin the work of reformation among his people? Judges 6:24–27.**

“The deliverance of Israel was to be preceded by a solemn protest against the worship of Baal. Gideon must declare war upon idolatry before going out to battle with the enemies of his people.

“The divine direction was faithfully carried out. Knowing that he would be opposed if it were attempted openly, Gideon performed the work in secret; with the aid of his servants, accomplishing the whole in one night.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 547.

**Judges 6:24-27:** *24 Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovahshalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. 25 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it: 26 And build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. 27 Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night.*

Friday, February 2

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. Why is it important to separate from known sources of temptation?**
- 2. What specific sins caused the oppression from the Midianites?**
- 3. Which is more dangerous—persecution from evil or compromise with evil?**
- 4. At the crisis hour, what reveals the amazing mercy of our God?**
- 5. What steps do I need to take in order to make a real reformation in my life?**

## Lesson 6 - Sabbath February 10, 2018

# Reviving a Remnant

**“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life: that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:3, 4).**

“Follow step after step in the path of duty. Steep places may have to be climbed, but go forward in the path of humility, of faith and self-denial, leaving the clouds of doubt behind you.” — Selected Messages, bk2, p. 272.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 547-549*

Sunday, February 4

## 1. THE SPIRIT OF GOD AT WORK

**a. After Gideon had disposed of his father's altar to Baal by night, how did the men of the city react the next morning? Judges 6:28–30.**

**Judges 6:28-30:** *28 And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built.*

*29 And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing.*

*30 Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it.*

Sunday, February 4

## 1. THE SPIRIT OF GOD AT WORK

### b. How did Gideon's father respond? Why? Judges 6:31, 32.

“Gideon had told his father, Joash, of the Angel's visit, and the promise that Israel should be delivered. He also related to him the divine command to destroy the altar of Baal. The Spirit of God moved upon the heart of Joash. He saw that the gods whom he had worshiped had no power even to save themselves from utter destruction and hence they could not protect their worshipers. When the idolatrous multitude clamored for the death of Gideon, Joash fearlessly stood in his defense, and endeavored to show the people how powerless and unworthy of trust or adoration were their gods. [Judges 6:31 quoted.]

“He reminded them that the penalty of death would justly rest upon themselves instead of Gideon, for they had broken the law of God against idolatry.” — The Signs of the Times, June 23, 1881.

**Judges 6:31-32:** *31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar. 32 Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.*

Monday, February 5

## 2. GOD'S AMAZING PROVIDENCE

### a. How did the putting away of idols motivate progress? Judges 6:33–35.

“The whole transaction [of destroying the idols], with the stirring appeals of Gideon, produced a powerful effect upon the people of Ophrah. All thoughts of violence were dismissed; and when, moved by the Spirit of the Lord, Gideon sounded the trumpet of war, they were among the first to gather to him. He then sent messengers throughout his own tribe of Manasseh, and also to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and all cheerfully obeyed the call.” —The Signs of the Times, June 23, 1881.

**Judges 6:33-35:** *33 Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel. 34 But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him. 35 And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.*

Monday, February 5

## 2. GOD'S AMAZING PROVIDENCE

**b. What can we learn from Gideon's prayers requesting confirmation from the Lord? What spirit prompted his petitions? Judges 6:36–40.**

“Gideon deeply felt his own insufficiency for the great work before him. He dared not place himself at the head of the army without positive evidence that God had called him to this work, and that he would be with him. . . .

“Unbelief suggested that wool naturally absorbs moisture when there is any in the air, and that the test was not decisive. Hence, [Gideon] asked a renewal of the sign, humbly pleading that unbelief might not move the Lord to anger. His request was granted. . . .

“Before honor is humility. The Lord can use most effectually those who are most sensible of their own unworthiness and inefficiency. He will teach them to exercise the courage of faith. He will make them strong by uniting their weakness to His might, wise by connecting their ignorance with His wisdom.

“God will accept the services of all who will work in obedience to His will, who will not for any consideration bring a stain upon the conscience, who will not permit any influence to lead them from the path of duty. . . .

“The teachable and trusting ones, having a right purpose and a pure heart, need not wait for great occasions or for extraordinary abilities before they employ their powers. They should not stand irresolute, questioning, and fearing what the world will say or think of them. We are not to weary ourselves with anxious care, but to go on, quietly performing with faithfulness the work which God assigns us, and leaving the result wholly with Him.” — Ibid.

**Judges 6:36-40:** *36 And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, 37 Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. 38 And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. 39 And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. 40 And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.*

Tuesday, February 6

### 3. GOD KNOWS THE HEART

**a. What law had been established in ancient Israel, revealing God’s compassion for families during times of war? Deuteronomy 20:5–8.**

“It had been made a law in Israel that before they went to battle, the following proclamation should be sounded throughout the army: [Deuteronomy 20:5–8 quoted]. What a striking illustration is this of the tender, pitying love of Christ! He who instituted the relations of life and the ties of kindred, made special provision that these be not too widely broken. He would have none go forth to battle unwillingly. This proclamation also sets forth in a forcible manner the influence which may be exerted by one man who is deficient in faith and courage, and further shows the effect of our thoughts and feelings upon our own course of action.” —The Signs of the Times, June 30, 1881.

**Deuteronomy 20:5-8:** *5 And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is therethat hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. 6 And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet \*eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it. 7 And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her. 8 And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren’s heart\* faint as well as his heart.*

Tuesday, February 6

### 3. GOD KNOWS THE HEART

**b. Now that Gideon had been assured of God’s direction in his venture, how did the Lord again amaze him? Why? Judges 7:1, 2. What effect does pride have upon us today?**

“Because his numbers were so few compared with those of the enemy, Gideon had refrained from making the usual proclamation [of Deuteronomy 20:5–8]. He was filled with astonishment at the declaration that his army was too large. But the Lord saw the pride and unbelief existing in the hearts of His people. Aroused by the stirring appeals of Gideon, they had readily enlisted; but many were filled with fear when they saw the multitudes of the Midianites. Yet, had Israel triumphed, those very ones would have taken the glory to themselves instead of ascribing the victory to God.

“Gideon obeyed the Lord’s direction, and with a heavy heart he saw twenty-two thousand, or more than two thirds of his entire force, depart for their homes.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 549.

“Pride of heart is a fearful trait of character. ‘Pride goeth before destruction’ (Proverbs 16:18, first part). This is true in the family, the church, and the nation.” — The Faith I Live By, p. 68.

**Judges 7:1-2:** *1 Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley. 2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.*

Wednesday, February 7

#### 4. A TEST OF CHARACTER

**a. After Gideon’s army was reduced to a mere 10,000, what did God tell him to do before going to battle? Why? Judges 7:4, 5.**

“The people were led down to the waterside, expecting to make an immediate advance upon the enemy. A few hastily took a little water in the hand and sucked it up as they went on; but nearly all bowed upon their knees, and leisurely drank from the surface of the stream. Those who took of the water in their hands were but three hundred out of ten thousand; yet these were selected; all the rest were permitted to return to their homes.

“By the simplest means character is often tested. Those who in time of peril were intent upon supplying their own wants were not the men to be trusted in an emergency. The Lord has no place in His work for the indolent and self-indulgent. The men of His choice were the few who would not permit their own wants to delay them in the discharge of duty.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 549.

**Judges 7:4-5:** *4 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. 5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.*

Wednesday, February 7

#### 4. A TEST OF CHARACTER

**b. How does the actual principle God was teaching likewise apply to us in His church today? Philippians 2:4; 3:13, 14.**

“Success does not depend upon strength or numbers. God can deliver by few as well as by many. A large church is not necessarily a strong church. Some of its members may be cherishing selfishness, pride, or unbelief; some may be dishonest, others corrupt in heart and life. All these are a source of weakness to the church. They bring the frown of God upon His people, and the great adversary will work through them to advance his own cause.

“Anciently, those whose worldly interests would draw their hearts from the work of God, were bidden to return to their homes. It were better for the cause of truth today, if those whose attention is absorbed with their own private interests, would separate from the work of God, and give themselves to the things in which their hearts delight. Then they would not, by their wrong example, exert so dangerous an influence upon others.

“God is honored, not so much by the great number, as by the character of those who serve Him.”—The Signs of the Times, June 30, 1881.

**Philippians 2:4:** *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*

**Philippians 3:13-14:** *13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

Thursday, February 8

## 5. SOLDIERS OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

### a. What is God's plan for all enlisted in His spiritual army? 2 Timothy 2:3–5.

“We are not placed in this world merely to care for ourselves, but we are required to aid in the great work of salvation, thus imitating the self-denying, self-sacrificing, useful life of Christ.” — Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 325.

“True Christian character is marked by a singleness of purpose, an indomitable determination, which refuses to yield to worldly influences, which will aim at nothing short of the Bible standard. If men will permit themselves to become discouraged in the service of God, the great adversary will present abundant reasons to turn them from the plain path of duty to one of ease and irresponsibility. Those who can be bribed or seduced, discouraged or terrified, will be of no service in the Christian warfare. Those who set their affections on worldly treasures or worldly honors, will not push the battle against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

“All who would be soldiers of the cross of Christ, must gird on the armor and prepare for conflict. They should not be intimidated by threats; or terrified by dangers. They must be cautious in peril, yet firm and brave in facing the foe and doing battle for God. The consecration of Christ's follower must be complete. Father, mother, wife, children, houses, lands, everything, must be held secondary to the work and cause of God. He must be willing to bear patiently, cheerfully, joyfully, whatever in God's providence he may be called to suffer. His final reward will be to share with Christ the throne of immortal glory.” — The Signs of the Times, June 30, 1881.

**2 Timothy 2:3-5:** *3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. 5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*

Thursday, February 8

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. How can I appeal to someone in apostasy as Gideon did to Joash?**
- 2. Why was Gideon the one assigned to the task of delivering God's people?**
- 3. Why did God want the 32,000 to be reduced to 10,000?**
- 4. Explain how the test about how the men drank water can be applied today.**
- 5. What does it mean to be a spiritual soldier for a kingdom not of this world?**

## Lesson 7 - Sabbath February 17, 2018

# Active Trust

**“And Gideon said unto [the men of Israel], I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you” (Judges 8:23).**

“When sorely tried, do not place your trust in the arm of flesh, but in the living God. Have faith in the One who is by your side ready to tell you what steps to take in times of perplexity and trial. He has everything marked out.” — Sermons and Talks, vol. 2, p. 178.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 550-559*

Monday, February 11

## 1. SERIOUS MINUTEMEN

**a. Out of 10,000 who drank water before battle, how many took their mission seriously, and what result did God promise them? Judges 7:6–9.**

“Not only did [the small remnant] possess courage and self-control, but they were men of faith. They had not defiled themselves by idolatry.” — The Signs of the Times, June 30, 1881.

“The Lord is just as willing to work through human efforts now, and to accomplish great things through weak instrumentalities. It is essential to have an intelligent knowledge of the truth; for how else could we meet its wily opponents? The Bible must be studied, not alone for the doctrines it teaches, but for its practical lessons. You should never be surprised, you should never be without your armor on. Be prepared for any emergency, for any call of duty. Be waiting, watching for every opportunity to present the truth familiar with the prophecies, familiar with the lessons of Christ. But do not trust in well prepared arguments. Argument alone is not enough. God must be sought on your knees; you must go forth to meet the people through the power and influence of His Spirit.

“Act promptly. God would have you minute men, as were the men who composed Gideon’s army.” — The Review and Herald, July 1, 1884.

**Judges 7:6-9:** *6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. 7 And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place. 8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley. 9 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.*

Tuesday, February 12

## 2. CHOOSING THE NARROW PATH

**a. What reveals God’s use of small numbers in His work? How does He bid us operate even in our schools? Romans 9:27; 12:1, 2; James 4:4.**

“Some will urge that if religious teaching is to be made prominent our schools will become unpopular; that those who are not of our faith will not patronize them. Very well; then let them go to other schools, where they will find a system of education that suits their taste. It is Satan’s purpose by these considerations to prevent the attainment of the object for which our schools were established. Hindered by his devices, the managers reason after the manner of the world and copy its plans and imitate its customs. Many have so far shown their lack of wisdom from above as to join with the enemies of God and the truth in providing worldly entertainments for the students. In doing this they bring upon themselves the frown of God, for they mislead the youth and do a work for Satan. This work, with all its results, they must meet at the bar of God.

“Those who pursue such a course show that they cannot be trusted. . . . When the Lord requires us to be distinct and peculiar, how can we crave popularity or seek to imitate the customs and practices of the world? . . .

“To lower the standard in order to secure popularity and an increase of numbers, and then to make this increase a cause of rejoicing, shows great blindness. If numbers were an evidence of success, Satan might claim the preeminence; for in this world his followers are largely in the majority. It is the degree of moral power pervading a school that is a test of its prosperity. It is the virtue, intelligence, and piety of the people composing our schools, not their numbers, that should be a source of joy and thankfulness.”—Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 142, 143.

“Many who occupy responsible positions in the church of God, are sacrificing their integrity to secure the favor of the ungodly. A strong current is sweeping downward, and they decide that it is easier to float with the tide than to row against it. Like the children of Israel, they sacrifice the blessings of God by their indolence and spiritual sloth. Many set up idols in their hearts—idols of selfishness, idols of pride, and love of display. Eternal things lose their value. Withdraw the influences which God has provided to preserve and strengthen our spirituality, and it decays and dies. We must be continually seeking to draw near to God, and to learn His will.”—The Signs of the Times, June 30, 1881.

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**Romans 9:27:** *Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:*

**Romans 12:1-2:** *1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

**James 4:4:** *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

Tuesday, February 13

### 3. VICTORY AND TACT

**a. In God’s work today, what should we learn from the unusual strategy given to Gideon’s army? Judges 7:12–22.**

“It is a dangerous thing for men to resist the Spirit of truth and grace and righteousness, because its manifestations are not according to their ideas, and have not come in the line of their methodical plans. The Lord works in His own way, and according to His own devising. Let men pray that they may be divested of self, and may be in harmony with heaven. . . . In the instruction that the Lord gave Gideon when he was about to fight with the Midianites—that he should go out against his foes with an army of three hundred blowing trumpets, and carrying empty pitchers in their hands, and shouting, ‘The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon’—these precise, methodical, formal men would see nothing but inconsistency and confusion. They would start back with determined protest and resistance. They would have held long controversies to show the inconsistency and the dangers that would accompany the carrying on of the warfare in such an extreme way, and in their finite judgment they would pronounce all such movements as utterly ridiculous and unreasonable.”—The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 2, p. 1004.

**Judges 7:12-14:** *12 And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude. 13 And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. 14 And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.*

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**Judges 7:15-22:** *15 And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian. 16 And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. 17 And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. 18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon. 19 So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands. 20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon. 21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled. 22 And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Bethshittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath.*

Tuesday, February 13

### 3. VICTORY AND TACT

**b. Explain the benefit of Gideon’s tactfulness toward his brethren. Judges 7:23–25; 8:1–3.**

“[The men of Ephraim] were jealous and angry, as though Gideon had been led by his own will and judgment. They did not discern God’s hand in the triumph of Israel, they did not appreciate His power and mercy in their deliverance; and this very fact showed them unworthy to be chosen as His special instruments. . . .

“The spirit of jealousy might easily have been fanned into a quarrel that would have caused strife and bloodshed; but Gideon’s modest answer soothed the anger of the men of Ephraim, and they returned in peace to their homes. Firm and uncompromising where principle was concerned, and in war a ‘mighty man of valor,’ Gideon displayed also a spirit of courtesy that is rarely witnessed.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 554, 555.

**Judges 7:23-25:** *23 And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites. 24 And Gideon sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and took the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan. 25 And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side Jordan.*

**Judges 8:1-3:** *1 And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply. 2 And he said unto them, What have I done now in comparison of you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? 3 God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.*

Wednesday, February 14

#### 4. STANDING, THEN FALLING

a. How was Gideon's attitude exemplary in refusing to violate the principles of God's theocracy? Judges 8:22, 23.

**Judges 6:22-23:** *22 Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. 23 And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.*

Wednesday, February 14

#### 4. STANDING, THEN FALLING

**b. Despite his unassuming modesty, what mistake did Gideon then make, and what warning should we heed from this? Judges 8:24–27.**

“The season of inactivity that succeeds a great struggle is often fraught with greater danger than is the period of conflict. To this danger Gideon was now exposed. A spirit of unrest was upon him. Hitherto he had been content to fulfill the directions given him from God; but now, instead of waiting for divine guidance, he began to plan for himself. When the armies of the Lord have gained a signal victory, Satan will redouble his efforts to overthrow the work of God. Thus thoughts and plans were suggested to the mind of Gideon, by which the people of Israel were led astray.

“Because he had been commanded to offer sacrifice upon the rock where the Angel appeared to him, Gideon concluded that he had been appointed to officiate as a priest. Without waiting for the divine sanction, he determined to provide a suitable place, and to institute a system of worship similar to that carried on at the tabernacle. With the strong popular feeling in his favor he found no difficulty in carrying out his plan. At his request all the earrings of gold taken from the Midianites were given him as his share of the spoil. The people also collected many other costly materials, together with the richly adorned garments of the princes of Midian. From the material thus furnished, Gideon constructed an ephod and a breastplate, in imitation of those worn by the high priest. His course proved a snare to himself and his family, as well as to Israel. The unauthorized worship led many of the people finally to forsake the Lord altogether, to serve idols. After Gideon’s death great numbers, among whom were his own family, joined in this apostasy. The people were led away from God by the very man who had once overthrown their idolatry.

“There are few who realize how far-reaching is the influence of their words and acts. How often the errors of parents produce the most disastrous effects upon their children and children’s children, long after the actors themselves have been laid in the grave.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 555, 556.

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**Judges 8:24-27:** *24 And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.) 25 And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey. 26 And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks. 27 And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.*

Thursday, February 15

## 5. TRUST NOT IN THE ARM OF FLESH

**a. How did Gideon’s later mistake affect the people after his death? Judges 8:28, 33–35. Where does our safety lie today?**

“[Gideon] thought himself the least in his father’s house. Human wisdom would not have selected him; but God saw in Gideon a man of integrity and moral courage. He was distrustful of self, and willing to listen to the teachings of God, and carry out His purposes. The Lord is not dependent upon men of high position, of great intellect, or extensive knowledge. Such men are frequently proud and self-sufficient. They feel themselves competent to devise and execute plans without counsel from God. They separate themselves from the true Vine, and hence become dry and fruitless, as withered branches.

“The Lord would put to shame the vaunting of men. He will give success to the feeblest efforts, the most unpromising methods, when divinely appointed, and entered upon with humility and trust. God will not test our faith beyond endurance. He will give us sufficient evidence, that we may, in our weakness, lean upon the arm of His strength, and trust wholly in His power. Talents, education, and influence, may, under the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, be employed in the service of God; but Satan is more often served by them, than is Jesus Christ.” — The Signs of the Times, June 30, 1881.

“Those who stand in the highest positions may lead astray. The wisest err; the strongest may falter and stumble. There is need that light from above should be constantly shed upon our pathway. Our only safety lies in trusting our way implicitly to Him who has said, ‘Follow Me.’ ” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 556.

**Judges 8:28:** *Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon.*

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**Judges 8:33-35:** *33 And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baalberith their god. 34 And the children of Israel remembered not the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side: 35 Neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel.*

Thursday, February 16

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. Describe our duties as “minutemen” for God today.**
- 2. What mistake is often made in denominational institutions for the public?**
- 3. Why did God choose such a simple strategy to defeat the Midianites?**
- 4. Even for those who seem humble, what mistake of Gideon can be a snare?**
- 5. Why are we warned against trusting in the arm of flesh?**

## Lesson 8 - Sabbath February 24, 2018

# Planning Victorious Families

**“How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?” (Judges 13:12).**

“In cultivating that which is best in themselves, parents are exerting an influence to mold society and to uplift future generations. . . . Even before the birth of the child, the preparation should begin that will enable it to fight successfully the battle against evil.” —The Ministry of Healing, p. 371.

**Suggested Reading:**     *The Ministry of Healing, pp. 371-378*  
                                  *Selected Messages, bk2, pp. 420-433*

Sunday, February 18

## 1. GUIDANCE FOR BOTH PARENTS

**a. What was the instruction given by the angel of the Lord to Manoah's wife, and how did she and her husband both reveal their zeal to honor the Lord? Judges 13:2–12; James 1:5.**

“Let every mother go often to her Saviour with the prayer, ‘Teach us, how shall we order the child, and what shall we do unto him?’ Let her heed the instruction which God has given in His word, and wisdom will be given her as she shall have need.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 573.

“Upon fathers as well as mothers rests a responsibility for the child's earlier as well as its later training, and for both parents the demand for careful and thorough preparation is most urgent. Before taking upon themselves the possibilities of fatherhood and motherhood, men and women should become acquainted with the laws of physical development—with physiology and hygiene, with the bearing of prenatal influences, with the laws of heredity, sanitation, dress, exercise, and the treatment of disease; they should also understand the laws of mental development and moral training.” —Education, p. 276.

**Judges 13:2-6:** *2 And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. 3 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. 4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: 5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. 6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name:*

*Verses continued on next page...*

**Judges 13:7-12:** *7 But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death. 8 Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. 9 And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband wasnot with her. 10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day. 11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. 12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?*

**James 1:5:** *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

Monday, February 19

## 2. A SOLEMN RESPONSIBILITY

### a. What counsel was repeated to both parents? Why? Judges 13:13, 14, 24.

“The well-being of the child will be affected by the habits of the mother. Her appetites and passions are to be controlled by principle. There is something for her to shun, something for her to work against, if she fulfills God’s purpose for her in giving her a child. If before the birth of her child she is self-indulgent, if she is selfish, impatient, and exacting, these traits will be reflected in the disposition of the child. Thus many children have received as a birthright almost unconquerable tendencies to evil.

“But if the mother unswervingly adheres to right principles, if she is temperate and self-denying, if she is kind, gentle, and unselfish, she may give her child these same precious traits of character.” — The Ministry of Healing, pp. 372, 373.

“It was not enough that Samson, the child who was to deliver Israel, should have a good legacy at his birth. This was to be followed by careful training. From infancy he was to be trained to habits of strict temperance.” — Ibid., p. 379.

**Judges 13:13-14:** *13 And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. 14 She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe.*

**Judges 13:24:** *And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.*

Monday, February 19

## 2. A SOLEMN RESPONSIBILITY

### b. Why is the privilege of parenthood a very solemn matter? Psalm 127:3.

“The father should bear in mind that the treatment of his wife before the birth of his offspring will materially affect the disposition of the mother during that period, and will have very much to do with the character developed by the child after its birth. Many fathers have been so anxious to obtain property fast that higher considerations have been sacrificed, and some men have been criminally neglectful of the mother and her offspring, and too frequently the lives of both have been sacrificed to the strong desire to accumulate wealth. Many do not immediately suffer this heavy penalty for their wrongdoing, and are asleep as to the result of their course. The condition of the wife is sometimes no better than that of a slave, and sometimes she is equally guilty with the husband, of squandering physical strength, to obtain means to live fashionably. It is a crime for such to have children, for their offspring will often be deficient in physical, mental, and moral worth, and will bear the miserable, close, selfish impress of their parents, and the world will be cursed with their meanness.” — Selected Messages, bk2, pp. 428, 429.

**Psalm 127:3:** *Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD:and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*

Tuesday, February 20

### 3. LABOURING FOR SPIRITUAL SUCCESS

#### a. Name some keys to enjoying greater peace in family life. Philippians 4:5–8.

“The mother, before the birth of her children, is often permitted to labor beyond her strength. Her burdens and cares are seldom lessened, and that period, which should be to her of all others, a time of rest, is one of fatigue, sadness, and gloom. By too great exertion on her part, she deprives her offspring of that nutrition which nature has provided for it, and by heating her blood, she imparts to it, a bad quality of blood. The offspring is robbed of its vitality, robbed of physical and mental strength. The father should study how to make the mother happy. He should not allow himself to come to his home with a clouded brow.” — Selected Messages, bk2, pp. 427, 428.

“It is the duty of men and women to act with reason in regard to their labor. They should not exhaust their energies unnecessarily, for by doing this, they not only bring suffering upon themselves but, by their errors, bring anxiety, weariness, and suffering upon those they love. What calls for such an amount of labor? Intemperance in eating, and in drinking, and the desire for wealth have led to this intemperance in labor.” — Ibid., p. 429.

“Mothers, let your countenance be full of sunshine. Smile if you can, and the infant’s mind and heart will reflect the light of your countenance.” — The Adventist Home, p. 436.

**Philippians 4:5-8:** *5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Tuesday, February 20

### 3. LABOURING FOR SPIRITUAL SUCCESS

**b. Why did Israel urgently need to produce valiant men, and how does a similar need exist today? Judges 13:1; Jeremiah 2:12–14; 1 Corinthians 3:3.**

“The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

“But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man.”—Education, p. 57.

**Judges 13:1:** *And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.*

**Jeremiah 2:12-14:** *12 Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. 13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. 14 Is Israel a servant? is he a homeborn slave? why is he spoiled?*

**1 Corinthians 3:3:** *For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

Wednesday, February 21

#### 4. THE INFLUENCE OF ASSOCIATION

**a. What request did Samson make of his parents? Judges 14:1–3. Despite their good intentions, what perils might Samson’s parents have overlooked? 1 Corinthians 15:33.**

“The town of Zorah being near the country of the Philistines, Samson came to mingle with them on friendly terms. Thus in his youth intimacies sprang up, the influence of which darkened his whole life.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 562.

“Great care should be taken by Christian youth in the formation of friendships and in the choice of companions. Take heed, lest what you now think to be pure gold turns out to be base metal. Worldly associations tend to place obstructions in the way of your service to God, and many souls are ruined by unhappy unions . . . with those who can never elevate or ennoble.” —Messages to Young People, p. 436.

“Fathers and mothers should feel that a duty devolves upon them to guide the affections of the youth, that they may be placed upon those who will be suitable companions. They should feel it a duty, by their own teaching and example, with the assisting grace of God, to so mold the character of the children from their earliest years that they will be pure and noble, and will be attracted to the good and true. Like attracts like; like appreciates like. Let the love for truth and purity and goodness be early implanted in the soul, and the youth will seek the society of those who possess these characteristics.” —Ibid., p. 466.

“While we shall not cease to warn and entreat and try to present the truth to the parents who are unbelievers, to mix and mingle with them in association will be to the ruin of your children.” —Manuscript Releases, vol. 9, p. 74.

“Fathers and mothers, do you realize the importance of the responsibility resting on you? Do you allow your children to associate with other children without being present to know what kind of education they are receiving? Do not allow them to be alone with other children.” —Child Guidance, p. 114.

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**Judges 14:1-3:** *1 And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. 2 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife. 3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well.*

**1 Corinthians 5:33:** *Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*

Wednesday, February 21

#### 4. THE INFLUENCE OF ASSOCIATION

**b. Who was responsible for the unhappiness in Samson's life? Galatians 6:5, 7.**

“Had Samson as faithfully obeyed the divine commands as faithfully as his parents had done, his would have been a nobler and happier destiny. But association with idolaters corrupted him.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 562.

**Galatians 6:5:** *For every man shall bear his own burden.*

**Galatians 6:7:** *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

Thursday, February 22

## 5. GUIDANCE AVAILABLE

**a. Why does God forbid marriage of believers to unbelievers? What have been the results of such alliances? Judges 3:5–8; Deuteronomy 7:3; Nehemiah 13:23–26.**

“Never marry an unbeliever.” — Our High Calling, p. 257.

“The Lord has in His Word plainly instructed His people not to unite themselves with those who have not His love and fear before them. Such companions will seldom be satisfied with the love and respect which are justly theirs. They will constantly seek to gain from the God-fearing wife or husband some favor which shall involve a disregard of the divine requirements. To a godly man, and to the church with which he is connected, a worldly wife or a worldly friend is as a spy in the camp, who will watch every opportunity to betray the servant of Christ, and expose him to the enemy’s attacks.” — The Signs of the Times, September 27, 1910.

**Judges 3:5-8:** *5 And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites: 6 And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. 7 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgat the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves. 8 Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years.*

**Deuteronomy 7:3:** *Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.*

**Nehemiah 13:23-26:** *23 In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: 24 And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews’ language, but according to the language of each people. 25 And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. 26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.*

Thursday, February 22

## 5. GUIDANCE AVAILABLE

**b. What should Christians prayerfully consider when seeking a spouse? 2 Corinthians 6:14–18; 1 Corinthians 7:39.**

“In ancient times marriage engagements were generally made by the parents, and this was the custom among those who worshiped God. None were required to marry those whom they could not love; but in the bestowal of their affections the youth were guided by the judgment of their experienced, God-fearing parents. It was regarded as a dishonor to parents, and even a crime, to pursue a course contrary to this.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 171.

**2 Corinthians 6:14-18:** *14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

**1 Corinthians 7:39:** *The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.*

Friday, February 23

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. What knowledge better equips future parents to give children a strong foundation?**
- 2. What types of circumstances make childbearing inadvisable?**
- 3. Explain the secret of how God-fearing integrity is developed.**
- 4. Why is it so important to be vigilant about associations formed in youth?**
- 5. What guidelines are important in choosing a spouse?**

## Lesson 9 - Sabbath March 3, 2018

# Weakness Into Strength

**“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Romans 13:14).**

“Physically [Samson] was the strongest man upon the earth; but in self-control, integrity, and firmness, he was the weakest of men.”—The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 563-568*

Sunday, February 25

## 1. REAPING WHAT WAS SOWN

**a. What bitter fruit immediately became apparent in Samson’s marriage with an unbeliever? Judges 14:7, 10, 20.**

“[Samson] did not ask whether he could better glorify God when united with the object of his choice, or whether he was placing himself in a position where he could not fulfill the purpose to be accomplished by his life. To all who seek first to honor Him, God has promised wisdom; but there is no promise to those who are bent upon self-pleasing. . . .

“At his marriage feast Samson was brought into familiar association with those who hated the God of Israel. Whoever voluntarily enters into such relations will feel it necessary to conform, to some degree, to the habits and customs of his companions. The time thus spent is worse than wasted. Thoughts are entertained and words are spoken that tend to break down the strongholds of principle and to weaken the citadel of the soul.

“The wife, to obtain whom Samson had transgressed the command of God, proved treacherous to her husband before the close of the marriage feast. Incensed at her perfidy, Samson forsook her for the time, and went alone to his home at Zorah. When, afterward relenting, he returned for his bride, he found her the wife of another.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 563.

**Judges 14:7:** *And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.*

**Judges 14:10:** *So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.*

**Judges 14:20:**

*But Samson’s wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.*

Monday, February 26

## 2. HUMANITY RESISTING GOD'S GRACE

**a. How did Samson's revenge on the Philistines show a sample of the unique strength God gave him for Israel's deliverance? Judges 15:4–8, 13–15.**

**Judges 15:4-8:** *4 And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. 5 And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives. 6 Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they answered, Samson, the son in law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire. 7 And Samson said unto them, Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease. 8 And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.*

**Judges 15:13-15:** *13 And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock. 14 And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands\*loosed from off his hands. 15 And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith.*

Monday, February 26

## 2. HUMANITY RESISTING GOD'S GRACE

**b. How long did Samson rule as a judge in Israel? Judges 15:20. How did the people show how human nature often hinders God's plans?**

“Had the Israelites been ready to unite with Samson and follow up the victory, they might at this time have freed themselves from the power of their oppressors. But they had become dispirited and cowardly. They had neglected the work which God commanded them to perform, in dispossessing the heathen, and had united with them in their degrading practices, tolerating their cruelty, and, so long as it was not directed against themselves, even countenancing their injustice. When themselves brought under the power of the oppressor, they tamely submitted to the degradation which they might have escaped, had they only obeyed God. Even when the Lord raised up a deliverer for them, they would, not infrequently, desert him and unite with their enemies.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 564.

**Judges 15:20:** *And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.*

Monday, February 26

## 2. HUMANITY RESISTING GOD'S GRACE

### c. Despite Samson's apostasy, how did God show him mercy? Judges 16:1–3.

“Samson had transgressed the command of God by taking a wife from the Philistines, and again he ventured among them—now his deadly enemies—in the indulgence of unlawful passion. Trusting to his great strength, which had inspired the Philistines with such terror, he went boldly to Gaza, to visit a harlot of that place. The inhabitants of the city learned of his presence, and they were eager for revenge. Their enemy was shut safely within the walls of the most strongly fortified of all their cities; they felt sure of their prey, and only waited till the morning to complete their triumph. At midnight Samson was aroused. The accusing voice of conscience filled him with remorse, as he remembered that he had broken his vow as a Nazarite. But notwithstanding his sin, God's mercy had not forsaken him. His prodigious strength again served to deliver him.” —Ibid., p. 565.

**Judges 16:1-3:** *1 Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there\* an harlot, and went in unto her. 2 And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. 3 And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them,\* bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.*

Tuesday, February 27

### 3. THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

**a. In what sin was Samson becoming entangled? Judges 16:4–6; Galatians 6:8. How did this sin work his ruin?**

“[Samson] did not again venture among the Philistines, but he continued to seek those sensuous pleasures that were luring him to ruin. . . . The vale of Sorek was celebrated for its vineyards; these also had a temptation for the wavering Nazarite, who had already indulged in the use of wine, thus breaking another tie that bound him to purity and to God. The Philistines kept a vigilant watch over the movements of their enemy, and when he degraded himself by this new attachment, they determined, through Delilah, to accomplish his ruin.

“A deputation consisting of one leading man from each of the Philistine provinces was sent to the vale of Sorek. They dared not attempt to seize him while in possession of his great strength, but it was their purpose to learn, if possible, the secret of his power. They therefore bribed Delilah to discover and reveal it.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 565.

**Judges 16:4-6:** *4 And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. 5 And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver. 6 And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.*

**Galatians 6:8:** *For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*

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Tuesday, February 27

### 3. THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

**b. What warnings should we heed from the downward spiral into which Samson was falling? Proverbs 5:21, 22; 7:10, 22, 23; Romans 13:14.**

“Samson’s infatuation seems almost incredible. At first he was not so wholly enthralled as to reveal the secret; but he had deliberately walked into the net of the betrayer of souls, and its meshes were drawing closer about him at every step.” — The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881.

“In the society of this enchantress, the judge of Israel squandered precious hours that should have been sacredly devoted to the welfare of his people. But the blinding passions which make even the strongest weak, had gained control of reason and of conscience.” — Ibid.

“Samson in his peril had the same source of strength as had Joseph. He could choose the right or wrong as he pleased. But instead of taking hold of the strength of God, he permitted the wild passions of his nature to have full sway. The reasoning powers were perverted, the morals corrupted. God had called Samson to a position of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness; but he must first learn to govern by first learning to obey the laws of God.” — Ibid.

**Proverbs 5:21-22:** *21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings. 22 His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.*

**Proverbs 7:10:** *And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.*

**Proverbs 7:22-23:** *22 He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; 23 Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*

**Romans 13:14:** *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Wednesday, February 28

#### 4. THE BOTTOM OF THE PIT

**a. What bitter results followed Samson’s spiritual weakness? Judges 16:15–21.**

“When he had been shaven, Delilah began to annoy him and cause him pain, thus making a trial of his strength; for the Philistines dared not approach him till fully convinced that his power was gone. Then they seized him and, having put out both his eyes, they took him to Gaza. Here he was bound with fetters in their prison house and confined to hard labor.

“What a change to him who had been the judge and champion of Israel!—now weak, blind, imprisoned, degraded to the most menial service! Little by little he had violated the conditions of his sacred calling. God had borne long with him; but when he had so yielded himself to the power of sin as to betray his secret, the Lord departed from him. There was no virtue in his long hair merely, but it was a token of his loyalty to God; and when the symbol was sacrificed in the indulgence of passion, the blessings of which it was a token were also forfeited.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 566.

**Judges 16:15-18:** *15 And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth. 16 And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death; 17 That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother’s womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man. 18 And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand.*

*Verses continued on next page*

**Judges 16:19-21:** *19 And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. 20 And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him. 21 But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.*

Wednesday, February 28

#### 4. THE BOTTOM OF THE PIT

**b. How can Samson's response to the most discouraging hour in his life bring hope to each one of us? Luke 5:32.**

“In suffering and humiliation, a sport for the Philistines, Samson learned more of his own weakness than he had ever known before; and his afflictions led him to repentance.” — Ibid.

**Luke 5:32:** *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Wednesday, February 28

#### 4. THE BOTTOM OF THE PIT

**c. What began to happen to Samson physically, showing God's amazing mercy toward sinners? Judges 16:22. What attitude was beginning to take hold of Samson? Mark 9:24.**

“[Samson's] hair began gradually to grow, indicating the return of his extraordinary powers.” — The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881.

**Judges 16:22:** *Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.*

**Mark 9:24:** *And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

Thursday, March 1

## 5. THE TRIUMPH OF GOD'S MERCY

**a. How and why did Satan mock at the disgraceful condition of God's broken deliverer? Judges 16:23–25.**

“As the Philistines exulted over their great victory, they ascribed the honor to their gods, praising them as superior to the God of Israel. The contest, instead of being between Samson and the Philistines, was now between Jehovah and Dagon.” —  
The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1881.

**Judges 16:23-25:** *23 Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. 24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us. 25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars.*

Thursday, March 1

## 5. THE TRIUMPH OF GOD'S MERCY

**b. What deliberate request did Samson make to the one leading him by the hand? What prayer did Samson breathe to God? Judges 16:26–28.**

“After a time, as if weary, Samson asked permission to rest against the two central pillars which supported the temple roof. Then he silently uttered the prayer, ‘O Lord God, remember me, I pray Thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines.’ ”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 567.

**Judges 16:26-28:** *26 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. 27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. 28 And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.*

Thursday, March 1

## 5. THE TRIUMPH OF GOD'S MERCY

**c. What did God use to impart saving faith to Samson? In what “hall of fame” is this frail man included? Judges 16:30; Hebrews 11:32, 33.**

**Judges 16:30:** *And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.*

**Hebrews 11:32-33:** *32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: 33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,*

Friday, March 2

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. Why should the outcome of Samson's marriage be no surprise?**
- 2. To what spiritual path did the marriage lead Samson?**
- 3. How is the history of Samson and Delilah repeated in various ways today?**
- 4. What change did Samson make after the loss of his eyes?**
- 5. How and why did God bless Samson's prayer at the end of his life?**

## Lesson 10 - Sabbath March 10, 2018

# Asked of the Lord

**“Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord” (1 Samuel 1:20).**

“The mother’s daily influence upon her children is preparing them for everlasting life or eternal death. She exercises in her home a power more decisive than the minister in the desk, or even the king upon his throne. The day of God will reveal how much the world owes to godly mothers for men who have been unflinching advocates of truth and reform.”—Reflecting Christ, p. 195.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 569-579*

Sunday, March 4

## 1. BARREN AND BETRAYED

### a. What brought sadness to Hannah, the wife of Elkanah? 1 Samuel 1:1, 2.

“Elkanah’s love for his chosen companion was deep and unchanging; yet a cloud shadowed their domestic happiness. The home was not made joyful by the voice of childhood. At length the strong desire to perpetuate his name led the husband, as it had led many others, to adopt a course which God did not sanction—that of introducing into a family a second wife, to be subordinate to the first. This act was prompted by a lack of faith in God, and was attended with evil results. The peace of the hitherto united and harmonious family was broken. Upon Hannah the blow fell with crushing weight. All happiness seemed forever swept away from her life. She bore her trials uncomplainingly, yet her grief was none the less keen and bitter.

“Penninah, the new wife, was a woman of inferior mind, and of envious and jealous disposition. As the years passed on, and sons and daughters were added to the household, she became proud and self-important, and treated her rival with contempt and insolence.”—The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881.

**1 Samuel 1:1-2:** *1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite: 2 And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.*

Monday, March 5

## 2. MISJUDGED AND MISUNDERSTOOD

**a. Explain the typical scene with Elkanah’s family at the time of the feasts in Shiloh. 1 Samuel 1:3–5.**

“Even amid the sacred festivities connected with the worship of God, the evil spirit that had cursed [Elkanah’s] home intruded. After the other sacrifices had been made, it was customary for the peace-offering to be presented. A specified portion of this was given to the priest, and then the offerer, after distributing to each member of his family a share of the remainder, united with them in a solemn yet joyous feast. Upon these occasions, Elkanah gave the mother of his children a portion for herself and for each of her sons and daughters, and then as a token of regard for Hannah, his first and best-loved wife, he gave her a double portion. This excited the envy and jealousy of the second wife, and she boldly asserted her claims to superiority as one highly favored of God; and she tauntingly pointed to the fact that Hannah had no children, as proof of the Lord’s displeasure toward her.” — The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881.

**1 Samuel 1:3-5:** *3 And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. 4 And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: 5 But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb.*

Monday, March 5

## 2. MISJUDGED AND MISUNDERSTOOD

### b. Describe the bitter extent of Hannah's suffering. 1 Samuel 1:6, 7.

“This scene was enacted again and again, not only at the yearly gatherings, but whenever circumstances furnished an opportunity for Peninnah to exalt herself at the expense of her rival. The course of this woman seemed to Hannah, a trial almost beyond endurance. Satan employed her as his agent to harass, and if possible exasperate and destroy one of God's faithful children. At last, as her enemy's taunts were repeated at one of the yearly feasts, Hannah's courage and fortitude gave way. Unable longer to conceal her feelings, she wept without restraint. The expressions of joy on every hand seemed mockery to her. She could not partake of the feast.” —Ibid.

**1 Samuel 1:6-7:** *6 And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. 7 And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.*

Monday, March 5

## 2. MISJUDGED AND MISUNDERSTOOD

### c. How did Elkanah try to comfort his dear wife, but in vain? 1 Samuel 1:8.

“It was impossible for Elkanah fully to understand [Hannah’s] feelings or to appreciate the cause.” —Ibid.

**1 Samuel 1:8:** *Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepst thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?*

Tuesday, March 6

### 3. FAITHFUL AND GRACIOUS

**a. What should we learn from Hannah’s character and the solution she sought for her difficulty? 1 Samuel 1:9–11; Psalm 50:15.**

“Humility, conscientiousness, and a firm reliance upon God, were ruling traits in [Hannah’s] character.” — The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881.

“Hannah brought no reproach against her husband for his unwise marriage. The grief which she could share with no earthly friend, she carried to her Heavenly Father, and sought consolation from Him alone. . . . There is a mighty power in prayer. Our great adversary is constantly seeking to keep the troubled soul away from God. An appeal to Heaven by the humblest saint is more to be dreaded by Satan than the decrees of cabinets or the mandates of kings.

“Hannah’s prayer was unheard by mortal ear, but entered the ear of the Lord of hosts.” — Ibid.

**1 Samuel 1:9-11:** *9 So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. 10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. 11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid\* a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.*

**Psalm 50:15:** *And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*

Tuesday, March 6

### 3. FAITHFUL AND GRACIOUS

**b. After being misjudged through the malice of her rival, how was Hannah now misjudged by the high priest in the house of God? 1 Samuel 1:12–14.**

“Feasting revelry had well-nigh supplanted true godliness among the people of Israel. Instances of intemperance, even among women, were of frequent occurrence, and now Eli determined to administer what he considered a deserved rebuke.” — Ibid.

**1 Samuel 1:12-14:** *12 And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. 13 Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. 14 And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.*

Tuesday, March 6

### 3. FAITHFUL AND GRACIOUS

**c. How does Hannah's noble response reveal the abundant grace of a Christlike character? 1 Samuel 1:15, 16.**

“Hannah had been communing with God. She believed that her prayer had been heard, and the peace of Christ filled her heart. Hers was a gentle, sensitive nature, yet she yielded neither to grief nor to indignation at the unjust charge of drunkenness in the house of God. With due reverence for the anointed of the Lord, she calmly repelled the accusation and stated the cause of her emotion.” —Ibid.

**1 Samuel 1:15-16:** *15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. 16 Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.*

Wednesday, March 7

#### 4. SAMUEL'S FIRST THREE YEARS

a. What miracle did the Lord grant in answer to Hannah's prayer? 1 Samuel 1:17–20.

**1 Samuel 1:17-20:** *17 Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. 18 And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad. 19 And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her. 20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.*

Wednesday, March 7

#### 4. SAMUEL'S FIRST THREE YEARS

**b. What should we learn from the thoroughness of Hannah's instruction of young Samuel? Proverbs 22:6.**

“During the first three years of the life of Samuel the prophet, his mother carefully taught him to distinguish between good and evil. By every familiar object surrounding him she sought to lead his thoughts up to the Creator.” — Child Guidance, p. 197.

“The first three years is the time in which to bend the tiny twig. Mothers should understand the importance attaching to this period. It is then that the foundation is laid.” — Ibid., p. 194.

“It was Hannah, the woman of prayer and self-sacrifice and heavenly inspiration, who gave birth to Samuel, the heaven-instructed child, the incorruptible judge, the founder of Israel's sacred schools.” — The Ministry of Healing, p. 372.

**Proverbs 22:6:** *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

Wednesday, March 7

#### 4. SAMUEL'S FIRST THREE YEARS

**c. What should we learn from Hannah about the seriousness of vows made to God? 1 Samuel 1:11, 21–28; Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5.**

“As soon as the little one was old enough to be separated from his mother, she fulfilled her vow. She loved her child with all the devotion of a mother’s heart; day by day, as she watched his expanding powers and listened to his childish prattle, her affections entwined about him more closely. He was her only son, the special gift of Heaven; but she had received him as a treasure consecrated to God, and she would not withhold from the Giver His own.

“Once more Hannah journeyed with her husband to Shiloh and presented to the priest, in the name of God, her precious gift.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 570, 571.

**1 Samuel 1:11:** *And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.*

**1 Samuel 1:21-25:** *21 And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. 22 But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever. 23 And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him. 24 And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh: and the child was young. 25 And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli.*

*Verses continued on the next page...*

**1 Samuel 1:26-28:** 26 *And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD. 27 For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: 28 Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.*

**Ecclesiastes 5:4-5:** 4 *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. 5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*

Thursday, March 8

## 5. A SONG OF PRAISE AND PROPHECY

### a. What was Hannah led to publicly declare with power? 1 Samuel 2:1.

“[Hannah] felt that she could do no less in token of her gratitude than to make a public acknowledgment of the divine mercy and loving-kindness. The spirit of inspiration came upon her, and although a retiring and timid woman, her voice was now heard in the assembly of the people, sounding forth the praise of God. . . .

“The horn is in some animals the weapon of attack and defense; by the use of this figure, Hannah would acknowledge that her deliverance had come from God. In her exultation, there is no vain triumph of self. She rejoices not in Samuel, not in her own prosperity, but in the Lord.”—The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881.

**1 Samuel 2:1:** *And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.*

Thursday, March 8

## 5. A SONG OF PRAISE AND PROPHECY

### b. How do Hannah's words bring us comfort and wisdom? 1 Samuel 2:2–10.

“[1 Samuel 2:3 quoted.] While here referring to Peninnah's boastful and insolent conduct, Hannah seems also to speak to all the enemies of true godliness, who glory in themselves, and insult and despise the children of faith. Pride and boasting cannot deceive God. He is acquainted with the hearts and the lives of all. By Him actions are weighed. He distinguishes men's characters, and weighs their motives in the balance. When He sees that it will be for the good of man and for His own glory, He will interpose in behalf of His people. In due time He will reward the righteous and punish the wicked.” —Ibid.

**1 Samuel 2:2-10:** *2 There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God. 3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. 4 The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. 5 They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble. 6 The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. 7 The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. 8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them. 9 He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. 10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.*

Friday, March 9

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. How do many too often repeat the same type of mistake as Elkanah did?**
- 2. What should we do about the “Penninah’s” in our life?**
- 3. In what ways might I be guilty of misjudging someone I know?**
- 4. Explain the work of parents during the first three years of a child’s life.**
- 5. What prompted Hannah to make the public declaration that she did?**

## Lesson 11 - Sabbath March 17, 2018

# A Consecrated Child

**“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right” (Proverbs 20:11).**

“The Lord accepted Samuel from his very childhood, because his heart was pure. He was given to God, a consecrated offering, and the Lord made him a channel of light.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 537.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 575-580

Sunday, March 11

## 1. CALLED TO SERVICE

**a. What did Samuel do in his new life in the temple? 1 Samuel 2:11, 18. What did Hannah do for Samuel, and how did God bless Hannah? 1 Samuel 2:19–21.**

“It was not customary for the Levites to enter upon their peculiar services until they were twenty-five years of age, but Samuel had been an exception to this rule. Every year saw more important trusts committed to him; and while he was yet a child, a linen ephod was placed upon him as a token of his consecration to the work of the sanctuary. Young as he was when brought to minister in the tabernacle, Samuel had even then duties to perform in the service of God, according to his capacity. These were at first very humble, and not always pleasant; but they were performed to the best of his ability, and with a willing heart.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 573.

“When separated from her child, the faithful mother’s solicitude did not cease. He was the subject of her prayers. Every year she made him a little coat, and when she came with her husband to the yearly sacrifice, she presented it to the child as a token of her love. With every stitch of that coat she had breathed a prayer that he might be pure, noble, and true. She did not ask that he might be great, but earnestly pleaded that he might be good.” — The Signs of the Times, November 3, 1881.

**1 Samuel 1:11:** *And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.*

**1 Samuel 1:18-21:** *18 But Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. 19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the\* loan which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home. 21 And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the LORD.*

Monday, March 12

## 2. WITH ELI AND HIS FAMILY

**a. What is written about Samuel in his youth? 1 Samuel 2:26. What was the relationship between the child Samuel and Eli, the high priest?**

“Samuel had been placed under the care of Eli, and the loveliness of his character drew forth the warm affection of the aged priest. He was kind, generous, obedient, and respectful. Eli, pained by the waywardness of his own sons, found rest and comfort and blessing in the presence of his charge. Samuel was helpful and affectionate, and no father ever loved his child more tenderly than did Eli this youth. It was a singular thing that between the chief magistrate of the nation and the simple child so warm an affection should exist. As the infirmities of age came upon Eli, and he was filled with anxiety and remorse by the profligate course of his own sons, he turned to Samuel for comfort.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 573.

**1 Samuel 2:26:** *And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.*

Monday, March 12

## 2. WITH ELI AND HIS FAMILY

**b. Although young Samuel was living on the premises of the high priest, what should we realize about the environment there? What serious warning was given to Eli? 1 Samuel 2:12, 22, 27–31.**

“Samuel’s youth was passed in the tabernacle solemnly devoted to the worship of God; yet even here he was not free from evil influences or sinful example. The sons of Eli are described in the sacred word as ‘sons of Belial.’ They feared not God, nor honored their father; but Samuel did not seek their company nor follow their evil ways. It was his constant effort to make himself what God would have him to become. This is the privilege of every youth. God is pleased when even little children devote themselves to His service; they should not be discouraged in their efforts to become Christians. . . .

“The youngest child that loves and fears God, is greater in His sight than the most talented and learned man who neglects the great salvation.” —The Signs of the Times, November 3, 1881.

“Despite the many sovereigns to whom men profess allegiance, all mankind are serving one of two masters—the Prince of light or the Prince of darkness. Samuel served the former, the sons of Eli the latter.” —Ibid.

**1 Samuel 2:12:** *Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD.*

**1 Samuel 2:22:** *Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*

**1 Samuel 2:27-28:** *27 And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh’s house? 28 And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?*

*Verses continued on next page...*

**1 Samuel 2:29-31:** *29 Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? 30 Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. 31 Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house.*

Tuesday, March 13

### 3. OBEDIENCE AS A MERE OPTION?

**a. Explain the problem of Eli and how we might be guilty of repeating the same mistake today. 1 Samuel 2:22–25; Isaiah 3:12 (first part).**

“Eli was quick to see and rebuke the sins and errors of the people, sometimes, as in the case of Hannah, even administering unjust reproof; but the sins of his own sons seemed to him less offensive than the sins of others. In his undue affection he was ever ready to find excuses for their perverse course.”—The Signs of the Times, November 24, 1881.

“Eli had instructed his children in the law of God, and had given them a good example in his own life; but this was not his whole duty. God required him, both as a father and as a priest, to restrain them from following their own perverse will. This he had failed to do.”—Ibid., November 10, 1881.

“[Eli] did not enforce obedience.”—The Review and Herald, August 30, 1881.

**1 Samuel 2:22-25:** *22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. 24 Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress. 25 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.*

**Isaiah 3:12:** *As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.*

Tuesday, March 13

### 3. OBEDIENCE AS A MERE OPTION?

**b. What do we need to realize when we see spiritual weakness in our children? Proverbs 26:2; Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.**

“In every earnest Christian heart the question rises, ‘Why, oh, why, in a land of Bibles and Christian teaching, can the adversary of souls exert over our youth a power so mighty, so unrestrained?’ The reason is apparent. Parents are neglecting their solemn responsibility. They are not earnest, persevering, and faithful in the work of training their children for God, restraining their evil desires and enforcing obedience to parental authority, even in infancy.” — The Signs of the Times, November 3, 1881.

“The mother should not allow her child to gain an advantage over her in a single instance; and, in order to maintain this authority, it is not necessary to resort to harsh measures; a firm, steady hand and a kindness which convinces the child of your love will accomplish the purpose. . . .

“Never should they [the children] be allowed to show their parents disrespect. Self-will should never be permitted to go unrebuked. The future well-being of the child requires kindly, loving, but firm discipline.” — Child Guidance, p. 83.

**Proverbs 26:2:** *As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.*

**Deuteronomy 6:6-7:** *6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

Wednesday, March 14

#### 4. WORTHY OF A HIGH CALLING

**a. In contrast to Eli's sons, what can every child learn from the experience of little Samuel at the temple? Proverbs 20:11; Psalm 71:17.**

“If children were taught to regard the humble round of everyday duties as the course marked out for them by the Lord, as a school in which they were to be trained to render faithful and efficient service, how much more pleasant and honorable would their work appear. To perform every duty as unto the Lord, throws a charm around the humblest employment and links the workers on earth with the holy beings who do God's will in heaven.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 574.

**Proverbs 20:11:** *Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.*

**Proverbs 71:17:** *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.*

Wednesday, March 14

#### 4. WORTHY OF A HIGH CALLING

**b. Why can we be inspired by the way Samuel was a tremendous witness to the aged Eli, and how only was this possible? 2 Corinthians 2:14–17.**

“While Eli’s heart was filled with anxiety and remorse by the evil course of his sons, he found relief and comfort in the integrity and devotion of the youthful Samuel. His ready helpfulness and unvarying fidelity lightened the burdens of the careworn priest. Eli loved Samuel; for he saw that the grace and love of God rested upon him. . . .

“As Samuel grew older, the anxiety of his parents in his behalf became more intense. Many were the petitions offered that he might not be contaminated by the wickedness reported concerning the sons of Eli.” —The Signs of the Times, December 15, 1881.

**2 Corinthians 2:14-17:** *14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. 15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: 16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? 17 For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*

Wednesday, March 14

## 4. WORTHY OF A HIGH CALLING

### c. Relate the amazing story of God's call to Samuel. 1 Samuel 3:1–10.

“When but twelve years old, the son of Hannah received his special commission from the Most High. . . . Three times Samuel was called, and thrice he responded in like manner; and then Eli was convinced that the mysterious call was the voice of God. What feelings must have stirred the heart of the high priest at that hour! God had passed by his chosen servant, the man of hoary hairs, to commune with a child.”—Ibid.

**1 Samuel 3:1-10:** *1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision. 2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; 3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; 4 That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I. 5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. 6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again. 7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. 8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child. 9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10 And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.*

Thursday, March 15

#### 4. A MESSAGE TO MAKE EARS TINGLE

**a. What message did God give to Samuel and how did the boy feel about delivering it? 1 Samuel 3:12–15.**

“Samuel had not been ignorant of the wicked course pursued by the sons of Eli, but he was filled with fear and amazement that the Lord should commit to him so terrible a message. He arose in the morning and went about his duties as usual, but with a heavy burden on his young heart. How earnestly did he long for the sympathy and counsel of his parents in that trying hour! The Lord had not commanded him to reveal the fearful denunciation to the priest or to his sons; hence he remained silent, avoiding as far as possible the presence of Eli. He trembled, lest some question would compel him to declare the divine judgments against one whom he so loved and revered.” — The Signs of the Times, December 15, 1881.

**1 Samuel 3:12-15:** *12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. 13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. 14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever. 15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision.*

Thursday, March 15

#### 4. A MESSAGE TO MAKE EARS TINGLE

**b. Respectful and obedient as ever, what did Samuel soon have to do? What should we consider as we reflect on the message given? 1 Samuel 3:18.**

“In every age, God’s judgments have been visited upon the earth because men transgressed His law. What, then, have we to expect as we behold the wickedness which prevails at the present day? . . . Many of the acknowledged leaders in the church and in the nation, break, and teach others to break that law, as sacred to God as His own throne and name. It is time for the Lord Himself to assert His authority in the earth. . . . He removes His protecting, providential care, and visits His judgments upon the children of men.” —Ibid.

**1 Samuel 3:18:** *And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.*

Friday, March 16

## **5. PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. Although left alone at the temple without his parents, why was Samuel safe?**
- 2. Why was Eli able to appreciate Samuel so much?**
- 3. How can parents be like Eli today?**
- 4. Name some of the keys to Samuel's purity in the corrupt temple court.**
- 5. What shows the accountability that God expects in all ages?**



Sunday, March 18

## 1. IMPENDING WOE UPON THE NATION

a. For what gift did faithful Samuel become renowned? 1 Samuel 3:19, 21.

**1 Samuel 3:19:** *And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.*

**1 Samuel 3:21:**

*And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD.*

Sunday, March 18

## 1. IMPENDING WOE UPON THE NATION

**b. Meanwhile, although Eli had bowed in humble submission to the rebuke against his household, how did God view the situation? Ecclesiastes 8:11.**

“Eli did not manifest the fruits of true repentance. He confessed his guilt, but failed to renounce the sin. Year after year the Lord delayed His threatened judgments. Much might have been done in those years to redeem the failures of the past, but the aged priest took no effective measures to correct the evils that were polluting the sanctuary of the Lord. . . . The warnings were disregarded by the people, as they had been by the priests. The people of surrounding nations also, who were not ignorant of the iniquities openly practiced in Israel, became still bolder in their idolatry and crime. They felt no sense of guilt for their sins, as they would have felt had the Israelites preserved their integrity. But a day of retribution was approaching. God’s authority had been set aside, and His worship neglected and despised, and it became necessary for Him to interpose, that the honor of His name might be maintained.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 582, 583.

**Ecclesiastes 8:11:** *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*

Monday, March 19

## 2. SUMMONING A SYMBOL

**a. What foolish decision did Israel make when in a weak spiritual state, and who was responsible for this decision? 1 Samuel 4:2, 4.**

“This expedition [of going out against the Philistines to battle] was undertaken by the Israelites without counsel from God, without the concurrence of high priest or prophet. [1 Samuel 4:2 quoted.] As the shattered and disheartened force returned to their encampment, ‘the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us today before the Philistines?’ (1 Samuel 4:3). The nation was ripe for the judgment of God, yet they did not see that their own sins had been the cause of this terrible disaster.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 583.

“Instead of confessing and forsaking the sins that had brought defeat upon them, [the Israelites] now set about devising some other means by which to obtain the victory. Then they thought of the ark of God. What wonders had been wrought when the priests bore it before the people into Jordan! How its waters parted, leaving a safe path for that vast company! They remembered also how it was borne about the city of Jericho seven days in solemn silence, and then as the trumpets pealed, and the people gave a great shout, the massive walls fell flat upon the earth.

“The recollection of these glorious triumphs inspired all Israel with fresh hope and courage.” —The Signs of the Times, December 22, 1881.

**1 Samuel 4:2:** *And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men.*

**1 Samuel 4:4:** *So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.*

Monday, March 19

## 2. SUMMONING A SYMBOL

**b. What shows the misunderstanding the people had about the ark, and how might we fall into the same trap today? 1 Samuel 4:5.**

“[Israel] did not consider that it was the law of God which alone gave to the ark its sacredness, and that its presence would bring them prosperity only as they obeyed that law. . . .

“Yet we see a similar blindness and inattention on the part of many at the present day. . . . God has given to modern Israel warnings, counsel, and reproof, to bring them to repentance and reformation of life. But too often these produce but a momentary impression. The persons warned soon return to their own ways. . . . It is one thing to acknowledge the claims of God’s law, and quite another thing to render faithful and willing obedience to all its requirements.” —Ibid.

**1 Samuel 4:5:** *And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.*

Tuesday, March 20

### 3. MISGUIDED CONFIDENCE

**a. With what regard did the Philistines hold the ark? What was the outcome of the battle? 1 Samuel 4:6, 10. Why did the ark not help Israel?**

“[Israel] overlooked the distinction between the divine presence vouchsafed to an obedient and believing people, and the ark, which was but a symbol of that presence. Hence they confidently looked to the ark for those blessings which God alone could bestow. They saw not the wide contrast between the condition of Israel when the Lord wrought so mightily in their behalf, and their present state. “They were then walking in obedience to God. The ark was borne by holy men in accordance with His express command, and the Captain of the Lord’s host went before the repository of His law. Then His arm brought deliverance for them. But they were now following their own plans, in opposition to the divine counsel and authority. The ark was borne by sons of Belial who were doomed to destruction. Yet the people were so infatuated by Satan as to imagine they could induce God to fight for them, when the law under the mercy-seat condemned them to defeat, disaster, and death!” — The Signs of the Times, December 22, 1881.

“God permitted His ark to be taken by their enemies to show Israel how vain it was to trust in the ark, the symbol of His presence, while they were profaning the commandments contained in the ark. God would humble them by removing from them that sacred ark, their boasted strength and confidence.” — Spiritual Gifts, vol. 4a, p. 106.

**1 Samuel 4:6:** *And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they understood that the ark of the LORD was come into the camp.*

**1 Samuel 4:10:** *And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.*

Tuesday, March 20

### 3. MISGUIDED CONFIDENCE

#### b. What tragedies highlighted the woe of this defeat? 1 Samuel 4:11, 15–22.

“The Lord sorely chastised His people Israel, revealing their hypocrisy and rebuking their presumption, and thus left upon the pages of history the testimony for all future ages, that the iniquities of His professed people will not go unpunished. The greater the knowledge of God’s will, the greater the sin of those who disregard it. God is not dependent upon men to cause His name to be feared and honored in the earth. He accepts the labors of those who walk in faithfulness and humility before Him, but He will reject all who profess to serve Him, and yet follow in the course of the unrighteous.” —The Signs of the Times, December 22, 1881.

**1 Samuel 4:11:** *And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.*

**1 Samuel 4:15-22:** *15 Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. 16 And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to day out of the army. And he said, What\* is there done, my son? 17 And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken. 18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years. 19 And his daughter in law, Phinehas’ wife, was with child, near to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father in law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her. 20 And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard it. 21 And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband. 22 And she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken.*

Wednesday, March 21

#### 4. ACCOUNTABILITY BEFORE GOD

**a. In the judgment that befell the house of Eli, what solemn warning should we heed from the way history repeats itself? Matthew 7:19, 23; Isaiah 58:1.**

“Eli was gentle, loving, and kind, and had a true interest in the service of God and the prosperity of His cause. He was a man who had power in prayer. He never rose up in rebellion against the words of God. But he was wanting; he did not have firmness of character to reprove sin and execute justice against the sinner so that God could depend upon him to keep Israel pure. He did not add to his faith the courage and power to say No at the right time and in the right place. Sin is sin; righteousness is righteousness. The trumpet note of warning must be sounded. We are living in a fearfully wicked age. The worship of God will become corrupted unless there are wide-awake men at every post of duty. It is no time now for any to be absorbed in selfish ease. Not one of the words which God has spoken must be allowed to fall to the ground.

“While some in Battle Creek have professedly believed the Testimonies, they have been trampling them under their feet. But few have read them with interest; but few have heeded them. The indulgence of self, pride, fashion, and display are mingled with the worship of God. He wants brave men for action, who will not regard the setting up of idols and the coming in of abominations without lifting up the voice like a trumpet, showing the people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins.” — Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 517.

“Warnings and reproofs are not given to the erring among Seventh-day Adventists because their lives are more blameworthy than are the lives of professed Christians of the nominal churches, nor because their example or their acts are worse than those of the Adventists who will not yield obedience to the claims of God’s law, but because they have great light, and have by their profession taken their position as God’s special, chosen people, having the law of God written in their hearts.” — Ibid., vol. 2, p. 452.

*Verses on next page...*

**Matthew 7:19:** *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

**Matthew 7:23:** *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

**Isaiah 58:1:** *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.*

Wednesday, March 21

#### 4. ACCOUNTABILITY BEFORE GOD

**b. As the Philistines were cursed by stealing the symbol of a God they did not worship, how long was it before they returned the ark? How long was it before Israel would value again the sacred symbol? 1 Samuel 6:1; 7:1, 2.**

**1 Samuel 6:1:** *And the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months.*

**1 Samuel 7:1-2:** *1 And the men of Kirjathjearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD. 2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjathjearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.*

Thursday, March 22

## 5. A MIRACLE OF MERCY

**a. What earnest appeal did Samuel bring to the people of Israel and with what beautiful results? 1 Samuel 7:3, 6.**

“As soon as Samuel began to judge Israel, even in his youth, he called an assembly of the people for fasting and prayer, and deep humiliation before God. He bore his solemn testimony from the mouth of God. The people then began to learn where their strength was.” — Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 517.

**1 Samuel 7:3:** *And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.*

**1 Samuel 7:6:** *And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.*

Thursday, March 22

## 5. A MIRACLE OF MERCY

**b. What should we learn from how God was gracious to humbled Israel? Why should we search our hearts as they did? 1 Samuel 7:7, 10, 12.**

“The condition of God’s people at the present day is similar to that of idolatrous Israel. Many who bear the name of Christians are serving other gods besides the Lord. Our Creator demands our supreme devotion, our first allegiance. Anything which tends to abate our love for God, or to interfere with the service due Him, becomes thereby an idol. With some their lands, their houses, their merchandise, are the idols. Business enterprises are prosecuted with zeal and energy, while the service of God is made a secondary consideration. Family worship is neglected, secret prayer forgotten. Many claim to deal justly with their fellowmen, and seem to feel that in so doing they discharge their whole duty. But it is not enough to keep the last six commandments of the decalogue. We are to love the Lord our God with all the heart. Nothing short of obedience to every precept—nothing less than supreme love to God as well as equal love to our fellowmen—can satisfy the claims of the divine law.”—The Signs of the Times, January 26, 1882.

**1 Samuel 7:7:** *And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.*

**1 Samuel 7:10:** *And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.*

**1 Samuel 7:12:** *Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.*

Friday, March 23

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. Why is it not enough to submit to reproof?**
- 2. Why wasn't the presence of the ark helpful on the battlefield?**
- 3. What was the significance of the word "Ichabod" in Israel's history?**
- 4. Eli was a man of prayer, but what was lacking in his spirituality?**
- 5. How are we—like Israel—in need of a "Mizpeh" experience today?**

## Lesson 13 - Sabbath March 31, 2018

# The Last Judge of Israel

**“And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22).**

“Samuel . . . wielded a more powerful influence than [Saul], because his record was one of faithfulness, obedience, and devotion.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 663.

**Suggested Reading:**     *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 592, 615

Sunday, March 25

## 1. SECRETS FOR VICTORY

**a. What insights can we learn from Israel’s experience during the time that Samuel judged the nation? 1 Samuel 7:12, 17.**

“There is need today of such a revival of true heart-religion as was experienced by ancient Israel. We need, like them, to bring forth fruit meet for repentance—to put away our sins, cleansing the defiled temple of the heart that Jesus may reign within. . . .

“Repentance is the first step which must be taken by all who would return to God. No one can do this work for us. We must individually humble our souls before God, and put away our idols. When we have done all that we can do, the Lord will manifest to us his salvation.

“And when the light of Heaven dispels our darkness, let us, like Samuel, evince our gratitude by making a memorial to God.”—The Signs of the Times, January 26, 1882.

**1 Samuel 7:12:** *Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.*

**1 Samuel 7:17:** *And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the LORD.*

Sunday, March 25

## 1. SECRETS FOR VICTORY

**b. Why must there be earnest appeals to God's professed people until the end of time? Isaiah 2:17–22.**

**Isaiah 2:17-22:** *17 And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. 18 And the idols he shall utterly abolish. 19 And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. 20 In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; 21 To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. 22 Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?*

Monday, March 26

## 2. AN ESSENTIAL STEP

**a. What caused the downfall of God’s people? Hosea 4:6. What did Samuel do to bring about enduring spiritual growth among the people?**

“Provision was made for the instruction of the young, by the establishment of the schools of the prophets. If a youth desired to search deeper into the truths of the word of God and to seek wisdom from above, that he might become a teacher in Israel, these schools were open to him. The schools of the prophets were founded by Samuel to serve as a barrier against the widespread corruption, to provide for the moral and spiritual welfare of the youth, and to promote the future prosperity of the nation by furnishing it with men qualified to act in the fear of God as leaders and counselors. In the accomplishment of this object Samuel gathered companies of young men who were pious, intelligent, and studious. These were called the sons of the prophets. As they communed with God and studied His word and His works, wisdom from above was added to their natural endowments. The instructors were men not only well versed in divine truth, but those who had themselves enjoyed communion with God and had received the special endowment of His Spirit. They enjoyed the respect and confidence of the people, both for learning and piety.

“In Samuel’s day there were two of these schools—one at Ramah, the home of the prophet, and the other at Kirjath-jearim, where the ark then was. Others were established in later times.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 593.

**Hosea 4:6:** *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

Monday, March 26

## 2. AN ESSENTIAL STEP

### b. What is to be the keynote of such schools? Isaiah 34:16; Psalm 12:6.

“We are willing that the whole world should know, not only that our youth are educated in the sciences, but that they have continually kept before them the importance of obtaining a knowledge of the laws of God, and of rendering obedience to them.”—College Record, January 1, 1878.

“Are there not some lessons which the educators of our day might learn with profit from the ancient schools of the Hebrews? He who created man has provided for his development in body and mind and soul. Hence, real success in education depends upon the fidelity with which men carry out the Creator’s plan.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 595.

**Isaiah 34:16:** *The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.*

**Psalm 12:6:** *The words of the LORD are pure words:as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.*

Tuesday, March 27

### 3. SAMUEL DISAPPOINTED

**a. What disappointment did Samuel face in his old age? 1 Samuel 8:1–3. To some extent, how was he treated a bit unfairly?**

“Divinely invested with the threefold office of judge, prophet, and priest, [Samuel] had labored with untiring and disinterested zeal for the welfare of his people, and the nation had prospered under his wise control. Order had been restored, and godliness promoted, and the spirit of discontent was checked for the time. But with advancing years the prophet was forced to share with others the cares of government, and he appointed his two sons to act as his assistants. While Samuel continued the duties of his office at Ramah, the young men were stationed at Beersheba, to administer justice among the people near the southern border of the land.

“It was with the full assent of the nation that Samuel had appointed his sons to office.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 604.

“The people saw that [Samuel’s] sons did not follow his footsteps. Although they were not vile, like the children of Eli, yet they were dishonest and double-minded. While they aided their father in his laborious work, their love of reward led them to favor the cause of the unrighteous.” —The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 1, p. 353.

“The cases of abuse among the people had not been referred to Samuel. Had the evil course of his sons been known to him, he would have removed them without delay; but this was not what the petitioners desired. Samuel saw that their real motive was discontent and pride.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 604.

**1 Samuel 8:1-3:** *1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. 2 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beersheba. 3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.*

Tuesday, March 27

### 3. SAMUEL DISAPPOINTED

**b. Instead of requesting for the wrongs to be corrected, what did the people demand from Samuel? What did he do in response? 1 Samuel 8:4–6.**

“The aged prophet looked upon the request as a censure upon himself, and a direct effort to set him aside. He did not, however, reveal his feelings; he uttered no reproach, but carried the matter to the Lord in prayer and sought counsel from Him alone.” — Ibid., pp. 604, 605.

**1 Samuel 8:4-6:** *4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, 5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. 6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.*

Wednesday, March 28

#### 4. WHO IS TO BE OUR KING

**a. How did the Lord bid Samuel respond to the people's demand for a king? Why? 1 Samuel 8:7, 18.**

“Those who despise and reject the faithful servant of God show contempt, not merely for the man, but for the Master who sent him. It is God's words, His reproofs and counsel, that are set at nought; it is His authority that is rejected.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 605.

**1 Samuel 8:7:** *And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.*

**1 Samuel 8:18:** *And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.*

Wednesday, March 28

#### 4. WHO IS TO BE OUR KING

**b. What timeless principle does God want us to glean from this experience, as explained through later prophets? Hosea 13:11; Ezekiel 14:3, 8.**

“The Lord had, through His prophets, foretold that Israel would be governed by a king; but it does not follow that this form of government was best for them or according to His will. . . . When men choose to have their own way, without seeking counsel from God, or in opposition to His revealed will, He often grants their desires, in order that, through the bitter experience that follows, they may be led to realize their folly and to repent of their sin. Human pride and wisdom will prove a dangerous guide. That which the heart desires contrary to the will of God will in the end be found a curse rather than a blessing.” —Ibid., pp. 605, 606.

**Hosea 13:11:** *I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.*

**Ezekiel 14:3:** *Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?*

**Ezekiel 14:8:** *And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.*

Wednesday, March 28

#### 4. WHO IS TO BE OUR KING

**c. After Saul, the first king, was instated, how did God mercifully seek to make the best of the situation? 1 Samuel 10:1, 6, 9; 15:17.**

**1 Samuel 10:1:** *Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?*

**1 Samuel 10:6:** *And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.*

**1 Samuel 10:9:** *And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day.*

**1 Samuel 15:17:** *And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?*

Wednesday, March 28

#### 4. WHO IS TO BE OUR KING

**d. What was God finally constrained to do to the first king? Why? 1 Samuel 13:14; 15:22, 23; Acts 13:20, 22. How does He govern His people today? Ephesians 4:11, 16.**

“God has not set any kingly power in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to control the whole body or to control any branch of the work. He has not provided that the burden of leadership shall rest upon a few men. Responsibilities are distributed among a large number of competent men.” — Testimonies, vol. 8, p. 236.

**1 Samuel 13:14:** *But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.*

**1 Samuel 15:22-23:** *22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

**Acts 13:20:** *And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.*

**Acts 13:22:** *And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.*

**Ephesians 4:11:** *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

**Ephesians 4:16:** *From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

Thursday, March 29

## 5. A GODLY LEGACY

**a. Name one of the saddest days in the history of Israel and explain why it was so heartrending. 1 Samuel 25:1; Psalm 116:15.**

“The death of Samuel was regarded as an irreparable loss by the nation of Israel. A great and good prophet and an eminent judge had fallen in death, and the grief of the people was deep and heartfelt. . . .

“As the people contrasted the course of Saul with that of Samuel, they saw what a mistake they had made in desiring a king that they might not be different from the nations around them. Many looked with alarm at the condition of society, fast becoming leavened with irreligion and godlessness. . . .

“The nation had lost the founder and president of its sacred schools, but that was not all. It had lost him to whom the people had been accustomed to go with their great troubles—lost one who had constantly interceded with God in behalf of the best interests of its people. The intercession of Samuel had given a feeling of security; for ‘the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much’ (James 5:16). . . .

“It was when the nation was racked with internal strife, when the calm, God-fearing counsel of Samuel seemed to be most needed, that God gave His aged servant rest. Bitter were the reflections of the people as they looked upon his quiet resting place, and remembered their folly in rejecting him as their ruler; for he had had so close a connection with Heaven that he seemed to bind all Israel to the throne of Jehovah. It was Samuel who had taught them to love and obey God.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 663, 664.

**1 Samuel 25:1:** *And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran.*

**Psalm 116:15:** *Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.*

Friday, March 30

## **PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1. How did Samuel wisely begin his period as judge of Israel?**
- 2. What revealed his foresight to brighten the future of God's nation?**
- 3. Both Eli and Samuel had troublesome sons, but what was the difference?**
- 4. Why is it so important to fully surrender to God's will when we pray?**
- 5. Why should we have a deeper appreciation for leaders like Samuel?**