



VOL. XV

BALBOA, CANAL ZONE, DECEMBER 1, 1938

No. 23

The Week of Special Prayer

Again we have come to another annual Week of Prayer—an occasion intended of God, we believe, to bring His people around the whole, wide circle of the earth, many rich, spiritual blessings. The weeks and months since our last season have sped rapidly by, and we now find ourselves one year nearer His coming kingdom.

These have been eventful days. Much has transpired to encourage us in the advent hope. The perils of the last days are upon us. Strife between capital and labor has become more intense; crime, particularly on the part of youth, has increased. Industrial disorders have become more acute, despite the efforts of national leaders to effect a cure.

Lifting our eyes to earth's horizons we see other multiplied troubles. We see war and bloodshed, with wanton destruction of life and property. We see the citizenry of many nations feverishly working and training in preparation for war, which many feel threatens to destroy civilization itself. We see ecclesiastical powers, meddling in the legislation of nations, making most difficult the pathway of those who "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

But the thickening troubles from without must be no cause for alarm or distrust. Indeed, they should be reason for increased trust and confidence in God and in the early triumph of this message. We are told: "It is no time now for mourning and despair, no time to yield to doubt and unbelief. Christ is not now a Saviour in Joseph's new tomb, closed with a great stone, and sealed with the Roman seal; we have a risen Saviour. He is the King, the Lord of hosts; He sitteth between the cherubim; and amid the strife and tumult of nations, He guards His people still.

BY THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE
COMMITTEE

... When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of God's wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands."—"Testimonies," Vol. V., p. 754.

Let us make this Week of Prayer a special occasion of intercession for the cause of God in these lands where strife and persecution reign, that the onward progress of His cause may not be hindered and that the faith of our dear people fail not when tried in the furnace of affliction.

But the source of our real danger is not from without, but rather from within—the danger that because of the cares of this world, or lack of faith of those long in the message, their love should grow cold. We urge, therefore, that this Week of Prayer be made a time of spiritual revival on the part of all, and particularly those who may be backslidden, or who are growing indifferent or cold toward their spiritual obligations.

If this occasion is to be a success, needful preparation must be made well in advance. If at all possible, meetings should be held daily. Let our people be urged to put forth extra effort at this time to come together for the readings, and for devotion as a church group. Those responsible for the arrangement of the meetings should be careful to select readers who can read in a thoughtful, devotional spirit the messages herein prepared. Let the readings be followed by earnest seasons of prayer or testimony.

But no series of meetings of the church can be truly successful unless

the spiritual interest of the children is cared for. Wherever possible, arrangements should be made for separate meetings for them. Persons having some ability in teaching the children should be asked to lead out, in order that definite soul-winning efforts may be made in behalf of the lambs of the flock. Many of our faithful members date their conversion or rededication of life to decisions made at such meetings.

The last Sabbath of the Week of Prayer is the occasion for receiving the Annual Offering. As we look out upon the fields, we can say, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few." From every division of our mission fields come reports of unrivaled opportunity for advance. An indigenous worker in one division, having held a successful effort, pleads that help be sent to answer the twenty-five calls made for evangelistic meetings in his area. From another division on appeal is made to help respond to the thirty calls for teachers. A similar need is felt by all our division leaders.

Let mention be made on the first Sabbath, and at other times during the week, of the plan to receive an offering the following Sabbath. Urge that all have a part in making a real sacrifice in behalf of our great, unfinished task. God will reward those who thus take part in this offering, and souls will be saved from the pits of sin.

As these readings go forth, it is with a sincere prayer that this Week of Prayer may be the occasion of a great, spiritual revival throughout our ranks. Let there be a putting away of sin, a turning of hearts to God in preparation for His soon-coming, remembering the promise, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

DECEMBER 3-10 IS THE WEEK OF SPECIAL PRAYER

(READING FOR SABBATH, DECEMBER 3)

OMENS OF THE COMING DAY

By L. H. CHRISTIAN

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand." "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." Romans 13:12; I Thessalonians 5:4.

Omens are "prophetic signs," "portents" of things to come. The coming day is the day of God,—the climax of the ages, the consummation of the plan of salvation. This day ushers in the return of Jesus, the end of human woe, the triumph of right, the kingdom of God. Mankind today lives in an atmosphere of strained expectancy. On every hand people say, "Something is coming, some mighty event is to take place;" but they know not what it is. Christ speaks of these omens as "the beginning of sorrows," the birth pangs of a new creation. Though the signs of His coming are everywhere, like the stars on a clear night, and though all see them, no one but the elect discern their true meaning. Indeed, only those who long for that day, and only the few who love the day understand the omens. "None of the wicked shall understand." Dan. 12:10.

Even in the remnant church of today, the advent hope of some members has grown dim. There is not generally that deep yearning for the coming of Jesus as was seen during the first angel's message in the movement of 1844. The weakening of the advent longing is among our greatest perils at this time. A revival of a genuine faith in Christ's glorious appearing will do more than anything else to bring us that new power, zeal, and sacrifice, now so sadly needed. Concerning the Lord's return, we should pray more, think more, plan more, and hope more. It should shape our entire life.

The Prophetic Waymarks

The omens of the Lord's coming are only fully and correctly understood in the light of Bible prophecy. Of all evidence given, nothing is more certain than the divine predictions. What God says of things that are future is far more dependable than what man says of events that are past. Many belittle prophetic time, yet history and experience show that it is as certain as the times of astronomy.

The prophetic times of the Bible are

accomplished facts, and there can be no doubt or questions about them. The long-time predictions of Daniel and Revelation have been long since fulfilled. Six times in these books we find the period of 1260 years. During that era, which began in 538 A. D., and ended in 1798, the true church was under the iron heel of cruel persecution. Five times in the book of Daniel we find the term, "the time of the end," and we are distinctly told that this epoch began in 1798, which is now 140 years ago. The longest time prophecy of Scripture, the 2300 years of Daniel 8 and 9, extended from 457 B. C. to 1844, thus ending 94 years ago. This prophecy not only brings us to the final service of Christ as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, the hour of God's judgment, but to the "end of the indignation." Dan. 8:19.

Not only are these long-time prophecies all ended, but the predictions concerning earthly kingdoms and church powers have nearly all met their fulfillment. Even the prophecy in Revelation 13, concerning the United States, as recent events clearly indicate, is so near to complete fulfillment that the final events predicted may come at almost any time. We should now give special thought to the significant statements concerning spiritual Babylon and other mighty religious and racial forces, for they are being fulfilled in many parts of the earth. As the children of God view the revolt of atheism today, they can readily see that the fulfillment of Revelation 17:14 and chapter 18 are right upon us.

Signs Proclaiming End Near

The Bible prophets also, and the Saviour Himself, set forth in exact outline a long list of unmistakable signs of the second advent. First of all came a mighty earthquake, the Lisbon disaster of 1755. In that terrible catastrophe, the most deadly of its kind up to that date, over 30,000 people in one place perished. Such a thing had never happened before, nor since. In 1780 and in 1833 mankind witnessed the darkening of the sun and moon and the falling of the stars. By these startling phenomena of nature many were led to think of the last days, and as never before to study

the prophetic Word. In later years, and especially after the World War, other omens have multiplied, such as tidal waves, tornadoes, dust storms, locusts, and ominous changes in nature itself, bringing famine and plagues. These are the very signs given by Jesus as heralds of His return.

Christ also spoke of "wars and rumors of wars." We have had the "wars," and today we witness the "rumors." The mighty rearmament of our time is an omen of tragic days ahead. Said one prominent statesman recently: "Today we find the world living by the moment, living as dangerously as the most reckless adventurer could desire." "We live in a time when tomorrow must look after itself." Another declared, "Unfortunately these are troublous times. One-fourth of the world's peoples are menaced by actual or threatened hostilities. Many great nations are engaging in a fierce armament race. Huge navies are being built, and enormous armies are being assembled." A wise, world leader has said, "We have come to a crisis in the historic evolution of Europe. The nations stand in the valley of decision. The future of civilization depends on whether they can display enough wisdom, courage, and energy in the months, perhaps weeks, immediately ahead." We should thank God for far-seeing men who seek the welfare of their people.

Deliverance Shall Come

These conditions of unrest and dread, and the Bible prophecies concerning them, need not be given in detail. In some places a radical, unbridled press stirs up the war spirit. God's children are not to join such agitation. But every believer in all lands should make a careful study of these truths for themselves. Many signs had better not be spoken of publicly. We are to be like Mary, the mother of Jesus, who "kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." Of our age the Lord says, "Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time." Amos 5:13. But while we are to be careful in our words, we are to have a clear vision, for "the wise shall understand." And in this time, every Adventist believer is to stand true to God, and never compromise with evil.

The Bible speaks of two series of omens that betoken the coming day. In Revelation 16:17-19 we read: "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there

were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath." Of these events the Spirit of prophecy says:

"It was midnight that God chose to deliver his people. As the wicked were mocking around them, suddenly the sun appeared, shining in his strength, and the moon stood still. The wicked looked upon the scene with amazement, while the saints beheld with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Signs and wonders followed in quick succession. Everything seemed turned out of its natural course. The streams ceased to flow. Dark, heavy clouds came up, and clashed against each other. . . . The sky opened and shut, and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind, and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot, and cast out stones upon the land. And as God spoke the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people, He spoke one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling over the earth."—*Early Writings*, page 285.

The aforesaid omens in nature come some months after the close of probation, and only a few hours before the Saviour is seen. Said Jesus, "And the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven." Matthew 24: 29, 30.

Omens Seen Among Men and Nations

However, another series of omens of the coming day need careful study. They are called "a rumor from the Lord," (Obadiah 1:1) and "the voice of the day of the Lord." Zeph. 1:14. As deep rumblings precede an earthquake, and as before a terrific storm there comes a brief period of silence, so these omens are danger signals, or symptoms, which reveal what is soon to be seen. To many minds these omens are even more convincing than the fulfilled prophecies, because they are the immediate precursors of the coming, foretold events. We can but briefly mention some of them.

First, the religious indifference and spiritual blindness of our time, when darkness covers the earth, and "gross

darkness the people," are truly a sign of the coming dawn. However, the root-cause of this condition goes deeper than many suppose. It is not merely that we are in an age of rush and hurry with little time for quiet thought and meditation. We are in an era when the mind of mankind turns to business and other material things with a bent for lust and forbidden pleasures. The very manner of living—the music, literature, education, amusement, industry, travel,—makes religion difficult in our day. The finer perceptions of the soul, moral discernment, and the old-time, keen sense of the sinfulness of sin, have grown dull. Life has become secular and almost profane. To many people nothing is holy any more, even the sanctity of the home has suffered.

In our machine age, the poetical gives way to the practical, facts smother philosophy, knowledge supplants wisdom, and the achievements of science have so dazzled the human mind that the heavenly vision is darkened. We speak of great changes during the last decades, but by far the greatest and saddest of these is the change in the soul of mankind. The whole trend of modern thinking is earthly and pagan. It is Sodom over again. Eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building, they heed not the divine warning. Luke 17:28-30.

Second, another omen of the coming day is the present, world-wide apostasy. In describing the sealing work of the last days, the prophet Ezekiel declares that public opinion would say, "The Lord hath forsaken the earth." Eze. 9:9. Today mankind is separating from God. In large sections where atheism rules supreme, there is active war against Christ. The church is hated, prayer is despised, public worship almost forbidden, Christian education banned, and all religion branded as poison. The largest youths' society of our time is godless. In other parts of the earth where the turning away from religion is not so blatant, the anti-religious forces are more subtle and deceptive. Here and there we find a strong propaganda against organized religion, though it is well known that religion, like all living things, must be organized, or perish.

This generation faces a spiritual crisis within Christianity, perhaps more general and more deeply rooted than any period since the beginning of the Christian era. These secret foes of Christ are within the church itself. The foundations of faith are being undermined.

This modern unbelief is a sign of the end. "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8. When we remember that civilization is a fruit of religion, and that the decay of morals always brings disaster, we can readily understand the results of this apostasy.

Third, the present reign of violence is also an omen of the day of the coming King. Before the flood, "the earth was filled with violence." Gen. 6:11. In our time, too, as when Israel was banished, "violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness." Eze. 7:11. Men have grown brutal and bloody. There is cruelty beyond anything known in former decades. Property is destroyed, and human life is no longer sacred. Says the Spirit of prophecy, "Confederacies will increase in number and power as we draw nearer to the end of time. These confederacies will create opposing influences to the truth. . . . Satanic agencies in human form will take part in this last great conflict to oppose the building up of the kingdom of God. And heavenly angels in human guise will be on the field of action."—*Mrs. E. G. White, in "Review and Herald," August 5, 1909.*

Fourth, the Saviour stated that just before His return great persecution and suffering would come upon the church. "And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Mark 13:13. In this connection we would refer to the present flight of freedom. We witness today an entirely different conception of human rights, of the relationship of nations to each other, and of the sphere of government.

Fifth, another sad omen and sign of the end is the spirit of cold criticism among the professed people of God. "The love of many shall wax cold." Matt. 24:12. The remnant church itself, indeed, has come to the great test of its history. The faith of all will be severely tried. In the Spirit of prophecy we read, "New parties of professed believers who will act out their own delusive theories, will be formed. The apostasy will increase. 'Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.' Men and women have confederated to oppose the Lord God of heaven, and the church is only half awake to the situation. There needs to be much more of prayer, much more of earnest effort, among professed believers. . . . We cannot afford to be off our guard for one moment. The true, stanch believers will

pray more and more, and will talk less of matters of little consequence. More and more decided testimonies will come from their lips to encourage the weak and the needy."—*Ibid.*

Sixth, we are, however, very happy to mention a cheerful omen of the coming day. The surest sign of the first advent was the Advent Message itself, the preaching of John the Baptist. In like manner the present, rapid advance of the Advent Movement stands as a glorious sign that the Lord is at hand. We shall not give statistics, for we are not thinking merely of the many languages in which this message is preached, or of the large number of baptisms, or of the material growth and prosperity of the advent cause. We think of the deeper, spiritual life, the new consecration and zeal seen with our true believers in many lands. We have come into the day of great things, but the greatest of all in God's work is that seen in this deeper spiritual vision and power being experienced among the loyal ones. For this power in the life, let us all at this time most earnestly pray.

Our Relationship with Heaven

What are the meaning and appeal of all these omens of the coming day? They are a mighty challenge to deeper consecration and larger mission work. Says one strong, mission leader not of our faith: "The greatest and most urgent task which Christendom has to face is the answer to the challenge of a secularized and purely humanistic civilization. Reports from all parts of the world, from China, India, and the Near East, as well as from the great cities of Europe and America, agree on this point, that old and venerable forms of social life are beginning to lose their hold on the masses of the population, being undermined by modern science and technical art. . . . The future is calling us to great things; the world is waiting; sincere thinkers do not deny that a world without religion is a dying world. But where is this great force to be found?" The Scriptures give the answer: "This gospel of the [soon-coming] kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14.

This is the first day of our Week of Prayer, and it is well to think of our relation to the hope of the Advent Message. Have we done all we could for the present truth during the past year? Do we, in our very hearts, believe that

Jesus is coming in our life-time? Do we, who have grown up as Seventh-day Adventists, believe in the second advent more firmly than when we were children, or youth? Do we rejoice in the belief that in a short time we shall see Jesus, and move from this earth to heaven?

We are not to dread the future. Those who believe in the immediate coming of Christ do not worry as does the world. That the Lord is coming does not mean that the true believer should sell his property unwisely, or fail to educate his children, or stop building institutions, or neglect kindness to the needy, or disregard other phases of the advent cause. But it does mean separation from sin and a new diligence in

spiritual things, as well as manifesting self-sacrificing liberality in sustaining the cause of God and carrying on His work.

Every family that truly looks for the coming of Christ will spend more time in morning and evening worship than in listening to foolishness over the radio. Every child of God who really believes the advent truth will live in the solemn consciousness that this is the judgment hour. Shall we not pray this week for a new joy in the blessed hope, for a lasting, longing love for Jesus, knowing that only "unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation?" Heb. 9:28.

(READING FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4)

THE CALL OF THE MARRIAGE SUPPER

By N. P. NEILSEN

"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." Rev. 19:9.

The apostle John already had been told to write in a book what he saw; but when the angel spoke to him about the marriage supper of the Lamb, the subject was of such importance that the request to write it was renewed. Whatever else might be forgotten, this subject of the marriage supper must not be omitted from the records. And to stress it still more, the angel added, "These are the true sayings of God." While all the sayings of God are true, the blessedness of the call to the marriage supper of the Lamb is made to stand out in an emphasized way by the angel of God. The subject demands our attention and provokes our interest. Let us, therefore, study its importance and meditate upon its blessedness.

A wedding is an important event in the lives of those who are to be married, and of special interest to their friends. It should not be lightly regarded, especially so, if the persons to be married are of high rank in society and greatly esteemed by all. It would be considered a great honor to be invited. No trivial matter would be permitted to stand in the way of attending. Preparations for the occasion would be made. We would attend without fail.

The Greatest of All Weddings

The marriage spoken of in our text has no equal. No wedding ever performed on earth can be compared thereto. It is the marriage of the Lamb! The splendor and greatness of the kings and potentates of earth fade into insignificance in comparison with the grandeur and glory of the marriage of the Lamb. He will then ride forth as King of kings and Lord of lords. This will be one of the greatest events in the history of the universe. Yea, "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." The Lamb here referred to is the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

He loves us. He took upon Himself our nature, that we might become partakers of His divine nature. He was clothed with humanity, that we might be clothed with divinity. He became a curse for us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." He died that we might live. He will be crowned as King of kings and adored as Lord of lords by the angelic throng, but He is still our Friend. He will be acclaimed as the chiefest among all the heavenly hosts, but He is still our Elder Brother. He will be exalted to the highest heaven, but He has linked Himself to humanity with an unbreakable tie.

This is the One whose marriage we have been invited to attend. This is

the supper to which we have been called. No wonder that the angel pronounced a special blessing upon those who have been called to participate in this glorious event! But if it is blessed to be called, it must also be blessed to be permitted to extend the call to others. It is a privilege to be a mouthpiece for the Lamb and to invite others to come to His marriage feast. And this becomes our work when we have accepted His call. Yea, it becomes our joy to hasten on the news, extending the blessed invitation to all.

Urgent Call to the Marriage Supper

In order to bring this subject more clearly before us, the Saviour gave a parable to illustrate the urgency of the call to the marriage supper, and the difference manifested by many who receive the call. He said, "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready." Luke 14:16, 17.

We have heard the call. We have accepted it, and now as true servants we are sent forth to invite others to come to the marriage feast. We are to repeat the glad news. With joyful hearts we are to speed on with the invitation of our King, "Come, for all things are now ready." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come." Rev. 22:17. Such is our happy lot. We are messengers of peace, sent forth by the One we love. This work has been given, not to the ministers alone, but to every soul who has heard the call.

According to the parable, it was at "supper time" that the servants were sent forth with their special message of invitation. The day was almost gone. The time for the marriage feast had nearly come. The preparations for the feast had been made. The invitation was urgent: "Come, for all things are now ready." But those who were bidden, "with one consent began to make excuse."

To such a time as this we have come now. The "supper time" is now here. The day of probation is almost gone. The marriage of the Lamb will soon take place. The last preparations for the feast are being made now in the heavenly courts. Soon, very soon, it will be too late to enter in.

The Meaning of Unpreparedness

But God's people are not ready. The churches are asleep, unmindful of the

momentous event to take place so soon. The whole world is being stirred by a strange power from beneath. Fear is taking hold of the hearts of men, and perplexity is gripping the nations of earth. The leaders of governments and the statesmen of earth know not which way to turn. The nations are jealously watching each other, and are feverishly arming themselves for the coming fray. The last great battle, the battle of Armageddon, will soon be fought. Mrs. E. G. White has graphically described our time in the following solemn words:

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

"Men in their blindness boast of wonderful progress and enlightenment; but to the eye of Omniscience are revealed the inward guilt and depravity. The heavenly watchers see the earth filled with violence and crime. Wealth is obtained by every species of robbery, not robbery of men only, but of God. Men are using His means to gratify their selfishness. Everything they can grasp is made to minister to their greed. Avarice and sensuality prevail. Men cherish the attributes of the first great deceiver. They have accepted him as God, and have become imbued with his spirit.

"But the cloud of judicial wrath hangs over them, containing the elements that destroyed Sodom. In his visions of things to come, the prophet John beheld this scene. This demon-worship was revealed to him, and it seemed to him as if the whole world were standing on the brink of perdition. But as he looked with intense interest, he beheld the company of God's commandment-keeping people. They had upon their foreheads the seal of the living God, and he said: 'Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep

the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.'"—*"Testimonies," Vol. VI, pp. 14, 15.*

Yes, "supper time" is here, and we must go forth with the invitation: "Come, for all things are now ready." But according to the parable, those who were bidden, "They all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Luke 14: 18-20.

"None of the excuses were founded on a real necessity. The man who 'must needs go and see' his piece of ground, had already purchased it. His haste to go and see it was due to the fact that his interest was absorbed in his purchase. The oxen, too, had been bought. The proving of them was only to satisfy the interest of the buyer. The third excuse had no more semblance of reason. The fact that the intended guest had married a wife need not have prevented his presence at the feast. His wife also would have been made welcome. But he had his own plans for enjoyment, and these seemed to him more desirable than the feast he had promised to attend. He had learned to find pleasure in other society than that of the host. He did not ask to be excused, made not even a pretense of courtesy in his refusal. The 'I can not' was only a veil for the truth,—'I do not care to come.'

"All the excuses betray a preoccupied mind. To these intended guests other interests had become all-absorbing. The invitation they had pledged themselves to accept was put aside, and the generous friend was insulted by their indifference."—*"Christ's Object Lessons," page 222.*

Thus excused themselves those who had previously been bidden, and who had accepted the invitation. This represents a certain class in the church who have grown careless and indifferent. They have permitted the cares of this life to dampen their ardor for the eternal realities. Such are on dangerous ground, and, unless they change, will soon drift out of the truth, and be lost. They have permitted the world with its allurements to gain a hold upon their hearts and the cause of God must take second place in all their plans. How

terrible will be their anguish when the great day of God breaks upon them, and they find themselves shut out of the kingdom! They have known the truth; they are members of the church; but have failed to make the needed preparation. Too late they will realize their need! Too late are they for the feast—the door is shut—and they are without!

Other Guests Called

In the parable, the master of the house then commanded his servants to "go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city," and "into the highways and hedges" (Luke 14:21, 23) with the invitation for all to come to the marriage supper. "In the command to go into the highways and hedges, Christ sets forth the work of all whom He calls to minister in His name. The whole world is the field for Christ's ministers. The whole human family is comprised in their congregation. The Lord desires that His word of grace shall be brought home to every soul."—*Id.*, p. 229.

This work must be done now. The times demand that we "go out quickly" to all the world with the closing message of God. There is no time to lose. The hour is late already, and the night is fast approaching. The omens all around us clearly portray that we are nearing the end of all things. The sure word of God teaches this. The prophetic chains in the Scriptures reveal to us that we are living in the last days of this world's history. The signs foretold in Holy Writ indicate very clearly that time has almost run its course. We are nearing home. The marriage supper of the Lamb will soon take place.

We are commanded to "go quickly," announcing the call to the marriage feast. Conditions demand that we hasten. Hurry and haste are seen on every hand. Men rush to and fro. They have no time to wait. They attempt to annihilate both time and space in their feverish haste to accomplish their plans. For us time is short, with much to be done. Even the devil is in a hurry, "having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." We, too, must speed on with the call of our Master, for the hour is late. The "supper time" has come. The call must be given before the night comes on. Let us individually give earnest heed to the following words addressed us:

"When the storm of God's wrath breaks upon the world, it will be a terrible revelation for souls to find that

their house is being swept away because it is built upon the sand. Let the warning be given them before it is too late. We should now feel the responsibility of laboring with intense earnestness to impart to others the truths that God has given for this time. We cannot be too much in earnest.

"The heart of God is moved. Souls are very precious in His sight. It was for this world that Christ wept in agony; for this world He was crucified. God gave His only-begotten Son to save sinners, and He desires us to love others as He has loved us. He desires to see those who have a knowledge of the truth imparting this knowledge to their fellow-men.

"Now is the time for the last warning to be given. There is a special power in the presentation of the truth at the present time; but how long will it continue?—Only a little while. If there was ever a crisis, it is now.

"All are now deciding their eternal destiny. Men need to be aroused to realize the solemnity of the time, the nearness of the day when human probation shall be ended. Decided efforts should be made to bring the message for this time prominently before the people. The third angel is to go forth with great power. Let none ignore this work, or treat it as of little importance."—*"Testimonies," Vol., VI, p. 16.*

Beautiful Wedding Garments Provided

When the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness, the angels hurried Lot and his family out of the city. They told them in no uncertain tones: "Escape for thy life." "Haste thee, escape thither." Gen. 19:17, 22. As it was in the days of Lot, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man. We must hasten to escape. Again we quote a message sent us:

"So it is today. Men are rushing on in the chase for gain and selfish indulgence as if there were no God, no heaven, and no hereafter. In Noah's day the warning of the flood was sent to startle men in their wickedness and call them to repentance. So the message of Christ's soon coming is designed to arouse men from their absorption in worldly things. It is intended to awaken them to a sense of eternal realities, that they may give heed to the invitation to the Lord's table."—*"Christ's Object Lessons," p. 228.*

Yes, we have been called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Shall we be there? We must make the necessary

preparation. We must have on the wedding garment when the King comes in to examine the guests. How shall we stand in that searching moment? We know not how soon our names may come up in review before God. Are we ready to enter before the door is closed?

Our Saviour loves us. He wants us to be there. Yes, and we must be there! We must pass through the pearly gates into the city of God! We must sit down with all the righteous of all the ages at the marriage supper of the Lamb! Let us then cease to make excuses, and by the grace of God we will be there. Yes, we want to meet you, dear soul, at this marriage feast of our Lord and King. Will *you* be there? What will your answer be?

NO LOVE LIKE HIS LOVE TO ME

A sturdy farmer came into the little village one day, driving a span of fine young colts hitched to an old work wagon. He drove up in front of the post office, and was about to tie the team, when a large piece of newspaper was blown across the street and under those colts. They sprang ahead with great power, and the farmer caught and held to them, but they dragged him down the street with them. The colts stumbled and fell. In falling they crushed the body of the man. Friends rushing out to assist him found he was nearly dead. They asked why he had risked his life for that team and old wagon, and he answered with his last breath, "Go look in the wagon." They looked in the wagon, and saw his little boy sound asleep. He knew for what he was giving his life. Was it worth it? Friends, Jesus stepped in front of humanity's great runaway, and seized him who was striving to destroy the lives of many, yes, the lives of all mankind, and saved us; but it took His life, His sinless life, as a sacrifice. Are we worth it? We must be, or He would not have made the sacrifice. He says He loves us with an everlasting love, and from all that He has done to make it possible for our salvation it looks very much as if He does. Do we appreciate what He has done? Are we striving to glorify Him in every word and act?

It was a workman's hand that was nailed on the cross. The horny hand of toil is consecrated by the gospel of Jesus Christ. What it has made sacred we dare not despise.—*Dr. Sutherland.*

(READING FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 5)

HEALTH REFORM AS RELATED TO THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE

By H. M. WALTON, M. D.

Instruction pertaining to healthful living was in a striking manner brought to the attention of the remnant church early in its history—the church which is to sound the Third Angel's Message in all the world. Special blessing was conferred upon this church in the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, and through this providential means counsel was given regarding man's physical, mental, and spiritual needs. Balanced, fundamental principles of healthful living, as well as of true education and primitive godliness, were taught this people. We have, therefore, through the years, taken just pride in the fact that our message is a complete one, ministering to the full scope of man's need.

The question may arise as to why the health question is made prominent in the tenets of our faith. In other words, what is the relationship, if any, between physical well-being and spiritual experience?

Perhaps the strongest Biblical answer to such a query is found in the letters of the apostle Paul. To the Corinthians he wrote, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

A very fitting comment on this thought is found in these words from "Ministry of Healing," p. 271:

"The knowledge that man is to be a temple for God, a habitation for the revealing of His glory, should be the highest incentive to the care and development of our physical powers. Fearfully and wonderfully has the Creator wrought in the human frame, and He bids us make it our study, understand its needs, and act our part in preserving it from harm and defilement."

God created the human body as one of the crowning achievements of His handiwork. The intricate wonders of its functions and mechanisms, cause one to be deeply felt that here, indeed, is divine power manifested, and wisdom that is past finding out. The study of the human body fills the student with

profound admiration for the Creator.

When God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, the father of our race became a living soul; and we are told that the various systems of the body, the senses and the faculties, all began their work, "*and all were placed under law.*" From this we understand that the working of the human body is not a haphazard matter, but its harmonious, coordinated functioning is sustained and regulated by natural law.

We are told this: "The physical organism of man is under the supervision of God, but it is not like a clock, which is set in operation, and must go of itself. The heart beats, pulse succeeds pulse, breath succeeds breath, but the entire being is under the supervision of God."—"Medical Ministry," p. 9.

Truly it is in God that "we live and move and have our being." The constant operation of the power of God through physiological law, of which He is the Author, causes us to be momentarily in direct organic contact with the Giver of life. The recognition of the fact that our physical body is sustained and regulated by the power of God, and that observance of the laws that make for the well being of the body, is a duty and a means of showing allegiance to God. It is an important step in the proper understanding of the real relation of physical health to spiritual life, and of the far-reaching, three-fold effect of disregard for, and disobedience of, natural law.

Again we quote: "The same power that upholds nature is working also in man. The same great laws that guide alike the star and the atom control human life. The laws that govern the heart's action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds. Only in harmony with Him can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same,—a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator's will. To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place

one's self out of harmony with the universe, to introduce discord, anarchy, ruin."—*Id.* p. 10.

This strong statement should cause each of us to pause and ponder. The thought that we are to be a temple for God, and that transgression of the laws that make for health of the body is to place one's self out of harmony with the Creator, is a solemn one. Such an idea, indeed, gives point to the purpose of healthful living, but at the same time takes it beyond the scope of biological living, worthy though that be.

Tragic Results of Transgression

In the following quotation we catch a still wider vision of the import of natural law and of God's regard for it. Such pointed counsel and admonition should solemnize our hearts, and cause us to seek earnestly to bring every habit into accord with the light revealed, and to glorify God in our body and in our spirits, which are God's.

"Transgression of physical law is transgression of moral law; for God is as truly the author of physical laws as He is the author of the moral law. His law is written with His own finger upon every nerve, every muscle, every faculty, which has been entrusted to man. . . . All should have an intelligent knowledge of the human frame, that they may keep their bodies in the condition necessary to do the work of the Lord. The physical life is to be carefully preserved and developed, that through humanity the divine nature may be revealed in its fulness. The relation of the physical organism to the spiritual life is one of the most important branches of education. It should receive careful attention in the home and in the school."—"Christ's Object Lessons," pp. 347, 348.

The original transgression which ushered in the reign of sin, brought about tragic and profound changes in man's nature—physical, mental, and moral. Man's body became susceptible to the ravages of age and disease—actually a dying body. The mental processes became greatly limited in scope of perception and comprehension. Man's mind became perverted. In spiritual relationship to God, man became alienated and carnal in nature. Sin degraded the faculties of the soul, and man's heart turned imperceptibly toward evil.

God foresaw this terrible experience of sin through which mankind would go; and in infinite love for us, the Father and the Son made provision for

man's redemption and the restoration of the image of God in man. To be complete, that restoration must embrace the whole man and include the physical, mental, and moral natures. Note how clearly this thought is taught in the following paragraph:

"God desires us to reach the standard of perfection made possible for us by the gift of Christ. He calls upon us to make our choice on the right side, to connect with heavenly agencies, *to adopt principles that will restore in us the divine image*. In His written word and in the great book of nature He has revealed the principles of life. It is our work to obtain a knowledge of these principles, and by obedience to co-operate with Him in restoring health to the body as well as to the soul."—*Ministry of Healing*, pp. 114, 115.

Relationship of Physical, Mental, and Spiritual Powers

The close relationship existing between these three aspects of man's nature are, from a scientific point of view, quite well known. They are so vitally connected, interrelated and interacting that successful divorcement is not possible. In fact, the more deeply the subject is studied, the more inseparable these natures are found to be. This intimate relationship of the physical, mental, and spiritual, is prominently emphasized in the Spirit of prophecy, as is seen by the following counsel:

"Let none who profess godliness regard with indifference the health of the body, and flatter themselves that intemperance is no sin, and will not affect their spirituality. A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature."—*Review and Herald*, Jan. 25, 1881.

Again we read of the very vital role played by the body in the plan of character building:

"The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here means the surrender to evil of the whole being."—*Ministry of Healing*, p. 130.

In His dealings with ancient Israel, God gave evidence of His regard for the health and proper care of the body. Through Moses, He gave detailed instruction and hygienic regulations for the good of His people; and along with these statutes, special promises of blessing and health preservation were given.

"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, *and keep all His statutes*, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee." Ex. 15:26.

It will be noted that this is a conditional promise. Its fulfillment to Israel depended upon their obedience. The health of His people was of special concern to God, but He could not honor or countenance disobedience. Right physical habits always promote physical superiority.

God has given to this people—modern Israel—the health-reform message. It is intended to be a special safeguard to a people surrounded by indulgence and excesses of all kinds. We believe that this light, if followed, will be a safeguard against diseases and plagues that shall be widespread in the close of time. This protection was promised Israel, but no more today than in ancient time can God approve or honor disobedience. Violation brought sickness, leanness of soul, and death to many in the camp of Israel. Will not disregard or ignorance of light bring similar results today? Failure to comply with the rules of health removes the provision for, and the mantle of, protection, and ultimately effects both the body and soul. We read that "Nature's God will not interfere to preserve men from the consequences of violating nature's laws."—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 28.

Physical Health a Part of the Gospel Message

We have already noted that "the body is the only medium through which the mind and soul are developed for the upbuilding of character." If restoring and maintaining the physical health is one part of the gospel message, (and we are told that it bears the signature of Heaven,) then the gospel of redemption is not complete if that phase of the message is omitted. Let us note the relationship of the program of healthful living to the Third Angel's Message:

"December 10, 1871, I was again shown that *the health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord*. It is as closely connected with the Third Angel's Message as the hand is with the body. The law of ten commandments has been lightly regarded by

man; but the Lord would not come to punish the transgressor of that law without first sending them a message of warning. . . . Men and women cannot violate natural law by indulging depraved appetite and lustful passions, and not violate the law of God. Therefore He has permitted the light of health reform to shine upon us, that we may see our sin in violating the laws which He has established in our being. . . . To make plain natural law, and urge the obedience of it, is the work that accompanies the Third Angel's Message, to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord."—*Testimonies*, Vol. III, p. 161.

Comments are hardly necessary, yet we desire to call special attention to the statement that "the health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord." Furthermore, "to make plain natural law, and *urge the obedience of it*, is the work that accompanies the Third Angel's Message." Such statements take this matter of healthful living out of the field of mere hygiene, or health for health's sake, and gives it a higher and holier mission. At the same time it entails a greater personal responsibility for the light that has been permitted to shine upon us. Is this light shining upon you? Does it illuminate your heart and mind and cause you to earnestly regard the laws of your body and respect them as the laws of God?

Conversion to Health Principles Necessary

The need for complete victory in personal living, including the habits of life, cannot be over-emphasized. The enemy of souls seeks to hinder the work of reform. A deep and real connection between habits of life and spiritual experience is clearly revealed both in the Bible and Spirit of prophecy, and a compromise of principle here may mean a sacrifice of all.

It requires much of the grace of Christ to be a health reformer. First of all, we must be converted to these principles and accept them. Next, we must become well informed and know them in their sound, authentic, balanced setting. Then only are we in a position to intelligently observe and teach them.

An individual, by strong determination, may refrain from doing certain things, or from eating foods that are known not to be the most healthful; but when observance comes as a result

of sheer will power, or is done merely from a sense of duty, health reform becomes distasteful and is a heavy yoke. That individual is in bondage until obedience springs from the heart as a part of the new-birth experience. This message of how to live has been called to our attention for our highest good, and not as an arbitrary restriction. Again we read:

"In teaching health principles, keep before the mind the great object of reform,—that its purpose is to secure the highest development of body and mind and soul. Show that the laws of nature, being the laws of God, are designed for our good; that obedience to them promotes happiness in this life, and aids in the preparation for the life to come. Lead the people . . . to study that marvelous organism, the human system, and the laws by which it is governed. . . . Instead of looking upon an observance of the laws of health as a matter of sacrifice or self-denial, they will regard it, as it really is, as an *inestimable blessing*."—*"Ministry of Healing,"* pp. 146, 147.

Our Personal Relationship

"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." Rom. 12:1.

When man violates the principles of healthful living and takes a course that impairs health, can he at the same time glorify God in his body, and offer it as a living sacrifice wholly acceptable unto God? Seventh-day Adventists, who are looking for the soon return of their Lord, should never manifest indifference toward this work of reform.

The incentive to live healthfully for health's sake is a worthy one. Following the rules of hygienic living does reduce the incidence of sickness and repays in dividends of happiness, physical and mental superiority, and a minimum of "dis-ease." But *healthful living for God* reaches far beyond the physical fitness of the moment, and enters into the realm of character development. Through the spirit of willing obedience to all of God's requirements, we enter into an experience that brings "health to the body as well as to the soul." Note carefully the following statement from the servant of the Lord:

"True sanctification . . . is not merely a theory, an emotion, or a form of words, but a living, active principle, entering into the every-day life. It re-

quires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing, be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies—not an offering corrupted by wrong habits, but 'a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.'"—*"Review and Herald,"* Jan. 25, 1881.

Any feature that affects our eternal destiny, and is an aid in the preparation for the life to come, should be of the utmost concern to each of us. This earnest exhortation from "Ministry of Healing," is given us:

"Our bodies are Christ's purchased possession, and we are not at liberty to do with them as we please. All who understand the laws of health should realize their obligation to obey these laws, which God has established in their being. Obedience to the laws of health is to be made a matter of personal duty. We ourselves must suffer the results of violated law. We must individually answer to God for our habits and practices. Therefore the question with us

is not, 'What is the world's practice?' but, 'How shall I as an individual treat the habitation that God has given me?'" —*Page, 310.*

What shall be our answer to this question? God accepts no substitute for obedience. What will be the result if we close our eyes to the light which clearly points out duty and reveals our responsibility to moral and physical laws? If we shirk our duty in this respect, we will be in danger of shunning our duty in other things. May the Lord help us each to bring every practice and habit of life into complete harmony with His divine plan and will, to glorify God in our body and spirit, to live by every ray of light that He has given, and become truly sanctified through the truth, fitted for immortality. We appeal for a revival and reformation in every phase of gospel truth. We appeal for renewed faithfulness in living and teaching these authentic, balanced principles of healthful living ordained of God as a part of the Third Angel's Message.

(READING FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6)

THE HOME AND THE CHURCH

By E. E. ANDROSS

"The day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out." Jer. 6:4. "The day of salvation" will be followed by the night of which Jesus spoke when He said: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." 2 Cor. 6:2; John 9:4.

The sun is rapidly sinking in the west; the shadows are lengthening, while with each swiftly passing day the shades of night are growing deeper. Portentous events of the greatest magnitude, and decisive in character, are now taking place. The whole world is stirred to its depths, not knowing what a day may bring forth. The Lord speaks of this time as follows: "The mere understanding of the report shall cause terror." Isaiah 28:19, (Lesser's Translation).

"The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unset-

tled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.

"The agencies of evil are combining their forces, and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. IX, p. 11.

How perfectly this prophetic description is being fulfilled in the events of today; and with what startling rapidity are they developing! One great danger confronting every Seventh-day Adventist is that his spiritual vision shall be dimmed, either by life's cares and perplexities that press upon him, or by its infatuating enticements to evil, its alluring temptations to seek worldly pleasure, position, honor, or wealth.

In this sunset-hour what are some of the things that call most loudly for earnest, prayerful consideration in order that as individual Christians, as families, as churches, we may be ready for the return of our precious Saviour in power and glory?

Of the many things that might be mentioned, with profit none is of greater importance than that of building genuine Christian homes all through our ranks. If we measure up to God's standard, our homes must continually witness to the saving and keeping power of the gospel of Christ,—homes where Jesus is an ever-present guest.

The Christian Home

The marriage relation is of divine origin, and, with the Sabbath, is a gift of the Edenic state. "The family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred, of any on earth. It was designed to be a blessing to mankind."—*"Ministry of Healing,"* p. 356.

"He desires that the families below shall be a symbol of the great family above."—*"Christ's Object Lessons,"* p. 290.

To those who have had the inestimable privilege of being reared in a truly Christian home, how precious to their hearts has been that home, because never can they forget the experiences of their childhood days, the sweet atmosphere of the home, or the tender ties of affection that bound the members of the home circle together. These ties, having been cultivated and nurtured in the atmosphere of the family altar, with the sweet incense of the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and praise regularly ascending to the throne of grace, can never be permanently severed.

"The restoration and uplifting of humanity begins in the home. The work of parents underlies every other."—*"Ministry of Healing,"* p. 349.

"No work entrusted to human beings involves greater or more far-reaching results than does the work of fathers and mothers."—*Id.*, p. 351.

The Kind of Home Required

In view of the great spiritual darkness that is enveloping the earth, the fiery-furnace of trial through which all must pass before Jesus comes, the supreme demand for heroic service for God, in which all are expected to engage, in sounding abroad the last invitation of mercy; and, in view of our personal appearance in the very presence of the King of kings when He comes in all His glory, what manner of homes ought we to have throughout our ranks in this supreme hour!

I think of a humble home on the banks of the River Nile in Egypt, the habitation of a family of exiles and slaves. Here, for twelve years, the child

Moses lived with godly parents who "were not afraid of the king's commandment." They believed the time had come for the deliverance of God's people from bondage, and that God might use their son, if rightly trained, to assist in such a wonderful work.

The mother of Moses knew that she could not long retain that precious treasure under her care, and he must soon be taken to his royal foster-mother, to be surrounded with influences that would tend to lead him away from God. So faithful was that mother in the training of her child for God, so devoted to his every interest, and so sweet, so heavenly the atmosphere of that cabin home, that Inspiration has preserved the record of the marvelous choice made by Moses:

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." Heb. 11:24-27.

Where was the foundation for such a character-building laid, and who was largely responsible for it? Quickly the response comes, "In that humble Hebrew home, and by that patient, toiling mother." She rests today in an unknown grave; but one day soon a coronet of glory, shining with infinitely more splendor than any that ever graced the brow of an earthly queen, will be placed on that once care-worn brow by the pierced hands of our Saviour.

The Ideal Home Illustrated

The Lord's servant pictures before us that ideal home in the Galilean hills. In these words it is described:

"The importance and the opportunities of the home life are illustrated in the life of Jesus. He who came from heaven to be our example and teacher spent thirty years as a member of the household at Nazareth. . . . Yet during all these years He was fulfilling His divine mission. He lived as one of us, sharing the home life, submitting to its discipline, performing its duties, bearing its burdens. In the sheltering care of a humble home, participating in the experiences of our common lot, He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."—*"Ministry of Healing,"* p. 349.

"The Saviour's early years are more than an example to the youth. They are a lesson, and should be an encouragement, to every parent. . . . There is no more important field of effort than that committed to the founders and guardians of the home. No work entrusted to human beings involves greater or more far-reaching results than does the work of fathers and mothers."—*Id.*, p. 351.

Thirty years spent by the Son of God in His home in Nazareth, and three and one-half years of public ministry, from His baptism to His ascension to His Father, surely emphasizes the great importance of the home in the work of redemption.

"During all these secluded years His life flowed out in currents of sympathy and helpfulness. His unselfishness and patient endurance, His courage and faithfulness, His resistance of temptation, His unflinching peace and quiet joyfulness, were a constant inspiration. He brought a pure, sweet atmosphere into the home, and His life was as leaven working amidst the elements of society."—*Id.*, p. 350.

How sweet, how heavenly is the home where Jesus abides! My beloved brethren, this is my conception of our great need as a people today. Not that Jesus should make a hasty visit to our home, but that henceforth He be the *abiding Guest* in each and every home. The home may be ever so humble, but with Jesus as its ever-present, honored Guest, it is transformed into a royal palace. The essential prerequisite to such an experience in the home, however, is that Jesus shall be enthroned in the heart, that His will shall be supreme in the life of each parent.

With what tender solicitude the father and mother should carry forward unitedly this sacred work of building and maintaining a Christian home! Each should cheerfully bear his or her share of responsibility. These helpful and encouraging words are given us in "Ministry of Healing:"

"Parents, let the sunshine of love, cheerfulness, and happy contentment enter your own hearts, and let its sweet, cheering influence pervade your home. Manifest a kindly, forbearing spirit; and encourage the same in your children, cultivating all the graces that will brighten the home-life. The atmosphere thus created will be to the children what air and sunshine are to the vegetable world, promoting health and vigor of mind and body."—*Page, 387.*

"Brought up under the wise and loving guidance of a true home, children will have no desire to wander away in search of pleasure and companionship. Evil will not attract them. The spirit that prevails in the home will mould their characters; they will form habits and principles that will be a strong defense against temptation when they shall leave the home shelter and take their place in the world."—*Id.*, p. 394.

"If we will open our hearts and homes to the divine principles of life, we shall become channels for currents of life-giving power. From our homes will flow streams of healing, bringing life, and beauty, and fruitfulness where now are barrenness and dearth."—*Id.*, p. 355.

From such homes established in all parts of the earth, a holy fragrance would ascend to heaven, awakening joy in the hearts of the angelic throng; and, on earth, the deserts would be made to rejoice and blossom as the rose. From these homes, as from the Waldensian homes, would go forth messengers of peace bearing the torch of truth, and soon the earth would be lighted with the glory of God.

Parental Restraint

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother. . . . Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 6:1-4.

Father and mother must work unitedly if success is to attend their efforts in building a home that will be a true symbol of the heavenly home, a place of refuge for their children. Again we read:

"God has given rules for our guidance. Children should not be left to wander away from the safe path marked out in God's word, into ways leading to danger, which are open on every side. Kindly but firmly, with persevering, prayerful effort, their wrong desires should be restrained, their inclinations denied. . . . Combine affection with authority, kindness and sympathy with firm restraint."—*"Ministry of Healing,"* p. 391.

The Family Altar

Such a work as that to which we are called can never be accomplished without very careful study of the inspired directions given us in the word of God and in the Spirit of prophecy. There must also be a resolute purpose to follow this counsel. But, we are all weak.

We must have the help of the Holy Spirit to enable us to build our homes after the heavenly pattern. This help comes to those who ask, who seek with all the heart. Luke 11:9-13. There must be earnest, prevailing prayer. Concerning the importance of the home altar of prayer we are counseled:

"If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven." Matt. 18:19.

"Fathers and mothers, however pressing your business, do not fail to gather your family around God's altar. Ask for the guardianship of holy angels in your home. Remember that your dear ones are exposed to temptations. Daily annoyances beset the path of young and old. Those who would live patient, loving, cheerful lives must pray. Only by receiving constant help from God can we gain the victory over self."—*"Ministry of Healing,"* p. 393.

"The home on earth is to be a symbol of and a preparation for the home in heaven."—*Id.*, p. 363.

The Church

We must ever remember that the spirit that is cherished in the home is the spirit that will be manifested in the church. In this great world organization the church is the next larger organized unit after the family, and it has a part to act, next in importance to that of the home, in the great work of making "ready a people prepared for the Lord."

No one is prepared for the return of his Lord till individually, and in co-operation with his brethren, he has done what he could, both in personal service, and in sacrificial giving to sustain the work of God to the ends of the earth. These words are addressed us for these last hours:

"Heavenly angels have long been waiting for human agents—the members of the church—to cooperate with them in the great work to be done. They are waiting for you. So vast is the field, so comprehensive the design, that every sanctified heart will be pressed into service as an instrument of divine power."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. IX, pp. 46, 47.

The church has been made the depository of sacred truth to be given to the world, and our burden for those outside the fold of Christ can never be laid down till the whole earth shall be lightened with the glory of the Lord. We read:

"What a responsibility is resting upon all to carry the words of gracious in-

itation. . . . Every one who heareth is to say, Come. Not only the ministers, but the people. All are to join in the invitation. Not only by their profession, but by their character and dress, all are to have a winning influence. They are made trustees for the world, executors of the will of One who has bequeathed sacred truth to men. Would that all could feel the dignity and glory of their God-given trust."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. V, p. 207.

Strengthening the Weak

Another very important phase of work for the home and church at this time is revealed in the following scripture:

"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come. . . . He will come and save you." Isaiah 35:3, 4.

Oh, how many feeble knees, and fearful hearts there are among us! They may have made mistakes that have disheartened them; but who of us have not made mistakes? The Psalmist says: "My feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." Psalms 73:2.

The weak, the erring in our churches, do not need criticism, but they do need help, and that without delay. They need help from those who can give "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." While we must correct wrongs that may exist, it must be done "in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." It is high time that every one help his neighbor; and every one say to his brother, "Be of good courage." Isaiah 41:6. We are told in "Acts of the Apostles," page 551:

"Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another,—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. . . . In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennoble the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life, and sheds a refining influence on all around."

Our Greatest Need

Our greatest need at this supreme hour, both in the home and in the church is the gift of the Holy Spirit, rich, full and abundant. We need this

(READING FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7)

INTO ALL THE WORLD

By A. W. CORMACK

precious gift to make our lives in our homes sweet and winsome, just like the life of Jesus in His home at Nazareth. We need this anointing to win and to hold the hearts of our children and youth, to enlist them whole-heartedly in the most blessed ministry ever given to man.

The time is fully come for the entire church to receive this heavenly endowment of power from on high to equip it for mighty service for God in this last hour of human probation.

We must be saved completely now from our sins; all differences between brethren, all that separates hearts must be put away now. To be "almost but not wholly saved, means to be not almost but wholly lost."—*"Christ's Object Lessons,"* p. 118.

When this preparatory work has been done by the church, then the promised blessing will come with a fulness that will reach every heart. Clothed with the panoply of heaven, the church will go forth, "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Cant. 6:10. May this blessed experience come upon the whole church ere this Week of Prayer shall close.

BEYOND TO-DAY

If we could see beyond to-day
As God can see;
If all the clouds should roll away,
The shadows flee,
O'er present griefs we would not fret,
Each sorrow we would soon forget,
For many joys are waiting yet
For you and me.

If we could know beyond today
As God doth know,
Why dearest treasures pass away
And tears must flow;
And why the darkness leads to light,
Why dreary paths will soon grow bright;
Some day life's wrongs will be made right;
Faith tells us so.

"If we could see, if we could know,"
We often say.
But God in love a veil doth throw
Across our way;
We cannot see what lies before,
And so we cling to Him the more.
He leads us till this life is o'er;
Trust and obey.

—Selected.

"We are nearing the close of this earth's history. We have before us a great work,—the closing work of giving the last warning message to a sinful world. There are men who will be taken from the plow, from the vineyard, from various other branches of work, and sent forth by the Lord to give this message to the world."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. 7 p. 270.

To Adventist believers throughout the world a wonderful vision is being unfolded in this our day. God is accomplishing His last work among the nations. He is the God of heaven and earth, and while in almost every phase of human activity developments of startling import and significance are taking place, the greatest signs of all that were to herald the return of the Saviour are being displayed today on every hand.

On the lonely isle of Patmos, nearly two thousand years ago, the apostle John, in exile for his faith, was given a vision of the triumphs of the gospel that were to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. Of this he wrote: "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; . . . Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:6-12.

What the inspired apostle saw so long ago in prophetic vision, is given to us today who live amid the closing scenes of earth's history to behold in actuality. "We are living, we are dwelling, in a grand and awful time."

This week our hearts have been stirred anew as we have considered day by day the messages that have come to us during this special prayer season. It will be of interest at this time to view briefly developments throughout the mission fields of earth, remembering as we do so the pronouncement of the Saviour to His disciples: "This gospel of

the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14.

Facing Great Difficulties in China

The text reminds us at once of the context and parallel scriptures with their reference to latter-day "distress of nations with perplexity," and the question arises in our minds: How are these perils of the last days affecting the advancement of the gospel in war-stricken areas of earth? For an answer we quote correspondence received from one such section of the harvest field.

After telling of some of the difficult experiences through which many of our people in China have been passing, Prof. Frederick Griggs, president of the division, says: "I am glad to tell you that in spite of war and trouble our work is moving forward. The Lord is blessing in many, many ways. The courage of our workers is excellent. We shall have a fair report of baptisms for the past year, although not up to that of a year ago. It is now possible to open efforts in some sections that have been closed. I found a wonderfully good spirit on the part of our workers in East China. Our churches in places have been broken up and our members and workers scattered, but as a result new interests are springing up, and in these places to which workers have gone, the work is being strengthened. In the West China Union there were in 1937 more baptisms than in any previous year."

How wonderfully reports of this kind confirm to us the assurance given in the Saviour's commission: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Away inland, on the very borders of old China, the rays of the gospel light are penetrating. Brother and Sister Milton Lee were sent into the western province of Yunnan. They located at Mokiang, and found there a remarkable interest. Within six months they were operating four Sabbath schools and one branch Sabbath school, with a total attendance of several hundred. All this was done among two tribes where no previous work had been done.

Looking across from West China to the cold, forbidding plateaus of Tibet,

our hearts are warmed as we remember that in Northwest China recently two Tibetans were baptized. One of these new converts is to return with literature to Lhasa, that in this way the message may be given to these people who for so long have held themselves aloof from the advances of the gospel.

Some may have been privileged to hear Elder J. L. McElhany tell of visiting China and the earnest appeal made to him by a Buddhist lama said to be the last remaining "Living Buddha," who, having visited our school at Chiao Tou Tseng in company with Missionary J. H. Shultz, made an urgent plea that such a work as he had seen in China, with its missionary objectives, be opened among his people.

Amid Threatening Dangers in Europe

War and rumors of wars have threatened the church in Europe especially in recent times, but the brethren bearing there the burdens of responsibility in these times of stress and difficulty send us only messages of faith and courage. Typical of these is the following from W. R. Beach, Secretary of the Southern European Division. He writes:

"Dark war clouds have hung over our countries, and threatening decrees have menaced our work with destruction, but the angels of Revelation 7 have held in check the winds of strife, and 3,200 souls, the largest number since the organization of the Southern European Division, were won to the truth during 1937. In fact, the increase throughout the year has been encouraging, for the statistical reports show that since 1929 the membership of the division has practically doubled, passing from a membership of 14,644 to 29,044, at the end of 1937. Taking into consideration the conditions under which these results have been attained, we feel to cry out in the language of the man of God of old, 'What hath God wrought!'"

Cheering Progress in South America

"True mission work requires sacrifice," writes N. P. Neilson, President of the South American Division. He then relates how, on a tributary of the mighty Amazon, Honorino Tavares and his wife, with two small children, opened a school in an Indian tribe. Soon their little baby passed away in that far-away place, with no one to speak a comforting word to the sorrowing parents. Later the Indians stole their chickens, and poisoned their cow. Yet, after three years of trials and hardships, their hearts rejoiced to see fifteen precious

souls won for the Master. One man and his wife were baptized at ten o'clock at night, he not having reached home in time for the baptismal service that afternoon. Hundreds are joining the ranks of believers in the regions of the Amazon.

A Glimpse into the Far East

V. T. Armstrong of the Far Eastern Division, writes: "In the Sarawak Mission in Borneo, where Missionary J. M. Nerness, with his limited staff of workers, is endeavoring to reach out into the unentered territory, there is dire need for advance work. There comes a cry from the Dyak people of that land for the light of the gospel; but as yet we have been unable to respond. It is true that some of the young Dyaks have been in our school, and have experienced the blessing of Christian living. As these boys go back up the river from our mission, into the territory that we have not yet entered, they take with them the wonderful story of salvation. Their testimonies are causing many who sit in the shadow of death to reach out to us for help. Doors are opening before us, and now is our opportunity to enter. Never have the opportunities been greater throughout the Far Eastern Division than they are at the present time."

From Japan comes the cheering word that the past year proved to be by far the best in the history of our Tokyo Sanitarium and Hospital. The patient list has increased year by year as its work has become better known, until at times its staff has been at a loss to know how to accommodate all applying for admittance.

A building donated by the city of Kobe has recently been fitted up for another medical unit to be established there for ministry to those in need in this large center.

Advancement in Inter-America

The work of our church members is being greatly blessed of the Lord in many places. Of this soul-winning service, L. V. Finster, Superintendent of the Colombia-Venezuela Union Mission, writes:

"As a result of literature he had received, a church member living near the Venezuela border was instrumental in bringing about thirty people into the truth. This group, in turn, raised up another company of twenty-five or thirty people in another village. In one village, our company of believers had undergone no little persecution brought

on by a man greatly opposed to the truth. This man became ill. The members of our company went over and did what they could for him, and after receiving permission, had prayer with him. In about a week, he was much improved, attended Sabbath school, and is now a fervent believer in this truth."

Further word from the Inter-American Division comes from C. E. Wood, Superintendent of the Mexican Union. He says: "A quick work is being done in Mexico. Whole churches of other denominations are accepting the truth. In the Gulf Mission eight or ten new Sabbath schools have been organized this year; in the Central Mission, four; in the Lake Mission, three. Much of our work is being done by members doing personal missionary work, and amid great difficulties."

The Last Message in Bible Lands

In the ancient city of Khartoum, in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, there is an earnest, Christian business man now awaiting baptism. Several years ago he visited his people in a little village near Bethlehem, Palestine, and while returning, called at Cairo, Egypt, where he attended evangelistic services. Later yielding his heart to the claims of the message, he became an ardent witness for the truth. With him his wife and more than twenty other persons are meeting Sabbath by Sabbath for prayer and Bible study in a room he has provided in his new home. Writing in Arabic to W. K. Ising, this brother makes the following impressive appeal:

"O, dear brethren, pray especially for the benefit of the Sudan, that as the Lord has permitted His word to be preached in other Arabic countries in the near East, in like manner His goodness may permit the gospel to be preached in the Arabic Sudan. We are many here who are thirsty for the word of God. Pray, therefore, O my brethren and my sisters, in behalf of the Sudan, for you are those responsible to this calling. We are all brothers and sisters, whether red, white, yellow or black; and we are sons and daughters of God, to whom be all glory. Amen."

Among the Multitudes of India

Marvelous, indeed, and of wonderful encouragement are the reports that continue to come to us from India, known so long as heathenism's Gibraltar. Opportunities almost innumerable for the presentation of the message of salvation are confronting our missionaries and workers in that land of teaming

millions. Again and again deputations of village representatives send their requests for teachers to work among their peoples. Forty-three precious souls were baptized in an effort held recently in a Tamil village by Pastor S. Thomas. Thirty more are awaiting baptism. In another place, at the close of an effort, twenty-five souls were baptized into this blessed truth.

Another recent experience is of real interest and striking significance. Missionary P. K. Simpson, with his faithful Indian workers, was moving among the seething multitudes of people in attendance at a large festival, distributing literature in the vernacular. The district commissioner, with whom he was acquainted, met Brother Simpson in the throng, and proposed a "better way" to accomplish this purpose. Gladly accepting the suggestion, Missionary Simpson went aloft with a pilot in a plane, and passing back and forth over the heads of the people, he showered down the leaflets containing their heaven-born messages. As the tracts fluttered to earth, many of the astonished people eagerly gathered them. To these people it must have seemed that in a double sense they had received a message from heaven. It surely was like the "leaves of autumn" falling into their midst.

Africa's Appeal

Only a few years ago, Portuguese East Africa was a closed country to our work. Then some students from our mission school across the border in Nyasaland, sowed the gospel seed by distributing literature in Portuguese East Africa. Now the message is finding a wonderful entrance into the hearts of the people. A school is being conducted, and it is hoped that medical work soon may be opened in this promising territory. M. M. Webster, who is in charge of the mission, writes: "The people, in encouraging numbers, are coming to our meetings. There are 150 in the Bible classes, all from heathenism. You should see the willingness with which these heathen people give their offerings. They do not stop with giving of their own possessions, but urge their friends and neighbors to contribute also."

In the Zambesi Union Mission, where our mission work among heathen peoples had its beginning in 1887, J. R. Campbell, the superintendent, reports 1,170 baptisms during 1937, with 6,000 seekers after truth in the Bible classes.

W. G. Turner, Vice-President of

the General Conference, tells of an open-air meeting held one afternoon in the town of Kokoridua, on the Gold Coast, West Africa, where Missionary F. Stokes was beginning work. In a large, open space in the center of the town, a few believers had gathered, and the visiting brethren were to speak to the people. As the little group sang hymns, the people began to gather until there was a throng of more than a thousand people. A huge, silk umbrella, about ten feet across, was brought out, and a number of beautifully carved stools—articles of unique and remarkable craftsmanship, in preparation for the chief and his counsellors. Soon they came and took their places. There were also present 200 leading men of the town. The chief, a fine looking man, wore a kingly crown of fine beaten gold, with rings of pure gold on his hands and feet. As Pastor Turner addressed the gathering, the people listened with close attention.

After the meeting, a personal messenger from the chief asked for an interview. That evening, with two or three of his counsellors the chief came to the mission house. He said he had been deeply impressed by the message and wished to extend to the Adventist people a very pressing invitation to come and proclaim the message of the soon-coming of Jesus among his people. The brethren were impressed with the sincerity of this chief's kingly appeal.

Pastor Turner tells how that in another district a good work some years ago was developing, but later was hindered by the chief who was notorious for his wickedness, being bitterly opposed to the work of the missionary. This chief found, however, that when the Adventists withdrew from his community, the influences of evil became very pronounced. This impressed him, and he regretted the loss of the good influence of our people. He sent for the missionary, urgently desiring that he resume work among his people. He promised never again to oppose the Adventists. Missionary S. Broberg came and held a public meeting, with the chief and his counsellors present. Our brother spoke of sin, and of the grace of the Lord Jesus in saving from sin. His appeal was to the chief particularly, and evidently the Spirit of the Lord sent the message home to his heart. As the meeting closed the chief came up and said, "I have lived in sin. Do you mean to tell me that if I continue I will one day lose my life? eternal life?"

"I mean precisely that," was the reply.

Next day, as the missionary journeyed he was surprised, at some distance from town, when he saw a man running alone up a by path. It was the chief himself. He called, "Wait, I want to speak to you." As he waited, the chief came up and said, "I want Jesus to come into my life. Can you tell me how I can receive Him?" As our brother reasoned with him again, he asked, "Does it mean that I must give up my sinful practices?" "Yes, it means exactly that." Then very humbly the chief replied, "I will give up my sinful ways, for I do want Jesus to come into my life." And there by the roadside, as they knelt in prayer, the chief gave his heart to God. Today that village is completely transformed. The chief has given up his old ways, and his people are free and happy, with hundreds rejoicing in the truth of the living God.

The Gospel Flying in Midheaven

Latter-day marvels of man's inventive genius lend their aid to the proclamation of the Third Angel's Message. It is no longer a new thing to learn that at the moment spoken, the message proclaimed is heard thousands of miles away in another country, there to gladden and cheer the hearts of the hearers. In a new way, "the heavens declare the glory of God." For example, Pastor R. H. Hartwell, from Manila was able to broadcast the message over a high-powered station. Responses came back from a number of countries, indicating that listeners-in had been enlightened and comforted by the spoken message from so far away. In the Philippines proper, many cities and towns have loud speakers located in the public squares, and it is reported that hundreds of people in some places gather in the town square to hear these broadcasts which proclaim the truth of God for these times.

With the airplane rivaling other means of transportation in many parts of the world in these days, some of our missionaries find at times that it is economical in actual cost, as well as in time, to utilize this mode of travel. So the heralds of the Third Angel's Message are seen literally "flying in the midst of heaven," with "the everlasting gospel."

God's Call to Righteousness

Centuries ago the gospel prophet looked down upon our day and described the benighted conditions of the

(READING FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8)

SACRIFICIAL GIVING

By M. N. CAMPBELL

peoples of earth, saying: "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." With this portrayal of the world's need, there is given to the church the glorious invitation, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isaiah 60:1, 2. That God's remnant people will heed this call, that the earth shall be lightened with His glory, is certain, for we read: "But the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee." Then comes the statement, in the next verse, about the result of the power of God upon His remnant people. "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." But what, my brethren and sisters, is the meaning of the expressions "thy light" and "the brightness of thy rising"? Ah, they refer to the thing which above all else will attract souls to Christ. Nothing else can take its place. There is no substitute for it. It is defined in chapter 62:2, "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory." There is converting power in the word of God as it is preached and published, but it is righteousness in the lives of the people of God that will attract multitudes to believe and accept the message in these closing days of earth's history. So, brethren, it is a time for renewed consecration of heart and life, for a new experience with the Lord in righteousness, in right living, and in loving service, that the work of the Lord may be quickly finished in all the earth.

THE MORNING COMETH

Ho, watchman, standing on thy tower,
As years sweep onward in their flight,
What signs in heaven attract thy sight,
Predictive of the coming hour,
When earth shall see the reign of right?
What of the night? What of the night?
And, pointing to the dim, gray light
Just struggling up the eastern sky,
A promise and a prophecy
That day shall chase the dark that gloometh
O'er heaven to hide it from our eye,
The watchman saith, "The morning cometh!"
And angels sing, "The morning cometh!"
And earth repeats, "The morning cometh!"
And "God be thanked!" our hearts reply.
—Selected.

"Angels are interested in the spiritual welfare of all who are seeking to restore God's moral image in man; and the earthly family are to connect with the heavenly family in binding up the wounds and bruises that sin has made. Angelic agencies, though invisible, are cooperating with visible human agencies."

Sacrificial giving underlies the entire gospel plan. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. That gift, the most precious that heaven possessed, enabled a lost world to find its way back to God; but it was the giving of that gift that wrung the heart of the Eternal. In the unfathomable recesses of eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, found that even Deity could find complete happiness only in sharing the joys of existence with others. The plans were then laid for the creation of the universe with its innumerable suns, worlds, and satellites, and their teeming billions of inhabitants. To number these holy and happy beings would exhaust the vocabulary of mathematics. It is a total that "no man can number." And every creature with whom God shared life added to His happiness.

So from the very beginning of beginnings the Lord has been giving of Himself, His power, His love, His resources, for the benefit of His creatures. Here in our world, on both the just and unjust, the loving-kindness of the Lord has been poured with a lavish hand. What a contrast is this to the attitude of the great rebel chieftain who reaches out to gather everything to himself. Provided with a person of transcendent beauty, and a mind of almost divine wisdom, he avariciously reached out for more power, hoping to exalt his throne above even the stars of God.

The two principles, that of giving on the one hand, and that of gathering to one's self on the other, represent the mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity. With the deepest solicitude the Lord is watching each of His professed children to see if the generosity of His own character is being developed in them. Only thus can a soul be truly happy and enter into the joy of his Lord.

The parable of the rich fool illustrates the Lord's contempt for the love of wealth. When goods increased with this man he wondered what he should do with the increase. Apparently, it never occurred to him to share it with those less favored. He proposed to keep it all. His responsibility as a steward of God evidently carried no weight. "This will I do:" said he, "I will pull down

my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

Shocked at such a manifestation of selfishness, the Lord decreed, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" Then to impress the lesson on all succeeding generations the Lord added, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12:18-21.

Commenting upon one's affections being entwined about earthly treasure, the Spirit of prophecy says:

"The word of God defines covetousness as idolatry. It is impossible for men and women to keep the law of God and love money. The heart's affections should be placed on heavenly things. Our treasure should be laid up in heaven, for where our treasure is, there will our heart be also."—"Testimonies," Vol. III, p. 130.

Life Consisteth Not in the Abundance of Things Possessed

As a modern illustration of the true spirit of sacrifice, we quote the following words from one of our conference presidents:

"Recently Mrs. _____ and I visited some of our isolated believers in the west central part of the state. We called on a poverty-stricken family of twelve children and the parents, making fourteen members in all. The house was dilapidated, and the furniture was poor, but these people are rendering faithful service to the Master. After our prayer with the family, the mother went into a room and returned with a handful of bills. She placed the money in my hand, stating that \$10.00 was tithe, and \$3.00 was Sabbath-school money. I hesitated to accept it, realizing their own need. She told us her experience. When she planted her garden, she promised the Lord that if He would keep away the devourer so that they should realize its products, she would pay tithe. The Lord wonderfully blessed the garden. She had sufficient vegetables to suffice for the entire winter. This was the tithe on

that. I asked about the Sabbath-school money. She said that the eggs laid upon the Sabbath were put aside, and when sold provided the Sabbath-school offerings."

Henry Drummond once said, "Most people are on the wrong track in the pursuit of happiness. They think it consists of having and getting. It is found in giving and sharing." No real joy or happiness is found in grasping after material things. The satisfaction that is felt in acquiring worldly gain is short-lived, and the thirst for more drives away peace and quietude. The Lord would remove from us this thirst for material things. He would have us use whatever can be spared for the good of others, for the enlightenment of the ignorant, and the saving of the lost. When material wealth is misused, or consumed on selfish aims, the Lord often removes it and places it in hands that will put it to a right use.

Some years ago there was a brother who was blest with considerable wealth. An earnest appeal was made in behalf of a worthy and needy cause. He turned a deaf ear to the call. I wondered at his hardness toward the appeal, and expressed the fear that the Lord might remove him from his stewardship. He laughed rather sneeringly at the suggestion. He is now on government relief.

The matter of Christian benevolence is something that needs to be carefully cultivated, for it is one thing that Satan watches very carefully and does all in his power to cause men to neglect. He would dry up every possible source of missionary income, if he could. He knows that every penny given to the Lord will contribute to the downfall of his kingdom, and toward the upbuilding of the kingdom of Christ. So he has a list of schemes to halt sacrificial giving.

The Enemy's Plot Revealed

He makes the individual's own personal wants look as large as possible when calls are made for means to advance the cause of God.

He creates fears for the future, leading Christians to hoard money for possible future needs.

He leads parents to turn over to unbelieving children and relatives the money the Lord has placed in their hands to use in helping the cause.

He tries to arouse suspicion regarding the integrity of those handling the means dedicated to the cause of God.

By these and other means he seeks to dry up the benevolence of God's people. The Spirit of prophecy has un-

masked these Satanic devices in the chapter on "Covetousness" in "Early Writings," pp. 266 to 268, in these impressive words:

"I saw that Satan bade his angels lay their snares especially for those who were looking for Christ's second appearing, and keeping all the commandments of God. Satan told his angels that the churches were asleep. He would increase his power and lying wonders, and he could hold them. 'But,' he said, 'the sect of Sabbath-keepers we hate; they are continually working against us, and taking from us our subjects, to keep the hated law of God. Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with cares. If you can make them place their affections upon these things, we shall have them yet. They may profess what they please, only make them care more for money than for the success of Christ's kingdom or the spread of the truths we hate. Present the world before them in the most attractive light, that they may love and idolize it. We must keep in our ranks all the means of which we can gain control. The more means the followers of Christ devote to His service, the more will they injure our kingdom by getting our subjects. . . . Battle every inch of ground. Make covetousness and love of earthly treasures the ruling traits of their character. As long as these traits rule, salvation and grace stand back. Crowd every attraction around them, and they will be surely ours. And not only are we sure of them, but their hateful influence will not be exercised to lead others to heaven. When any shall attempt to give, put within them a grudging disposition, that it may be sparingly.'"

"If they are disposed to be selfish and covetous, Satan takes his stand by their side, and with all his power seeks to lead them to indulge their besetting sins. The grace of God and the light of truth may melt away their covetous, selfish feelings for a little, but if they do not obtain entire victory, Satan comes in when they are not under a saving influence, and withers every noble, generous principle, and they think that too much is required of them."

The parable of the unjust steward is on record to teach us an important lesson. The Lord admonishes us to use our means so as to make friends to ourselves in eternity that we may be received into everlasting habitations. This does not refer to those who give as little as possible, but to those who give as much as possible. We have certain goals

that we seek to reach as churches and conferences. Our aim in the United States is to attain each week an average of twenty-five cents per member through the Sabbath school, with a general missions goal of forty cents a week per member. The plan is not that each member shall, irrespective of his income, give these sums. Some may find ten cents a week the limit of their ability, but there are many who could give from one to five dollars or more each week. The Lord expects those who are thus able, to do this, and His blessing will be upon them in making the larger gifts. For a man of means to drop twenty-five cents into the Sabbath school, and content himself with giving at the rate of forty cents a week, supposing he has discharged his full duty before the Lord, is to labor under a grave deception. He will perhaps be surprised in the final day that he should fail to hear the "well done, thou good and faithful servant." *He* may be surprised, but few others will.

Held Accountable For Our Stewardship

No Bible statement is more true than that "there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." It is high time for a revival of our stewardship. Many are losing sight of the fact that the Lord will hold us strictly to account for the way we spend our money, and for the way in which we respond to His calls for its disbursement. In these last days, as perils are closing in upon us, we should be seriously reflecting upon the disposal of whatever means we have in reserve. Several nations have forbidden the sending of money out of their borders. Our people in these nations are no longer able to give to foreign missions as they once did, and it is a source of great sorrow to them. We know not when similar restrictions may go into effect in other lands, our own included, and when that day comes we may as well throw our gold and silver to the bats, so far as its usefulness to the cause in foreign lands is concerned. Some day many will bring their hidden stores of means to the treasury only to find there is no further use for it. Now is the time to invest in heavenly treasure. While the cause of God is in dire need, is the time to turn in the funds. It will be far safer invested there than in the banks.

The economic outlook does not seem very encouraging, and it appears as if

we were coming into trying times with respect to our cause and its financing. If we recognize this, then it seems to me that we should double our gifts while we may, in the spirit of loyal sacrifice and devotion to the cause of God. Many of our brethren and sisters are unquestionably giving to the extent of their abilities, but there are many more who could probably give much more than they do. The relationship of the mission gifts to the tithe would indicate this. Let us all see to it that we do not make solicitation of funds a substitute for our personal giving. This is a case where we should do the one, and not leave the other undone.

Transferring Earthly Treasure

When war or labor troubles threaten in one land, the rich hastily transfer their cash and securities to another country, one less likely to be affected by these dangers. So in the face of all these threatening tendencies the Christian would be well advised at this time to send his spare funds ahead of him to the kingdom.

Revelation 13:16, 17, sets forth another consideration that should lead us to transfer our funds to another world. "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that hath the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." This course of boycotting Sabbath-keepers is being advocated in different sections already. The following from a lecture by the Rev. Dr. Bacon Robins, delivered in Burlington, Kansas, illustrates the trend of thinking on the part of Sunday law advocates at the present time:

"In the Christian decalogue the first day of the week was made the Sabbath by divine appointment, but there is a class of people in this country who will not keep the Christian Sabbath unless they are forced to do so; but that can easily be done. We have twenty millions of men, besides women and children, who want this country to keep the Christian Sabbath. If we would say we will not sell anything to them, we will not work for them, nor hire them to work for us, the thing could be wiped out, and all the world would keep the Christian Sabbath."

Holding the Ropes At the Home Bases

There is another outstanding basis of appeal to our benevolence. It is that of the thousands of our devoted youth

who have left all and followed their Master into the dark corners of the earth. Youth, who, had they chosen to remain in the homeland and given their talents to the service of the world, might have won high recognition and wealth. These young people from our churches and homes have severed the tenderest ties, and gone off to foreign mission service, trusting implicitly in our loyalty to the cause of missions. We quote from a beautiful poem entitled, "Our Youth in the Far Fields," written by our late C. M. Snow:

"We'll miss the glance of a happy face,
The clasp of a hearty hand;
But then one day, at the end of the fray,
We'll meet in a fairer land.
This bouys us up as the days go by,
This cheers the heaviest heart.
When the warfare ends, we shall meet
our friends,
And meet no more to part.

"We send you away with our prayers
today,
That God may bless and shield,
And count you again when the sons of
men
Have quit the embattled field.
May His hand be over you all the days
From now till we see His face.
And number you with His faithful few
In the kingdom of His grace."

We must not fail these loyal missionaries. They are worthy of our regular and whole-hearted support.

Meeting About Calvary in Self-Denial and Sacrifice

Over-topping every other consideration is the commission attached to the three-fold message that has been placed in our hands—the commission to carry this message "unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." No Seventh-day Adventist can escape personal responsibility for this task. The Lord has laid it upon us, and each is to carry his share according to his ability. But it will take the full lifting ability of each believer to carry the load. It is an honor of the highest degree to be chosen of God to bear this sacred message to the world, and joyful recognition of this fact will bring the blessing of heaven to the soul. Because David, without any promptings from heaven, and purely out of his love for God, planned to build a temple to His glory, the Lord gave him the promise that his

throne should abide forever. Christ is to reign throughout the ages from David's throne. So today those who, out of the warmth of their love for God, lay plans of their own to aid in carrying this precious light to those in darkness, will not fail of exceptional recognition from the Lord of the harvest when He makes up the list of the redeemed.

From "Testimonies," Vol. IX, page 236, this message comes to us:

"The love expressed on Calvary should be revived, strengthened, and diffused among our churches. . . . Christ's believing people are to perpetuate His love. This love is to draw them together around the cross. It is to divest them of all selfishness, and bind them to God and to one another.

"Meet around the cross of Calvary in self-sacrifice and self-denial. God will bless you as you do your best. As you approach the throne of grace, as you find yourself bound to this throne by the golden chain let down from heaven to earth, to draw men from the pit of sin, your heart will go out in love for your brethren and sisters who are without God and without hope in the world."

How can we look out upon the world in the condition it is in today and close up our hearts to the appeals in behalf of the millions caught in the maelstrom of national hatreds, and soon to be cruelly destroyed in the overflowing scourge of war? What we do we must do promptly, for time is rapidly closing, Armageddon is soon to be staged, and our last opportunity to have a part in sacrificial giving will soon close.

A CALL

There's a cry in the wind tonight
From the homes where the Lord is unknown,
While the Shepherd above in pitying love
Intercedes at His Father's throne.

There's a call from the darkness tonight
That haunts the lighted room,
From His other sheep from the broken steep
At the edge of eternal doom.

There's a pain in my heart tonight,
From the heart of God it came,
For I cannot forget that He loves them yet,
And they've never heard His name.

There's a sob in my prayers tonight
When I think of the million homes
Where never a word for the Lord is heard
Nor a message from Jesus comes.

—Selected.

When we look on the world as our own plum, we are almost sure to find that we have eaten it too green.—*Our Young Folks.*

(READING FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9)

THE GREATEST DANGERS THREATENING THE CHURCH

By F. M. WILCOX

The dangers threatening the church of Christ are so many and so varied in their character that it would be difficult to designate the greatest dangers. The greatest danger to one class in the church would not necessarily be the greatest danger to other classes. There are, however, several leading dangers which threaten all.

Our First Love

One of the greatest and perhaps most basic dangers that threatens every disciple of Christ is the loss of his first love. By this I mean the loss of the consecration, ardor, and warmth of affection, which the disciple felt for his Saviour when he first realized that his sins were forgiven and that he was accepted in the Beloved. With the loss of this experience, Christian service degenerates into mere form. Prayer becomes commonplace and is entered into from sense of duty rather than as a blessed privilege. The Bible is supplanted by the newspaper or magazine. Personal effort for those in need becomes irksome. This is the sad state of many professed Christians. The vital question for us to consider is, Does this represent my state? If so, may God awaken me to my great need.

No amount of sacrifice or good works on our part will make up for the lack of this experience. Addressing the church at Ephesus, representing the believers of the first century, the Lord says: "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience: . . . and thou hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted." Rev. 2:2, 3. All this was commendable, but it was not sufficient in the estimation of the Master. The divine admonition continues: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Rev. 2:4, 5.

Have we trusted to our form of service to commend us to God? Have we been liberal toward the cause? Have

we sacrificed for Christ? Have we suffered rebuff and persecution for His name? We may have done all this, and yet have failed in maintaining that close, personal relationship with the Lord which He requires. We may give all of our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to be burned; and if love for Christ has not prompted these sacrifices, they count for nothing. We cannot buy our way into God's favor, nor work our way into the kingdom of heaven. We can maintain this personal relationship with Christ only by taking time to cultivate His acquaintance the same as we cultivate the acquaintance of an earthly friend. It will require time for frequent prayer and meditation, time for the study of His word, and labor for those for whom Christ died.

This close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ, this cherishing of the first love in our experience, is the only thing that will save us from the stress and storm of coming days. It will save us individually even when others go astray and forsake the Lord. We shall know in whom we have believed, and with this personal knowledge we shall be held in the hour of temptation. Sacrifice then will become a loving privilege, and the chief joy in Christian living will be the joy of service for others, for those in darkness for whom Christ died.

The Lord's Coming

Another great and basic danger and, in a way, one all-inclusive, is the danger of putting off the coming of the Lord. When we lose out of our hearts and lives this dominant objective, this great hope, this inspiring prospect, we lose much in the way of Christian impetus in our experience. That there would be two classes in the church, one devotedly cherishing the hope of the Lord's speedy return and the other putting the coming of the Lord afar off, is clearly indicated in the words of Christ:

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall

find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 24:45-51.

It is in view of this great danger of putting off the coming of the Lord that the apostle Paul makes this touching appeal in his letter to the Hebrews:

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Heb. 10:35-39.

This earnest admonition is needed by some in the remnant church. The message is to you who listen to these words. Have you waited long for the coming of the Lord? Have you sacrificed and toiled for the giving of the advent message to all the world? Have you placed your sons and daughters upon the altar of service? And does it seem to you that Christ's coming has been delayed beyond the expected time? Has hope long deferred made your heart sick? The Lord knew that these doubts would assail you, and to you He says: "Cast not away therefore your confidence. . . . for yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

We have come to the time when, as stated by the apostle, "The just shall live by faith." "But if any man draw back," the Lord says, "My soul shall have no pleasure in him." The signs on every hand indicate that the coming of the Lord is near. Where we had one proof twenty-five years ago, we have one hundred proofs today. We have not followed cunningly devised fables. Our faith rests upon the prophecies and promises of His word. Soon He that shall come will come. And if we cherish this hope and prepare our hearts to meet the Lord, then shall we be able to say when He appears: "Lo, this is

our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:9.

The Cares of Life

As the brightness of the advent hope grows dim in our hearts, the cares of life more and more dominate our thinking and our experience. Christ warned: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Luke 21:34. With the large majority in the world today there is a struggle for existence. Seventh-day Adventists are no exception. In the hurry and bustle of daily toil, prayer is neglected. The study of the word is abandoned, and God is forgotten. This is the sad state of some.

The Lord sympathizes with you in your great distress. Born into this world of a working family, having toiled for His own daily bread and aided His parents, Christ can understand your perplexities and anxieties. It is your privilege to throw upon His great heart of love the burden that oppresses yours. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," is the admonition of the Lord to those who are oppressed by the cares of life. Making God first, we can rest in Him, and believe that He in His own way will provide for our necessities.

The Comforts of Life

There is danger not only to those who are in actual need of life's necessities, but also to those who have sufficient and to spare. In our prosperity, even more than in our need, we are liable to forget God. The hour of temporal prosperity has always been the hour of danger to every disciple. In our comfortable homes, with modern conveniences, with abundance of food and clothing, the great danger is that we shall become self-centered, that our sensibilities shall become deadened, and in eating and drinking and in the physical pleasures of life we shall forget the Source of all of our benefits, and fail to render to God that which belongs to Him in service and in sacrifice. Apprised of the danger, let us be sure that we do not succumb to it.

Sabbath Observance

As we lose from our hearts the sense of the nearness of Christ's coming, we grow careless in the observance of His holy requirements. Particularly is this true of Sabbath observance. There is

a growing tendency on the part of too many Sabbathkeepers to lower the standard of Sabbath observance to the level of Sunday observance in the world around us. Satan by specious arguments may seek to lead us to feel that it would be right for us to continue during the Sabbath hours some part of our regular weekly employment. Here we must be guarded.

God has called us to act a distinctive part as His representatives in the closing days of earth's history. He has given us a message of reform relative to the Sabbath of the Lord. He has not laid upon us the burden of carrying on the world's work. We may benefit, even on the Sabbath, from some of the great industries that the world carries forward. In attending the services of the Lord's house we may utilize the street car or the steam railway on the Sabbath. Our part in the matter would involve no secular aim or service, but only the work of God. But it would be quite another thing for us to take part in operating these public utilities on the Sabbath. We may avail ourselves in time of need of police protection; but this by no means warrants a Seventh-day Adventist doing police duty on the Sabbath.

We recognize that the sick must be cared for on the Sabbath day, and necessary work must be done in the home. Live stock must be fed, and cows milked. Sabbath milk should be disposed of in a manner requiring the least amount of labor. To retail the milk from door to door, requiring hours of Sabbath labor, is most unfortunate and is not in harmony with Sabbath observance.

Some have grown careless regarding the beginning and ending of the Sabbath. They return from the store with their arms laden with purchases after the Sabbath has begun. They go forth to their labor or to their social engagements before the Sabbath is ended. We are told that the Sabbath is a sign of our order. The church of Christ stands in the world as a spectacle to all men. May God help us to maintain before our neighbors the holy character of our high profession.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride up-

on the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. 58:13, 14.

Can you claim the fulfilment of this precious promise in your home, in your experience? It is for you to do it. If you have failed to do this in the past, may God grant that you shall renew your allegiance to the Lord, that you shall enter into the joy of service, obeying His requirements, not from stern sense of duty, but as a joyous privilege.

Worldly Association

The class of evil servants pointed out by Christ, who say in their hearts, "My Lord delayeth His coming," naturally choose as their companions the careless and indifferent. And this is one great decoy of Satan to draw the disciples of Christ away from their divine Master.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. . . . And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 1 John 2:15-17.

It was in worldly association that Satan sought to corrupt Israel in the days of Jehoshaphat. He was a godly king and served the Lord, but in his prosperity he forgot God. The divine record is that "Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab." 2 Chron. 18:1. He paid a visit to this wicked king. Ahab invited him to join forces in battle against Ramoth-gilead, Jehoshaphat replied: "I am as thou art, my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war." This ungodly union proved well nigh fatal to Jehoshaphat. Except for the Lord's special care, he would have been slain in battle. The prophet of the Lord gave to him on his return to Jerusalem this earnest rebuke: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord." 2 Chron. 19:2.

These questions today could properly be put to some Seventh-day Adventists in their worldly association. "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?" It is sad to say that some of our believers are joining affinity with the Ahabs of today. They are found at the theaters and in the movies and at the popular bathing resorts. They unite with their neighbors in worldly parties and pursuits. That a great wave of worldliness is

sweeping in upon the church none can deny. Scores have departed from their first love. They have lost out of their hearts the spirit of the advent hope. They are engrossed with the things of this world, with its ambitions, its ideals, its opportunities to make money, its fashions, its foibles, its follies. Every one who considers the condition of the church must recognize that there are many counted as members who have a name that they live and yet are dead.

The theater, the movies, the ball game, the public bathing resort, the worldly party fill a larger place in the hearts of some than do the Master and His service. Some find their chief joy in novel reading and story reading, or in listening to the jazz music which comes directly into the home through the agency of the radio. We are convinced that great evil is resulting from the use that is made of the radio in the homes of many Seventh-day Adventists. It is taking time which belongs to the study of the Word, to prayer, to church activities. And in many cases it fills the minds of the listeners with that which creates a distaste for the sober and the serious. We know of instances where even the Sabbath hours are employed in following sporting events or listening to music and speeches which are widely separate from the spirit of Sabbath observance. Of what avail is it to keep our children from theatrical performances if we bring the theater into the home, and permit our children to listen to ribald songs and speeches through the radio as pernicious as any they would hear at the public entertainment?

As a matter of fact, we must educate our families to love only the pure and the refined in literature, music, and art. We must educate them to distinguish at the public library between good and bad books and magazines. We must train them to avoid the contaminating influence of ribaldry and foolish music as they would that of evil associates.

This is their only hope. These agencies of communication are here to stay. We cannot eliminate them from the world. Satan will employ the ministry of literature, art, music, to the end of time in order to ensnare souls. On the other hand, these same agencies will be employed for holy uses and to further gospel work. We shall find ourselves constantly at the cross-currents. We must decide daily into which current we shall be swept. In this decision, as in every other, we shall need that fine

discrimination, that sense of propriety, that discernment, which can come only from the Spirit's leading. But God will guide all who seek Him sincerely to know what to do in every detail of life.

Power from Above

"Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field." Zech. 10:1. This is the time for rain. God is graciously wait-

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

AT THE PLACE OF THE SEA

Have you come to the Red Sea place in your life,
Where, in spite of all you can do,
There is no way out, there is no way back,
There is no other way but—through?

Then wait on the Lord with a trust secure
Till the night of your fear is gone;
He will send the wind, He will keep the floods,
When He says to your soul, "Go on."

And His hand will lead you through, clear through,
Ere the watery walls roll down;
No foe can reach you, no waves can touch,
Nor the mightiest sea can drown.

The tossing billows may rear their crests,
Their foam at your feet may break,
But over their bed you shall walk dry shod,
In the path that our Lord will make.

In the morning watch 'neath the lifted cloud,
You shall see but the Lord alone,
When He leads you on from the place of the sea
To a land you have not known.

And your fears shall pass as your foes have
passed,

You shall be no more afraid;
You shall sing His praise in a better place,
A place that His hand has made.

—Annie Johnson Flint.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

ing to bestow His Spirit upon His children. Shall we permit Him to fill our hearts, and quicken our spiritual life? He will do this if we will bid Him welcome. Some will receive the Spirit, and it depends upon each individual as to whether he shall be of that number. By confessing and putting away sin, by unbarring the door of the heart and removing the rubbish of pride and worldliness, the Spirit may be bidden to enter, and He will come in most graciously and freely.

There will be some who will enter upon this work of preparation, and all may do so. Even now the lines are being drawn among God's people. Some are advancing with the light. With open hearts and receptive minds they stand ready to advance with the Spirit's leading. Others, indifferent and unconcerned, are falling into a state of lethargy and slumber.

Where do you stand? Is Christ your personal Saviour from sin? Do you

walk in God's light, or are you walking in the sparks of your own kindling? Is the truth more precious to you than ever before? Is your interest in its progress and ultimate triumph greater? Do you apply its principles more and more to your daily life? Do you have an earnest burden for the salvation of men who are in darkness? Do you gladly and cheerfully toil and labor for them? Ah, these are important considerations. Well and good if they can be answered in the affirmative; but sad, indeed, if a negative reply must be returned. Then there is cause for contrition, for searching of heart, for pleading for divine help.

These are perilous times. We are passing over the enchanted ground; and only by a lively sense of our own weakness, and of our need of the help of Him who has trodden the way before us, shall we be able to maintain our spiritual life and activity. The Spirit of God is the only power that can keep us. Oh, we need more of Christ and His Spirit in our personal experience, in every department of our work! With Him we may triumph; without Him we are lost. As the apostles before the day of Pentecost prayed for the outpouring of the Spirit, so we should pray today. We, as did they, need the Pentecostal shower; and we likewise may obtain it by humbling our hearts, putting away our sins, and seeking God with a waiting, trusting faith. May this be the spirit that shall actuate every believer.

—*—

"Spiritual feebleness, lack of power, is the curse of the church. A life of conscious, daily victory, is gloriously possible to every believer. Yea, it is a positive necessity if we would 'see Him as He is.' This personal holiness, personal victory over sin, is the greatest asset this denomination can possess for the finishing of the work in this generation. May it not be that in seeking after this experience we shall witness a revival of primitive godliness as is promised in the time of the latter rain?" —"Australian Record."

—*—

"In the time of distress and perplexity of nations, there will be many who have not given themselves wholly to the corrupting influences of the world, and the service of Satan, who will humble themselves before God, and turn to Him with their whole heart and find acceptant and pardon." —"Testimonies," Vol. I, p. 269.

(READING FOR SABBATH, DECEMBER 10)

PREPARING TO MEET GOD

By J. L. McELHANY

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Amos 4:12. These words of inspiration have a special application today. This call to prepare to meet God is directed to the people of God themselves. It indicates that there is something definite to be done before they are ready to meet their Judge and Deliverer. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we give earnest heed to this call.

As Seventh-day Adventists we stand before the world, professing to be a people preparing for translation into the kingdom of God. We are proclaiming a message to the world that has for its real purpose the saving of men and women from sin, and preparing them for the coming of Christ. We believe the Scriptures, and are familiar with the promises of Jesus' coming. We have occupied ourselves with the proclamation of God's closing message to the world. We comply with some or all of the external standards of the church. We profess to obey all the commandments, including the true Sabbath, and it is our practice to pay tithes and offerings. Yet with all our belief and work for others, we ourselves need to prepare to meet God. Whether we recognize that need or not, it is a fact, for His word reveals our need, and tells us that we should prepare to meet Him. That is His message to the church today.

We may possibly deceive ourselves by trusting to formal, outward compliance to certain religious principles, while at the same time sin is cherished in the life. It may be that a love for the world is allowed to fill the heart. Or a hard, critical spirit toward others is cultivated. Or, perhaps in the heart there may be an evil spirit of backbiting, malice, and hatred manifested toward some. Any one or all of these things will keep one out of the kingdom of God. No one is prepared to meet God who cherishes sin of any kind in the life. No one is prepared to meet God who fails to do the work He gives to each one to do as his part in preparing others to meet Him.

The Preparation Required

It is fitting that we should consider just what preparation to meet God means in practical life. Such a con-

sideration should be very personal. In order for this consideration to be effective we need to realize the perils that beset us. The world today is filled with dangers of many kinds. They abound on every hand. They affect physical life and safety, as well as the spiritual life. It is my profound conviction that the greatest personal peril facing each of us just now in preparing to meet God, is that we may sit here today and permit this Week of Prayer to close without breaking the spell of apathy, indifference, and lukewarmness that binds us. Our contacts with the world are deadening to spiritual life. Everywhere we see sin, evil, and wickedness prevailing. All this may have a paralyzing effect upon our spiritual well-being. May God help us to be aroused to our peril and to have every band of wickedness loosed.

We should approach this consideration with intense earnestness, with a burning desire to overcome all sin. There must be complete and unreserved self-surrender of the life and the will to the Lord. Every sinful practice must be given up, every wicked way abandoned, all evil thinking put away. Those who are truly preparing to meet God will not be found following the ways of the world in its fashions, in attending theaters and shows, in cherishing worldly amusements and frivolous entertainments. They will not be found in any unhallowed partnership with the world in business, or social lines. They will not be violating the word of God by intermarrying with unbelievers. They will not be violating their marriage vows in having recourse to divorce courts.

Those who are preparing to meet God will be a separated people,—separated from the world and the ways of the world, separated from sin. What a deep work of repentance ought to be seen! What a confession of wrong there should be. should take place! This word is given us:

"In both the Old and New Testaments the Lord has positively enjoined upon His people to be distinct from the world, in spirit, in pursuits, in practice, to be a holy nation, a peculiar people. The east is not farther from the west than are the children of light, in cus-

toms, practices, and spirit, from the children of darkness. And this distinction will be more marked, more decided, as we near the close of time."—*Mrs. E. G. White, in "Review and Herald," Nov. 12, 1914.*

In the light of these solemn words, it is evident that preparing to meet God is a progressive experience. We are not to be satisfied with the past. We are not to be satisfied with our spiritual condition today. As the appointed time to meet our God draws rapidly nearer, we are to do a deeper, more thorough work of heart searching. Again we read:

"It is not a profession of faith, or a name registered in the church book, that constitutes us children of God. It is a vital connection with Christ. We must be one with Him, imbued with His Spirit, partakers of the divine nature, crucified to the world with its affections and lusts, renewed in knowledge and true holiness."—*Ibid.*

The World Resolved Into Two Classes

Today the people of this world are divided into many classes and castes. There are the rich and the poor, the great and the humble, the learned and the ignorant, the rulers and the subjects, those with position and power, and the outcasts. But in the day of Jesus' coming there will be but two classes—those who are ready and those who are unready. Social standing will mean nothing in that day. Worldly standards and distinctions, fame and position, will not avail in helping any one in that time. How significant are the words of Jesus—"And they *that were ready* went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." Matt. 25:10

Those who are prepared to meet God at that time are described in these words: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:9.

The other class, made up of those who are unprepared, is described in the following words of Scripture: "And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and

hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6:14-17.

What a serious and solemn thought it is that perhaps during this very service today we may ourselves decide which of these two classes we shall belong. How important it is that we give earnest attention to making the preparation necessary to meet God. This exhortation is given us:

"We are facing events that closely precede the coming of the Lord. At this time it behooves us to be faithful, to guard well our words and actions. Let us not trifle with eternal realities. Those who would be prepared for the coming of Christ must make diligent work for eternity. They have no time to lose; for the end of all things is at hand. Let heart and mind be sanctified by the truths of the Word. Give evidence that you are preparing for the solemn events of eternity."—*Mrs. E. G. White, in "Review and Herald," Feb. 8, 1912.*

Beloved brethren and sisters, how much nearer is the end of all things today than when these words were written twenty-six years ago! We had no time to lose then, but how much less do we have today in which to make our heart preparation to meet the coming King!

The Disappointment of Those Unprepared

A terrible disappointment is awaiting those who fail to be ready. Let us read further:

"Christ is soon coming in glory, and when His majesty is revealed, the world will wish that they had His favor. At that time we shall all desire a place in the mansions of heaven; but those who do not confess Christ now in word, in life, in character, cannot expect that He will confess them then before His Father and the holy angels. By those who have denied Him, the cry will be raised, even to the mountains, 'Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?'"—*Id., April 28, 1891.*

On the other hand, what a touching picture is drawn of those who will be ready to meet their Lord:

"O, how happy will those be who have made themselves ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb, who are robed in the righteousness of Christ, and reflect is lovely image! They will

have on the pure white linen which is the righteousness of saints, and Christ will lead them by the side of living waters; God will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and they will have the life that runs parallel with the life of God."

—*Ibid.*

In view of our great need at this time, what earnestness, what striving after God, what entreaty in prayer, what repentance, what confession of sin, what turning from the world, what seeking for forgiveness, what desire for holiness and righteousness, should fill every one of us on this closing day of the Week of Prayer! We should no longer trifle indifferently with our own eternal welfare. This spirit of indifference is described in the words of Scripture: "And there is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee." Isa. 64:7.

May God stir us mightily today. Unless He does, only disappointment may await us. This scene is given us: "I can not represent to you how terrible in that day will be the disappointment of those who in this life have chosen to follow their own will instead of the will and way of God. The low standard of the world is not Christ's standard. The world's measurement of righteousness is not His measurement. Those only who in their probationary time use their capabilities to honor and glorify God will hear from His lips the benediction and welcome: 'Well done, good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"—*Id., Feb. 8, 1912.*

Important and Solemn Questions

It is a fitting thing on a solemn day of prayer and seeking God like this, that we should seriously ask ourselves some questions, like the following ones from the servant of the Lord:

"The Lord is coming. If He were to come today, would you be ready to meet Him? Have you made your peace with Him? Do you desire to be sent away from God's presence to share in the humiliation and punishment of Satan and his angels? If, during your lifetime you robbed God of the service that He has purchased with His own blood, if you spend your time in idle talk and foolish amusement, you will lose heaven. Can you afford to barter away for worldly pleasure the gift of eternal life?"—*Id., Feb. 15, 1912.*

Some very solemn and important questions are propounded in this appeal. We cannot afford to barter away eternal life at any cost. Shall worldly pleas-

ure or sinful indulgence tempt us to turn away from the Lord and thus lose eternal life? God forbid! The visitation of His wrath upon those who reject Him need not come upon us. Thank God! there is still an open door of grace and mercy to every soul who will enter! This comforting word is given:

"The day will come when the awful denunciation of God's wrath will be uttered against those who have persisted in their disloyalty to Him. The day will come when He must speak and do terrible things in righteousness against the transgressors of His law. But you need not be among those who will come under His wrath. We are living in the day of His salvation. The light from the cross of Calvary is shining forth in clear, bright rays, revealing Jesus, our sacrifice for sin. 'We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.'"—*Ibid.*

God will not leave us helpless in our struggle against sin if we only turn to Him in repentance. Like the father of the prodigal son, He will meet us on the way back to our Father's house:

"God desires to restore His image in you. Believe that He is your Helper. Resolve to become acquainted with Him. As you draw nigh to him with confession and repentance, He will draw nigh to you with mercy and forgiveness."—*Ibid.*

On our part there should be confession and repentance, on His part there is mercy and forgiveness. What comfort there is in that fact!

How useless for us even to consider what it means to prepare to meet God unless we fix our faith solely upon the Lord Jesus Christ. It is just as true today as it was in Peter's that "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. This great and vital truth is beautifully set forth in the following statements:

"Only through faith in Christ's name can the sinner be saved. He is the Head of the new creation. He is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the prophet, priest, and king of all regenerate humanity. He is Immanuel, 'God with us.' The eternal Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and of His fulness have we all received. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith."—*Id., Nov. 3, 1904.*

The experience called for now on the part of every believer is to exercise that true faith in the Lord Jesus which appropriates His righteousness. For we

are instructed that "Both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ."—*"Desire of Ages,"* p. 300, (small edition).

"Those who reject the gift of Christ's righteousness are rejecting the attributes of character which would constitute them the sons and daughters of God. They are rejecting that which alone could give them a fitness for a place at the marriage feast."—*"Christ's Object Lessons,"* pp. 316, 317.

"The plan of salvation opens before the repenting, believing sinner prospects for eternity which the greatest stretch of his imagination cannot compass. If man will keep God's law *through faith in Christ*, the treasures of heaven will be at his disposal; but the opposite of this will be the result if we refuse to obey God."—Mrs. E. G. White, in *"Review and Herald,"* Feb. 4, 1890.

Eternal Life the Gift of God

In the following words some very precious instruction is given us in regard to this life of faith that every true child of God and every worker for Him must possess and exercise:

"That simple faith which takes God at His word should be encouraged. God's people must have that faith which will lay hold of divine power; for by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.' Those who believe that God for Christ's sake has forgiven their sins, should not, through temptation, fail to press on to fight the good fight of faith. Their faith should grow stronger until their Christian life, as well as their words, shall declare, 'The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin.'"—*"Gospel Workers,"* p. 161.

It is not sufficient, however, to receive by faith the imputed righteousness of Christ. Our faith must be constantly fed that it may grow stronger and more effective in the personal life. Faith must be continually nourished by the bread of heaven. Jesus said:

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall *live forever*." He told the woman at the well of Samaria that He would give her "living water," and that "whosoever drinketh of the water I shall give him shall *never thirst*; but that the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." To encourage us in the enjoyment of such unspeakable blessings in the life of faith, we have these assuring words:

"A bright light shines upon our pathway today, and it leads to increased faith in Jesus. We must receive every ray of light, and walk in it, that it may not be our condemnation in the judgment. Our duties and obligations become more important as we obtain more distinct views of truth. Light makes manifest and reproves the errors that were concealed in darkness; and as light comes, the life and character of men must change correspondingly, to be in harmony with it. Sins that were once sins of ignorance, because of the blindness of the mind, can no more be indulged in without incurring guilt. As increased light is given, men must be

PRAY—GIVE—GO

Three things the Master hath to do;
And we who serve Him here below
And long to see His kingdom come,
May pray, or give, or go.

He needs them all,—the open hand,
The willing feet, the asking heart,—
To work together, and to weave
The threefold cord that shall not part.

Nor shall the giver count his gift
As greater than the worker's deed;
Nor he in turn his service boast
Above the prayers that voice the need.

Not all can go; not all can give
To arm the others for the fray;
But young or old, or rich or poor,
Or strong or weak, we all can pray.

Pray that the full hands open wide
To speed the message on its way;
That those who hear the call may go;
And pray that other hearts may pray.
—Annie Johnson Flint.

reformed, elevated, and refined by it, or they will be more perverse and stubborn than before the light came."—*Id.*, p. 162.

The longing desire of our returning Lord is to find His people ready to meet Him. In exhorting His disciples and us, when the shadow of the cross was already falling across His pathway, His plea was, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." The appeal is not so much to be getting ready, but to *be* ready. In the parable of the ten virgins, the five wise ones were *ready* when the bridegroom came, and went joyously in with him to the wedding. The five foolish virgins were only *getting* ready, and found the door shut against them.

God is not willing that even one of His little ones should be shut out of the kingdom and left to perish. His heart's desire is that every one should have life, and have it abundantly. It is

for this reason that in yearning love He sends the message to us, "Prepare to meet thy God."

To the church today comes the call of the Lord through the prophet: "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake they self from the dust; arise and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." Isa. 52:1, 2.

The time has come for a great spiritual awakening in the church. There must be a real work of revival and reformation in the personal life of each believer.

With the many precious and comforting words that our ears have heard today, from the Bible and from the servant of the Lord, with the great gift of Jesus' righteousness received by faith, and with the abounding provision for the feeding and growth of our faith, should not every one of us arise and consecrate ourselves anew to God today? Shall we not dedicate ourselves wholly to the work of winning other souls, and helping prepare them also for the soon-coming of our Lord and Saviour? If we will do this, dear fellow-believers, we shall have a Spirit-filled church, we shall be strengthened with power from on high, and the work of God in the earth will be quickly finished. Above all things we shall not only be instrumental in getting others ready, but ourselves heed the solemn admonition given us in love: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."

HERE LET THE OFFERING BE TAKEN

"God has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. He provides opportunities and opens channels of working. If His people are watching the indications of His providence, and are ready to co-operate with Him, they will see mighty results."—*"Prophets and Kings,"* p. 660.

The chains of habit are generally too light to be felt until they are too strong to be broken.—D. Johnson.

The Week of Prayer for the Children

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS TO LEADERS

Called to lead a group of children into a close fellowship with Jesus! And, at such a time—when the very air is laden to keep the mind occupied with light, trifling songs and stories; when at every turn the eye meets scenes fiendishly planned to sear the conscience, and to make the pleadings of the Holy Spirit distasteful; when nations are scarcely restrained from destroying each other; when internal problems in every country are promising revolution, famine, and want,—what a responsibility to stand before boys and girls and endeavor to prepare them to meet every test in the fear of God!

There should be prayer together, and in small prayer bands. Every leader should make a solemn promise to God, that no boy or girl shall go through the week without an opportunity of a quiet personal talk with him, and a prayer with him over his peculiar problems. Only thus will it be a *real* week of prayer.

Do not try to cover too much ground. Plan your time. Read the readings carefully, and mark those points and illustrations which you wish to tell your boys and girls. Do *not* read, but let each day bring its message straight from your heart to the boys and girls.

During the week, sing over and over two or three songs which may become linked with the blessings of the week. Young people of today are losing much by not singing the old hymns which inspired our pioneers. Sing a few appropriate songs until the boys and girls know them well.

Place where they can be easily seen and memorized one or two sentences from the Spirit of prophecy, such as, "To every sincere prayer an answer will come."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 258; or "Lord take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 159.

(LESSON NO. 1, FOR SABBATH, DECEMBER 3)

WHEN JESUS WILL COME

TEXT: John 14:1-3.

One day some boys were chasing a rabbit. They followed it into an opening in the ground. Crawling through a tunnel, they found themselves in one of the largest and most beautiful caves ever discovered. But it was dark and the boys were in danger. They could not see the pits before them, they would be hopelessly lost underground if they got beyond the ray of light that penetrated through the tunnel they entered.

So it is in this world of sin. As beautiful as it is, it is full of darkness and sorrow, and Satan has made many pitfalls for our feet, which we would never see unless we keep our eyes on Jesus.

When Sister White was a young girl, she was privileged to see the glory of the place Jesus is preparing for us. Here is what she says of it. "There I saw most beautiful houses, that had the appearance of silver, supported by four pillars set with pearls. . . . I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried out, 'They will never fade.' Next I saw a field of tall grass most glorious to behold; it was living green, and had a reflection of silver and gold."—*Testimonies*, Vol. I, p. 68.

Sister White wanted to stay there, where everything was so bright, but she was told that she must come back to the earth. This is what she tells us about it. "Then an angel bore me gently down

to this dark world. Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer, all things of earth look so dreary."

And the earth is dark for many boys and girls. James had a happy home, although it was very humble. Then there was an accident. The father was killed,

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

DEAR LITTLE HEADS IN THE PEW

In the morn of the holy Sabbath
I like in the church to see
The dear little children clustered,
Worshipping there with me.
I am sure that the gentle pastor,
Whose words are like summer dew,
Is cheered as he gazes over
The dear little heads in the pew.

Faces earnest and thoughtful,
Innocent, grave, and sweet;
They look in the congregation
Like lilies among the wheat,
And I think that the tender Master,
Whose mercies are ever new,
Has a special benediction
For dear little heads in the pew.

When they hear "The Lord is my Shepherd,"
Or "Suffer the babes to come,"
They are glad that the loving Jesus
Has given the lambs a home—
A place of their own with His people.
He cares for me and for you,
But close in His arms He gathers
The dear little heads in the pew.

So I love in the great assembly
On the Sabbath morning to see
The dear little children clustered,
And worshipping there with me;
For I know that the precious Saviour,
Whose mercies are ever new,
Has a special benediction
For the dear little heads in the pew.

—Selected.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

the mother became ill, and before long there was little to eat. Day after day James sought to earn a little, but times were hard, and night after night he prayed that God would provide their necessary food. Yes, it was a dark world for him. Then there was Anita, born blind, never to see the sunshine nor the flowers until her eyes shall be opened at Jesus' coming. Worse than all this, though, is the darkness and sorrow in the lands where there is war. The sun may be ever so bright, and out of the blue will come bombs that bring death and suffering even to little children.

Jesus knew it would be this way, and so He told us that we were to look to Him, and how that many of these very things which make for us so much sorrow here, would remind us that His coming was near. Just as the only safety for the boys in the cavern was to keep looking toward the light, so our only safety for the boys in the cavern was to keep looking toward the light, so our only safety here is to look to Him.

How important for us to talk about and love His appearing, and be ready to meet Him!



"God calls upon all, both preachers and people, to awake. All heaven is astir. The scenes of earth's history are fast closing. We are amid the perils of the last days. Greater perils are before us, and yet we are not awake. This lack of activity and earnestness in the cause of God is dreadful. This death stupor is from Satan."—*Testimonies*, Vol. I, pp. 260, 261.

(LESSON NO. 2, FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4)

THE CALL TO THE MARRIAGE SUPPER

TEXT: "And they all with one consent began to make excuses." Luke 14:18.

Phyllis May ran into the room. "Mother, I am invited to a party, and it is going to be Elizabeth Ann's and you know her daddy is rich and we are going to have ice-cream, and her mother knows nice games. And, mother, I want to wear my best pink dress."

The excited little girl hardly paused for breath, and how she planned for that party! Sometimes older folks are invited to appear before a king, or a queen. And how they prepare! The ladies must wear the proper dress, and the men a certain kind of suit. Then they must practice how to go before the king, and how to leave. Yes, they spend a great deal of time and money in getting ready.

But a greater King has sent out invitations to visit Him, the King of the universe! His beloved Son is to have a marriage supper, and He is inviting His friends. How are they answering the invitation? Jesus told a story about a king here on earth illustrating it.

He said that the invitations were sent out, but that instead of honoring them, people treated the messengers shamefully, killing some of them. When the king heard of it, he sent his armies and destroyed those ungrateful people. Then he sent his servants to others with the same wonderful invitation, Matthew 22:1-14.

But let us stop and think about some of the people who refused the invitation. In the parable, it says, "They all with one consent began to make excuse." One had bought land, another some oxen. The truth of the matter was, they were interested in their business, or in their good times, more than in the invitation. How about today? Do we think more of the parties, or of the things we have, perhaps of our clothes, than we do of the invitation? Let us test ourselves. Do I dislike to tell people that I am a Christian? Which would I rather read, a story book, or my Bible? Do I like to pray?

Many people cannot afford to accept an invitation to meet an earthly queen because they cannot buy the necessary clothes. But the King of the universe is preparing a wedding garment for each of His guests. His garment is pure and

spotless, and it is one that not one of us can buy; but if we will accept it, He gives it to us. He has promised. "This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every

repenting, believing soul." — "Christ's Object Lessons," p. 311. "When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness." — *Id.*, p. 312.

(LESSON NO. 3, FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 5)

KEEPING FIT

TEXT: 1 John 2:14. (Emphasize word "strong.")

How many of you ever have been in a race? (Tell how athletes train for years, how they sacrifice pleasure, how they eat simply, how they must not indulge in any excess, if they are to win.)

Paul spoke of this years ago. 1 Cor. 9:25. And then He asks us if we are willing to do even more for the prize God offers. God himself has sent a message to the young men who are *strong*. Why do you suppose that He is so anxious for us to have clear minds and strong bodies? There are three reasons that we will talk of today.

First, in our day Satan knows that he has but a short time, and he will try every way to ensnare us. (Read Rev. 12:12.) We must have clear minds to recognize the danger. God says of Satan: "He gains easy access to those who are in bondage to appetite. . . . Those who would have clear minds to discern Satan's devices must have their physical appetites under the control of reason and conscience." — "Messages to Young People," pp. 236, 237.

How are we to wear this robe? It says it will be given to those who *repent* and *believe* and *submit*.

John disobeyed mother. He thought she would never know. But God knew, and God didn't want John to come up to the time of trouble with an unforgotten sin. And so He put it into John's heart to be uncomfortable. He confessed, and made things right. Caroline had a bracelet given to her, and how she loved jewelry! But when mother read to her how Jesus had asked His children not to wear such things, she put it away. It was a struggle, but Jesus won in her heart. Caroline believed Jesus' word, and gave up her wishes for His sake. God is preparing a cover-

ing for boys and girls who are like that.

(Illustrate the lesson further from the experiences of boys and girls you know, showing what it means to repent and submit to God's way. Let this lesson close with a reason of prayer for definite victories in the lives of those before you.)

Satan gives no warning when he tempts us. So many times we fall because we had not time to think things out. How we need a quick mind to see and sense the danger, and to reach up to Jesus! God is so particular about this that He has sent us much instruction. (Show the book "Ministry of Healing," and read some of the chapter headings to show how much He has advised. Emphasize the need of simple food. Tell how we are advised to abstain from meat because of its poisons and stimulating effect. Speak of the instruction on dress, rest, and exercise, etc.)

Second, if we live to see Jesus come, we will pass through the most terrible times that this world has ever known. There will be dangers, and wars, and finally persecution on every side. But even more terrible will be the judgments of God. We are told that even now they are beginning to fall on the earth. Do you not think it wise to take God's counsel and make your bodies strong so you may be ready for these trials?

Third, another reason why we need strong bodies and quick minds at a time such as this, is because God has given us a tremendous task to accomplish. John may need a strong muscle to win the game here on the school-ground, but over in the wilderness of some country where he may go at God's bidding, he will need greater strength and more steady endurance in order to stand the trying climate and the dan-

gerous travel needed to save the lives of others who know not God. God needs our best at a time such as this, and we must be ready to give it.

A SUGGESTION

The reader is referred to statements given in "Testimonies," Volume 9, pages 11 to 18. These statements impress upon us that we are already in the time for which God wants us to prepare. Some of the statements are quoted:

"We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.

"The agencies of evil are combining their forces, and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.

"The condition of things in the world shows that troublous times are right upon us. The daily papers are full of indications of a terrible conflict in the near future. Bold robberies are of frequent occurrence. Strikes are common. Thefts and murders are committed on every hand. Men possessed of demons are taking the lives of men, women, and little children. Men have become infatuated with vice, and every species of evil prevails. . . .

"Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of trouble that is coming,—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation,—God's chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host can not destroy them; for angels that excel in strength will protect them."

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinions; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

(LESSON NO. 4, FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6)

THE HOME AND THE CHURCH

TEXT: Mal. 4:6. (Emphasize the thought of the children's hearts being knit with one purpose to those of their parents. Tell what preparations are made in a city that is going to entertain a president, or some notable man,—how streets are carefully cleaned and put in order, how dwellings are redecorated, how a committee is chosen to welcome him and to have everything in readiness.)

The first time Jesus came to this world, He came as a little babe. The second time He will come for you and me, if we are ready. Both times He has sent someone to prepare the way, not to select nice homes or to build beautiful roads, but to prepare the hearts of His people to meet Him.

The first time Jesus came, John the Baptist was sent to be His messenger. He was instructed never to touch strong drink, and to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." Luke 1:13-17. This was called the "Elijah message." See Matt. 11:14.

The whole world is now in open defiance to God. Men have refused to keep His law, they have turned to their own ways. (Read 2 Tim. 3:1, 2.) But in these last days God is going to have some boys and girls who will be brave enough to say, "We will obey God, and keep His commandments." Satan will do everything possible to weaken them, he will even threaten their lives, but they will be so rooted in their determination to obey God that they will die rather than disobey Him. Boys and girls, obedience like that does not come all at once. It is the result of forming the habit of obedience. (Illustrate how the tree will grow as it is bent when small. A thread is easily broken, but doubled not quite so easily, etc.) God wants us to have such habits of obedience that they cannot be broken whatever the test may be. Such habits must begin in our homes while we are young.

In times of great danger we must obey God exactly whether we understand the reason or not. (Illustrate with stories of Lot's wife, and of Nadab and Abihu.)

It is so easy to try to excuse little disobediences. Father had told Richard to put the tools away just as soon as

he was through using them. But company came, and Richard thought, "I can put them away a little later just as well." Then he forgot, and it rained and the tools were rusted. It took him hours to scour the rust off.

"But, mother, I thought that you would not care if I went to Margery's house, for her mother asked me," said Marie as she was explaining why she had not come home straight from school. It was just a little disobedience, but Marie missed a nice ride.

Boys and girls, if we are to be ready to meet Jesus, we must learn this "Elijah message" ourselves. How can we best show our love?—by obedience. (After your talk, have an earnest season of prayer, asking God to help each child to learn the lesson of obedience in the home and in the school, in order that he may better obey God in the test of these last days.)

SHOW HIM YOUR HANDS

A little girl lay dying. When very young she had been left to care for her motherless little brothers and sisters, and to keep the home together. Realizing that her life was ending, she grieved, fearing she had done no work for Jesus. "What shall I say to Him?" she asked her sister.

The sister replied, "Say nothing. Just show Him your hands."

Our love to God is shown by our service to those about us. All the work you are doing in school and in the home is welcome to God. Those roughened hands are more beautiful than the white, soft hands of idleness.

When Jesus wants to show us His love, He has no need to speak. He just shows us His hands! There is a scar in each where the nails went through on the cross. Each scar seems to say, "I loved you and gave Myself for you."

It is deeds that matter. What does your life say? Can you show Jesus your hands marked by loving service?—"Our Little Friend" (Australia).

Oh, where does all the money go? Foolish little money lendings!

Thoughtless little money spendings! That's where all the money goes!

(LESSON NO. 5, FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7)

INTO ALL THE WORLD

TEXT: "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me." Acts 1:8.

In olden days the Greeks used to have a race of torch-bearers. Men bearing flaming torches stood in a line. In the distance stood another line of men waiting to carry the torch that would be handed to him, and so on until everyone along the course had seen the torch. This was called a relay race.

When Jesus went away, He left on earth a few who truly believed on Him. Someone has imagined that Jesus and the angel Gabriel talked it over after Jesus reached heaven. Gabriel had asked Him who was to bear the light to all the world. "I am counting on Peter, James, and John, and the others who know Me," Jesus answered. "But, Master, they are such weak men, what if they should fail?" And the Master answered quietly, "I have no other plan, I am counting on them."

And Peter, James, and John did not fail. After the Holy Spirit came into their hearts they feared nothing. They endured hardship, hunger, and death itself; but they carried the torch on to others. Paul joined the torch bearers. He endured shipwreck, he was stoned, he was beaten, and finally gave up his life; but his letters and his example are still lighting the path for many others.

I think of Glandina who was just a little slave girl, but told her heathen persecutors that she was a Christian, and would do no wrong. She chose to face hungry lions rather than to drop her light. I think of Margaret who sang while giving up her life. She was put to death because she refused to give up her faith in Jesus. I think of the lad William Hunter who was offered riches and honor if he would stop reading the Bible, but rather than deny Christ, he let them kill him, and he became an inspiring witness to those who knew him.

And now we have come to a time when God has asked us to give our lives to carrying the gospel. Here is what He tells us. "Every youth, every child, has a work to do for the honor of God and the uplifting of humanity."—"Education," p. 58.

What are we going to do about it? (Tell the story of David Livingston.) What was the secret of that wonderful

life? As a boy he had truly given his heart to God. Then he had trained himself. Each moment was precious. Although working from six o'clock in the morning until late at night, David trained his mind to think by reading good books that he fastened up before him. He trained his hand to do thoroughly every task that came his way, though it might be no more than sweep-

ing a room. He was bearing the torch at home before he ever carried it into the dark jungles of Africa.

(Tell the stories of other great missionaries and how they were faithful even as children. Use some recent examples of sacrifice or bravery gleaned from our own papers. Close your talk with the thought that boys and girls are preparing in their homes to bear the torch. Discuss ways of bearing witness for Jesus in their own homes, and in their neighborhoods. Close with a short consecration service and a call to witnessing.)

(LESSON NO. 6, FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8)

SACRIFICIAL GIVING

TEXT: "God so loved . . . that He gave." John 3:16.

(Have the above text posted where all the children can see it. Repeat it, emphasizing "love" and "gave." Begin with a praise service in which the children recount God's many gifts to them. Call their minds to the many gifts we take for granted, such as sight, hearing, etc. Then speak of the beautiful gift of Christ.)

Years ago when God asked the children of Israel for a dwelling in order that He might live with them, they were ready to give. Women brought their finest linen and purple and their jewels. Men brought out their treasures of gold, and of the wealth they had in precious gems. More than this, people offered their services. Women spent hours in fine needlework, while the men fashioned the walls and furniture. The people gave until God said, "It is enough." And boys and girls, if we truly understand what God is doing for us, we cannot help giving to Him.

Two wealthy Christians, a lawyer and a merchant, joined a party which was making a tour around the world. Before they started, their minister earnestly requested them to observe some interesting thing and bring a report back to him. One day in Africa they saw in a field by the roadside a boy pulling a plow while an old man held the handles and directed it. The lawyer was amused and took a snapshot of the scene.

"That's a rare picture! I suppose they are very poor," the lawyer remarked to the guide of the party.

"Yes," was the quiet reply. "When

the church was being built, they were eager to give something to it, but they had no money; so they sold their only ox and gave the money to the church. This spring they are doing the work of the ox themselves."

The lawyer and the merchant were silent. Then one remarked, "That must have been a *real* sacrifice."

"They did not call it that," said the guide. "They thought it was fortunate that they had an ox to sell."

The lawyer took that picture to his minister and told him the story. "I want to double my pledge to the church," he said. "I have never known what sacrifice for the church meant till a converted heathen taught me."—"Adventures in Christian Living," pp. 143, 144.

Over in China there are young Chinese men who so appreciate what Jesus has done for them, that they are going without food one day each week that they may give more to God. Over in India, there are boys and girls who are so grateful that Jesus has found them, that they have asked their teachers to give them less food that they may give more to Him.

(Close your talk with a few earnest sentences about the tithe. Bring out the fact that God blesses as we give, and we have more than before. Tell how God has kept pests and harm from the property of tithepayers, while those around them have been destroyed.)

—•—

The sooner you learn to be hurt and not injured, the better for you.—*Will Carleton*.

(LESSON NO. 7, FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9)

DANGERS THREATENING THE CHURCH

TEXT: Matt. 13:3-8.

Thousands had come to hear Jesus. Yet as Jesus looked into the faces of the people before Him, He knew that although everyone there should hear His words, some would not take them into their hearts. So He told them a story to warn them concerning this great danger.

First, He spoke of a *hard-beaten path*, and how impossible it is for seed to push its roots down into such soil. God has told us that our hearts get that way when we choose to think only of our own pleasures. "Like the hard-beaten path, trodden down by the feet of men and beasts, is the heart that becomes a highway for the world's traffic, its pleasures and sins."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 44.

Do we think more of our parties and good times than we do of God? Helen and Isabel were whispering about something in Sabbath school. Their teacher tried hard to make the lesson interesting, but they would not even listen. The angels turned sorrowfully away, and Satan exulted, for he had made their hearts so hard that the seeds of truth could not be planted.

Second, there is the *stony ground*. How gladly some people hear the truth! Boys and girls love their Bible stories, they like to store their memory verses in their minds, but somehow some boys and girls do not change their lives to fit what they learn. For instance, in God's word, we are told over and over how terrible it is to lie and deceive. We are told about Ananias and Sapphira. And yet some will continue to lie just the same. Boys and girls, unless we truly let the words of God change us and our habits, we will have stony-ground hearts. Wanting to be saved, just listening, without acting, will do no good. Remember that Jesus has warned us that many will be lost while hoping and wanting to be saved.

Third, there is the *soil that is full of weeds and thorns*. Let us make a list of things that choke out God's word. (Help them mention story reading, movies, and the many things which make God's word distasteful.)

It is Satan's studied plan to keep the children's minds so busy with his material that they will have no time for

God's. Exciting stories ruin the mind, and make it impossible for anyone to enjoy God's word.

The popular music which so often screams out from the radio by the hour, makes it impossible to hear the quiet pleadings of the Spirit. Read Eph. 4:

(LESSON NO. 8, FOR SABBATH, DECEMBER 10)

PREPARING TO MEET GOD

TEXT: "Prepare to meet thy God." Amos 4:12.

Ten days before the Day of Atonement in ancient Israel, there was a great blast of trumpets which sounded through all the land so that everyone would know it was time to get ready. We can well imagine how fathers and mothers, boys and girls, searched their lives each day, how they asked forgiveness for being cross, or unfair with each other—for in ten days God Himself would search their lives.

Before the Flood, God sent a warning to everyone. Noah preached for 120 years. Before Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, God sent angels to warn the people. And so too, in our day God has warned us when the day of judgment for the earth was to begin, and also He has sent us some signs.

One of these signs was the falling of the stars and the dark day. (Tell about these events.) At that time a little girl, named Martha, lay asleep. Suddenly she was awakened by her mother and carried to the window. The heavens seemed ablaze. It looked as if it were raining stars. "What is the matter?" she cried in terror. "It must be the judgment day," answered her mother. Martha lived to be a very old woman, but she never forgot that night when the stars fell.

Sister White was a young girl when everyone was expecting Jesus to come so soon. With diligent searching of heart and humble confessions, she and her young friends came prayerfully up to the time. Often she would gather them around her and ask them if they were ready to meet Jesus.

(Finish the parable begun yesterday. Show how good soil is prepared. Tell

30, 31. (Point out how impossible it is to think of the love of Jesus while our hearts are in a turmoil of anger.) Listen to the following advice sent by God's servant to the youth. "Young men and young women, . . . say firmly: 'I will not spend precious moments in reading that which will be of no profit to me. . . . I will close my eyes to frivolous and sinful things. My ears are the Lord's and I will not listen to the subtle reasoning of the enemy.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. VII, p. 64.

the children that hard hearts must be broken and made soft. The Holy Spirit must come into them, and make us sorry for our sins. We must be willing to confess and put sin away.)

It is only the pure in heart who shall see God and inherit the kingdom of heaven. Although we may not feel that our hearts are entirely black, still we know there is sin there which Jesus must forgive. (Read 1 John 1:9.) This certainly brings us good news. We cannot understand it. We cannot see how Jesus can take a heart that is stained with sin and make it pure again. But He has promised to do this, and He will do it if we ask Him to forgive us. All we have to do is to confess our sins and trust Jesus for the rest. Then we may become pure and clean as He is.

(The leader should have clearly in mind these important steps: repentance, confession, and reformation, all of which come to those who seek Jesus. Make the way very simple. Show the part that studying the Sabbath-school lesson each day plays in keeping us in Jesus. Show the children how necessary it is to ask Jesus to keep them day by day. Emphasize prayer and Bible study. Close your service with a testimony meeting in which each is asked to express a new determination to be ready in this hour of judgment.)

—*—
"Pray on! Pray on, dear heart, in grief or gladness;

For earth and heaven are joined by holy prayer.

Distance is naught to Love that is eternal,

And heaven still makes thy need its care."

—ROBERT HARE

NOTES OF PROGRESS IN THE INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

From all parts of the Inter-American Division territory come reports of progress and zeal in carrying the message of salvation to every "nation, and tribe and kindred, and tongue, and people." Truly the Lord is opening doors for the entrance of this message, and the hearts of the people are being turned toward Him. We ask that God's people remember the work of ministers and people as they engage in the most important work for this time.

The following items are gleaned from correspondence and reports received.

THE EDITOR

From Guatemala

"For ten consecutive weeks I preached every night and the Lord strengthened me and filled my heart with joy, for He let me see so many precious souls and let me hear so many sincere testimonies in praise of our good God and Saviour. Imagine my surprise and rejoicing when more than seventy people asked for baptismal cards."—*José C. Aguilar.*

From Panama

"The 12th of March was a day long to be remembered in Rio Abajo, when about 150 people gathered on Sabbath morning at the place of worship. This was the occasion of the organization of a new church of thirty-four members. In the afternoon a large company gathered in the Panama City church to witness the baptism of twenty-four dear souls, eighteen of this number having come in from the Rio Abajo effort and six from the Panama City church.

"About three months later, on the 25th of June, in the presence of a large congregation in the Panama City church, twenty-two earnest souls were led to the watery grave. Seven of these were from Gamboa, eight from Rio Abajo, one from Pueblo Nuevo, and six from the Panama City Church."—*C. B. Sutton.*

From Costa Rica

"Were the number of our workers tripled in Costa Rica we would not have enough to fill the calls for Adventist meetings that are coming to us. So far this year the members of our working band have held three evangelistic efforts. Forty-five souls have been won."—*Arthur Roth.*

More Intensive Evangelism

"Our constant slogan throughout the Central American Union is 'More Intensive Evangelism.' All field leaders, as well as those of the union staff and the school faculty, have been dedicating a portion of their time to definite evangelistic work. This season has seen twenty evangelistic efforts held in this union, and we have every reason to hope that our baptisms for 1938 will be the largest in the history of the union. Our need is for more of the Spirit's power to break the stony hearts, and we also have a crying need for more workers to join those in the field, for a speedy finishing of the work."—*C. P. Cramer, of the Central American Union Mission.*

From Haiti

"Wherever one goes among the churches, miracles of God's saving grace can be seen. In one place a building has been destroyed because it was given over to evil spirits; a tree has been cut down because it was a sort of god to a family who turned to the living God; a necklace full of charms has been handed over to the local pastor; trunks full of red garments that were worn for the rebellious angels, have been burned; etc."—*A. G. Roth.*

From Jamaica

"The work in the Jamaica Conference, since our session in March, has brought to us much encouragement. In the last few months we have organized two new churches and have begun seventeen new Sabbath schools. We now have approximately 165 regular Sabbath schools. Besides this, scores of branch Sabbath schools and Sunday schools have been organized. Hubert Fletcher has encouraged the laymen of a number of the twenty-seven churches and companies in his district to hold regular evangelistic meetings four or five nights each week. As a result of these meetings, during the last two months he has been able to organize four new Sabbath schools with a baptismal class in each place. The Sabbath schools have an attendance of from ten in the smallest to fifty-three in the largest. He has baptized forty candidates already this year and expects to baptize sixty more.

"During the recent vacation period of the West Indian Training College, B. R.

Hamilton, a member of the faculty, held meetings at Plowden, south of Mandeville (where the school is located), within two or three miles of the seacoast. Since school has opened, Brother Haig, a student teacher, has been following up the meetings. As a result, sixteen were baptized a few days ago and eighteen more are in the baptismal class."—*C. E. Andross*

From Cuba

"Our greatest problem in Cuba is how to answer the many calls that come to us from the different parts of the field. Wherever we go we find interested people, and we do not have enough workers to respond to the calls. Our lay members are united with our preachers and many lay preachers are conducting meetings where we cannot send ministers. This year we have granted Lay Preachers' Certificates to twenty-nine members."—*E. J. Lorntz*

The Harvest Truly is Great

"The baptized membership of the Antillian Union at December 31, 1937, was 13,000, while the Sabbath school membership was 23,000, including the membership of our many branch Sabbath schools. Indications are that the year 1938 will see a large growth both in church and Sabbath school membership, as the baptisms thus far this year are well ahead of the same period in 1937. On every hand our workers are pressed down with heavy burdens as in this union field 'the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.'"—*H. M. Blunden, of the Antillian Union Mission.*

From Mexico

"When I receive letters telling of many churches of other faiths accepting this message *en masse*, when I read of great districts in Mexico where we have no worker, just crying out for help, I can see the Spirit of God moving upon the hearts of the people.

"When I read of a young worker, in one of these districts, saying: 'Why, brother, there are 100 souls accepting Christ here in these few days! The tears of joy are running down my face as I write and consider how the arm of the Lord is being manifested in this great region,' I long for this same grace to be imparted to each one of His faithful children."—*C. E. Moon*

The Lord is Helping Us

"The State of Tabasco, Mexico, has been, during the past few years, one of the most difficult fields in which to carry

forward missionary work, and yet our members have remained faithful and have accomplished wonders by their personal service. José Castrejón, one of the students who has been employed temporarily in that field, reports as follows to Max Fuss, the director of the mission:

"I am glad to tell you of the rich blessings we received from the Lord during our recent trip. We visited six new congregations, and marveled to see how the membership is growing. In a town called Libertad there are about 200 faithful souls.

"Brother Trinidad baptized 72 persons recently. One of our brethren walked 120 kilometers to reach the place of baptism. Another brother, 75 years of age, walked 80 kilometers one day to the nearest town, to arrange for a marriage certificate in order to be baptized.

"The work is extending in all parts of the field, even in the most fanatical districts the light is beginning to shine. Comalcalco was a place of wickedness, but our message found an entrance, and there are 43 converts in that place. Calls are coming to us from Marcuspana and El Salto de Agua, where many are waiting to be organized. Brother Trinidad and I are planning to visit them as soon as possible. We do not know how to find time to visit all these new companies, but the Lord is helping us."—C. E. Wood, of the Mexican Union Mission.

From Colombia's Capital City

"Our members are ever more faithful and many are very active. A man and his wife, whom I recently baptized, now have six other persons prepared for the baptism of service which we hope to perform soon. There are interests on all sides."—W. E. Baxter

From Venezuela

"Last year we had a large increase in tithe, and this year to date we have had an increase over that of last year. Our Sabbath school membership has shown a good increase. In the first quarter the membership was 458, the second quarter, 533.

"The writer has recently conducted an effort in our new chapel in Caracas. Local mission workers and church members have given much help in the effort. A baptismal class of twelve members has been organized."—R. O. Garner

Our Young People Active in Missionary Work

"It was interesting to remember that only a few years ago our young people

started a branch Sabbath school at Rebole, Colombia, but it has grown until now its membership is near that of the mother church in Barranquilla. Our young people are still very active in missionary work.

"God is wonderfully blessing the efforts of Brother Kinzer in this field. Their tithe increased more than a thousand pesos for the first six months of the year. During this trip more than sixty persons were baptized. Brother Kinzer expects to baptize from 150 to 200 people before the close of the year. Many more could have been baptized during this trip, but he is very careful that candidates are thoroughly prepared and ready before the sacred rite is administered."—L. V. Finster, of the Colombia-Venezuela Union.

From the French West Indies

"Our members love the message and rejoice in every opportunity of preaching the gospel. This last Ingathering campaign has been a great blessing to us all. Our young people, as well as the older ones, took hold in a strong way. In 1933 the campaign brought in the sum of 7,865 francs, and in 1938 more than 14,000 francs have been received."—A. Orville Dunn

From Dutch Guiana

"We have not as yet been able to do anything for the 3,000 Chinese and the 140,000 East Indians who are largely worshipping their own gods. We have twelve colporteurs and magazine workers who are scattering the printed page in the English and Dutch languages. Some of these are carrying the truth away up among the gold and diamond mines. People seem hungry to get hold of our literature in these places."—L. H. Gardiner

From the Leeward Islands

"It is not a question of finding an interest, but of finding the men to answer the calls. Many new companies could quickly be raised up if we had some one to send without weakening the stakes we have already driven."—A. E. Hempel

The Hour Hasteth Greatly

"God is blessing His work in this field. Let us now respond to the call for still greater service. Let us carry out the whole plan of God. The Lord is coming, the end is near, the hour hasteth greatly, in a little while we shall be unable to work with the freedom we now enjoy.

Terrible scenes are before us and what we do we must do quickly."—"Testimonies," Vol. 9, p. 101.—Gorden Oss

A Bountiful Harvest

"One of the most encouraging features of our work is the earnest way in which our lay members engage in the various lines of Home Missionary activity, as evidenced by figures gleaned from our first quarter's (1938) Home Missionary report. During the quarter 36,404 Bible readings were reported, with 85,716 missionary visits. Other items of the Home Missionary report showed correspondingly interesting figures. Over 38,000 pieces of literature were distributed. With all of this activity on the part of our church members the results from this seed during should bring in a bountiful harvest of souls."—A. R. Ogden, of the Caribbean Union Conference.



In one of the last statements of former President Coolidge is voiced this admonition: "I think that the church must preach a new birth, a change of heart, and a change of living. I feel too often this is not done." Sensing the futility of human efforts, this man, who is said to have viewed with alarm the future prospect of government and society, called for men to return to God, to the discredited doctrine taught by Jesus Christ—a new birth; to an appraisal of human need, which led the psalmist of old to cry out, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. 51:10.—"Present Truth."

DIVISION DIRECTORY

G. A. ROBERTS	-	-	President and Ministerial Assn. Sec'y
W. C. RALEY	-	-	Secretary-Treasurer
E. R. SANDERS	-	-	Assistant Sec'y-Treasurer
W. A. BERGHERM	-	-	Field Miss. Sec'y
W. L. ADAMS	-	-	Educational and Home Commission Sec'y
R. R. BREITIGAM	-	-	Missionary Volunteer, Home Missionary and S. S. Sec'y

INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION MESSENGER

W. C. Raley, Editor
G. A. Roberts, Associate Editor

Published semi-monthly as the Official Organ of the Inter-American Division Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Box 2006, Balboa, C. Z. Price 50 cents a year.

Entered at Cristobal, Canal Zone as second-class matter under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Printed at Cristobal, C. Z., Isthmus of Panama.

VOL. XV DECEMBER 1, 1938 No. 23

A GRAND PROGRAM OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT

No people on earth have a greater incentive to read and study than do Seventh-day Adventists. The times in which we live, the plan of redemption by which we are saved, the task to which we are dedicated, the responsibility which we have assumed, and the great needs which we face, all demand constant and continual individual self-improvement on our part.

Our program may be summed up thus: "To get ready to meet the Lord, and to lead others to do the same." As the solemn event of Christ's return steadily approaches, we should spare no pains, no efforts, and no sacrifice that may be necessary to the performance of our task.

For this reason our people throughout the wide world have inaugurated a gigantic plan of systematic reading and study for old and young. It is probable that no such universal program of mental and spiritual uplift, for all the members of a denomination, can be found comparable to our



Here is seen a picture of the famous *Codex Sinaiticus*, considered as the oldest Bible manuscript now in existence, save a few papyrus fragments. It was probably written in the time of Constantine I (306-337 A. D.). This copy was purchased by the British Museum from the Soviet Government of Russia at a cost of \$510,000. To us the Bible is worth far more. "None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict." (G. C., page 593). We need to study and improve more than we do.

own. Our series of Bible lectures and Bible readings; the publication of so many books, tracts, and periodicals in more than 200 languages and on all phases of human needs; our schools, sanitariums, institutes, and special programs, for the preparation of workers; our organized leadership and shepherding of the churches and interests, are some of the constant educational features of our program.

Besides these, special Reading Courses have been prepared and outlined for our individual edification. In every language, country, and clime, it is the endeavour of our leaders to make this provision. In order to make it possible for all to have these books, the publishing houses give special prices on the Reading Course sets. If a person follows the Reading Course program from year to year, in the space of a few years (and some have followed it for many years) the wide variety of subjects and their study constitutes a very liberal education for a sum that is infinitely small. If the set of books costs only \$4.00, it would mean about thirty-three and one-third cents a month. Most of the courses cost much less than that. Besides this knowledge acquired, your personal library is being built up constantly, which serves not only as a supply of reference material for you and your family, but also as good books to lend to your friends and neighbors for their edification and salvation.

For the year 1939 the Inter-American Division has recommended the following Reading Courses. Here are the lists of these courses and the price of the set of books corresponding to each of them.

Senior Y. P. M. V. Reading Course for 1939

"How to Pray," by L. A. Wilcox	\$.25
"True Adventure Stories," (Compiled)25
"Providential Deliverances," by W. A. Spicer60
"Colporteur Evangelist," by Mrs. E. G. White25
"Science Speaks," by Dr. George Thomason25
Value \$1.60; but Special Course Price, Postpaid: \$1.45	
(The price quoted is in U. S. currency or its equivalent.)	

Primary Reading Course for 1939

"Stories Jesus Told," by Hazel Whitthaus	\$.75
"Bedtime Stories," No. 14, by A. S. Maxwell25
Value \$1.00, but Special Course Price, Postpaid, \$.90	
(The price quoted is in U. S. currency or its equivalent.)	

Ministerial Reading Course for 1939

"Religion and Politics," by Dr. Albert Hyma	\$ 3.00
"Organization," by C. C. Crisler	2.25
"The Preacher and His Preaching," by I. H. Evans	2.75
"Counsels on Diet and Foods," by Mrs. E. G. White ..	2.75
Value \$10.75, but Special Course Price, Postpaid, \$8.75.	

NOTE: The set of the first three books of the Ministerial Reading Course (without the book "Counsels on Diet and Foods") are valued at \$8.00, but may be had for \$5.95. The book "Counsels on Diet and Foods" is a recent publication, being a compilation of the writings of Mrs. E. G. White on that special subject. There is no discount given on the price of this book. All prices quoted are in U. S. currency or its equivalent.

These excellent Reading Courses provide timely study, instruction, and mental refreshment for both old and young, learned and learners. Order your set of books *immediately*, and BEGIN THE NEW YEAR RIGHT!

THE WEEK OF PRAYER READINGS

By G. A. ROBERTS

For many years we have observed a Week of Prayer each year. What have these weeks of prayer meant to us personally as they have come and gone? Have we simply attended the meetings to hear the readings? Do we spend no more time or thought on the privileges of prayer than before the Week of Prayer came last year? Are we gaining in the experience of prayer, or is prayer but a formal routine of our daily program?

Each Week of Prayer should leave an indelible impress upon our hearts and minds. We should gain victories during this Week of Prayer that will greatly advance us in our Christian experience. We should definitely aim to gain these victories before this Week of Prayer and make definite prayerful effort to succeed. Changes should take place in us so that when the Week of Prayer shall have closed we will walk with a lighter, happier, but withal a more careful, prayerful step than before.

When men of old came in contact with Jesus, changes took place. The blind saw, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, and the lame and diseased walked and worked without impediment, and all these offered praise and prayer to God. The bitter, railing persecutor became the gentle, mild, but positive spoken, preacher of the gospel. In this way our contact with Jesus in this Week of Prayer should change us. We should see clearly the way we should go, because the eyes of our understanding have been anointed. We should hear and know and obey His voice, because Jesus has put His finger, as it were, in our ears. We should have our dumb tongues loosened to praise and exalt Him, because He has touched them. We should no more offer a sick and lame service in our work for Him, because He has healed us of all our spiritual infirmities. All these changes should and will be made in us, if by sincere prayer and unreserved consecration we come into actual contact with Jesus during this Week of Prayer.

These meetings should be more than simply "READINGS." They should be conducted with all the care that would be exercised if the writer of the article of that day were to be present in person to present the subject. Let several

pray at the opening of the meeting; and after each reading, let testimony be borne by those present. Where the members cannot gather at the church each day, let neighbors gather daily in some one's home for the service, and people not of our faith should also be invited to attend.

We have one fine church in Jamaica that was raised up as a result of a

neighborhood-reading of the Week of Prayer articles. Let each responsible leader pray earnestly and plan to the best advantage that his flock may receive the greatest possible benefit.

On the first Sabbath, announcements should be made that the offering to missions is to be given on the last Sabbath; and the envelopes should be distributed at once so that during the week each family or isolated member may come prepared on the closing Sabbath to turn in his offering. Much prayer, much praise, and liberal giving will insure great blessings.

FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED

FREELY GIVE

By W. C. RALEY

The Week of Prayer offering is a special offering. It is a special token of our appreciation of the greatest of all gifts to us. It is a thank-offering for our great blessings, spiritual and temporal. It is also an offering of special importance to the mission board, for during the year, the calls for money to carry on the work have been many and insistent. The needs have been great. There have been emergencies and unexpected expenses so that the treasury has been unable to meet all of the calls. The situations caused by war are examples of the kind of emergencies that must be met.

In the last month of the year is given

to us the privilege of bringing a thank offering, and of thus assisting in bearing the burdens of the treasury. And why should we not give at this time? For a large majority of us, this has been a good year. We have been spared many hardships and to all of us the Lord is good. We can now bring this special thank offering to Him. "Every sacrifice made for Christ enriches the giver, and every suffering and privation endured for His dear sake increases the overcomer's final joy in Heaven."—"Testimonies," Vol. IV., p. 219.

It is the last hour of this earth's history, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Matt. 6:20.

PLEASE PRESERVE

The Week of Prayer readings for this year are published in full in the MESSENGER as well as in the *Review and Herald*, in order that more of our people may have the readings for themselves. Please preserve your copy and carry it with you to the meetings. We also suggest that you give your neighbors and friends an opportunity to read the articles and to attend the meetings that are held.

Some who read these articles may not be in the habit of meeting regular-

ly with an organized church or company of Seventh-day Adventist believers. We invite any such persons to unite, if possible, with a church company and receive the blessings that such an association will afford. If, however, any reader of this paper does not have an opportunity to unite his consecration, service and offering with those of others in a church organization, we invite such a one to correspond with his conference or mission office, or with the editor of the MESSENGER.