

ELECT ACCORDING
TO THE
FOREKNOWLEDGE
OF
GOD

**2003 Camp Meeting
By Dr. Elliot Douglin**

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Preface

ELECTION, PREDESTINATION AND FREE CHOICE are subjects which have agitated the minds of God's people down through the centuries of the Christian era.

- If God has foreknown all things are we really free to choose?
- Is there a true doctrine of predestination?
- In addition to these questions, Christians want to make their calling and election sure.
- Who are the elect?

This book seeks to give the Biblical answers to these questions. The true Seventh Day Adventist doctrine of the investigative or pre-advent Judgement allows clearer insights and more accurate definitions in the study of these “mind-boggling” themes.

As we approach the final crisis we must look to our great High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary to have our sins blotted out and our names retained in the Book of Life. The Apostle Paul has left on record the sublime verses of Romans 8:28-39 for our comfort and security. In these verses the apostle carries his doctrine concerning the certainty of our salvation to a grand climax. The way in which he advances with certainty from argument to argument, piling one upon another is astonishing and constitutes the supreme example of inspired logic. In doing so, he brings us face to face with the fundamental theme of the Bible God's plan and purpose of redemption conceived from all eternity, centred in Christ and His Cross, and spanning the whole of human history from the original creation to the final glory.

What is perhaps even more amazing is that Paul wrote these verses out of a primary pastoral concern for the Christians in Rome who were enduring what he calls “*the sufferings of this present time.*”

It is only as we, in this final generation, follow him “with the eyes of our understanding being enlightened” that we shall be able to understand these deep truths, and to be “more than conquerors” as we face the great test of the final crisis.

God grant that these 2003 camp lectures may be a source of help and encouragement to the people of God in making their “calling and election” sure.

The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith. *Letter 208, 1906.*

God’s people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of the judgment is going forward,—where He is interceding for His people. *Review and Herald, Nov. 27, 1883.*

In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years? *Review and Herald, May 25, 1905.*

Satan is striving continually to bring in fanciful suppositions in regard to the sanctuary, degrading the wonderful representations of God and the ministry of Christ for our salvation into something that suits the carnal mind. He removes its presiding power from the hearts of believers, and supplies its place with fantastic theories invented to make void the truths of the atonement, and destroy our confidence in the doctrines which we have held sacred since the third angel’s message was first given. Thus he would rob us of our faith in the very message that has made us a separate people, and has given character and power to our work. *Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 7, p. 17. (1905).*

Chapter One

Not Willing That Any Should Perish

OUR INFINITE, ETERNAL HEAVENLY FATHER, YAHWEH (JEHOVAH) GOD, is not willing that any should perish. This fact speaks volumes about His character while giving us sinners measureless encouragement.

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9.

Since He is not willing that any should perish He must be willing that all should be saved, in other words, God’s will is that all men be saved.

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:1-4.

The ultimate destruction of the wicked gives God no pleasure at all, on the contrary it grieves His heart of infinite love.

“Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” Ezekiel 33:11.

Since it is God’s will that all men be saved He has given to corporate humanity (all men) the gift of salvation and eternal life. This gift is in His Son. It is a gift of grace to be received by faith and each and every person can choose to accept the gift or to reject the gift.

2 Elect According to the Foreknowledge of God

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John 5:11, 12.

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Mark 16:15, 16.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:12, 13.

So we see clearly that God permits men to choose whether they will receive the gift of salvation or not. No one will be arbitrarily excluded from salvation. No one will be saved contrary to his own will and decision.

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Rev. 22:17.

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Joshua 24:15.

“Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.” Ezekiel 18:31, 32.

God does not compel men to give up their unbelief. Before them are light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which they will accept. The human mind is endowed with power to discriminate between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from impulse, but from weight of evidence, carefully comparing scripture with scripture. Had the Jews laid by their prejudice and compared

written prophecy with the facts characterizing the life of Jesus, they would have perceived a beautiful harmony between the prophecies and their fulfillment in the life and ministry of the lowly Galilean.

Many are deceived today in the same way as were the Jews. Religious teachers read the Bible in the light of their own understanding and traditions; and the people do not search the Scriptures for themselves, and judge for themselves as to what is truth; but they yield up their judgment, and commit their souls to their leaders. The preaching and teaching of His word is one of the means that God has ordained for diffusing light; but we must bring every man's teaching to the test of Scripture. Whoever will prayerfully study the Bible, desiring to know the truth, that he may obey it, will receive divine enlightenment. He will understand the Scriptures. *"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching."* John 7:17, R.V. D.A. 458.

Salvation Full And Free

When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to choose another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. S.C. 72.

As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ's atonement in his behalf and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, his sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. Every believing soul is to conform his will entirely to God's will and keep in a state of repentance and contrition, exercising faith in the atoning merits of the Redeemer and advancing from strength to strength, from glory to glory.

Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are

borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: "This is My child, I relieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy—eternal life—because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son." Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God.

The sinner may err, but he is not cast off without mercy. His only hope, however, is repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Father's prerogative to forgive our transgressions and sins, because Christ has taken upon Himself our guilt and relieved us, imputing to us His own righteousness. His sacrifice satisfies fully the demands of justice.

Justification is the opposite of condemnation. God's boundless mercy is exercised toward those who are wholly undeserving. He forgives transgressions and sins for the sake of Jesus, who has become the propitiation for our sins. Through faith in Christ, the guilty transgressor is brought into favor with God and into the strong hope of life eternal. MS. 21, 1891.

Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. He who could not see human beings exposed to eternal ruin without pouring out His soul unto death in their behalf, will look with pity and compassion upon every soul who realizes that he cannot save himself.

He will look upon no trembling suppliant without raising him up. He who through His own atonement provided for man an infinite fund of moral power, will not fail to employ this power in our behalf. We may take our sins and sorrows to His feet; for He loves us. His every look and word invites our confidence. He will shape and mold our characters according to His own will.

In the whole Satanic force there is not power to overcome one soul who in simple trust casts himself on Christ. *"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."* Isa. 40:29. C.O.L. 157.

Chapter Two

Free Choice and the Book of Life

WHEN THE SINNER CHOOSES TO BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ and to receive the free gift of salvation his freedom of choice is not taken away. In fact, it is enhanced!

Every soul that refuses to give himself to God is under the control of another power. He is not his own. He may talk of freedom, but he is in the most abject slavery. He is not allowed to see the beauty of truth, for his mind is under the control of Satan. While he flatters himself that he is following the dictates of his own judgment, he obeys the will of the prince of darkness. Christ came to break the shackles of slavery from the soul. *"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."* *"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"* sets us *"free from the law of sin and death."* Rom. 8:2.

In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom. The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself. True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God. D.A. 466.

The believer can choose continuously to remain in Christ; the believer can choose to separate himself from Christ for awhile and then return; or the believer can choose to abandon Christ permanently.

6 Elect According to the Foreknowledge of God

God's final judgement will give to men what they have chosen, either eternal life or everlasting death.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23.

“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

“And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

“But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

“Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.” Romans 2:1-11.

It is a law of the human mind that sooner or later the mind becomes permanently fixed in its choice, one way or the other.

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” Isaiah 26:3.

“My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.” Psalm 57:7.

“He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.” Psalm 112:7.

The Book Of Life

The Book of Life contains the names of all who have ever entered the service of God by initial conversion.

“And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.” Phillipians 4:3.

“Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.”
Luke 10:20.

A name which has been entered into the Book of Life will have one of two fates or destinies in the Judgement. It will be either blotted out of or be retained in the Book of Life.

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” Rev. 3:5.

“And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

“Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.” Exodus 32:30-33.

Only those whose names are both *entered into* and *retained* in the Book of Life shall be saved. Those whose names were never entered, or, if entered, blotted out, will be lost.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Rev. 20:15.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” Rev. 21:27.

According to scripture probation closes for an individual either at death (Hebrews 9:27) or at the general closure of probation Rev. 22:11.

8 Elect According to the Foreknowledge of God

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” Hebrews 9:27.

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Rev. 22:11.

For those who will be alive in the time at and around the closure of probation and whose names will be retained in the Book of Life, the Bible gives some wonderful assurances:

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Rev. 13:8.

“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” Rev. 17:8.

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”
Matt. 24:13.

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Dan. 12:1.

In Matthew 24:24 Jesus describes this same group and calls them the “elect”:

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matt. 24:24.

This group will be alive at the Second Coming of Christ. They will be translated and, along with the resurrected saints, meet Christ in the air.

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thess. 4:16-18.

All those, dead or alive, whose names will be *retained* in the Book of Life are called the *elect* of God and will be gathered to meet Christ in the air at His second coming.

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matt. 24:30-31.

But the living elect at the end of time may be called the *end-time living remnant elect*.

“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” Rom. 11:5.

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Rev. 12:17.

Some of the texts we quoted before (Rev. 13:8; Rev. 17:8; Matthew 24:13; Daniel 12:11) apply only to the end-time living remnant elect. But there are many assurances given to the general elect. Here are a few of them:

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.”
Col. 3:12.

“Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”
2 Tim. 2:10.

“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Rom. 8:23.

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Luke 12:32.



Chapter Three

The Pre-Advent Judgement — Part One

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT FINAL REWARDS ARE DETERMINED BY the final Judgement:

“But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

“Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.” Rom. 2:5-11.

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Ecc. 12:13, 14.

At his second coming, Jesus will bring his reward to give his elect.

“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Rev. 22:12.

The reward of immortality will be given to His elect at His second coming.

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Cor. 15:51-54.

Therefore since the Judgement must determine the final reward and since the people of God will receive their final reward at the second coming of Christ there must be a Judgement for the people of God before the second coming of Christ! This Judgement may be called the pre-advent Judgement and it is a Judgement for the house of God.

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” 1 Peter 4:17, 18.

This pre-advent Judgement is announced in Revelation 14:6, 7:

“And 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.” Rev. 14:6, 7.

Since the announcement that “the hour of His Judgement is come” is made while the gospel is still being preached, this Judgement must be occurring before the work of preaching the gospel is completed. In other words it is a Judgement which occurs before the second coming of Christ. This Judgement was shown to the prophet Daniel and is recorded in Daniel, chapter 7:

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

“A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

“And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14.

This Judgement gives the kingdom to the elect and takes it away from the “little horn” power.

“But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

“And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” Dan. 7:26-27.

In Daniel 8, there is a parallel to this Daniel 7 Judgement scene, the cleansing or vindication of the sanctuary.

“And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Dan. 8:14.

The 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 equal 2300 years and the interpretation is given in Daniel 9:24-27.* The 2300 day-years commenced in 457 BC and ended on Oct. 22, 1844. Since then our great High Priest has been doing the work called the pre-advent Judgement which will produce a cleansed or vindicated heavenly sanctuary.

The *earthly* sanctuary built by Moses was a model of the true *heavenly* sanctuary, and the ministration of the Levitical priesthood was a teaching model of the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. In other words, the earthly ceremonial or typical sanctuary services were given to teach us about the real ministration of our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. (Hebrews Chapters 8 and 9).

Important truths concerning the atonement are taught by the typical service. A substitute was accepted in the sinner’s stead; but the sin was not canceled by the blood of the victim. A means was thus provided

* For a complete exposition on the judgement and the 2300 day prophecy, read our publication entitled, “The Hour Of His Judgement Is Come”, Series B No. 2.

by which it was transferred to the sanctuary. By the offering of blood the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law, confessed his guilt in transgression, and expressed his desire for pardon through faith in a Redeemer to come; but he was not yet entirely released from the condemnation of the law. On the Day of Atonement the high priest, having taken an offering from the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood of this offering, and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, directly over the law, to make satisfaction for its claims. Then, in his character of mediator, he took the sins upon himself and bore them from the sanctuary. Placing his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, he confessed over him all these sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the goat. The goat then bore them away, and they were regarded as forever separated from the people.

Such was the service performed "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." And what was done in type in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary is done in reality in the ministration of the heavenly sanctuary. After His ascension our Saviour began His work as our high priest. Says Paul: "*Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*" Hebrews 9:24.

The ministration of the priest throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary, within the veil which formed the door and separated the holy place from the outer court, represents the work of ministration upon which Christ entered at His ascension. It was the work of the priest in the daily ministration to present before God the blood of the sin offering, also the incense which ascended with the prayers of Israel. So did Christ plead His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners, and present before Him also, with the precious fragrance of His own righteousness, the prayers of penitent believers. Such was the work of ministration in the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven.

Thither the faith of Christ's disciples followed Him as He ascended from their sight. Here their hopes centered, "*which hope we have,*" said Paul, "*as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered,*

even Jesus, made an high priest forever." "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Hebrews 6:19, 20; 9:12.

For eighteen centuries this work of ministration continued in the first apartment of the sanctuary. The blood of Christ, pleaded in behalf of penitent believers, secured their pardon and acceptance with the Father, yet their sins still remained upon the books of record. As in the typical service there was a work of atonement at the close of the year, so before Christ's work for the redemption of men is completed there is a work of atonement for the removal of sin from the sanctuary. This is the service which began when the 2300 days ended. At that time, as foretold by Daniel the prophet, our High Priest entered the most holy, to perform the last division of His solemn work—to cleanse the sanctuary.

As anciently the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, so in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation—a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to his works. Revelation 22:12.

Thus those who followed in the light of the prophetic word saw that, instead of coming to the earth at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, Christ then entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to perform the closing work of atonement preparatory to His coming.

It was seen, also, that while the sin offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice, and the high priest represented Christ as a mediator, the scapegoat typified Satan, the author of sin, upon whom the sins of

the truly penitent will finally be placed. When the high priest, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, removed the sins from the sanctuary, he placed them upon the scapegoat. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty. The scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, never to come again into the congregation of Israel. So will Satan be forever banished from the presence of God and His people, and he will be blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners. G.C. 420-422.

The coming of Christ to His Father in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary to receive the Kingdom for His elect is described in Daniel 7:13 and Malachi 3:1-3:

Says the prophet: "Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."

Malachi 3:2, 3. Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14.

When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing. *"Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years."* Malachi 3:4. Then the church which our Lord at His coming is to receive to Himself will be a *"glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."*

Ephesians 5:27. Then she will look *“forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.”*
 Song of Solomon 6:10. G.C. 425.

Is There a Difference Between the Forgiveness of Sins and the Blotting Out of Sins?

The unique Seventh Day Adventist doctrine of the investigative judgement and the “cleansing” of the Heavenly Sanctuary sheds clear light on this question. The work of our High Priest in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary will have a presiding power in the hearts of the living remnant elect. Now to answer the question:

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38.

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” Acts 3:19.

Forgiven sins are transferred to the Heavenly Sanctuary but the believer may, under the pressure of temptation, fall back into the same sin for which he previously asked forgiveness. Or forgiveness can be rejected by the forgiven sinner and the sin be reactivated in his character experience. But for the living remnant elect whose names will be retained in the book of life in the investigative judgement there must come a time when they are finished with sin. They will not fall back into previously forgiven sin. In other words, sin would have been not only forgiven and cleansed initially but ultimately blotted out from their characters. Their names will be retained in the book of life and their sins will be blotted out of the heavenly records. This transaction is also called the *final sealing* work whereby sin is sealed out and righteousness sealed in, and *irreversibly* so!

We can say then that the blotting out of sin is the ultimate and irreversible forgiveness in which the believer’s mind is fixed in its choice for Christ and His righteousness and against Satan and sin!

This ultimate forgiveness is beautifully described in the following statement from *Mount Of Blessing*:

But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives the promise that He "will abundantly pardon," He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:7-9. God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. MB 114.

The Agape love of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit is the means by which sin is blotted out of the character and out of the Sanctuary records. This love has fully atoned for sin through the sacrifice of Christ and therefore we can say that the blood of Christ Jesus, His infinite sacrifice, brings us both initial and final forgiveness i.e. both initial forgiveness and the blotting out of sin.

The 1888 message of righteousness by faith, being the Third Angel's Message in verity, is the preaching of the gospel for the blotting out of sins.

When our High Priest was in the first Apartment of the Heavenly sanctuary His intercessory mediation offered full and free forgiveness. But now that our High Priest is in the second apartment or Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary He is doing the work of blotting out sin. Therefore the Third Angel's Message is the teaching of the gospel for the blotting out of sin!

Prof. W. W. Prescott, one of the pioneers who threw his full support behind the 1888 Jones-Waggoner message, understood this glorious work:

There is a difference between the forgiveness of sins and the blotting out of sins. There is a difference between the gospel being preached for the forgiveness of sins and the gospel being preached for the blotting out of sin. Always, and today, there is abundant provision for the forgiveness of sins. In our generation comes the provision for the blotting out of sin. And the blotting out of sin is what will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord; and the blotting out of sin is the ministry of our High Priest in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary; and it makes a differ-

ence to the people of God today in their ministry, in their message, and in their experience, whether they recognize, or experience the fact of the change....That should be distinctly brought out in the third angel's message; and with that, of course, will come the clearest revelation of the gospel ministry for this time,...thus preparing the way of the Lord. **General Conference Bulletin, 1903, pp. 53, 54.**

And, from *Spirit Of The Prophecy*:

Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). **C.O.L. 69.**

It is not the fear of punishment, or the hope of everlasting reward, that leads the disciples of Christ to follow Him. They behold the Saviour's matchless love, revealed throughout His pilgrimage on earth, from the manger of Bethlehem to Calvary's cross, and the sight of Him attracts, it softens and subdues the soul. Love awakens in the heart of the beholders. They hear His voice, and they follow Him. **DA. 480.**

A.T. Jones presented righteousness by faith within the context of preparation for translation. The remnant living elect will claim and experience Christ's complete victory over sin. They will be totally emptied of self, i.e. selfish, sinful thoughts (the carnal mind) will be eradicated from their characters!

Christ is cleansing the temple in heaven from the sins of the people, and we must work in harmony with him upon the earth, cleansing the soul temple from its moral defilement. If we will work thus, we shall find that the sweet influence of God's Spirit will be wrought into our life. Grace and peace and strength will take the place of strife and weakness, and instead of talking of discouragement and gloom, we shall speak of God's light and love and joy. We shall be looking at the things that are not seen, which are not temporal, but eternal. When we engage in this work, the angels of God will draw near to communicate divine power, and

combine heavenly strength with human weakness. Then we shall grow into the image of our Lord. We shall be learning how to believe in him, learning how to commit our souls to him, as unto a faithful Creator. The apostle says, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And as a result, our mental and spiritual powers increase. As we learn of Christ, we shall understand how to keep our spiritual strength, we shall feed on the word of God, and we shall have the blessed experience described by the apostle in these words: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. RH. 1890, Feb. 11.

Chapter Four

Genuine Conversion

Excerpts from the writings of E. G. White

IN ORDER TO BE SAVED, we must know by experience the meaning of true conversion. It is a fearful mistake for men and women to go on day by day, professing to be Christians, yet having no right to the name. In God's sight, profession is nothing, position is nothing. He asks, is the life in harmony with my precepts?

There are many who suppose that they are converted, but who are not able to bear the test of character presented in the Word of God. Sad will it be, in the day when every man is rewarded according to his works, for those who can not bear this test.

Conversion is a change of heart, a turning from unrighteousness to righteousness. Relying upon the merits of Christ, exercising true faith in him, the repentant sinner receives pardon for sin. As he ceases to do evil, and learns to do well, he grows in grace and in the knowledge of God. He sees that in order to follow Jesus he must separate from the world, and, after counting the cost, he looks upon all as loss if he may but win Christ. He enlists in his army, and bravely and cheerfully engages in the warfare, fighting against natural inclinations and selfish desires, and bringing the will into subjection to the will of Christ. Daily he seeks the Lord for grace, and he is strengthened and helped. Self once reigned in his heart, and worldly pleasure was his delight. Now self is dethroned, and God reigns supreme. His life reveals the fruit of righteousness. The sins he once loved he now hates. Firmly and resolutely he follows in the path of holiness. This is genuine conversion.

In the lives of many of those whose names are on the church books there has been no genuine change. The truth has been kept in the outer court. There has been no genuine conversion, no positive work of grace

done in the heart. Their desire to do God's will is based upon their own inclination, not upon the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their conduct is not brought into harmony with the law of God. They profess to accept Christ as their Saviour, but they do not believe that he will give them power to overcome their sins. They have not a personal acquaintance with a living Saviour, and their characters reveal many blemishes.

Many a one who looks at himself in the divine mirror, and is convinced that his life is not what it ought to be, fails to make the needed change. He goes his way, and forgets his defects. He may profess to be a follower of Christ, but what does this avail if his character has undergone no change, if the Holy Spirit has not wrought upon his heart? The work done has been superficial. Self is retained in his life. He is not a partaker of the divine nature. He may talk of God and pray to God, but his life reveals that he is working against God.

Let us not forget that in his conversion and sanctification, man must cooperate with God. "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,*" the Word declares; "*for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" Man can not transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change may be effected. The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. He who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power.

As the leaven, when mingled with the meal, works from within outward, so it is by the renewing of the heart that the grace of God works to transform the life. No mere external change is sufficient to bring us into harmony with God. There are many who try to reform by correcting this bad habit or that bad habit, and they hope in this way to become Christians, but they are beginning in the wrong place. Our first work is with the heart.

The great truth of the conversion of the heart by the Holy Spirit is presented in Christ's words to Nicodemus: "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God. . . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*" John 3:3-8.

The leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up,—the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are aroused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened.

The Scriptures are the great agency in this transformation of character. Christ prayed, “*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*” If studied and obeyed, the word of God works in the heart, subduing every unholy attribute. The Holy Spirit comes to convict of sin, and the faith that springs up in the heart works by love to Christ, conforming us, body, soul, and spirit, to his will.

A man sees his danger. He sees that he needs a change of character, a change of heart. He is stirred; his fears are aroused. The Spirit of God is working in him, and with fear and trembling he works for himself, seeking to find out his defects of character, and to see what he can do to bring about the needed change in his life. His heart is humbled. By confession and repentance he shows the sincerity of his desire to reform. He confesses his sins to God, and if he has injured any one, he confesses the wrong to the one he has injured. While God is working, the sinner, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, works out that which God is working in mind and heart. He acts in harmony with the Spirit’s working, and his conversion is genuine.

The nobility and dignity of the man increase as he takes his position against the wily foe, who for so many years has kept him in slavery. He feels a holy indignation arising within him as he thinks that for so long he has been Satan’s bond-slave, allowing the enemy to lead him to refuse to acknowledge his Best Friend.

Let the sinner co-operate with his Redeemer to secure his liberty. Let him be assured that unseen heavenly agencies are working in his behalf. Dear souls in doubt and discouragement, pray for the courage and strength that Christ waits to give you. He has been seeking for you. He longs to have you feel your need of his help. He will reach out his hand to grasp the hand stretched out for aid. He declares, “*Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*” Let mind and heart be enlisted in the warfare against sin. Let your heart soften as you think of how long you have chosen to serve your bitterest foe, while you turned from Him

who gave his life for you, who loves you, and who will accept you as his, though you are sinners. Step out from under the rebel flag, and take your stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel.

He who would build up a strong, symmetrical character, must give all and do all for Christ. The Redeemer will not accept divided service. Daily he must learn the meaning of self-surrender. He must study the Word of God, getting its meaning and obeying its precepts. Thus he may reach the highest standard of Christian excellence. There is no limit to the spiritual advancement that he may make if he is a partaker of the divine nature. Day by day God works in him, perfecting the character that is to stand in the day of final test. Each day of his life he ministers to others. The light that is in him shines forth, and stills the strife of tongues. Day by day he is working out before men and angels a vast, sublime experiment, showing what the gospel can do for fallen human beings.

Let us not spare ourselves, but carry forward in earnest the work of reform that must be done in our lives. Let us crucify self. Unholy habits will clamor for the mastery, but in the name and through the power of Jesus we may conquer. To him who daily seeks to keep his heart with all diligence, the promise is given, *“Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Rom. 8:38, 39.

“Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, . . . Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.” God himself is *“the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”* And *“whom he justified, them he also glorified.”* Great as is the shame and degradation through sin, even greater will be the honor and exaltation through redeeming love. To human beings, striving for conformity to the divine image, there is imparted an outlay of heaven’s treasure, an excellency of power that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen.”

Review & Herald July 7 1904.

Jesus continued: *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* By nature the heart is evil, and *“who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.”* Job 14:4. No human invention can find a remedy for the sinning soul. *“The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed*

can be.” *“Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”* Rom. 8:7; Matt. 15:19. The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian’s life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.

Nicodemus was still perplexed, and Jesus used the wind to illustrate His meaning: *“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.”*

The wind is heard among the branches of the trees, rustling the leaves and flowers; yet it is invisible, and no man knows whence it comes or whither it goes. So with the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. It can no more be explained than can the movements of the wind. A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or to trace all the circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. By an agency as unseen as the wind, Christ is constantly working upon the heart. Little by little, perhaps unconsciously to the receiver, impressions are made that tend to draw the soul to Christ. These may be received through meditating upon Him, through reading the Scriptures, or through hearing the word from the living preacher. Suddenly, as the Spirit comes with more direct appeal, the soul gladly surrenders itself to Jesus. By many this is called sudden conversion; but it is the result of long wooing by the Spirit of God, — a patient, protracted process.

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

It is impossible for finite minds to comprehend the work of redemption. Its mystery exceeds human knowledge; yet he who passes from death to life realizes that it is a divine reality. The beginning of redemption we may know here through a personal experience. Its results reach through the eternal ages.” D.A. 172-173.

Saving Faith

To the curious crowd pressing about Jesus there was imparted no vital power. But the suffering woman who touched Him in faith received healing. So in spiritual things does the casual contact differ from the touch of faith. To believe in Christ merely as the Saviour of the world can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere assent to the truth of the gospel. True faith is that which receives Christ as a personal Saviour. God gave His only-begotten Son, that I, by believing in Him, “*should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” John 3:16. When I come to Christ, according to His word, I am to believe that I receive His saving grace. The life that I now live, I am to “*live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*” Galatians 2:20.

Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which, through the grace of Christ, the soul becomes a conquering power. Faith is a mightier conqueror than death. If the sick can be led to fix their eyes in faith upon the Mighty Healer, we shall see wonderful results. It will bring life to the body and to the soul.” M.H. 62.

God’s Mercy

The Jewish elders had commended the centurion to Christ because of the favor he had shown to “our nation.” He is worthy, they said, for “he hath built us a synagogue.” But the centurion said of himself, “*I am not worthy.*” Yet he did not fear to ask help from Jesus. Not to his own goodness did he trust, but to the Saviour’s mercy. His only argument was his great need.

In the same way every human being can come to Christ. “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.*” Titus 3:5. Do you feel that because you are a sinner you cannot hope to receive blessing from God? Remember that Christ came into the world to save sinners. We have nothing to recommend us to God;

the plea that we may urge now and ever is our utterly helpless condition, which makes His redeeming power a necessity. Renouncing all self-dependence, we may look to the cross of Calvary and say:

“In my hand no price I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling.”

“*If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*” Mark 9:23.

It is faith that connects us with heaven and brings us strength for coping with the powers of darkness. In Christ, God has provided means for subduing every evil trait and resisting every temptation, however strong. But many feel that they lack faith, and therefore they remain away from Christ. Let these souls, in their helpless unworthiness, cast themselves upon the mercy of their compassionate Saviour. Look not to self, but to Christ. He who healed the sick and cast out demons when He walked among men is still the same mighty Redeemer. Then grasp His promises as leaves from the tree of life: “*Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.*” John 6:37. As you come to Him, believe that He accepts you, because He has promised. You can never perish while you do this — never.

“*God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*” Romans 5:8.

And “*if God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*” Romans 8:31, 32.

“*I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” Verses 38, 39, A.R.V., margin. M.H. 65-66.

Deliverance

Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. The greater the sinner’s guilt, the more he needs the Saviour. His heart of divine love and sympathy is drawn out most of all for the one who is the most hopelessly entangled in the snares of the enemy. With His own blood He has signed the emancipation papers of the race.

Jesus does not desire those who have been purchased at such a cost to become the sport of the enemy’s temptations. He does not desire us to be overcome and perish. He who curbed the lions in their den, and walked with His faithful witnesses amid the fiery flames, is just as ready

to work in our behalf to subdue every evil in our nature. Today He is standing at the altar of mercy, presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Whosoever will, may take hold of God's strength, and make peace with Him, and He will make peace.

The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand besides the great Sin Bearer in the light proceeding from the throne of God.

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses "*from all sin.*" 1 John 1:7.

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Romans 8:33, 34. **M.H. 89-90.**

When the gospel is received in its purity and power, it is a cure for the maladies that originated in sin. The Sun of Righteousness arises, "*with healing in His wings.*" Malachi 4:2. Not all this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. Fame, genius, talent—all are powerless to gladden the sorrowful heart or to restore the wasted life. The life of God in the soul is man's only hope.

The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul joy that nothing earthly can destroy—joy in the Holy Spirit—health-giving, life-giving joy. **M.H. 115.**

The Saviour overcame to show man how he may overcome. All the temptations of Satan, Christ met with the word of God. By trusting in God's promises, He received power to obey God's commandments, and the tempter could gain no advantage. To every temptation His answer was, "*It is written.*" So God has given us His word wherewith to resist evil. Exceeding great and precious promises are ours, that by these we "*might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*" 2 Peter 1:4.

Bid the tempted one look not to circumstances, to the weakness of self, or to the power of temptation, but to the power of God's word. All its strength is ours. *"Thy word,"* says the psalmist, *"have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee."* *"By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."* Psalms 119:11; 17:4.

Talk courage to the people; lift them up to God in prayer. Many who have been overcome by temptation are humiliated by their failures, and they feel that it is in vain for them to approach unto God; but this thought is of the enemy's suggestion. When they have sinned, and feel that they cannot pray, tell them that it is then the time to pray. Ashamed they may be, and deeply humbled; but as they confess their sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive their sins and cleanse them from all unrighteousness.

Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. By prayer, by the study of His word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go.

These precious words every soul that abides in Christ may make his own. He may say:

"I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: My God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy. When I fall, I shall arise; When I sit in darkness, The Lord shall be a light unto me."
Micah 7:7, 8.

"He will again have compassion on us, He will blot out our iniquities; Yea, Thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea!"
Micah 7:19, Noyes.

God has promised: *"I will make a man more precious than fine gold; Even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir."* Isaiah 13:12.

"Though ye have lain among the pots, Yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, And her feathers with yellow gold." Psalm 68:13.

"Those whom Christ has forgiven most will love Him most. These are they who in the final day will stand nearest to His throne."

"They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads."
Revelation 22:4. M.H. 180-182.



Chapter Five

The Pre-Advent Judgement — Part Two

Facing Life's Record

Excerpts from the writings of E. G. White

“I beheld,” says the prophet Daniel, “till thrones were placed, and One that was Ancient of Days did sit: His raiment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool; His throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7:9, 10, R.V.

THUS WAS PRESENTED to the prophet's vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth, and to every man should be rendered “according to his works.” The Ancient of Days is God the Father. Says the psalmist: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.” Psalm 90:2. It is He, the source of all being, and the fountain of all law, that is to preside in the judgment. And holy angels as ministers and witnesses, in number “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,” attend this great tribunal.

“And, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away.” Daniel 7:13, 14. The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the earth.

He comes to the Ancient of Days in heaven to receive dominion and glory and a kingdom, which will be given Him at the close of His work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not His second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man—to perform the work of investigative judgment and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.

In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period. *“Judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?”* 1 Peter 4:17.

The books of record in heaven, in which the names and the deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decisions of the judgment. Says the prophet Daniel: *“The judgment was set, and the books were opened.”* The revelator, describing the same scene, adds: *“Another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”* Revelation 20:12.

The book of life contains the names of all who have ever entered the service of God. Jesus bade His disciples: *“Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.”* Luke 10:20. Paul speaks of his faithful fellow workers, *“whose names are in the book of life.”* Philippians 4:3. Daniel, looking down to *“a time of trouble, such as never was,”* declares that God’s people shall be delivered, *“everyone that shall be found written in the book.”* And the revelator says that those only shall enter the city of God whose names *“are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”* Daniel 12:1; Revelation 21:27.

“A book of remembrance” is written before God, in which are recorded the good deeds of “them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.” Malachi 3:16. Their words of faith, their acts of love, are registered in heaven. Nehemiah refers to this when he says: *“Remember me, O my God,... and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God.”* Nehemiah 13:14. In the book of God’s remembrance every deed of righteousness is immortalized. There

every temptation resisted, every evil overcome, every word of tender pity expressed, is faithfully chronicled. And every act of sacrifice, every suffering and sorrow endured for Christ's sake, is recorded. Says the psalmist: *"Thou tellest my wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?"* Psalm 56:8.

There is a record also of the sins of men. *"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."* Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Says the Saviour: *"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."* Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 12:36, 37. The secret purposes and motives appear in the unerring register; for God *"will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."* 1 Corinthians 4:5. *"Behold, it is written before Me, . . . your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord."* Isaiah 65:6, 7.

Every man's work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven-sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel.

The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgment. Says the wise man: *"Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment."* Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14. The apostle James admonishes his brethren: *"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."* James 2:12

Those who in the judgment are "accounted worthy" will have a part in the resurrection of the just. Jesus said: *"They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, . . . are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."* Luke 20:35, 36. And again He declares that *"they that have done good"* shall come forth *"unto the resurrection of life."* John 5:29. The righteous dead will not be raised until after the judgment at which they are accounted worthy of "the resurrection of life." Hence they will not be present in person at the tribunal when their records are examined and their cases decided.

Jesus will appear as their advocate, to plead in their behalf before God. *“If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”* 1 John 2:1. *“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”* *“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”* Hebrews 9:24; 7:25.

As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God’s remembrance. The Lord declared to Moses: *“Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book.”* Exodus 32:33. And says the prophet Ezekiel: *“When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, . . . all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.”* Ezekiel 18:24.

All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. The Lord declares, by the prophet Isaiah: *“I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”* Isaiah 43:25. Said Jesus: *“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.”* *“Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.”* Revelation 3:5; Matthew 10:32, 33.

The deepest interest manifested among men in the decisions of earthly tribunals but faintly represents the interest evinced in the heavenly courts when the names entered in the book of life come up in review before the Judge of all the earth. The divine Intercessor presents the plea that all who have overcome through faith in His blood be

forgiven their transgressions, that they be restored to their Eden home, and crowned as joint heirs with Himself to *“the first dominion.”* Micah 4:8. Satan in his efforts to deceive and tempt our race had thought to frustrate the divine plan in man’s creation; but Christ now asks that this plan be carried into effect as if man had never fallen. He asks for His people not only pardon and justification, full and complete, but a share in His glory and a seat upon His throne.

While Jesus is pleading for the subjects of His grace, Satan accuses them before God as transgressors. The great deceiver has sought to lead them into skepticism, to cause them to lose confidence in God, to separate themselves from His love, and to break His law. Now he points to the record of their lives, to the defects of character, the unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer, to all the sins that he has tempted them to commit, and because of these he claims them as his subjects.

Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels, saying: I know them by name. I have graven them on the palms of My hands. *“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.”* Psalm 51:17. And to the accuser of His people He declares: *“The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?”* Zechariah 3:2. Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father *“a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.”* Ephesians 5:27. Their names stand enrolled in the book of life, and concerning them it is written: *“They shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy.”* Revelation 3:4.

Thus will be realized the complete fulfillment of the new-covenant promise: *“I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”* *“In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.”* Jeremiah 31:34; 50:20. *“In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem.”* Isaiah 4:2, 3.

The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. Since the dead

are to be judged out of the things written in the books, it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated. But the apostle Peter distinctly states that the sins of believers will be blotted out "*when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ.*" Acts 3:19, 20. When the investigative judgment closes, Christ will come, and His reward will be with Him to give to every man as his work shall be.

In the typical service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So Christ, at the close of His work as mediator, will appear, "*without sin unto salvation*" (Hebrews 9:28), to bless His waiting people with eternal life. As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. The scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel, was sent away "*unto a land not inhabited*" (Leviticus 16:22); so Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth, which will then be desolate, without inhabitant, and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked. Thus the great plan of redemption will reach its accomplishment in the final eradication of sin and the deliverance of all who have been willing to renounce evil.

At the time appointed for the judgment — the close of the 2300 days, in 1844 — began the work of investigation and blotting out of sins. All who have ever taken upon themselves the name of Christ must pass its searching scrutiny. Both the living and the dead are to be judged "*out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*"

Sins that have not been repented of and forsaken will not be pardoned and blotted out of the books of record, but will stand to witness against the sinner in the day of God. He may have committed his evil deeds in the light of day or in the darkness of night; but they were open and manifest before Him with whom we have to do. Angels of God witnessed each sin and registered it in the unerring records. Sin may be concealed, denied, covered up from father, mother, wife, children, and associates; no one but the guilty actors may cherish the least suspicion of the wrong; but it is laid bare before the intelligences of heaven. The darkness of the darkest night, the secrecy of all deceptive arts, is not sufficient to veil one thought from the knowledge of the Eternal. God has an exact record of every unjust account and every unfair dealing.

He is not deceived by appearances of piety. He makes no mistakes in His estimation of character. Men may be deceived by those who are corrupt in heart, but God pierces all disguises and reads the inner life.

How solemn is the thought! Day after day, passing into eternity, bears its burden of records for the books of heaven. Words once spoken, deeds once done, can never be recalled. Angels have registered both the good and the evil. The mightiest conqueror upon the earth cannot call back the record of even a single day. Our acts, our words, even our most secret motives, all have their weight in deciding our destiny for weal or woe. Though they may be forgotten by us, they will bear their testimony to justify or condemn.

As the features of the countenance are reproduced with unerring accuracy on the polished plate of the artist, so the character is faithfully delineated in the books above. Yet how little solicitude is felt concerning that record which is to meet the gaze of heavenly beings. Could the veil which separates the visible from the invisible world be swept back, and the children of men behold an angel recording every word and deed, which they must meet again in the judgment, how many words that are daily uttered would remain unspoken, how many deeds would remain undone.

In the judgment the use made of every talent will be scrutinized. How have we employed the capital lent us of Heaven? Will the Lord at His coming receive His own with usury? Have we improved the powers entrusted us, in hand and heart and brain, to the glory of God and the blessing of the world? How have we used our time, our pen, our voice, our money, our influence? What have we done for Christ, in the person of the poor, the afflicted, the orphan, or the widow? God has made us the depositaries of His holy word; what have we done with the light and truth given us to make men wise unto salvation? No value is attached to a mere profession of faith in Christ; only the love which is shown by works is counted genuine. Yet it is love alone which in the sight of Heaven makes any act of value. Whatever is done from love, however small it may appear in the estimation of men, is accepted and rewarded of God.

The hidden selfishness of men stands revealed in the books of heaven. There is the record of unfulfilled duties to their fellow men, of forgetfulness of the Saviour's claims. There they will see how often were given to Satan the time, thought, and strength that belonged to Christ. Sad is the record which angels bear to heaven. Intelligent beings, professed followers of Christ, are absorbed in the acquirement of worldly possessions or the enjoyment of earthly pleasures. Money, time, and

strength are sacrificed for display and self-indulgence; but few are the moments devoted to prayer, to the searching of the Scriptures, to humiliation of soul and confession of sin.

Satan invents unnumbered schemes to occupy our minds, that they may not dwell upon the very work with which we ought to be best acquainted. The archdeceiver hates the great truths that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful mediator. He knows that with him everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth.

Those who would share the benefits of the Saviour's mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God. The precious hours, instead of being given to pleasure, to display, or to gain seeking, should be devoted to an earnest, prayerful study of the word of truth. The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. Each must meet the great Judge face to face. How important, then, that every mind contemplate often the solemn scene when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, when, with Daniel, every individual must stand in his lot, at the end of the days.

All who have received the light upon these subjects are to bear testimony of the great truths which God has committed to them. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them.

The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at

an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Proverbs 28:13. If those who hide and excuse their faults could see how Satan exults over them, how he taunts Christ and holy angels with their course, they would make haste to confess their sins and to put them away. Through defects in the character, Satan works to gain control of the whole mind, and he knows that if these defects are cherished, he will succeed. Therefore he is constantly seeking to deceive the followers of Christ with his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome. But Jesus pleads in their behalf His wounded hands, His bruised body; and He declares to all who would follow Him: *"My grace is sufficient for thee."* 2 Corinthians 12:9. *"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."* Matthew 11:29, 30. Let none, then, regard their defects as incurable. God will give faith and grace to overcome them.

We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon — none know how soon — it will pass to the

cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: "*Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.*" Mark 13:33. "*If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*" Revelation 3:3.

When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: "*He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*" Revelation 22:11, 12.

The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. "So," says the Saviour, "*shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*" Matthew 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men.

"*Watch ye therefore:... lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.*" Mark 13:35, 36. Perilous is the condition of those who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments—it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence: "*Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.*" Daniel 5:27. **E.G. White – G.C. Chapter 28.**

Chapter Six

The Elect: Basic Definitions and Principles

IT IS CRUCIALLY AND VITALLY IMPORTANT to know the correct Biblical definition of the term **The Elect**, otherwise grave mistakes will be made in this mysterious doctrine of the Divine foreknowledge and election.

Definition

As we saw in Chapter Two, the Biblical definition can be arrived at with certainty by carefully comparing the following texts of scripture.

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matt. 24:30, 31.

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” Rev. 3:5.

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” 1 Peter 4:17-19.

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matt. 24:24.

It is absolutely clear from the above passages of scripture that the **elect of God are those whose names will be retained in the book of life and who will, by resurrection or translation, meet Jesus in the air at his second coming.** In other words the **elect** of God are those who will be ultimately saved into His kingdom of glory.

Basic Principles

A believer whose name will be retained in the book of life must have had his name entered before the closure of probation. His name is entered into the Book of Life when he enters into Christ by faith thereby experiencing genuine initial conversion.

After initial conversion an elect believer may follow one of two general paths. Ideally, he may abide in Christ constantly and continuously unto the end. Or he may backslide out of Christ only to return to continue to abide in Christ unto the end.

Biblical Examples

The classical examples of believers who after conversion abided constantly in Christ until the close of their probation are Enoch, Daniel, Elijah. Whereas the classical examples of believers who backslid or denied the Lord or fell into open sin but returned to the Lord are Samson, David, Solomon, Peter.

Freedom Of Choice And Divine Election

The elect start and end their Christian race as children of the promise. Abiding in Christ by faith their choice is fixed in absolute surrender.

“Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.” Rom. 9:7-9.

But Paul goes further and introduces the doctrine of election:

“And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.” Romans 9:10-12.

Jacob and Esau met at the deathbed of their father. Once the elder brother had looked forward to this event as an opportunity for revenge,

but his feelings had since greatly changed. And Jacob, well content with the spiritual blessings of the birthright, resigned to the elder brother the inheritance of their father's wealth—the only inheritance that Esau sought or valued. They were no longer estranged by jealousy or hatred, yet they parted, Esau removing to Mount Seir. God, who is rich in blessing, had granted to Jacob worldly wealth, in addition to the higher good that he had sought. The possessions of the two brothers "*were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle.*" This separation was in accordance with the divine purpose concerning Jacob. Since the brothers differed so greatly in regard to religious faith, it was better for them to dwell apart.

Esau and Jacob had alike been instructed in the knowledge of God, and both were free to walk in His commandments and to receive His favor; but they had not both chosen to do this. The two brothers had walked in different ways, and their paths would continue to diverge more and more widely.

There was no arbitrary choice on the part of God by which Esau was shut out from the blessings of salvation. The gifts of His grace through Christ are free to all. There is no election but one's own by which any may perish. God has set forth in His word the conditions upon which every soul will be elected to eternal life—obedience to His commandments, through faith in Christ. God has elected a character in harmony with His law, and anyone who shall reach the standard of His requirement will have an entrance into the kingdom of glory. Christ Himself said, "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.*" John 3:36. "*Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.*" Matthew 7:21. And in the Revelation He declares, "*Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*" Revelation 22:14. As regards man's final salvation, this is the only election brought to view in the word of God.

Every soul is elected who will work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. He is elected who will put on the armor and fight the good fight of faith. He is elected who will watch unto prayer, who will search the Scriptures, and flee from temptation. He is elected who will have faith continually, and who will be obedient to every word that

proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The provisions of redemption are free to all; the results of redemption will be enjoyed by those who have complied with the conditions.

Esau had despised the blessings of the covenant. He had valued temporal above spiritual good, and he had received that which he desired. It was by his own deliberate choice that he was separated from the people of God. Jacob had chosen the inheritance of faith. He had endeavored to obtain it by craft, treachery, and falsehood; but God had permitted his sin to work out its correction. Yet through all the bitter experience of his later years, Jacob had never swerved from his purpose or renounced his choice. He had learned that in resorting to human skill and craft to secure the blessing, he had been warring against God. From that night of wrestling beside the Jabbok, Jacob had come forth a different man. Self-confidence had been uprooted. Henceforth the early cunning was no longer seen. In place of craft and deception, his life was marked by simplicity and truth. He had learned the lesson of simple reliance upon the Almighty Arm, and amid trial and affliction he bowed in humble submission to the will of God. The baser elements of character were consumed in the furnace fire, the true gold was refined, until the faith of Abraham and Isaac appeared undimmed in Jacob. P.P. 207-208.

What It Takes To Have Our Names Retained In The Book Of Life

“Any one can be just what he chooses to be. Character is not obtained by receiving an education. Character is not obtained by amassing wealth, or by gaining worldly honor. Character is not obtained by trying to have others fight the battle of life for us. It must be sought, worked for, fought for; and it requires a purpose, a will, a determination. To form a character which God will approve, requires persevering effort. It will take a continual resisting of the powers of darkness to stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel, to be approved in the day of Judgment, and have our names retained in the book of life. Is it not worth more to have our names registered in that book, have them immortalized among the heavenly angels, than to have them sounded in praise throughout the whole earth? Let me know that Jesus smiles upon me; let me know that he approves my actions and my course, and then let come what may, let afflictions be ever so great, I will be resigned to my lot and rejoice in the Lord.” R.H Dec 21, 1886.

Genuine conversion is needed, not once in years, but daily. This conversion brings man into a new relation with God. Old things, his

natural passions and hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong, pass away, and he is renewed and sanctified. But this work must be continual; for as long as Satan exists, he will make an effort to carry on his work. He who strives to serve God will encounter a strong undercurrent of wrong. His heart needs to be barricaded by constant watchfulness and prayer, or else the embankment will give way; and like a millstream, the undercurrent of wrong will sweep away the safeguard. No renewed heart can be kept in a condition of sweetness without the daily application of the salt of the Word. Divine grace must be received daily, or no man will stay converted. O.H.C. 215.

Make Your Calling And Election Sure

“Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

“And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 1:1-11.

If all could appreciate this great blessing, what an advantage it would be to them! We can obtain like precious faith with Peter and those who

were his companions, only through one source—the righteousness of Christ, who as a sin-bearer stood at the head of humanity, overcoming in our behalf, that we might overcome in his strength. “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

If man could appreciate this great blessing, what an advantage it would be to him! He is given the privilege of being a laborer together with God in the saving of his soul. Receiving and believing is his part of the contract. He is to receive Christ as his personal Saviour, and is to continue to believe in him. This means abiding in Christ, showing in him, at all times and under all circumstances, a faith that is a representation of his character—a faith that works by love, and purifies the soul from all defilement. Christ is the author of this faith, and he demands that it be constantly exercised. Thus we receive a continuous supply of grace.

Each person must obtain an experience for himself. No one can depend for salvation on the experience or practice of any other man. We must each become acquainted with Christ in order properly to represent him to the world. “His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” None of us need excuse our hasty temper, our misshapen characters, our selfishness, envy, jealousy, or any impurity of soul, body, or spirit. God has called us to glory and virtue. We are to obey the call. **R.H April 24, 1900.**

There could be no such thing as one not prepared for heaven entering heaven. There is no such thing as a human being sanctified and fitted for the heavenly kingdom not having an election to that kingdom. God elects those who have been working on the plan of addition. The explanation is given in the first chapter of Second Peter. For every human being, Christ has paid the election price. No one need be lost. All have been redeemed. To those who receive Christ as a personal Saviour will be given power to become the sons and daughters of God. An eternal life insurance policy has been provided for all.

Whom God elects, Christ redeems. The Saviour has paid the redemption price for every soul. We are not our own; for we are bought with a price. From the Redeemer, who from the foundation of the world has chosen us, we receive the insurance policy that entitles us to eternal life.” (**Letter 53, 1904**). **7BC. 944.**

There is the election of God on the condition of practice, and there is no other election in the Bible. Election is within our reach. “If ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” (MS 49, 1894). MS 49, 1894. 7BC. 944.

The Elect Can Know Their Election

“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

“Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

“And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.”

1 Thess. 1:2-7.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” Rom. 8:14-17.

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.”

John 15:4.

Now here are the most precious jewels of truth for every individual soul of us. Here is the only election in the Bible, and you can prove yourself elected of Christ by being faithful; you can prove yourself the chosen of Christ by abiding in the vine. MS 43, 1894.

The Names of the Elect Were Written In the Book of Life From Eternity Past

“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth

shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” Rev. 17:8.

Names written “from the foundation of the world” are names retained or registered, by the investigative Judgement, in the book of life. Names which are blotted out by the investigative Judgement are not described as written “from the foundation of the world.”

Initial And Final Justification

When the individual sinner first believes on and surrenders to the Lord Jesus to be initially converted he is initially justified by faith. When in the investigative Judgement he is found to have finished his Christian race in Christ he receives final justification and his name is retained in the book of life. The elect, therefore, are those who will receive final justification by faith.

All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. The Lord declares, by the prophet Isaiah: *“I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”* Isaiah 43:25. Said Jesus: *“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.”* *“Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.”* Revelation 3:5; Matthew 10:32, 33. **G.C. 483.**

Eternally Secure In Christ

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. No one who in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy’s power. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but, thank God, we have a mighty Saviour, who cast out the evil one from heaven. Satan is pleased when we magnify his power. Why not talk of Jesus? Why not magnify His power and His love?

The rainbow of promise encircling the throne on high is an everlasting testimony that “...*God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” John 3:16. It testifies to the universe that God will never forsake His children in the struggle with evil. It is an assurance to us of strength and protection as long as the throne itself shall endure. **M.H. 94.**

No outward observances can take the place of simple faith and entire renunciation of self. But no man can empty himself of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul.

It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed. All our good works are dependent on a power outside of ourselves. Therefore there needs to be a continual reaching out of the heart after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the soul before Him. Only by constant renunciation of self and dependence on Christ can we walk safely. **C.O.L. 159-160.**



Chapter Seven

Three Judgement Parables

JESUS TAUGHT THE DOCTRINE of the investigative Judgement and election in a number of His parables. The most obvious of these Judgement parables are the *Parable of the Wedding Garment* recorded in Matthew 22:1-14, the *Parable Of The Ten Virgins* in Matthew 25:1-13; and the *Parable Of The Sower* in Luke 8:5-15.

The Ten Virgins — Matthew 25:1-13

In order to fully appreciate these parables we need to remind ourselves of the fact that when Jesus returns, with His reward of immortality for His saints, He will take them to Heaven to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 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. 19:7-9.

Before coming for His elect to take them to the marriage supper of the Lamb Jesus will receive the New Jerusalem, the capital and representative of His Kingdom, as His bride. The investigative Judgement gives the Kingdom to Christ and His elect. Having received the kingdom He will come in glory to gather His elect and take them to the marriage supper in the New Jerusalem.

The coming of Christ as our high priest to the most holy place, for the cleansing of the sanctuary, brought to view in Daniel 8:14; the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of Days, as presented in Daniel 7:13; and the coming of the Lord to His temple, foretold by Malachi, are

descriptions of the same event; and this is also represented by the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage, described by Christ in the parable of the ten virgins, of Matthew 25. G.C. 426.

In the parable it was those that had oil in their vessels with their lamps that went in to the marriage. Those who, with a knowledge of the truth from the Scriptures, had also the Spirit and grace of God, and who, in the night of their bitter trial, had patiently waited, searching the Bible for clearer light—these saw the truth concerning the sanctuary in heaven and the Saviour’s change in ministration, and by faith they followed Him in His work in the sanctuary above. And all who through the testimony of the Scriptures accept the same truths, following Christ by faith as He enters in before God to perform the last work of mediation, and at its close to receive His kingdom—all these are represented as going in to the marriage. G.C. 427.

Since the New Jerusalem represents the Kingdom and is described as a bride adorned for her husband, the elect living remnant must be perfected in character so that the entire body of the elect can be glorified at our Lord’s return.

“And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” Heb. 11:39-40.

Generally speaking, the 5 foolish virgins represent those professed believers whose names will be blotted out of the book of life whereas the 5 wise virgins represent those whose names will be retained in the book of life.

The Wedding Garment — Matthew 22:1-14

“So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

“And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“For many are called, but few are chosen.” Matt. 22:10-14.

In the parable of Matthew 22 the same figure of the marriage is introduced, and the investigative judgment is clearly represented as taking place before the marriage. Previous to the wedding the king comes in to see the guests, to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Matthew 22:11; Revelation 7:14. He who is found wanting is cast out, but all who upon examination are seen to have the wedding garment on are accepted of God and accounted worthy of a share in His kingdom and a seat upon His throne. This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing of work in the sanctuary above. G.C. 428.

The term “many are called” represent those whose names were entered into the book of life initially, whereas the term “but few are chosen” represents those whose names are retained finally in the book of life, the elect of God.

By the king’s examination of the guests at the feast is represented a work of judgment. The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples. Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, “to give every man according as his work shall be.” Rev. 22:12. Before His coming, then, the character of every man’s work will have been determined, and to every one of Christ’s followers the reward will have been apportioned according to his deeds.

It is while men are still dwelling upon the earth that the work of investigative judgment takes place in the courts of heaven. The lives of all His professed followers pass in review before God. All are examined according to the record of the books of heaven, and according to his deeds the destiny of each is forever fixed.

By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ’s true followers will possess. To the church it is given “that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,” “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” Eph. 5:27. The fine linen, says the Scripture, “is the righteousness of saints.” Rev. 19:8. It

is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour. C.O.L. 310.

The Sower — Luke 8:5-15, also Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23

This is a wonderful and solemn parable.

- A “wayside soil” soul never believes even though he hears.
- A “rocky” or “stony ground” soul gives a quick initial belief but has only a superficial experience and suffers early growth failure and spiritual death.
- A “thorny soil” soul is initially converted and makes good progress towards “harvest” but “brings no fruit to perfection”.
- A “good soil” soul starts, continues and finishes in Christ and is ultimately saved.

The only hope for the first three soil types is for them to be changed into good soil, for only good soil makes it to the harvest. Let us analyse the parable more carefully by means of the diagram beginning on page 58.

The love of God in the Holy Spirit is the only means God has to change a sinner’s spiritual soil-type into “good soil” but the soul must yield fully to the Spirit’s working. And, as we shall see later, the Spirit’s working may include suffering or adversity in order to bring us to the brokenness needed to produce good soil.

“For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.” Jer. 4:3.

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.” Hos. 10:12.

Throughout the parable of the sower, Christ represents the different results of the sowing as depending upon the soil. In every case the sower and the seed are the same. Thus He teaches that if the word of God fails of accomplishing its work in our hearts and lives, the reason is to be found in ourselves. But the result is not beyond our control. True, we cannot change ourselves; but the power of choice is ours, and it rests with us to determine what we will become. The wayside, the stony-ground, the thorny-ground hearers need not remain such. The Spirit of God is ever seeking to break the spell of infatuation that

holds men absorbed in worldly things, and to awaken a desire for the imperishable treasure. It is by resisting the Spirit that men become inattentive to or neglectful of God's word. They are themselves responsible for the hardness of heart that prevents the good seed from taking root, and for the evil growths that check its development.

The garden of the heart must be cultivated. The soil must be broken up by deep repentance for sin. Poisonous, Satanic plants must be uprooted. The soil once overgrown by thorns can be reclaimed only by diligent labor. So the evil tendencies of the natural heart can be overcome only by earnest effort in the name and strength of Jesus. The Lord bids us by His prophet, *"Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns."* *"Sow to yourselves in righteousness; reap in mercy."* Jer. 4:3; Hosea 10:12. This work He desires to accomplish for us, and He asks us to co-operate with Him.

The sowers of the seed have a work to do in preparing hearts to receive the gospel. In the ministry of the word there is too much sermonizing, and too little of real heart-to-heart work. There is need of personal labor for the souls of the lost. In Christlike sympathy we should come close to men individually, and seek to awaken their interest in the great things of eternal life. Their hearts may be as hard as the beaten highway, and apparently it may be a useless effort to present the Saviour to them; but while logic may fail to move, and argument be powerless to convince, the love of Christ, revealed in personal ministry, may soften the stony heart, so that the seed of truth can take root.

So the sowers have something to do that the seed may not be choked with thorns or perish because of shallowness of soil. At the very outset of the Christian life every believer should be taught its foundation principles. He should be taught that he is not merely to be saved by Christ's sacrifice, but that he is to make the life of Christ his life and the character of Christ his character. Let all be taught that they are to bear burdens and to deny natural inclination. Let them learn the blessedness of working for Christ, following Him in self-denial, and enduring hardness as good soldiers. Let them learn to trust His love and to cast on Him their cares. Let them taste the joy of winning souls for Him. In their love and interest for the lost, they will lose sight of self. The pleasures of the world will lose their power to attract and its burdens

to dishearten. The plowshare of truth will do its work. It will break up the fallow ground. It will not merely cut off the tops of the thorns, but will take them out by the roots. C.O.L. 56-58.

A Common Problem — Early Growth Failure (Stony Soil)

There were many in Christ's day, as there are today, over whom the control of Satan for the time seemed broken; through the grace of God they were set free from the evil spirits that had held dominion over the soul. They rejoiced in the love of God; but, like the stony-ground hearers of the parable, they did not abide in His love. They did not surrender themselves to God daily, that Christ might dwell in the heart; and when the evil spirit returned, with "seven other spirits more wicked than himself," they were wholly dominated by the power of evil.

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end. D.A. 323, 324.

Correct definitions are critically important in all Biblical doctrines and especially so in any discussion on the doctrine of election. Did you notice the definition of the term “vital connection” in the above quotation? A vital connection is a moment by moment surrender of self to God and includes, of necessity, a continual communion.

The “stony-soil” believer lacks this vital connection from early whereas the “thorny-soil” believer loses this vital connection later on in his Christian growth. The “good-soil” believer has this vital connection, i.e. there is moment by moment surrender, there is constancy and consistency of union through communion. And by beholding Christ there is progressive transformation into His likeness.

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” John 15:4, 7.

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Cor. 3:18.

This union with Christ, once formed, must be maintained. Christ said, *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.”* This is no casual touch, no off-and-on connection. The branch becomes a part of the living vine. The communication of life, strength, and fruitfulness from the root to the branches is unobstructed and constant. Separated from the vine, the branch cannot live. No more, said Jesus, can you live apart from Me. The life you have received from Me can be preserved only by continual communion. Without Me you cannot overcome one sin, or resist one temptation.

“Abide in Me, and I in you.” Abiding in Christ means a constant receiving of His Spirit, a life of unreserved surrender to His service. The channel of communication must be open continually between man and his God. As the vine branch constantly draws the sap from the living vine, so are we to cling to Jesus, and receive from Him by faith the strength and perfection of His own character.

continued on page 60

Text — Luke 8	Type of soil	Meaning Luke 8	Initial Spiritual Condition	Book of Life	Final Spiritual Condition	Result of Investigation Judgement	Final Destiny
<p>A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. Vs. 5</p>	<p>Wayside</p>	<p>Those by the way-side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. Vs. 12</p>	<p>Unbelief</p>	<p>Name not entered into the Book of Life</p>	<p>Unbelief</p>	<p>Not considered</p>	<p>Lost</p>
<p>And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. Vs. 6</p>	<p>Rock or Stony soil</p>	<p>They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. Vs. 13</p>	<p>Initial belief but growth failure</p>	<p>Name entered into the Book of Life</p>	<p>Fallen away into unbelief</p>	<p>No final justification, name blotted out of the Book of Life</p>	<p>Lost</p>

<p>And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. Vs. 7</p>	<p>Thorny soil</p>	<p>And that which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. Vs. 14</p>	<p>Initial conversion and growth to an advanced stage</p>	<p>Name entered into the Book of Life</p>	<p>Late growth failure. Choked</p>	<p>No final atonement, name blotted out of the Book of Life</p>	<p>Lost</p>
<p>And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Vs. 8</p>	<p>Good soil</p>	<p>But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. Vs. 15</p>	<p>Initial belief. Healthy growth to maturity</p>	<p>Name entered into the Book of Life</p>	<p>Consistent and constant growth toward perfection</p>	<p>Final atonement. Name retained in the Book of Life</p>	<p>Saved. God's Elect</p>

The root sends its nourishment through the branch to the outermost twig. So Christ communicates the current of spiritual strength to every believer. **So long as the soul is united to Christ, there is no danger that it will wither or decay.**

The life of the vine will be manifest in fragrant fruit on the branches. *"He that abideth in Me,"* said Jesus, *"and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing."* When we live by faith on the Son of God, the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in our lives; not one will be missing.

"My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away." While the graft is outwardly united with the vine, there may be no vital connection. Then there will be no growth or fruitfulness. So there may be an apparent connection with Christ without a real union with Him by faith. A profession of religion places men in the church, but the character and conduct show whether they are in connection with Christ. If they bear no fruit, they are false branches. Their separation from Christ involves a ruin as complete as that represented by the dead branch. *"If a man abide not in Me,"* said Christ, *"he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."* D.A. 676.

Jesus did not convey the idea that merely one draft of the water of life would suffice the receiver. He who tastes of the love of Christ will continually long for more; but he seeks for nothing else. The riches, honors, and pleasures of the world do not attract him. The constant cry of his heart is, More of Thee. And He who reveals to the soul its necessity is waiting to satisfy its hunger and thirst. Every human resource and dependence will fail. The cisterns will be emptied, the pools become dry; but our Redeemer is an inexhaustible fountain. We may drink, and drink again, and ever find a fresh supply. He in whom Christ dwells has within himself the fountain of blessing, *"a well of water springing up into everlasting life."* From this source he may draw strength and grace sufficient for all his needs. D.A. 187.

Chapter Eight

Avoiding Errors In the Doctrine of Election

IN THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION of the sixteenth century a number of outstanding reformers ventured into the doctrine of election. That was about three centuries before the light on the heavenly sanctuary and investigative Judgement came. It is not surprising therefore that there were some errors in their attempts to develop the doctrine of election.

One of the fundamental problems was that of incorrect definitions. The common definition of an elect saint was one who was initially converted, but, as we have seen, that is an incorrect definition.

Another dangerous error was one which asserted that a converted believer could not fall from grace at any time. But, as we have already proven, even a person who will ultimately be saved may backslide after initial conversion and then return to the Lord.

A modern version of that error is the doctrine “once saved always saved,” also called “unconditional election.” A few passages of scripture are enough to expose such errors for what they are worth.

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

“But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

“Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

“Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

“Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

“Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.” Eze. 18:20-30.

“Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

“These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

“For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”
2 Peter 2:15-22.

It must be made clear, however, that God’s ideal for His converted people is that they remain saved until the end. And some have achieved that ideal! But to pervert this by saying that the elect cannot sin or fall away at any point along their path of Christian growth (before they are sealed) is patently erroneous.

The doctrine of election was especially perverted by Antinomians as we are told in the following excerpt from *The Great Controversy*:

The spiritual declension which had been manifest in England just before the time of Wesley was in great degree the result of antinomian teaching. Many affirmed that Christ had abolished the moral law and that Christians are therefore under no obligation to observe it; that a believer is freed from the “bondage of good works.” Others, though admitting the perpetuity of the law, declared that it was unnecessary for ministers to exhort the people to obedience of its precepts, since those whom God had elected to salvation would, “by the irresistible impulse of divine grace, be led to the practice of piety and virtue,” while those who were doomed to eternal reprobation “did not have power to obey the divine law.”

Others, also holding that “the elect cannot fall from grace nor forfeit the divine favor,” arrived at the still more hideous conclusion that “the wicked actions they commit are not really sinful, nor to be considered as instances of their violation of the divine law, and that, consequently, they have no occasion either to confess their sins or to break them off by repentance.”—McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia*, art. “Antinomians.” Therefore, they declared that even one of the vilest of sins, considered universally an enormous violation of the divine law, is not a sin in the sight of God, if committed by one of the elect, because it is one of the essential and distinctive characteristics of the elect, that they cannot do anything that is either displeasing to God or prohibited by the law. G.C. 260-261.

Third Angel's Message Safeguarded by the Sanctuary Truth

The light on the heavenly sanctuary and the investigative Judgement protects God's remnant from erroneous positions in the study of election.

With correct definitions and a correct understanding of "free choice" we can enjoy the study of the true doctrine of election without fear of making shipwreck of faith. We close this chapter with an admonition from the Spirit of Prophecy:

There is no such thing in the Word of God as unconditional election—once in grace, always in grace. In the second chapter of Second Peter the subject is made plain and distinct. After a history of some who followed an evil course, the explanation is given: "*which have forsaken the right way, . . . following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.*" . . . [2 Peter 2:15-20 quoted.] Here is a class of whom the apostle warns, "*For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*" . . .

There is truth to be received if souls are saved. The keeping of the commandments of God is life eternal to the receiver. But the Scriptures make it plain that those who once knew the way of life and rejoiced in the truth are in danger of falling through apostasy, and being lost. Therefore there is need of a decided, daily conversion to God.

All who seek to sustain the doctrine of election, once in grace, always in grace, do this against a plain, "*Thus saith the Lord.*" [Eze. 18:21; 33:13 quoted.]

Those who have been truly converted have been buried with Christ in the likeness of His death, and raised from the watery grave in the likeness of His resurrection, to walk in newness of life. By faithful obedience to the truth they are to make their calling and election sure. MS. 57, 1900.

Chapter Nine

Election and God's Eternal Purpose

An Introduction

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” 1 Peter 1:1-2.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.” Eph. 1:3-5.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Rom. 8:28-29.

These amazingly wonderful passages of scripture bring us face to face with God's eternal purpose. The guarantee that all things will work together for our good, that they always have done so, that they are now doing so and that they will always do so, lies in the fact that it is all part of God's great purpose for His people. Here we have the sublime assurance that, for those who are born again and who submit moment by moment to God's will by abiding in Christ through continual communion, all things are working together for good!

Moreover, these passages also introduce us to the fathomless mystery of God's foreknowledge. The words of the Apostle Peter are as staggering in their impact as they are mysterious in their meaning when we read: **“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father...”**

This means that those whose names will be retained in the book of life have been foreknown by God from all eternity past!

The Apostle Paul intensifies the mystery by informing us that the elect were chosen in Christ before the “foundation of the world” i.e. from the beginningless ages of eternity past, and predestinated according to God's eternal purpose!

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” Eph. 1:11.

There is tremendous value in these mysterious doctrines. First of all, in terms of practical Christian living, as you press forward in Christ seeking to have your name retained in the book of life, you have the ultimate and supreme assurance and certainty of victory in these wonderful passages.

Secondly, these doctrines bring us into direct contact with the mind and purpose of God, His eternal purpose in Christ. And there is no other doctrine that lifts us out of ourselves and into Christ like these doctrines of God's foreknowledge, God's predestination, God's call, producing justification and glorification of His elect in Christ!

Holy Ground

At the outset we must realize the magnitude of the task we are undertaking. We must approach it ‘with reverence and godly fear’ because we are dealing with the mind and will of the Almighty and Infinite God. We are venturing to consider the mind and purpose of God. Man can never engage in any higher occupation. We, creatures of time, fallen and therefore less than nothing, unworthy and sinful, are now going to look into this particular revelation that God has been pleased to give us concerning His own mind and eternal purpose!

We must not approach these great doctrines merely out of curiosity or in an argumentative spirit or with our own philosophical analysis but with the spirit of meekness, humility, submission and with the determination to abide in Christ having always that vital connection which will ensure that we are in God's purpose and therefore in His elect.

The Voice which spoke to Moses speaks to us:

“And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” Exodus 3:5.

As we examine these great mysteries we too also stand on “holy ground.”

Unfathomable Mysteries

Neither must we come to these great doctrines with the idea that we can fully understand and comprehend such grand truths. It is God's eternal purpose and no finite sinful mind can even grasp it fully. Furthermore these mysteries will be our study throughout the endless ages of the future eternity.

Yet God has revealed enough for our understanding and for our encouragement. Indeed these great truths are for the people of God in general but more especially His end-time living remnant elect. We must have the Spirit of God in order to understand the deep things of God.

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” 1 Cor. 2:9-13.

Ultimately, the proof of a right approach to these doctrines is that you find in them the greatest urge to holiness and sanctification for these truths are indeed clustered around the cross of Christ and exalt and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ as Sacrifice, High Priest and coming King!

Chapter Ten

God's Eternal Purpose, Divine Foreknowledge, and Freedom of Choice

An Infinite God

YAHWEH OR JEHOVAH, THE GOD OF THE BIBLE, the true and living God, is **infinite!** He is infinite in power, infinite in wisdom and knowledge, infinite in righteousness and infinite in love. Moreover, God is infinite in existence, He is absolutely eternal, without beginning without end! The existence of God is the mystery of all mysteries!

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”
Rom. 1:20.

“Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.”
Psa. 147:5.

“Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isa. 40:28-31.

“Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” Heb. 4:13.

“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” Isa. 46:9-10.

“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”
Acts 15:18.

Omniscience

God knows all things past, present and future, and He knows them constantly and continuously and changelessly. Nothing short of eternal, all-encompassing, absolute knowledge would satisfy the fundamental Christian concept of God’s infinity and perfection.

Because He knows the future, God is never taken by surprise. Predictive prophecy is the supreme evidence of His foreknowledge. Prophecy predicts what God’s foreknowledge has seen will take place. The predicted events do not take place because they are foreseen; they are foreseen because they will take place.

Eternal Foreknowledge and Eternal Provision

As we said before, because God knows the future, He is never taken by surprise. He has eternally made provision to deal with all that He has eternally foreseen will happen. The apostacy of Satan and the fall of man were both foreseen by God and provision was made to meet the emergency.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

1 Peter 1:18-20.

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of *“the mystery which*

hath been kept in silence through times eternal.” Rom. 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God’s throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, “that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. D.A. 22.

Eternal Foreknowledge and Freedom of Choice

God lives in eternity. Eternity is timeless and changeless, it is without beginning or ending. Creatures live in time. The essential characteristic of time is change. Time starts and ends whereas eternity is changeless, beginningless and endless. Whatever creatures choose to do in **time** must be eternally known by God in **eternity**. This is a mystery beyond our understanding.

Although God eternally foreknew (or foreknows) in eternity all the choices that all His creatures would make in time, His foreknowledge does not predetermine their choices. God has given to His intelligent creatures the gift of freedom of choice and, again we repeat, His foreknowledge does not predetermine or predestinate their choices! What we freely choose determines His foreknowledge and yet His foreknowledge eternally existed before our choices! What a mystery!

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

“Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.” Rom. 11:33-36.

Divine Foreknowledge and God’s Eternal Purpose

Given all that has been said before, we can now approach the subject of God’s eternal purpose with reverence and Godly fear. Since God eternally foreknew all the choices of all his creatures, His eternal plan for the universe took into account that foreknowledge. He did

not ordain or predetermine that sin should exist but He foresaw its existence and He, from all eternity past, made provision to meet the terrible emergency of sin.

Let us analyse God's purpose and put our analysis in human terms—remembering that such terms are always less than adequate in describing eternal realities.

Let us suppose that God had a plan for the universe in the absence of sin. But He foresaw that sin would happen and therefore “modified” his plan in order to deal with the sin problem. Such would be our human analysis. But God is eternal, absolute and changeless and since He had always foreknown that sin would have developed He always had the plan to deal with sin.

It is clear then that God's eternal purpose is all-embracing and has been so from all eternity past. It included creation; the free choice of creatures, the development of the sin problem, with all the suffering and woe caused by sin, and the plan of redemption, centred in the infinite sacrifice of Christ, with all the glorious achievements and consequences of redemption. We can summarize it by saying that God's eternal purpose is the accomplishment of His will above and beyond, but through, the choices of His creatures!

He that ruleth in the heavens is the one who sees the end from the beginning—the one before whom the mysteries of the past and the future are alike outspread, and who, beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, beholds the accomplishment of His own purposes of love and blessing. Though *“clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne.”* Psalm 97:2, R.V. And this the inhabitants of the universe, both loyal and disloyal, will one day understand. *“His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.”* Deuteronomy 32:4. **P.P. 43.**

When God eternally conceived this eternal purpose of creation and redemption, He foreknew the fall of man and He accepted the necessary fact of infinite suffering. He foreknew He could not make a full atonement for sin without actually experiencing in His very own Being the full requirement of the suffering which sin, by its very nature, causes. His eternal purpose is victorious but the path of victory passes through the sufferings of the Cross of Jesus Christ!

The Fundamental Basis of God's Eternal Purpose

The law of self-sacrificing love is the law of life for the universe. This Agape love is an all-for-the-other love, it is absolutely selfless and it never fails. God's truth and God's love can never be defeated! And yet God's love is harmless and never forces the conscience of His creatures.

God's eternal purpose is conceived in infinite wisdom; it is filled with infinite righteousness and truth; it is motivated by infinite love and it is backed up by infinite power used harmlessly and righteously without by-passing the principles of freedom of choice. God's eternal purpose therefore cannot fail. And yet God leaves His intelligent creatures absolutely free to choose for or against His eternal purpose. Those who reject the principle of self-sacrificing love, "write off" themselves. Those who believe in, accept and surrender to the principle of self-sacrificing love will be ultimately victorious and receive eternal life.

One of the most glorious of divine mysteries is that opposition enhances the ultimate victory of God's plan even though the process of overcoming the opposition must necessarily include self-sacrificial suffering. The principle of self-sacrifice is the law of eternal life for the universe whereas the principle of self-centredness and self-love is the principle of non-existence.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." John 12:24-25.

In the eternal flow of God's eternal purpose He employs His eternal self-sacrificing love to solve the sin induced problems of evil by His eternal wisdom. In overcoming Satan's government of sin God does not use compulsory force rather He uses His power righteously and wisely by His love without invading, even to a hair's breadth, His creatures' freedom of choice. This brings us to another crucial fact—the greater the opposition and the evil, the more love and wisdom God applies to the problem. When God applies greater love and wisdom the result is that more is achieved than if the problem had never occurred!

"For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."
2 Cor. 13:8.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Rom. 8:37.

“Love suffereth long, and is kind; Love envieth not; Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

“Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth...” 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

No Reason, but a Purpose!

The development of the sin problem is a mystery. In terms of cause and effect there is no reason why sin should exist. Sin originated in the mind of Lucifer by his free choice to oppose the Divine government.

To many minds the origin of sin and the reason for its existence are a source of great perplexity. They see the work of evil, with its terrible results of woe and desolation, and they question how all this can exist under the sovereignty of One who is infinite in wisdom, in power, and in love. Here is a mystery of which they find no explanation. And in their uncertainty and doubt they are blinded to truths plainly revealed in God’s word and essential to salvation. There are those who, in their inquiries concerning the existence of sin, endeavor to search into that which God has never revealed; hence they find no solution of their difficulties; and such as are actuated by a disposition to doubt and cavil seize upon this as an excuse for rejecting the words of Holy Writ. Others, however, fail of a satisfactory understanding of the great problem of evil, from the fact that tradition and misinterpretation have obscured the teaching of the Bible concerning the character of God, the nature of His government, and the principles of His dealing with sin.

It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause be

shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the word of God; it is "the transgression of the law;" it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government. G.C. 492-493.

It was determined by Infinite Wisdom that once sin entered the universe, it must run its full course; it must be allowed to fully develop.

Until fully developed, it could not be made to appear the evil thing it was; his (Satan's) disaffection would not be seen to be rebellion. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character or see to what his work was leading. P.P. 41.

God could employ only such means as were consistent with truth and righteousness. Satan could use what God could not— flattery and deceit. He had sought to falsify the word of God and had misrepresented His plan of government, claiming that God was not just in imposing laws upon the angels; that in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, He was seeking merely the exaltation of Himself. It was therefore necessary to demonstrate before the inhabitants of heaven, and of all the worlds, that God's government is just, His law perfect. Satan had made it appear that he himself was seeking to promote the good of the universe. The true character of the usurper and his real object must be understood by all. He must have time to manifest himself by his wicked works. P.P. 42.

Even although there was no reason for the entrance or origin of sin in the universe, God has put a purpose to it. What is this purpose?

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages — a perpetual testimony to the nature of sin and its terrible results. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy beings, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its penalty.

He that ruleth in the heavens is the one who sees the end from the beginning — the one before whom the mysteries of the past and the

future are alike outspread, and who, beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, beholds the accomplishment of His own purposes of love and blessing. Though *"clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne."* Psalm 97:2, R.V. And this the inhabitants of the universe, both loyal and disloyal, will one day understand. *"His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He."* Deuteronomy 32:4. P.P.

Since God eternally foreknew that sin would develop, He also eternally had that purpose for it.

The Ultimate Purpose

God foreknew that the solution to the sin problem would necessitate the implementation of the plan of salvation. This would include the incarnation, earthly life, sacrificial death, resurrection, ascension and priesthood of His only Son. There would be no escaping the cross. Adam's lost race could be saved only by the faith, obedience and sacrifice of God's Son!

The plan of redemption, centred in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ, will produce Spirit born children of God who will possess His very own life, a church that will be the wife of His Son throughout the eternity to come and will reign with Him on His Throne!

Therefore the terrible and malignant emergency of the sin problem has been turned by God into an overwhelming victory for His government; redemptive exaltation of the redeemed; and the eternal security of the Universe in the eternal future.

In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. But He stepped still lower in the path of humiliation. *"Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."* Phil. 2:8. As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of the common priest, so Christ took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. *"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him."* Isa. 53:5.

Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share,

that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. *"With His stripes we are healed."*

By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. *"...God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son."* John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder."* God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. It is the "Son of man" whose name shall be called, *"Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* Isa. 9:6. The I Am is the Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He who is *"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,"* is not ashamed to call us brethren. Heb. 7:26; 2:11. In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.

Of His people God says, *"They shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon His land. For how great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty!"* Zech. 9:16, 17. **The exaltation of the redeemed will be an eternal testimony to God's mercy.** *"In the ages to come,"* He will *"show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."* *"To the intent that . . . unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known . . . the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Eph. 2:7; 3:10, 11, R. V.

Through Christ's redeeming work the government of God stands justified. The Omnipotent One is made known as the God of love. Satan's charges are refuted, and his character unveiled. Rebellion can never again arise. Sin can never again enter the universe. Through eternal ages all are secure from apostasy. By love's self-sacrifice, the inhabitants of earth and heaven are bound to their Creator in bonds of indissoluble union.

The work of redemption will be complete. In the place where sin abounded, God's grace much more abounds. The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God. Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and suffered and died: here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, *"and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."* And through endless ages as the redeemed walk in the light of the Lord, they will praise Him for His unspeakable Gift, Immanuel, *"God with us."* D.A. 25.

Chapter Eleven

Foreknowledge, Predestination and Freedom of Choice

Basic Definitions

THE GREEK WORD *proginosko* means “to know beforehand.” We have already examined the term *divine* foreknowledge in Chapter 10. The English word *predestinate* is the translation of the Greek word *prohorizo* or *proorizo* meaning “to mark off beforehand, to predetermine.”

Freedom of choice means that a person has the ability, capacity, liberty, opportunity and occasion to choose, without compulsion, to do a particular thing while having the same ability, capacity, liberty opportunity and occasion to choose, without compulsion, to do some other thing.

A person’s choice can be influenced one way or another by a number of factors. In addition a person usually has reasons for making any particular choice. Remember that influencing a person’s choice is not forcing that choice and, similarly, having reasons for a particular choice does not mean that the choice was not freely exercised.

God influences our choice through the sweetness and goodness of His love. God never forces the conscience. On the other hand Satan, and his agencies, usually try persuasion at first but sooner or later resort to compulsive force.

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan’s deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God’s government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character

must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "*with healing in His wings.*" Mal. 4:2. D.A. 22.

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power. D.A. 759.

Divine Predestination

We have made it absolutely clear from scripture that God has not predestinated or predetermined the choices of His intelligent creatures. We have seen too that God has not predestinated any one to be lost.

But God did predestinate or predetermine certain things. The first and most obvious of these is the Creation of the Universe and living intelligent creatures. God had predetermined from all eternity past that He would make the universe and that plan required no other decision but God's. Another thing God predetermined was the plan of redemption:

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:34.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:3-4.

In the councils of heaven, before the world was created, the Father and the Son covenanted together that if man proved disloyal to God, Christ, one with the Father, would take the place of the transgressor, and suffer the penalty of justice that must fall upon him. MS 145, 1897.

Christ was not alone in making this great sacrifice. It was the fulfillment of the covenant made between the Father and the Son before

the foundation of the earth was laid. With clasped hands they entered into the solemn pledge that Christ would become the substitute and surety for the human race if they were overcome by Satan's sophistry. MS 111, 1897.

Moreover, God is in absolute control of His Universe and from His great eternity He orders what His divine foreknowledge and omniscience knows to be best.

Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best. M.H. 417.

God predetermined to save corporate humanity in Christ. In other words God had predestinated that Adam's lost race be redeemed in Christ. But this predestination is not a predestination of the choices of individuals. Salvation is not forced upon us against our will. Each individual human is free to choose whether to accept or reject the free gift of salvation.

Always remember that before mercy there must be condemnation. Adam's disobedience placed the human race under condemnation and wrath. Christ's obedience placed the human race under mercy.

"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5:18.

And each individual human is free to choose whether he will remain under condemnation or submit to God's mercy. Here then is the true meaning of the so-called Pauline "double predestination." In the first Adam, because of his disobedience, God has predestinated all men to wrath. In the Second Adam, Christ, because of His perfect faith, obedience and sacrifice, God has predestinated all men, corporate humanity, to mercy. If they were not predestinated to wrath they could not be predestinated to mercy. The hope of mankind is more, not less, secure because it is grounded in the truth about God rather than in anything about man himself.

God's Sovereign Mercy: The Basis of Redemptive Predestination

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Titus 1:2.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."
Eph. 1:3-4.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Rom. 8:29.

Paul's statement is mysterious. "God predestinated those whom He foreknew." Let us first of all analyse this statement in a general way. The *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 575 gives this very interesting general analysis:

"To use human language, as God foresaw, and thus foreknew, each generation of men that would come upon the stage of this world's action, he coupled immediately with his foreknowledge the decision to predestinate them all to be saved. God never had any other purpose than salvation for the members of the human family. For God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4)...salvation is offered freely to all. But not all accept the gospel invitation. 'Many are called but few are chosen' (Matt. 22: 14). Salvation is not forced upon us against our will. If we choose to oppose and resist God's purpose, we shall be lost. Divine foreknowledge and divine predestination in no way exclude human liberty."

There is no justification for the frequently heard complaint: "God knows whether I am going to be lost or saved. If He knows, it has to be that way, so what difference does it make what I do?" It makes this difference: God knows that only those who accept Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour and who are genuinely born again and who abide in Christ, enduring to the end by His grace, will be saved. Not only does He know this, He has determined it from eternity. God has also determined that no one shall be taken into His kingdom except by his own choice. Consequently what God predetermines, in eternity, about an individual's salvation is solely

the result of the individual's decision, in time, about God's sovereign choice and predestination in the plan of salvation.

Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the covenant was made that all who were obedient, all who should through the abundant grace provided, become holy in character, and without blame before God, by appropriating that grace, should be children of God. F.C.E. 403:1.

We can summarize the general meaning of predestination by saying that God has predestinated corporate humanity (all men) to be saved in Christ but the individual human person has the freedom of choice to accept or reject God's free gift of salvation. Those who fix their choice in acceptance become fixed in God's redemptive predestination. Those who fix their choice in rejection become fixed outside God's plan i.e. they are in the predestinated path to destruction. And these respective destinies are determined by the investigative judgement and foreknown by God from eternity!

“For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.” Psa. 1:6.

The Specific Analysis of Paul's Statement

We have examined the general meaning of redemptive predestination but there is a specific meaning for, and application to, the elect.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Romans 8:28-30.

For those who are genuinely converted and justified by faith and who are abiding in Christ and enduring to the end, daily choosing to surrender fully and to be fixed in vital connection with Christ, these statements by Paul are precious promises to be claimed and they are also a description of God's purpose for His elect.

Paul's great and mysterious statements in these verses are comfort and assurance to God's afflicted people that their salvation rests in His hands and that it is in the process of being accomplished in perfect harmony with His eternal and changeless purpose for them.

The Highest Level of New Covenant Living

To live and to conduct our lives in accordance with God's eternal purpose and His plan for our lives is indeed the highest form of new covenant living!

"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10:23.

"Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?" Pro. 20:24.

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Isa. 30:21.

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Pro 3:5-6.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. 8:14.

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. **The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan.** But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take posses-

sion of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, **through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment**, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and **a continual communion**, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end. D.A. 324.

God's eternal purpose for humanity, His redemptive predestined plan for each soul, has been demonstrated in the earthly life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The specific meaning and individual application of predestination are clearly explained and demonstrated in Christ. He has shown us how to live the predestined life!



Chapter Twelve

How Jesus Lived the Predestinated Life

“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

“Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

“And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”
1 Pet 1:18-20.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Tim. 1:9-10.

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Rev. 13:8.

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”
Acts 2:23.

“For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.” Acts 4:27-28.

These wonderful passages of scripture reveal the profound truth that the plan of redemption was laid in eternity, that is, it always existed in the mind and purpose of God.

The Son of God, the Second Person of the Godhead, being co-eternal with and co-equal to the Father in Deity, possesses as God, the same omniscience as His Father. In heaven before His first advent He knew all the details of the plan of redemption and foreknew all the details of the choices of all those who would impact in one way or another on His earthly life.

When He came to earth as a man, in our fallen human nature which He took on, He gave up the use of the prerogatives of Deity and had to obtain knowledge by studying the word of God. Moreover in order to carry out the predetermined plan He had to remain in absolute surrender to His Heavenly Father.

As a man He had freedom of choice and a human will. How would the eternal predetermined plan be carried out in His earthly life? He would have to constantly and continuously choose to constantly and continuously surrender to His Father's will.

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." John 5:30.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." John 6:38.

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John 14:10.

"For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." Rom. 15:3.

The Predestinated Plan

The plan existed from all eternity and the man Christ Jesus on earth possessed our human will and free choice which He took on in the incarnation. How would he live the predestinated life? Through surrender of Himself moment by moment to God!

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." John 2:1-4.

"The words, "Mine hour is not yet come," point to the fact that every act of Christ's life on earth was in fulfillment of the plan that had existed from the days of eternity. Before He came to earth, the plan lay out before Him, perfect in all its details. But as He walked among men, He was guided, step by step, by the Father's will. He did not hesitate to act at the appointed time. With the same submission He waited until the time had come." D.A. 147.

The second example is found in John 7:1-8:

"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews' feast of

tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

“For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him. Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

“The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.” John 7:1-8

“Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for My time is not yet full come. When He had said these words unto them, He abode still in Galilee.” His brothers had spoken to Him in a tone of authority, prescribing the course He should pursue. He cast their rebuke back to them, classing them not with His self-denying disciples, but with the world. *“The world cannot hate you,”* He said, *“but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.”* The world does not hate those who are like it in spirit; it loves them as its own.

The world for Christ was not a place of ease and self-aggrandizement. He was not watching for an opportunity to seize its power and its glory. It held out no such prize for Him. It was the place into which His Father had sent Him. He had been given for the life of the world, to work out the great plan of redemption. He was accomplishing His work for the fallen race. But He was not to be presumptuous, not to rush into danger, not to hasten a crisis. Each event in His work had its appointed hour. He must wait patiently. He knew that He was to receive the world's hatred; He knew that His work would result in His death; but to prematurely expose Himself would not be the will of His Father. D.A. 451.

The third example is found in the account of the death and resurrection of Lazarus,

When Christ heard the message, the disciples thought He received it coldly. He did not manifest the sorrow they expected Him to show.

Looking up to them, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." For two days He remained in the place where He was. This delay was a mystery to the disciples. What a comfort His presence would be to the afflicted household! they thought. His strong affection for the family at Bethany was well known to the disciples, and they were surprised that He did not respond to the sad message, "He whom Thou lovest is sick."

During the two days Christ seemed to have dismissed the message from His mind; for He did not speak of Lazarus. The disciples thought of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. They had wondered why Jesus, with the power to perform wonderful miracles, had permitted John to languish in prison, and to die a violent death. Possessing such power, why did not Christ save John's life? This question had often been asked by the Pharisees, who presented it as an unanswerable argument against Christ's claim to be the Son of God. The Saviour had warned His disciples of trials, losses, and persecution. Would He forsake them in trial? Some questioned if they had mistaken His mission. All were deeply troubled.

After waiting for two days, Jesus said to the disciples, "Let us go into Judea again." The disciples questioned why, if Jesus were going to Judea, He had waited two days. But anxiety for Christ and for themselves was now uppermost in their minds. They could see nothing but danger in the course He was about to pursue. "Master," they said, "the Jews of late sought to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again? Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day?" I am under the guidance of My Father; as long as I do His will, My life is safe. My twelve hours of day are not yet ended. I have entered upon the last remnant of My day; but while any of this remains, I am safe. D.A. 526-527.

The lesson here for us is that we too are called to walk in the path that God has marked out for us!

If any man walk in the day," He continued, "he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world." He who does the will of God, who walks in the path that God has marked out, cannot stumble and fall. The light of God's guiding Spirit gives him a clear perception of his duty, and leads him aright till the close of his work. "But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." He who

walks in a path of his own choosing, where God has not called him, will stumble. For him day is turned into night, and wherever he may be, he is not secure. D.A. 527.

The fourth example we will look at is recorded in the Luke 19 description of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem when the multitudes were shouting praises to Jesus. The Pharisees were angry and commanded Jesus to rebuke the people.

Many Pharisees witnessed the scene, and, burning with envy and malice, sought to turn the current of popular feeling. With all their authority they tried to silence the people; but their appeals and threats only increased the enthusiasm. They feared that this multitude, in the strength of their numbers, would make Jesus king. As a last resort they pressed through the crowd to where the Saviour was, and accosted Him with reproving and threatening words: "Master, rebuke Thy disciples." They declared that such noisy demonstrations were unlawful, and would not be permitted by the authorities. But they were silenced by the reply of Jesus, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." That scene of triumph was of God's own appointing. It had been foretold by the prophet, and man was powerless to turn aside God's purpose. Had men failed to carry out His plan, He would have given a voice to the inanimate stones, and they would have hailed His Son with acclamations of praise. As the silenced Pharisees drew back, the words of Zechariah were taken up by hundreds of voices: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." D.A. 575.

Emptied of Self

Jesus remained surrendered to the eternal principle of self-renouncing love and therefore the character He worked out in our human nature was utterly emptied of self. So much so that He made no plans for Himself but in absolute surrender He accepted God's plans for Him, plans which had been laid down in eternity!

This is a very important lesson especially for the living remnant elect who will have to give the final gospel warning and the full and final display of Heaven's government to the world just before the Second Coming of Christ!

The priests and rabbis were taking the Son of God to task for the very work He had been sent into the world to do. By their sins they had separated themselves from God, and in their pride were moving independently of Him. They felt sufficient in themselves for all things, and realized no need of a higher wisdom to direct their acts. But the Son of God was surrendered to the Father's will, and dependent upon His power. So utterly was Christ emptied of self that He made no plans for Himself. He accepted God's plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. So should we depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will. D.A. 208.

The words of Christ teach that we should regard ourselves as inseparably bound to our Father in heaven. Whatever our position, we are dependent upon God, who holds all destinies in His hands. He has appointed us our work, and has endowed us with faculties and means for that work. So long as we surrender the will to God, and trust in His strength and wisdom, we shall be guided in safe paths, to fulfill our appointed part in His great plan. But the one who depends upon his own wisdom and power is separating himself from God. Instead of working in unison with Christ, he is fulfilling the purpose of the enemy of God and man. D.A. 209.

Living the Predestined Life Gives Rest

"Learn of Me," says Jesus; "for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest." We are to enter the school of Christ, to learn from Him meekness and lowliness. Redemption is that process by which the soul is trained for heaven. This training means a knowledge of Christ. It means emancipation from ideas, habits, and practices that have been gained in the school of the prince of darkness. The soul must be delivered from all that is opposed to loyalty to God.

In the heart of Christ, where reigned perfect harmony with God, there was perfect peace. He was never elated by applause, nor dejected by censure or disappointment. Amid the greatest opposition and the most cruel treatment, He was still of good courage. But many who profess to be His followers have an anxious, troubled heart, because they are afraid to trust themselves with God. They do not make a

complete surrender to Him; for they shrink from the consequences that such a surrender may involve. Unless they do make this surrender, they cannot find peace.

It is the love of self that brings unrest. When we are born from above, the same mind will be in us that was in Jesus, the mind that led Him to humble Himself that we might be saved. Then we shall not be seeking the highest place. We shall desire to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him. We shall understand that the value of our work does not consist in making a show and noise in the world, and in being active and zealous in our own strength. The value of our work is in proportion to the impartation of the Holy Spirit. Trust in God brings holier qualities of mind, so that in patience we may possess our souls. D.A. 330.

God's Eternal Purpose For Us Will Disentangle Our Lives

Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest. The Lord says, *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee."* Isa. 26:3. Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master Worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory. And that character which expresses the glory-character of Christ will be received into the Paradise of God. A renovated race shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy. D.A. 331.

Tenderly He bade the toiling people, *"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."* Matthew 11:29.

In these words, Christ was speaking to every human being. Whether they know it or not, all are weary and heavy-laden. All are weighed down with burdens that only Christ can remove. The heaviest burden that we bear is the burden of sin. If we were left to bear this burden, it would crush us. But the Sinless One has taken our place. *"The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."* Isaiah 53:6.

He has borne the burden of our guilt. He will take the load from our weary shoulders. He will give us rest. The burden of care and sorrow also He will bear. He invites us to cast all our care upon Him; for He carries us upon His heart.

The Elder Brother of our race is by the eternal throne. He looks upon every soul who is turning his face toward Him as the Saviour. He knows by experience what are the weaknesses of humanity, what are our wants, and where lies the strength of our temptations; for He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:15. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. Are you tempted? He will deliver. Are you weak? He will strengthen. Are you ignorant? He will enlighten. Are you wounded? He will heal. The Lord "telleteth the number of the stars;" and yet "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalm 147:4, 3.

Whatever your anxieties and trials, spread out your case before the Lord. Your spirit will be braced for endurance. The way will be open for you to disentangle yourself from embarrassment and difficulty. The weaker and more helpless you know yourself to be, the stronger will you become in His strength. The heavier your burdens, the more blessed the rest in casting them upon your Burden Bearer.

Circumstances may separate friends; the restless waters of the wide sea may roll between us and them. But no circumstances, no distance, can separate us from the Saviour. Wherever we may be, He is at our right hand, to support, maintain, uphold, and cheer. Greater than the love of a mother for her child is Christ's love for His redeemed. It is our privilege to rest in His love, to say, "I will trust Him; for He gave His life for me."

Human love may change, but Christ's love knows no change. When we cry to Him for help, His hand is stretched out to save.

*"The mountains may depart, And the hills be removed;
But My loving-kindness shall not depart from thee,
Neither shall My covenant of peace be removed,
Saith Jehovah that hath mercy on thee."* Isaiah 54:10, A.R.V. M.H. 71.

Jesus Rested By Faith In His Father's Care

As Jesus rested by faith in the Father's care, so we are to rest in the care of our Saviour. If the disciples had trusted in Him, they would have been kept in peace. Their fear in the time of danger revealed their unbelief. In their efforts to save themselves, they forgot Jesus; and it was only when, in despair of self-dependence, they turned to Him that He could give them help.

How often the disciples' experience is ours! When the tempests of temptation gather, and the fierce lightnings flash, and the waves sweep over us, we battle with the storm alone, forgetting that there is One who can help us. We trust to our own strength till our hope is lost, and we are ready to perish. Then we remember Jesus, and if we call upon Him to save us, we shall not cry in vain. Though He sorrowfully reproves our unbelief and self-confidence, He never fails to give us the help we need. Whether on the land or on the sea, if we have the Saviour in our hearts, there is no need of fear. Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the sea of life, and will deliver us from danger in the way that He knows to be best. D.A. 336.

The Secret Of Success In His Life Was Prayer

In order for Jesus to successfully live the predestinated life, He had to maintain constant communion with His Father through prayer.

Not for Himself, but for others, He lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed. *"The Lord God hath given Me,"* He said, *"the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned."* Isa. 50:4.

Christ's disciples were much impressed by His prayers and by His habit of communion with God. One day after a short absence from their Lord, they found Him absorbed in supplication. Seeming uncon-

scious of their presence, He continued praying aloud. The hearts of the disciples were deeply moved. As He ceased praying, they exclaimed, "Lord, teach us to pray." C.O.L. 139-140.

As the human was upon Him, He felt His need of strength from His Father. He had select places of prayer. He loved to hold communion with His Father in the solitude of the mountain. In this exercise His holy, human soul was strengthened for the duties and trials of the day. Our Saviour identifies Himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a suppliant, a nightly petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, to come forth invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. 2T 201.

It was not on the cross only that Christ sacrificed Himself for humanity. As He "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38), every day's experience was an outpouring of His life. In one way only could such a life be sustained. Jesus lived in dependence upon God and communion with Him. To the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty, men now and then repair; they abide for a season, and the result is manifest in noble deeds; then their faith fails, the communion is interrupted, and the lifework marred. But the life of Jesus was a life of constant trust, sustained by continual communion; and His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering.

As a man He supplicated the throne of God, till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that connected humanity with divinity. Receiving life from God, He imparted life to men. Education 80.

The Remnant Living Elect Will Fully Reflect The Christ-life

As yet the disciples were unacquainted with the Saviour's unlimited resources and power. He said to them, "*Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name.*" John 16:24. He explained that the secret of their success would be in asking for strength and grace in His name. He would be present before the Father to make request for them. The prayer of the humble suppliant He presents as His own desire in that soul's behalf. Every sincere prayer is heard in heaven. It may not be fluently expressed; but if the heart is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary where Jesus ministers, and He will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection.

The path of sincerity and integrity is not a path free from obstruction, but in every difficulty we are to see a call to prayer. There is no one living who has any power that he has not received from God, and the source whence it comes is open to the weakest human being. *"Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name,"* said Jesus, *"that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it."*

"In My name," Christ bade His disciples pray. In Christ's name His followers are to stand before God. Through the value of the sacrifice made for them, they are of value in the Lord's sight. Because of the imputed righteousness of Christ they are accounted precious. For Christ's sake the Lord pardons those that fear Him. He does not see in them the vileness of the sinner. He recognizes in them the likeness of His Son, in whom they believe.

The Lord is disappointed when His people place a low estimate upon themselves. He desires His chosen heritage to value themselves according to the price He has placed upon them. God wanted them, else He would not have sent His Son on such an expensive errand to redeem them. He has a use for them, and He is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him, that they may glorify His name. They may expect large things if they have faith in His promises.

But to pray in Christ's name means much. It means that we are to accept His character, manifest His spirit, and work His works. The Saviour's promise is given on condition. *"If ye love Me,"* He says, *"keep My commandments."* He saves men, not in sin, but from sin; and those who love Him will show their love by obedience.

All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us. D.A. 667-668.

Chapter Thirteen

Predestinated To Be Conformed To The Image Of His Son

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Rom. 8:28-30.

God conceived His purpose for us in eternity. All the steps of this purpose were planned in eternity before the foundation of the world. God planned for His people this ultimate salvation, this final glorification. He did not merely plan the first steps and then wait to see what would happen; He planned it right through to the end. Paul’s daring statement “them he also glorified” reminds us of this.

God’s eternal purpose is centered in Christ and has been successfully completed in Christ for us. Christ lived out the predestined plan in His earthly life. By the absolute surrender of perfect faith He traversed the victorious path of the principle of the cross from birth to glorification. All that Satan threw at Him was made to work for the good of God’s government and His people. Christ demonstrated before the on looking universe that submission to the principle of self-sacrificing love guarantees victory over sin and ends in glorification!

Therefore all things must work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. The elect are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God’s Son. This means not only character perfection, but ultimately glorification at

the Second Coming of Christ. Our Saviour took on our fallen human nature and overcame by faith in and absolute surrender to His Father. His victory is for us.

Those who enter into Christ by faith are converted, born again. As they abide in Christ they are sanctified, and as they remain in Christ even to the close of probation they become fixed in Him eternally. And they will be glorified! In other words they become a permanent fixture in God's eternal purpose which has already been fully worked out and demonstrated in Christ! These are the elect of God. God's election is in Christ. Christ is God's elect Man. Therefore they are elect who are in Him; they who are elect are in Him! "In Him," here, refers to the end-point i.e. abiding in Christ to the end so that the name is retained in the Book of Life in the investigative judgement. If we are in God's plan and purpose, then nothing can be against us!

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Rom. 8:31-33.

The Apostle wants us to see that what matters ultimately is the purpose of God. If we know the purpose of God, and that we are in that purpose, then there is only one conclusion to come to, that all things must work together for our good!

God foreknew from all eternity that His purpose would be victorious in Christ because Christ in our human nature would have chosen to remain absolutely surrendered to His Father by faith. So certain was His foreknowledge that God translated Enoch and Elijah and resurrected Moses into glory. In other words three men were glorified before Christ but their glorification depended on the success of the plan of redemption in Christ.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. 1:9.

The Five Stages In The Accomplishment Of The Purpose

Glorification is the ultimate goal. Humanity is already glorified in Christ and sits at the right hand of God!

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” 1 John 3:1-3.

Paul lists five stages in the eternal purpose in Christ for humanity. The elect must experience all five realities. These five stages are:

1. To be foreknown
2. To be predestinated
3. To be called
4. To be justified
5. To be glorified

First: Foreknowledge

“For whom he did foreknow?” This is the first of the five steps. We have already examined this term foreknowledge in its general meaning of omniscience. But here, with reference to the elect, it has a special and specific meaning. It does not merely mean that God knew them before hand in the same way that He knows all things. It means a lot more! How can we say this? Because of how the Bible uses the word “know” in the plan of redemption. Let us turn to the teachings of Jesus Himself in Matthew 7:21-23

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
Mat. 7:21-23.

When Jesus says that He will say to them “I never knew you” He is not talking about the general intellectual knowledge of omniscience by which He knows all things, rather His speaking of intimate, redemptive

knowledge, the specific intimate and saving knowledge that exists between Him and His own! The following texts confirm our conclusion.

“The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.” Nahum 1:7.

“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” John 10:14.

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” 2 Tim. 2:19.

Oh yes! The Lord knoweth them that are His and He has known them from all eternity and this is a special, specific, intimate, redemptive knowledge! What a mystery! Further light is shed on our understanding by a statement in the book of Amos, chapter 3, verse 2:

“You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.” Amos 3:2.

Obviously God knows, as a matter of pure omniscience, every family in the earth. But He says that it is because He has known them only, that He is going to punish them for their iniquities. It clearly does not just mean that He knows about them, and knows what they will do or will not do. It means “To you only have I given special attention, ‘You are my own family’, ‘you are the ones who are special to Me because you are mine and I have given you special attention.’ ‘You alone— therefore I am going to punish you in an exceptional manner.’”

The elect are those who by their own free will fix their choice in Christ. When they do so in time, it makes the connection in eternity. And the connection between God’s eternal purpose and our fixedness of choice produces an intimate bond of redemptive knowledge, a family tie which though formed in time was ultimately and eternally known by God in eternity past.

The specific meaning of “whom He did foreknow” in Romans 8:29 means “those on whom He set His heart in eternity because they set their heart on Him in time.”

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” 1 Peter 1:2.

All who choose Christ's kingdom of love and righteousness and peace, making its interest paramount to all other, are linked to the world above, and every blessing needed for this life is theirs. In the book of God's providence, the volume of life, we are each given a page. That page contains every particular of our history; even the hairs of the head are numbered. God's children are never absent from His mind.

"Be not therefore anxious for the morrow." Matt. 6:34, R. V. We are to follow Christ day by day. God does not bestow help for tomorrow. He does not give His children all the directions for their life journey at once, lest they should become confused. He tells them just as much as they can remember and perform. The strength and wisdom imparted are for the present emergency. "If any of you lack wisdom,"—for today,—let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5.

"Judge not, that ye be not judged." Do not think yourself better than other men, and set yourself up as their judge. Since you cannot discern motive, you are incapable of judging another. In criticizing him, you are passing sentence upon yourself; for you show that you are a participant with Satan, the accuser of the brethren. The Lord says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." This is our work. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." 2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Cor. 11:31.

The good tree will produce good fruit. If the fruit is unpalatable and worthless, the tree is evil. So the fruit borne in the life testifies as to the condition of the heart and the excellence of the character. Good works can never purchase salvation, but they are an evidence of the faith that acts by love and purifies the soul. And though the eternal reward is not bestowed because of our merit, yet it will be in proportion to the work that has been done through the grace of Christ.

Thus Christ set forth the principles of His kingdom, and showed them to be the great rule of life. To impress the lesson He adds an illustration. It is not enough, He says, for you to hear My words. By obedience you must make them the foundation of your character. Self is but shifting sand. If you build upon human theories and inventions, your house will fall. By the winds of temptation, the tempests of trial, it will be swept away. But these principles that I have given will endure. Receive Me; build on My words.

“Everyone therefore which heareth these words of Mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock.” Matt. 7:24, 25, R.V. D.A. 313.

The elect keep God’s righteousness as the “apple of the eye” and God keeps His elect as the “apple of His eye.” They are special. They are chosen in Christ from eternity!

“Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.” Prov. 7:2.

“Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.” Psa. 17:8.

“For the LORD’S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.” Deut 32:9-10.

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Eph. 1:4.

There are other passages of scripture which also show the special meaning of foreknowledge when used in connection with God’s eternal purpose and His elect. Here are two:

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” Acts 2:23.

“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.” 1 Peter 1:20.

In 1 Peter 1:20, the Greek word translated *foreordained* is the same word translated *foreknow*. The word “foreknown” is not a static but a dynamic word. God’s intimate, redemptive foreknowledge of His elect is the dynamic basis of the four other steps.

We share the intimacy of such knowledge by knowing God. To know God is not merely intellectual it is essentially experiential. God’s foreknowledge of His elect, their saving knowledge of Him and the

Spirit's witness of His ownership in the spirit of their minds, these are all dynamic realities in the circuit of beneficence and eternal realities in the mind of God.

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3.

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” Phi. 3:10-11.

“O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

“For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.” Psa. 139:1-6.

“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” John 10:14.

And the most wonderful thing about this knowledge is that it drives the elect on to put away sin and to live for God while depending entirely on His mercy and receiving His righteousness in Christ.

“How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:17, 18, 23, 24

Second: Predestinate

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate...”

God has predestinated a life of victory over sin, a life of holiness in Christ, for His elect. Christ lived the predestinated life by freely choosing moment by moment to surrender in full faith to His Father. And He bids

us to abide in Him and He will abide in us to ensure that we walk in His steps thereby remaining in the path of God's foreknowledge and predestination. God, having set His mind and heart upon His elect has marked them out for holiness and has marked holiness out for them. More yet! He has marked them out for glory and has marked glory out for them.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2 Cor. 7:1.

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4:24.

Third: Called

"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate... Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called..."

This term comes in the centre of the five terms, linking the first two with the last two. First there is the general call given by the preaching of the gospel to all men. Second, there is the effectual call, when the sinner responds by faith and surrender and becomes 'called'. Third, within the context of the elect and the investigative judgement, there are the called, chosen and faithful whose names will be retained in the Book of Life. This is really the true effectual call.

"Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. 2:14.

"For many are called, but few are chosen." Mat. 22:14.

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Rev. 17:14.

There is a mysterious connection between God's specific, intimate, redemptive foreknowledge of His elect and their calling. The Father draws and the Spirit calls and the elect respond with ultimate finality. In fact the holy calling was given to the elect in Christ Jesus in eternity.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Tim. 1:9-10.

“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.” 1 Thess. 1:5-6.

“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” 1 Cor. 2:4-5.

The Spirit applies the convicting power of God’s agape love as revealed by the cross of Christ. The word comes with such power through the Holy Spirit that it quickens us and brings us to life. Were it not for this power that comes in the ‘call,’ the almighty power of God’s agape love in the Holy Spirit, no one would even believe the gospel at all because the carnal mind is enmity against God.

The gospel is to be presented, not as a lifeless theory, but as a living force to change the life. God would have His servants bear testimony to the fact that through His grace men may possess Christlikeness of character and may rejoice in the assurance of His great love. He would have us bear testimony to the fact that He cannot be satisfied until all who will accept salvation are reclaimed and reinstated in their holy privileges as His sons and daughters.

Even those whose course has been most offensive to Him He freely accepts. When they repent, He imparts to them His divine Spirit, and sends them forth into the camp of the disloyal to proclaim His mercy. Souls that have been degraded into instruments of Satan are still, through the power of Christ, transformed into messengers of righteousness and are sent forth to tell how great things the Lord hath done for them and hath had compassion on them. M.H. 99.

The Father draws and the Spirit calls and the elect come! And Jesus keeps them in absolute safety!

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

“And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:37, 39, 44.

“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

“And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

“While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.” John 17:6-12.

Although the call must necessarily include our response, yet we must never forget that the ‘calling’ expresses the divine authorship of that experience and the sovereign power of God by which we are summoned.

The truly effectual call is driven by the foreknowledge and predestination of God’s eternal choice.

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Eph. 1:4.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall

any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.” John 10:27-30.

“Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.” John 15:15-16.

“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” Acts 13:48.

“And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.” Acts 16-14.

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.” Gal. 1:15-16.

The effectual call produces and maintains genuine conversion. It is a holy calling by which God saves us. It is not the result of our actions; it is entirely of God's grace and mercy. The effectual call never ceases its function. It is a heavenly, holy, high and unchangeable calling in Christ Jesus.

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” Heb. 3:1.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” 2 Tim. 1:9.

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Phil. 3:14.

“For God does not change his mind about whom he chooses and blesses.” Rom. 11:29. GNB.

All this is seen clearly in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus who became the Apostle Paul. First we see him going down from Jerusalem to Damascus ‘breathing out threatenings and slaughter,’ regarding Christ as a blasphemer, hating Christians and rejecting the Christian message with scorn. Did he, of himself, decide to accept the gospel and to believe in Christ? The Lord of glory appeared to him. He saw Christ in His glorified state! And immediately he believed. “What wilt thou have me to do, Lord?” This is a perfect picture of the true effectual call.

The Holy Spirit does the same work in us in a spiritual manner; He manifests Christ to us. And nothing short of that can make anyone believe. Sadly many people are brought into church membership without this effectual call and that is why genuine conversion is a rare experience.

Yes indeed, “whom He did predestinate, them He also called” — by His Spirit, and this produces faith, repentance, and genuine conversion.

Fourth: Justified

And within the context of the investigative judgement this is both initial and final justification. God is the one who justifies us entirely because of His mercy, compassion and grace. We cannot justify ourselves by any thing we can do. We are justified entirely and only by the sheer mercy of God is sending His Son to believe, obey and die sin’s death penalty for us!

While justification is a declaration by God that we are just in Christ, it is always accompanied by the radical change of genuine conversion. It includes forgiveness of sins and it puts the believer “into Christ” where there is no more condemnation. We are justified by faith. Faith is the channel by which we receive the free gift.

“For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Rom. 4:3-5.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and

experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Rom. 5:1-10.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Rom. 8:1-4.

“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

“Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Tit. 3:3-7.

Fifth: Glorification

“...and whom He justified, them He also glorified.”

Jesus said, “The glory which thou gavest Me I have given them” (John 17: 22), but the experience of full glorification is yet to come.

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Rom. 8:18.

Although this event is still future, Paul uses the past tense “glorified” as he does for all the other verbs in this sentence. This reflects the fact that in God’s eternal counsel the whole process, with all its stages, stands complete. Furthermore corporate humanity is already glorified in Christ.

Another explanation may be found in the timelessness of the Greek tense here employed. Regarding the verbs as timeless permits the following translation:

“Those whom He predestines He also calls; those whom He calls He also justifies; those whom He justifies He also glorifies.”

The Apostle deliberately uses the *aorist* tense in order to give us this final unshakeable assurance, this absolute certainty of triumph. In the mind of God it has already been done; it is as certain as our justification.

The first two steps “whom He did foreknow, he also did predestinate” existed in God’s mind from all eternity. The third step, the call, is our first step in time. If the call is accepted it brings with it justification and all that that experience implies. Then as the believer continues to abide in Christ to the end his name is retained in the Book of Life and the inevitable result will be glorification.

The Basis Of Our Glorification

The basis of our glorification is the gift of eternal life. Eternal life is the Life of God. The gift of salvation makes us partakers of the Divine Nature. This Life of God in the spirit of our minds gives us victory over sin and perfection of character in this present life. The Holy Spirit brings this eternal life, God’s life, into the human spirit.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John 5:11-12.

“And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you... And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” Rom. 8:10, 11, 17.

At the Second Coming of Christ, in the resurrection/translation event, the Life of God will become the life of the new body. The glorified redeemed will therefore have the Life of God in their spirit, soul and body. They will constitute the new human-divine species – human in spirit, mind and personality but with the Divine Nature and Life as the Life of the glorified body.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.” Through the beloved John, who listened to these words, the Holy Spirit declared to the churches, “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life.” 1 John 5:11, 12. And Jesus said, “I will raise him up at the last day.” Christ became one flesh with us, in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave,—not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours. Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into the heart, have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal. D.A. 388.

To the believer, Christ is the resurrection and the life. In our Saviour the life that was lost through sin is restored; for He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. He is invested with the right to give immortality. The life that He laid down in humanity, He takes up again, and gives to humanity. “I am come,” He said, “that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” “Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 10:10; 4:14; 6:54.

To the believer, death is but a small matter. Christ speaks of it as if it were of little moment. “If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death,” “he shall never taste of death.” To the Christian, death is but a sleep, a moment of silence and darkness. The life is hid with Christ in God, and “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” John 8:51, 52; Col. 3:4.

The voice that cried from the cross, "It is finished," was heard among the dead. It pierced the walls of sepulchers, and summoned the sleepers to arise. Thus will it be when the voice of Christ shall be heard from heaven. That voice will penetrate the graves and unbar the tombs, and the dead in Christ shall arise. At the Saviour's resurrection a few graves were opened, but at His second coming all the precious dead shall hear His voice, and shall come forth to glorious, immortal life. The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Him, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come. D.A. 786-787.

Chapter Fourteen

The Investigative Judgement of the Living

The elect living remnant, or final generation of living saints, must pass the examination of the investigative judgement while alive. Their examination in heaven will be accompanied by the examination on the earth called the mark-of-the-beast crisis.

In order for them to have their names retained in the Book of Life and their sins blotted out of the heavenly records they must overcome the terrible onslaught of the temptation, deceptions and compulsive force of the mark-of-the-beast crisis before the general closure of probation.

*“The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes: for it is to be the great test for the people by God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided...
Rev. 13:11-17.*

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as

would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 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 had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Rev. 13:11-17.

“This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who prove their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious Sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday Sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast” (Letter 11, 18910) SDA BC (7A) 7:976.

“So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, something that brings the soul face to face with death, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul’s need to be supplied.” C.O.I. 412.

The testing pressure of the final crisis will develop progressively, gradually at first and, later on, more rapidly until it reaches maximum intensity. This maximum intensity will start to affect God’s people before probation closes even though it will continue on after probation closes.

Now follow carefully the build up of the persecutory pressure through a number of tests:

1. When the Sunday laws are first passed there will be no direct aim by the authorities to trouble Sabbath keepers.
2. But the preaching of the final gospel message will prove the Sunday laws to be violations of God’s law and religious liberty; and will prove the Seventh day to be the true Sabbath of God, the sign of rest and victory over sin.
3. This will cause the masses to ask certain questions of the authorities who will at first use argument and ecclesiastical and traditional reasoning. But as these will not convince those who demand Bible proof the authorities will be aroused to sterner measures.
4. Bribes, including offers of position, wealth and fame will be the next method employed.

5. Then will follow fines and imprisonment.
6. Then will come the decree forbidding Sabbath keepers from buying or selling. This will be, in effect, a decree committing God's people to starvation and extreme socio-economic dislocation.
7. Ultimately will come the attachment of the death penalty to the violation of the Sunday laws, before the close of probation.
8. After the close of probation (a time which will be unknown to all) the death decree will be issued, thereby setting a time for the mass execution of God's Sabbath keeping remnant. The period between the issuing of the decree and appointed moment for execution will be the time of Jacob's trouble. At the very moment intended for the mass execution God's voice will deliver His people. This will occur under plagues 5, 6 and 7.)

The Great Final Test

It should be very clear then that the threat of the death penalty before the close of probation will be the great final test which will shake the professed people of God just before probation closes.

The threat of death has always been Satan's ultimate weapon in the warfare against God's people and he intends to use it fully in the final crisis. And he will begin to do so before probation closes. The Spirit of Prophecy gives a statement of Satan's expression of his intention. Listen to his plan, it is expressed in his own words:

"When death shall be made the penalty of violating our Sabbath, then many who are now ranked with commandment keepers will come over to us" T.M. 473.

Tried to the Uttermost

Why will the death sentence in the final crisis be so terrible an experience for the end-time people of God? The martyrs faced the death sentence again and again, so what will be different with the people of God facing such a threat in the final crisis?

What will make it to be so terrible an experience will be the peculiar setting and circumstances in which it will be imposed upon God's end-time believers.

"As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.

"In this time of persecution the faith of the Lord's servants will be tried. They have faithfully given the warning, looking to God and to His word alone. God's Spirit, moving upon their hearts, has constrained them to speak. Stimulated with holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they entered upon the performance of their duties without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord had given them. They have not consulted their temporal interests, nor sought to preserve their reputation or their lives. Yet when the storm of opposition and reproach bursts upon them, some, overwhelmed with consternation, will be ready to exclaim: "Had we foreseen the consequences of our words, we would have held our peace." They are hedged in with difficulties. Satan assails them with fierce temptations. The work which they have undertaken seems far beyond their ability to accomplish. They are threatened with destruction. The enthusiasm which animated them is gone; yet they cannot turn back. Then, feeling their utter helplessness, they flee to the Mighty One for strength. They remember that the words which they have spoken were not theirs, but His who bade them give the warning. God put the truth into their hearts, and they could not forbear to proclaim it." G.C. 608-609.

What terrible pressure that will be!

Satan will apply that terrible pressure to try to overthrow the faith of the elect and get them to cease abiding in Christ. But the living remnant elect will, by God's grace, overcome that terrible test and their names will be retained in the Book of Life.

“Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matt. 24:23, 24.

“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” Rev. 17:8.

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” Rev. 3:5.

They Would Have Made The Necessary Preparation

“The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God’s promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.

Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the decree to compel the conscience. And even if they endure the test they will be plunged into deeper distress and anguish in the time of trouble, because they have never made it a habit to trust in God. The lessons of faith which they have neglected they will be forced to learn under a terrible pressure of discouragement.

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

The young would not be seduced into sin if they would refuse to enter any path save that upon which they could ask God's blessing. If the messengers who bear the last solemn warning to the world would pray for the blessing of God, not in a cold, listless, lazy manner, but fervently and in faith, as did Jacob, they would find many places where they could say: "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Genesis 32:30. They would be accounted of heaven as princes, having power to prevail with God and with men.

The "time of trouble, such as never was," is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job" were in the land, "as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Ezekiel 14:20.

Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." John 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble.

It is in this life that we are to separate sin from us, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ. Our precious Saviour invites us to join ourselves to Him, to unite our weakness to His strength, our ignorance to His wisdom, our unworthiness to His merits. God's providence is the school in which we are to learn the meekness and lowliness of Jesus. The Lord is ever setting before us, not the way we would choose, which seems easier and pleasanter to us, but the true aims of life. It rests with us to co-operate with the agencies which Heaven employs in the work of conforming our characters to the divine model. None can neglect or defer this work but at the most fearful peril to their souls." G.C. 621-623.

The message of the Faithful and True Witness to the church of the Laodiceans will accomplish its work in the heart of the living elect remnant.

The message is of critical importance to both the legalist (who tries to be righteous by the obedience of self-effort without surrender to Christ), and the liberal (who believes that the gospel of Christ is only a gospel of forgiveness and not a gospel of victory over sin). The central truths of the Laodicean message are:

1. We are to accept the Testimony of the Faithful and Truth Witness that our self-satisfied religious experience is empty. We must count ourselves to be nothing, and our righteousness as filthy rags. Rev. 3:17.
2. We must abide in Christ by faith and surrender daily, continually. By abiding in Him through faith, surrender, and continual communion, the heart's door is open and He abides in us. Rev. 3:20; Gal. 2:20; John 15:4, 5.
3. Through surrender and acceptance of Christ the believer receives the gold tried in the fire; the white raiment; and the eyesalve. The gold is faith working by love. Gal. 5:6; 1 Peter 1:7-9. The white raiment is the righteousness of Christ. Rev. 19:7,8; Phil. 3:8-10. The eye salve is spiritual discernment. Eph. 1:17-19.
4. It is a call to ever deepening repentance as we contemplate the goodness of God's love in Christ. Rev. 3:19.
5. Jesus invites us to overcome as He overcame (Rev. 3:21). Jesus took on the same sinful human flesh which we have and overcame by

faith and surrender to His Father. He came in the likeness (sameness) of sinful flesh and condemned sin in the flesh. John 1:1, 14; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14-17; Rom. 1:3; John 5:30, 6:38; 14:10. The victory of Christ over the flesh, the world and the devil, is imparted to us by the Holy Spirit thereby making us victorious over our flesh. John 16:33; 1 Cor. 15:57; John 15:4, 5; Rom. 8:1-4; 1 John 5:1-5.

In other words the Laodicean message is the Third Angel's Message in verity. It is the full gospel message of both forgiveness of sins and victory over all sin by faith in, and, surrender to Christ, believing the full truth about His divinity and humanity and accepting His righteousness to cover us and to transform us and to perfect us!

Overcoming As Christ Overcame

In order to have their sins blotted out of the heavenly records and their names retained in the Book of Life the living remnant elect must have all defects and sin blotted out of their characters. They must overcome as Christ overcame by relying on His merits and being filled with His righteousness. They will overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to sin.

Hereditary and Cultivated Defects: The Basic Sinful Heredity

The law of sin and death is the principle of selfishness; (self-exaltation; self-centredness, own-way-ness and rejection of God's way of Agape love). This sin-principle is hereditary and is resident within fallen human nature (brain and body), and is the source of human behaviour when the individual has no saving relationship with Christ. Romans 7:15-23, Romans 8:7, 8.

Cultivation

So long as the law of sin and death in the sinful nature controls the mind, the defects of selfishness will be manifested in the character, in the behaviour, in the soul. And as often as these defects are allowed to reign in the soul, even so often are they also cultivated in the soul and character. Romans 7:5; Gal. 5:19-21.

Jesus Shared in Our Heredity but was Victorious Over it

Jesus Christ our Saviour took on our sinful fallen human flesh with the law of sin and death resident in it (Rom. 1:3; 8:3; Heb. 2:14-17). But by constant surrender to His Father, He, by the Holy Spirit, never allowed

the law of sin and death in the flesh to control His thinking process or to be the source of His behaviour or character. Therefore His soul, His character, His mind-function, His thoughts, words and deeds were sinless. In other words the moral hereditary defects of the flesh never entered into His character performance and were never cultivated in His soul or character. He maintained sinlessness of soul in sinful flesh, and He achieved this wonderful victory by the absolute surrender of full faith in His Father John 5:30; 6:38; 14:10; Rom. 15:3; Matt. 26:38, 39.

Jesus Never Cultivated Any Defect in His Soul

Jesus never cherished an evil thought or an evil suggestion. From conception and birth the Holy Spirit was in full control of His soul. As His mind matured and he exercised His own choice He chose always to remain fully surrendered to His Father. The law of sin and death in His human nature struggled with severe intensity to control his soul. He was truly tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. Heb. 4:15. Never once did He yield His mind-function to the control, or even to the slightest influence of sin. He was not exempt from our common heredity, but He never cultivated any sinful defect in His soul or character. 1 Peter 2:21, 22, 23.

The Contrast between Christ and Us

In contrast to Him, we have cherished and cultivated in our souls and characters few, some, many or all of the defects of selfishness (depending upon our childhood security, influences, instruction, training, discipline and the Spirit's molding in our early years, or lack thereof.)

In contrast to His sinless soul, we have sinful souls; for all have sinned and come short of God's glory. Rom. 3:10-19, 23. The physical, mental and moral degeneracies of fallen flesh have defiled our souls, our mind-function, our character. The defects of the flesh have entered into our souls and characters and have been cherished and cultivated through habit because we have yielded our mind-function to the principle of selfishness. Gal 5:17, 19-21.

Jesus was constantly and continuously fully surrendered to His Father and therefore and thereby the Holy Spirit kept His soul (mind-function for production of character) undefiled by, and free from, the law of sin and death resident in the flesh.

He was laden in His soul with all the iniquities of the world because He had to bear our sin and guilt. And yet while carrying such a terrible

weight of guilt (ours, not His), He had to allow the Holy Spirit to keep His own soul free from transgression. The attacks of the law of sin and death upon His soul were relentless and overwhelming yet He overcame by faith in, and surrender to, His Father.

His victory was for us, in fact His victory is ours! 1 Cor. 15:57.

Victory by Faith and Surrender

Just as His soul was kept free from the law of sin and death through faith and surrender, our souls can and will be delivered from sin, through faith and surrender, by the Holy Spirit Who brings His faith, His surrender, His repentance, His obedience, into the believer's soul. Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:14; Rom. 6: 10-14; Rom. 5:21 John 16:33. The formula for victory is written down in 1 John 3:6, first part:

“Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not...”!

Read also John 15:4, 5 and James 4:5-10.

Therefore we understand that it is by surrender to God through Christ by the Holy Spirit that the soul is delivered from the law of sin and death and also cleansed of the character defects which were developed by that law of sin and death. Romans 6:1 1-18; Gal. 5:16, 24, 25.

At the same time it is through surrender and communion with Christ that the Holy Spirit imparts the active Christian graces, the divine components of Agape Love, into the soul. John 15:1-5.

And it is also through surrender and continual communion that the active Christian graces are developed, matured and ripened for the harvest. Gal. 5:22-26.

The Deeper Cleansing

A very important method of maintaining the constancy of surrender and actually deepening the level of surrender is the method of experiencing adversity and suffering. Even Jesus our Saviour learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Heb. 5:7-9; 1 Peter 4:1, 2.

But for us, not only do we need to learn obedience, our souls must be cleansed of the cherished and cultivated defects. These defects are terrible, ugly and malignant. They indicate the quantity and quality of the damage which sin has done to human character and the human mind.

Here is a representative list: impatience, unkindness, envy, pride, love of supremacy, anger, unrest, doubt, hatred, retaliation, fear, insecurity, guilt, resentment, inability to forgive, cruelty, misery,

fretfulness, complaining, deceitfulness, defensiveness, sensitiveness, love of evil pleasures, intemperance, lack of moral endurance, discourtesy, impoliteness, disloyalty.

These defects of character in the soul cause our downfall through responding to Satan's external attacks thereby interrupting the stance of surrender and the abiding relationship.

Adversity, trial and temptation all serve to reveal the defects of the soul so that they may be cleansed out through prayer and meditation upon the character of Christ and the word of God. At the same time adversity, trial and temptation when successfully experienced serve to seal the soul in the particular level of surrender which was being tested and to prepare the soul for the next level of surrender as light advances. Romans 6:12-23.

Absolute surrender and *absolute* infilling are the ultimate goals which the Holy Spirit has for us. By *absolute surrender* we mean a surrender which will not be interrupted by any circumstance or temptation or adversity; even by the death threat.

By *absolute infilling* we mean that the love of God in the Holy Spirit has absolute control of the human spirit and has filled the soul with the divine attributes of Agape character which attributes have completely replaced the cleansed-out defects of self-centredness.

The Agape attributes must then be fully developed, fully matured and fully ripened by deeper revelations of God's love seen in the righteousness of Christ and by deeper levels of trial and adversity to fix them in the soul.

It is a *most holy* work to be done by our *most holy* High Priest in the *most holy* place of the heavenly sanctuary making us *most holy* for the harvest.

Practical Points

1. Consecrate yourself to God every morning. Make this your first daily duty. But do not consider it a duty, it is a privilege! Make sure of initial conversion.
2. Spend meaningful time alone with God at the start of each day in prayer and study of the character of Christ. Seek the daily conversion.
3. Surrender all to Him and pray earnestly for his forgiveness and cleansing and also for the infilling of the active graces, the divine components of Agape Love.

4. Make a practice of beholding Christ in His infinite sufferings. In so doing you will receive deeper appreciations of God's love for you and your appreciation of your nothingness in comparison with his fullness will strengthen your surrender, your constancy of depending only on Him and not on self. Read and believe His promises.
5. During the day tests will come. They may be minor and routine but these are the most important. Maintain a spiritual communion with Christ at the level of the thoughts and resolve with decisive determination to obey God and not Satan.
6. But recognize that though you must make the choice, Christ must give the victory, so make the choice and trust in Jesus for the victory. Let His love be your motive!
7. As the Holy Spirit reveals to you the deep seated defects of your soul be honest with yourself Examine yourself critically and compare your self with Christ But do not dwell on your defects, acknowledge them and ask Jesus to remove them and to fill the vacuum with His sweet attributes of character. So study His character and desire it with all your heart.
8. Be determined in your seeking for victory. Persevere as if it were a life or death matter (for it is). Practise to exhibit the graces of divine love under all circumstances. As you practise to forgive rather than to retaliate and as you practise every other active Christian virtue (see 1 Cor. 13:4-8) you will be working out what God works in (Phil. 2:12,13).
9. Believe and claim the 5 steps of Romans 8:29, 30. God's foreknowledge of the crisis and His predestination of the victory will sustain His elect in the final crisis.

"The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Malachi 3:17. If the blood of Christ's faithful witnesses were shed at this time, it would not, like the blood of the martyrs, be

as seed sown to yield a harvest for God. Their fidelity would not be a testimony to convince others of the truth; for the obdurate heart has beaten back the waves of mercy until they return no more. If the righteous were now left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness. Says the psalmist: "In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me." Psalm 27:5. Christ has spoken: "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Isaiah 26:20, 21. Glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming and whose names are written in the book of life." G.C. 634.

Chapter Fifteen

Election Promises

THE LIVING REMNANT ELECT MUST AND WILL claim and experience God's promises. They will be men and women of faith and prayer. They will have mastered the art and science of intercessory prayer and will "stand in the gap" until all who will be saved, during the great final gospel warning, have been saved!

Prayer moves the arm of omnipotence. God has ordained in His eternal purpose that the prayers of His elect shall make positive impact upon His governance of the world. From His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best. The intercessory prayers of His elect can influence what He orders! When you as a believer pray for someone God increases the flow of the Holy Spirit to work on that person's heart with greater convincing and convicting power. There will be many in the kingdom who will be grateful for the intercessory prayers made on their behalf for their salvation.

By intercessory prayer the elect will claim and experience the following promises and principles.

1. Power

All who consecrate soul, body, and spirit to God will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical and mental power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. The grace of God enlarges and multiplies their faculties, and every perfection of the divine nature comes to their assistance in the work of saving souls. Through co-operation with Christ they are complete in Him, and in their human weakness they are enabled to do the deeds of Omnipotence. *D.A. 827.*

2. Heaven's Government

Christ designs that heaven's order, heaven's plan of government, heaven's divine harmony, shall be represented in His church on earth. Thus in His people He is glorified. Through them the Sun of Righteousness will shine in undimmed luster to the world. Christ has given to His church ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. He has bestowed upon His people capabilities and blessings that they may represent His own sufficiency. The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display. Christ looks upon His people in their purity and perfection, as the reward of His humiliation, and the supplement of His glory,—Christ, the great Center, from whom radiates all glory. D.A. 680.

3. Fruitfulness

This union with Christ, once formed, must be maintained. Christ said, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." This is no casual touch, no off-and-on connection. The branch becomes a part of the living vine. The communication of life, strength, and fruitfulness from the root to the branches is unobstructed and constant. Separated from the vine, the branch cannot live. No more, said Jesus, can you live apart from Me. The life you have received from Me can be preserved only by continual communion. Without Me you cannot overcome one sin, or resist one temptation.

"Abide in Me, and I in you." Abiding in Christ means a constant receiving of His Spirit, a life of unreserved surrender to His service. The channel of communication must be open continually between man and his God. As the vine branch constantly draws the sap from the living vine, so are we to cling to Jesus, and receive from Him by faith the strength and perfection of His own character.

The root sends its nourishment through the branch to the outermost twig. So Christ communicates the current of spiritual strength to every believer. So long as the soul is united to Christ, there is no danger that it will wither or decay.

The life of the vine will be manifest in fragrant fruit on the branches. "He that abideth in Me," said Jesus, "and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." When we live by faith on the Son of God, the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in our lives; not one will be missing. D.A. 676.

4. The Elect Can Make The Highest Demands

The Lord is disappointed when His people place a low estimate upon themselves. He desires His chosen heritage to value themselves according to the price He has placed upon them. God wanted them, else He would not have sent His Son on such an expensive errand to redeem them. He has a use for them, and He is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him, that they may glorify His name. They may expect large things if they have faith in His promises.

But to pray in Christ's name means much. It means that we are to accept His character, manifest His spirit, and work His works. The Saviour's promise is given on condition. "If ye love Me," He says, "keep My commandments." He saves men, not in sin, but from sin; and those who love Him will show their love by obedience.

5. Perfect Union Of Divine And Human Wills

All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.

As Christ lived the law in humanity, so we may do if we will take hold of the Strong for strength. But we are not to place the responsibility of our duty upon others, and wait for them to tell us what to do. We cannot depend for counsel upon humanity. The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Our hearts

will often burn within us as One draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. Those who decide to do nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to pursue. And they will receive not only wisdom, but strength. Power for obedience, for service, will be imparted to them, as Christ has promised. Whatever was given to Christ—the “all things” to supply the need of fallen men—was given to Him as the head and representative of humanity. And “whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” 1 John 3:22. D.A. 668.

The one who stands nearest to Christ will be he who on earth has drunk most deeply of the spirit of His self-sacrificing love,—love that “vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, . . . seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil” (1 Cor. 13:4, 5),—love that moves the disciple, as it moved our Lord, to give all, to live and labor and sacrifice, even unto death, for the saving of humanity. This spirit was made manifest in the life of Paul. He said, “For to me to live is Christ;” for his life revealed Christ to men; “and to die is gain,”—gain to Christ; death itself would make manifest the power of His grace, and gather souls to Him. “Christ shall be magnified in my body,” he said, “whether it be by life or by death.” Phil. 1:21, 20. D.A. 549.

6. The Fullness Of The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ. Only those who are thus taught of God, those who possess the inward working of the Spirit, and in whose life the Christ-life is manifested, are to stand as representative men, to minister in behalf of the church. D.A. 805.

7. Minds Fortified With The Truth

Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; **they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified**

the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? G.C. 593.

8. God Will Be Our Plan-maker

Many are unable to make definite plans for the future. Their life is unsettled. They cannot discern the outcome of affairs, and this often fills them with anxiety and unrest. Let us remember that the life of God's children in this world is a pilgrim life. We have not wisdom to plan our own lives. It is not for us to shape our future. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Hebrews 11:8.

Christ in His life on earth made no plans for Himself. He accepted God's plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. So should we depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will. As we commit our ways to Him, He will direct our steps.

Too many, in planning for a brilliant future, make an utter failure. Let God plan for you. As a little child, trust to the guidance of Him who will "keep the feet of His saints." 1 Samuel 2:9. God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him. M.H. 478.

Our plans are not always God's plans. He may see that it is best for us and for His cause to refuse our very best intentions, as He did in the case of David. But of one thing we may be assured, He will bless and use in the advancement of His cause those who sincerely devote themselves and all they have to His glory. If He sees it best not to grant their desires He will counterbalance the refusal by giving them tokens of His love and entrusting to them another service.

In His loving care and interest for us, often He who understands us better than we understand ourselves refuses to permit us selfishly to seek the gratification of our own ambition. He does not permit us to pass by

the homely but sacred duties that lie next us. Often these duties afford the very training essential to prepare us for a higher work. Often our plans fail that God's plans for us may succeed.

We are never called upon to make a real sacrifice for God. Many things He asks us to yield to Him, but in doing this we are but giving up that which hinders us in the heavenward way. Even when called upon to surrender those things which in themselves are good, we may be sure that God is thus working out for us some higher good.

In the future life the mysteries that here have annoyed and disappointed us will be made plain. We shall see that our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings.

We are to look upon every duty, however humble, as sacred because it is a part of God's service. Our daily prayer should be, "Lord, help me to do my best. Teach me how to do better work. Give me energy and cheerfulness. Help me to bring into my service the loving ministry of the Saviour." M.H. 473.

9. God Will Give Us The Words To Speak

The servants of Christ were to prepare no set speech to present when brought to trial. Their preparation was to be made day by day in treasuring up the precious truths of God's word, and through prayer strengthening their faith. When they were brought into trial, the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance the very truths that would be needed.

A daily, earnest striving to know God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, would bring power and efficiency to the soul. The knowledge obtained by diligent searching of the Scriptures would be flashed into the memory at the right time. But if any had neglected to acquaint themselves with the words of Christ, if they had never tested the power of His grace in trial, they could not expect that the Holy Spirit would bring His words to their remembrance. They were to serve God daily with undivided affection, and then trust Him. D.A. 355.

10. Cleansed Of The Spirit Of Retaliation

The servants of Christ are not to act out the dictates of the natural heart. They need to have close communion with God, lest, under provocation, self rise up, and they pour forth a torrent of words that are unbecoming, that are not as dew or the still showers that refresh the withering plants. This is what Satan wants them to do; for these

are his methods. It is the dragon that is wroth; it is the spirit of Satan that is revealed in anger and accusing. But God's servants are to be representatives of Him. He desires them to deal only in the currency of heaven, the truth that bears His own image and superscription. The power by which they are to overcome evil is the power of Christ. The glory of Christ is their strength. They are to fix their eyes upon His loveliness. Then they can present the gospel with divine tact and gentleness. And the spirit that is kept gentle under provocation will speak more effectively in favor of the truth than will any argument, however forcible. D.A. 353.

11. Perfection Of Character

God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.

The tempter's agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God. D.A. 311.

12. Absolute Protection In The Final Crisis

In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death. See Rev. 13:11-17. But to the obedient is given the promise, "He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isa. 33: 16. By this promise the children of God will live. When the earth shall be wasted with famine, they shall be fed. "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied."

Ps. 37:19. To that time of distress the prophet Habakkuk looked forward, and his words express the faith of the church: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Hab. 3:17, 18. D.A. 121.

Kept By The Power Of God

The elect have the wonderful assurance that God will keep them safely in His salvation as they constantly and continuously surrender in full faith to Him in the abiding relationship.

As God keeps them, He allows the necessary refining process to proceed until every defect is removed from their characters. This is especially applicable to the elect living remnant who will go through the final crisis and be translated at the return of our Lord.

The refining process involves adversity, trials, temptations which are necessary for the perfecting of their faith to the "gold standard," the standard of the faith of Jesus. God will keep His elect remnant in Christ. He will keep them from falling. Christ will allow no power to pluck them from His hands!

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Jude verses 20, 21, 24, 25.

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

"To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God

through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:2-9.

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” James 1:2-4.

Kept In Absolute Safety

During the terrible pressures of the final crisis, the living remnant elect will have to stand on the naked promises of God depending on His word when all the evidence of their senses will be telling them that they are forsaken by God and man! But the promises of security and safety will have been riveted in their minds and they will rest in the following promises of God’s word with complete assurance.

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out... And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” John 6:37, 39.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one.” John 10:27-30.

“And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

“While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son

of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” John 17:10-14, 20-22.

All Things Work Together For Their Good

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Rom. 8:28.

The elect are described as those who love God. And remember we love Him because He first loved us. Our love for Him proves that He first loved us. Of course we know that God loves everyone but we are not now speaking about that general love, we are speaking about His love for His elect. The case of Daniel is a specific example.

“And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.” Dan. 10:11.

All things work together for good to them that love God. Loving God is not mere emotion. It includes emotion but it is a lot more.

“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.” Mark 12:30.

Loving God includes that absolute surrender whereby the elect will constantly be abiding in Christ and therefore be partakers of His righteousness.

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him... Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” John 14:21,23.

“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” John 15:7-14.

The elect’s love for God will be manifested in the obedience of faith. Indeed faith works by love and the “faith working by love” of the elect is the “gold” which Jesus gives them.

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” Gal. 5:6.

“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Rev. 3:18.

Trials and tribulations will show whether we really love God! And when our love for Him has been tested, tried and proven by adversity it is wonderful evidence of the certainty of our election!

“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day

of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us.” 1 John 4:16-19.

Called According To His Purpose

The living elect remnant will have been called, chosen and faithful. To be called means that you know that God has set His hand upon you. He has intervened in your life and laid hold upon you. This is entirely different from your deciding to “take up religion” or “join a church.” The elect to whom “all things work together for good” are those who know the convicting, convincing and overwhelming spiritual magnetic pull of the Holy Spirit in their lives continually! This, in turn, leads to a feeling of our own rotten helplessness and need. No “natural man” ever has or can ever bring himself to have this feeling. Anyone who tells you that he has “received” Christ who does not at the same time tell you that he was utterly convinced and convicted of sin and that he felt so completely helpless that he cried out to Jesus for salvation, does not conform to the New Testament description.

The living remnant elect will be fixed in their abiding in Christ, will live in harmony with God’s will and therefore all things will work together for their eternal good and God’s glory.

Chapter Sixteen

A Higher Experience

By E.G. White

We need constantly a fresh revelation of Christ, a daily experience that harmonizes with His teachings. High and holy attainments are within our reach. Continual progress in knowledge and virtue is God's purpose for us. His law is the echo of His own voice, giving to all the invitation, "Come up higher. Be holy, holier still." Every day we may advance in perfection of Christian character.

Those who are engaged in service for the Master need an experience much higher, deeper, broader, than many have yet thought of having. Many who are already members of God's great family know little of what it means to behold His glory and to be changed from glory to glory. Many have a twilight perception of Christ's excellence, and their hearts thrill with joy. They long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Saviour's love. Let these cherish every desire of the soul after God. The Holy Spirit works with those who will be worked, molds those who will be molded, fashions those who will be fashioned. Give yourselves the culture of spiritual thoughts and holy communings. You have seen but the first rays of the early dawn of His glory. As you follow on to know the Lord, you will know that "the path of the righteous is as the light of dawn, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Proverbs 4:18, R.V., margin.

"These things have I spoken unto you," said Christ, "that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." John 15:11.

Ever before Him, Christ saw the result of His mission. His earthly life, so full of toil and self-sacrifice, was cheered by the thought that He would not have all this travail for nought. By giving His life for the life of men, He would restore in humanity the image of God. He would lift

us up from the dust, reshape the character after the pattern of His own character, and make it beautiful with His own glory.

Christ saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied. He viewed the expanse of eternity and saw the happiness of those who through His humiliation should receive pardon and everlasting life. He was wounded for their transgressions, bruised for their iniquities. The chastisement of their peace was upon Him, and with His stripes they were healed. He heard the shout of the redeemed. He heard the ransomed ones singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Although the baptism of blood must first be received, although the sins of the world were to weigh upon His innocent soul, although the shadow of an unspeakable woe was upon Him; yet for the joy that was set before Him He chose to endure the cross and to despise the shame.

This joy all His followers are to share. However great and glorious hereafter, our reward is not all to be reserved for the time of final deliverance. Even here we are by faith to enter into the Saviour's joy. Like Moses, we are to endure as seeing the Invisible.

Now the church is militant. Now we are confronted with a world in darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry.

The Joy of the Lord

There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold,
But one was out on the hills away,
Far, far from the gates of gold—
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

"Lord, Thou hast here Thy ninety and nine;
Are they not enough for Thee?"

But the Shepherd made answer: "One of Mine
Has wandered away from Me,
And although the road be rough and steep,
I go to the desert to find My sheep."

But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed,
Nor how dark was the night
that the Lord passed through

Ere He found His sheep that was lost.
 Far out in the desert He heard its cry—
 Fainting and helpless, and ready to die.

“Lord, whence are these blood drops all the way
 That mark out the mountain’s track?”

“They were shed for one who had gone astray,
 Ere the Shepherd could bring him back.”

“Lord, why are Thy hands so rent and torn?”

“They were pierced tonight by many a thorn.”

But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
 And up from the rocky steep,
 There rose a cry to the gate of heaven,
 “Rejoice, I have found My sheep!”
 And the angels sang around the throne,
 “Rejoice, for the Lord brings back His own!”

—Elizabeth C. Clephane

But the day is coming when the battle will have been fought, the victory won. The will of God is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. The nations of the saved will know no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving—the robe of Christ’s righteousness. All nature, in its surpassing loveliness, will offer to God a tribute of praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold greater than it is now. The years will move on in gladness. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming, “There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death.”

These visions of future glory, scenes pictured by the hand of God, should be dear to His children.

Stand on the threshold of eternity and hear the gracious welcome given to those who in this life have co-operated with Christ, regarding it as a privilege and an honor to suffer for His sake. With the angels, they cast their crowns at the feet of the Redeemer, exclaiming, “*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength,*

and honor, and glory, and blessing. . . Honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Revelation 5:12, 13.

There the redeemed ones greet those who directed them to the uplifted Saviour. They unite in praising Him who died that human beings might have the life that measures with the life of God. The conflict is over. All tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven, as the redeemed stand around the throne of God. All take up the joyful strain, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain” and hath redeemed us to God.

“I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” Revelation 7:9, 10.

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

“And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Verses 14-17; 21:4.

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

In the Mount With God

“Come up to Me into the mount,” God bids us. To Moses, before he could be God’s instrument in delivering Israel, was appointed the forty years of communion with Him in the mountain solitudes. Before bearing God’s message to Pharaoh, he spoke with the angel in the burning bush. Before receiving God’s law as the representative of His people, he was called

into the mount, and beheld His glory. Before executing justice on the idolaters, he was hidden in the cleft of the rock, and the Lord said, “I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee,” “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness and truth; . . . and that will by no means clear the guilty.” Exodus 33:19; 34:6, 7, A.R.V. Before he laid down, with his life, his burden for Israel, God called him to the top of Pisgah and spread out before him the glory of the Promised Land.

Before the disciples went forth on their mission, they were called up into the mount with Jesus. Before the power and glory of Pentecost, came the night of communion with the Saviour, the meeting on the mountain in Galilee, the parting scene upon Olivet, with the angel’s promise, and the days of prayer and communion in the upper chamber.

Jesus, when preparing for some great trial or some important work, would resort to the solitude of the mountains and spend the night in prayer to His Father. A night of prayer preceded the ordination of the apostles and the Sermon on the Mount, the transfiguration, the agony of the judgment hall and the cross, and the resurrection glory.

The Privilege of Prayer

We, too, must have times set apart for meditation and prayer and for receiving spiritual refreshing. We do not value the power and efficacy of prayer as we should. Prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish. We are seldom, in all respects, placed in the same position twice. We continually have new scenes and new trials to pass through, where past experience cannot be a sufficient guide. We must have the continual light that comes from God.

Christ is ever sending messages to those who listen for His voice. On the night of the agony in Gethsemane, the sleeping disciples heard not the voice of Jesus. They had a dim sense of the angels’ presence, but lost the power and glory of the scene. Because of their drowsiness and stupor they failed of receiving the evidence that would have strengthened their souls for the terrible scenes before them. Thus today the very men who most need divine instruction often fail of receiving it, because they do not place themselves in communion with heaven.

The temptations to which we are daily exposed make prayer a necessity. Dangers beset every path. Those who are seeking to rescue others from vice and ruin are especially exposed to temptation. In constant contact with evil, they need a strong hold upon God lest they themselves be corrupted. Short and decisive are the steps that lead men

down from high and holy ground to a low level. In a moment decisions may be made that fix one's condition forever. One failure to overcome leaves the soul unguarded. One evil habit, if not firmly resisted, will strengthen into chains of steel, binding the whole man.

The reason why so many are left to themselves in places of temptation is that they do not set the Lord always before them. When we permit our communion with God to be broken, our defense is departed from us. Not all your good purposes and good intentions will enable you to withstand evil. You must be men and women of prayer. Your petitions must not be faint, occasional, and fitful, but earnest, persevering, and constant. It is not always necessary to bow upon your knees in order to pray. Cultivate the habit of talking with the Saviour when you are alone, when you are walking, and when you are busy with your daily labor. Let the heart be continually uplifted in silent petition for help, for light, for strength, for knowledge. Let every breath be a prayer.

As workers for God we must reach men where they are, surrounded with darkness, sunken in vice, and stained with corruption. But while we stay our minds upon Him who is our sun and our shield, the evil that surrounds us will not bring one stain upon our garments. As we work to save the souls that are ready to perish we shall not be put to shame if we make God our trust. Christ in the heart, Christ in the life, this is our safety. The atmosphere of His presence will fill the soul with abhorrence of all that is evil. Our spirit may be so identified with His that in thought and aim we shall be one with Him.

It was through faith and prayer that Jacob, from being a man of feebleness and sin, became a prince with God. It is thus that you may become men and women of high and holy purpose, of noble life, men and women who will not for any consideration be swayed from truth, right, and justice. All are pressed with urgent cares, burdens, and duties, but the more difficult your position and the heavier your burdens, the more you need Jesus.

It is a serious mistake to neglect the public worship of God. The privileges of divine service should not be lightly regarded. Those who attend upon the sick are often unable to avail themselves of these privileges, but they should be careful not to absent themselves needlessly from the house of worship.

In ministering to the sick, more than in any merely secular business, success depends on the spirit of consecration and self-sacrifice with

which the work is done. Those who bear responsibilities need to place themselves where they will be deeply impressed by the Spirit of God. You should have as much greater anxiety than do others for the aid of the Holy Spirit and for a knowledge of God as your position of trust is more responsible than that of others.

Nothing is more needed in our work than the practical results of communion with God. We should show by our daily lives that we have peace and rest in the Saviour. His peace in the heart will shine forth in the countenance. It will give to the voice a persuasive power. Communion with God will ennoble the character and the life. Men will take knowledge of us, as of the first disciples, that we have been with Jesus. This will impart to the worker a power that nothing else can give. Of this power he must not allow himself to be deprived.

We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work. The strength received through communion with God, united with earnest effort in training the mind to thoughtfulness and caretaking, prepares one for daily duties and keeps the spirit in peace under all circumstances, however trying.

The Divine Counselor

When in trouble, many think they must appeal to some earthly friend, telling him their perplexities, and begging for help. Under trying circumstances unbelief fills their hearts, and the way seems dark. And all the time there stands beside them the mighty Counselor of the ages, inviting them to place their confidence in Him. Jesus, the great Burden Bearer, is saying, “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.” Shall we turn from Him to uncertain human beings, who are as dependent upon God as we ourselves are.

You may feel the deficiency of your character and the smallness of your ability in comparison with the greatness of the work. But if you had the greatest intellect ever given to man, it would not be sufficient for your work. “Without Me ye can do nothing,” says our Lord and Saviour. John 15:5. The result of all we do rests in the hands of God. Whatever may betide, lay hold upon Him with steady, persevering confidence.

In your business, in companionship for leisure hours, and in alliance for life, let all the associations you form be entered upon with earnest, humble prayer. You will thus show that you honor God, and God will honor you. Pray when you are fainthearted. When you are desponding, close the lips firmly to men; do not shadow the path of others; but tell

everything to Jesus. Reach up your hands for help. In your weakness lay hold of infinite strength. Ask for humility, wisdom, courage, increase of faith, that you may see light in God's light and rejoice in His love.

Consecration; Trust

When we are humble and contrite we stand where God can and will manifest Himself to us. He is well pleased when we urge past mercies and blessings as a reason why He should bestow on us greater blessings. He will more than fulfill the expectations of those who trust fully in Him. The Lord Jesus knows just what His children need, how much divine power we will appropriate for the blessing of humanity; and He bestows upon us all that we will employ in blessing others and ennobling our own souls.

We must have less trust in what we ourselves can do, and more trust in what the Lord can do for and through us. You are not engaged in your own work; you are doing the work of God. Surrender your will and way to Him. Make not a single reserve, not a single compromise with self. Know what it is to be free in Christ.

The mere hearing of sermons Sabbath after Sabbath, the reading of the Bible through and through, or the explanation of it verse by verse, will not benefit us or those who hear us, unless we bring the truths of the Bible into our individual experience. The understanding, the will, the affections, must be yielded to the control of the word of God. Then through the work of the Holy Spirit the precepts of the word will become the principles of the life.

As you ask the Lord to help you, honor your Saviour by believing that you do receive His blessing. All power, all wisdom, are at our command. We have only to ask.

Walk continually in the light of God. Meditate day and night upon His character. Then you will see His beauty and rejoice in His goodness. Your heart will glow with a sense of His love. You will be uplifted as if borne by everlasting arms. With the power and light that God imparts, you can comprehend more and accomplish more than you ever before deemed possible.

"Abide in Me."

Christ bids us: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. . . . He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth

much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. . . . If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.

“As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. . . .

“Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.” John 15:4-16.

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.” Revelation 3:20.

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” Revelation 2:17.

“He that overcometh, . . . I will give him the Morning Star,” “and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God: . . . and I will write upon him My new name.” Verses 26-28; 3:12.

“This One Thing I Do.”

He whose trust is in God will with Paul be able to say, “I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13, R.V. Whatever the mistakes or failures of the past, we may, with the help of God, rise above them. With the apostle we may say:

“This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:13, 14. M.H. 503-516.

Closing Gem

Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the

things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." If our mind are fixed upon the things that are eternal, and not on the things of earth, we shall grasp the hand of infinite power, and what can make us sad? What can make us doubt? What can separate our souls from the Lord? Paul says, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. RH. 1890, Feb. 11.

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