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Readings for the Week of Prayer

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Introduction

HOW rapidly the years are spent! When we will be conducting this Week of Prayer, the year 1959 will be drawing to a close. Once more the Lord, by His grace, is giving us an opportunity to greater sanctification by humble prayer. How great is the long-suffering and love of God toward a perishing world!

As we look upon the past year, we note that science has made great strides. On the other hand, man became greatly afraid because of political crises, which tell us that this world is standing before great events. We are standing before such events, it is hard to tell whether they will lead to a complete annihilation or to un-dreamed-of prosperity. Only the word of God can give us an answer to this question.

In all that took place—in spite of all apparent progress—the problems confronting the world became none easier to solve. The helplessness, fear, and uncertainty concerning the future has steadily increased.

For God's people, whose expectations and hopes are not centered upon this world, this should be an evidence that our time is far spent. The events, following in quick succession, the far-reaching plans of science, the finely-woven deceptions of the

powers of darkness,—all are telling us that the time allotted to us is very short. With the steady approach of the hour of judgment, the perils of God's people are steadily increasing.

For this reason the annual Week of Prayer is to us a God-given opportunity to ponder about our faith, our spiritual life, and our calling as people of the endtimes. May God grant that the Week of Prayer may not merely be a custom, returning every year, but that, by the united study of the Readings and praying together, we may experience a true regeneration of our spiritual life.

Our duty as a Reformatory Movement is great. We cannot minimize it by doubt and unbelief, nor permit our hearts and hands to grow weak by discouragement. Although our strength is small and the outlook may sometimes be dark, God stands at our side with His mighty arm, and to Him nothing is impossible. Jer.32:17.

Let this Week of Prayer become a new milestone in our history. Shall we pray for the help of the Lord; for unity among the true Advent people; for the conversion of our youth; for God-consecrated workers in the vineyard of the Lord; for a renewal of the missionary zeal in all our churches, and for a general preparation for the day of Jesus'

coming, by faithfulness toward the principles of the three-fold angel's message.

May the Lord also make hearts willing to bring special sacrifices, and give many of His children a special experience in this respect. Let ministers, colporteurs, and all those engaged in the work be a special

example to the people in prayer and sacrifice, in order that greater blessings may be imparted to God's people than ever before.

May the God of peace and all graces be with you in all the world.

Your Brother and co-pilgrim,

A. Ringelberg.

Reading No. 1 - Friday, December 4, 1959.

Are we Ready when Jesus Comes?

Compiled from the writings of
Mrs. E. G. White.

WE are living in a most solemn, important time of this earth's history. We are amid the perils of the last days. Important and fearful events are before us. How necessary that all who fear God and love His law, should humble themselves before Him, and be afflicted and mourn, and confess the sins that have separated God from His people. That which should excite the greatest alarm is that we do not feel or understand our condition, our low estate, and that we are satisfied to remain as we are. We should flee to the word of God and to prayer, individually seeking the Lord earnestly, that we may find Him. We should make this our first business." -Testimonies, Vol.3, p.53.

"I saw greater distress in the land than we have yet witnessed. I heard groans and cries of distress, and saw large companies in active battle. I heard the booming of the canon, the clash of arms, the hand-to-hand fight, and the groans and prayers of the dying. The ground was covered with the wounded and the dead. I saw desolate, despairing families, and pinching want in many dwellings. Even now many families are suffering want, but this will increase. The faces of many looked haggard, pale, and pinched with hunger. ...

"God's people must take warning and discern the signs of the times. The signs of Christ's coming are too plain to be doubted; and in view of these things every one who professes the truth should be a living preacher. God calls upon all, both preachers and people, to awake. All heaven is astir. The scenes of earth's history are

fast closing. We are amid the perils of the last days." -Testimonies, Vol.1, p.260.

"What shall I say to arouse the remnant people of God? I was shown that dreadful scenes are before us; Satan and his angels are bringing all their powers to bear upon God's people. He knows that if they sleep a little longer he is sure of them, for their destruction is certain. I warn all who profess the name of Christ to closely examine themselves, and make full and thorough confession of all their wrongs, ..." -Ibid., p.263.

The Threatening Danger

"God's word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated. Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God, will thereby incur reproach and persecution." -Great Controversy, p.581.

"These records of the past clearly reveal the enmity of Rome toward the true Sabbath

and its defenders, and the means which she employs to honor the institution of her creating. The word of God teaches that these scenes are to be repeated as Roman Catholics and Protestants unite for the exaltation of the Sunday." -Ibid., p.578.

"The Roman Catholic Church, with all its ramifications throughout the world, forms one vast organization, under the control, and designed to serve the interest, of the papal see. Its millions of communicants, in every country of the globe, are instructed to hold themselves as bound in allegiance to the Pope. Whatever their nationality or their government, they are to regard the authority of the church as above all other." -Ibid., p.580.

Behold, I Come Quickly:

Hold That Fast Which Thou Hast.

"The day of the Lord is near, and hasteth greatly;' but where do we behold the true Advent spirit? Who are preparing to stand in that time of temptation which is just before us? The people to whom God has entrusted the sacred, solemn, testing truths for this time, are sleeping at their post. They say by their actions, We have the truth, we are 'rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;' while the True Witness declares, 'Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.'" -Testimonies, Vol.5, p.101.

"In this season of conflict and trial, we need all the support and consolation we can derive from righteous principles, from fixed religious convictions, from the abiding assurance of the love of Christ, and from a rich experience in divine things. We shall attain to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, only as the result of a steady growth in grace." -Testimonies, Vol. 5, p.105.

"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." -Great Controversy, p.622.

"The precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear, He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God's people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him." -Ibid., p.633.

What Is Needed To Be Ready?

"I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps—the first, second, and third angel's messages. Said my accompanying angel, 'Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.' I was again brought down through these messages, and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experience." -Early Writings, pp. 258, 259.

"I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully.

"I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking for the time of 'refreshing' and the 'latter rain' to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. O how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God." -Ibid., p.71.

"God requires perfection of His children. His law is a transcript of His own character. This infinite standard is presented to all that there may be no mistake in regard to the kind of people whom God will have to compose His kingdom. The life of Christ on earth was a perfect expression of

God's law, and when those who claim to be children of God become Christ-like in character, they will be obedient to God's commandments. Then the Lord can trust them to be of the number who shall compose the family of heaven. Clothed in the glorious apparel of Christ's righteousness, they have a place at the King's feast. They have a right to join the blood-washed throng." -Christ's Object Lessons, p.321.

"It is now that we must keep ourselves and our children unspotted from the world. It is now that we must wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is now that we must overcome pride, passion, and spiritual slothfulness. It is now that we must awake, and make determined effort for symmetry of character. 'Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' We are in a most trying position, waiting, watching for our Lord's appearing. The world is in darkness. ...

"Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God--candidates for Heaven." -Testimonies, Vol.5, p.216.

Our Only Hope

"When the sinner believes that Christ is his personal Saviour, then, according to His unfulfilling promises, God pardons His sin, and justifies him freely. The repentant soul realizes that his justification comes because Christ, as his substitute and surety, has died for him, as his atonement and righteousness." -Review and Herald, November 4, 1890.

"Christ has become our sacrifice and surety. He has become sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Through faith in His name, He imputes unto us His righteousness, and it becomes a living principle in our life." -Review and Herald, July 12, 1892.

"Jesus is our great High Priest in heaven. And what is He doing? He is making intercession and atonement for His people who believe in Him. Through His imputed righteousness, they are accepted of God as those who are manifesting to the world that they acknowledge allegiance to God, keeping all His commandments." -Review and Herald, Aug. 22, 1893.

"The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed. The righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven; the second is our fitness for heaven." -Review and Herald, June 4, 1895.

"When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin; for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes, but we will hate the sin that caused the sufferings of the Son of God." -Review and Herald, March 18, 1890.

"This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to us." -Christ's Object Lessons, p.318.

"There will be no future probation in which to prepare for eternity. It is in this life that we are to put on the robe of Christ's righteousness. This is our only opportunity to form characters for the home which Christ has made ready for those who obey His commandments." -Ibid., p.325.

A N N O U N C E M E N T :

SABBATH, DECEMBER 12, IS SET ASIDE AS A SPECIAL DAY FOR FASTING AND PRAYER. ON THIS DAY, ALSO, THE OFFERING WILL BE GATHERED. MAY GOD BLESS THE GIVERS AND THE GIFTS AS WELL, TO HIS HONOR AND GLORY. REMEMBER THAT "GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER" !

THE BRETHREN

Reading No. 2 - Sabbath, December 5, 1959.

The Work of Elijah in our Time

by A. Ringelberg

THE inspired records of the Old Testament close with a strange and marvelous prediction, which is a promise at the same time. The last verses of the book of Malachi proclaim the coming of Elijah, the great reformer in the days of wicked king Ahab. His steadfastness and message of decision, supported by the miracle of God, brought the people to acknowledge the Lord as the true God.

Before the Saviour returns, such a work of reformation must be accomplished. The third angel's message, supported by the angel of Revelation 18, is this Elijah message in our days. It is the message of decision for all mankind, and it involves the Sabbath as the divine test. This message will reach its climax in the loud cry by means of the latter rain. And yet, the work of Elijah includes another task, "...he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers..." Mal.4:6.

A Reformatory Work in the Family

We are living in an age when mankind passes through a crisis in every sphere. Never before have such great and sweeping changes occurred in every phase, as we notice in our day. Revolutionary changes follow one another in such quick succession that one can hardly find time to think about them. While we are still pondering over a problem that has upset us severely, another much greater puzzle and of far-reaching importance looms up in front of us.

One of the saddest of all problems in our day is the disintegration of families,— a problem with which all civilized nations have to contend. The many unhappy marriages, divorces, adulteries, broken-up marriages, the living apart of marriage partners, are the treacherous cliffs upon which the family life is wrecked. The causes for this misery are of different nature. Predominantly it is the thoughtless way of getting married, because it has become modern to marry again if the first marriage dissolves.

Another cause is the highly raised standard of living, which places heavy burdens

upon the family life, causing both, husband and wife, to work for their living.

This in turn causes the children and youth to be left to themselves. In modern countries, where Marxist ideas are strictly enforced, they will even venture as far as leaving the children completely in charge of the state, because the equality of husband and wife demands from her an equal amount of labor produced in the interest of the state. Right from the beginning the children are educated by the state and kept in state institutions. In such cases, what is left of a family life as God has designed it should be?

Yet, it are not only the families of the world that are endangered today. Christian families, as well, are exposed to the influence of our times. The bonds which bind parents and children together in a natural manner, sorry to say, have become very loose in places. Only too often we must experience that also Christian youth does not bring the honor, respect, and loving obedience to their parents. Jesus cared for His mother till He was 30 years old. When hanging on the cross, He forgot for a moment His own agonies, and using the words, "Behold, thy mother! Behold thy son!" He transferred the care for His mother upon John.

Our young people entertain the thought altogether too soon of freeing themselves from their parents' home and walking their own way. The care of the aging father or of an aging mother is only too eagerly left to the state.

In this, also, certain causes play their part. Sad to say, but many parents do not succeed in binding their children with the strong cords of love, wisdom, counsel, and tactful guidance to their hearts, because they did not learn to sit at the feet of Jesus themselves. A family where parents and children cling together in the fear of God, and serve each other with unselfish love, is the most beautiful thing that can exist on earth. But sad indeed, we have observed that Christian families are becoming more scarce right along.

Let the Influence of Christ Rule in Your Family

The work of Elijah extends deeply into the family life. The truth we hold, the message we carry to the world, must first do its work in our families. The church of the last days must be composed of true Christian families.

"The home that is beautified by love, sympathy, and tenderness is a place that angels love to visit, and where God is glorified. The influence of a carefully guarded Christian home in the years of childhood and youth is the surest safeguard against the corruptions of the world. In the atmosphere of such a home the children will learn to love both their earthly parents and their heavenly Father. ... The family relationship should be sanctifying in its influence. Christian homes, established and conducted in accordance with God's plan, are a wonderful help in forming Christian character. ... Parents and children should unite in offering loving service to Him who alone can keep human love pure and noble." —The Adventist Home, p.19.

Such a family preaches a sermon to the world. Our families are to be strong fortresses against the corruption of the present world. Satan is well acquainted with this and for this reason he leaves no stone unturned to destroy the family. Once the family ties have become broken, or even weakened, he has conquered a fortress and his work is made easy to destroy the souls.

The Duty of Fathers and Mothers

The Bible contains many instructions and much counsel for men and women who have taken upon themselves the responsibilities of married life, and with it that of a family life. In the eyes of a modern world, these instructions are old-fashioned, yet they are still laying the foundation of a Christian family. In modern married life much is said about "the rights of the one, and the rights of the other party". It is very interesting to notice that in the Bible record no mention is made of "rights". We shall study the Bible, describing the position of the wife: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto

Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." Eph.5:22-24.

It is not the meaning of these words to place the thought of submission into the foreground, much rather it concerns the "rights" and not the dependence. Did not Christ place man and wife as equals side by side in the plan of redemption? It is the position of the wife to lean upon the stronger partner in marriage, the husband; yet, she is the serving soul which furnishes the good things, the happiness, and the abundance in wealth and blessings. Gal. 3:28; Prov.31:10-29. In this manner the wife is according to the original plan of God a "help meet for him". Gen.2:18.

Now let us consider the position of the husband in marriage and in the family life. He is the head of the wife, therefore also the head of the family. From this a person might conclude that he has the "rights". Yet, let us listen to what the word of God says concerning it, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; ... So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." Eph. 5:25,28.

Where, in these verses, does it speak of ruling, rights, and commands? Does not love stand in the first place in the position which the husband occupies, namely the same love which Christ revealed toward His church? The father of a Christian home is not a man that is led by selfishness and insisting that he is always right; he does not demand anything doubtful, nor does he collide with the laws of morality and purity. He is no dictator who does not regard the feelings and sound opinions of his wife and children, but he prays God for wisdom, that he as priest, head, and leader of the family may do his duty, so that the love and respect of wife and children may be safeguarded. It certainly is no easy task, and this lesson can only be learned in the school of God.

The Spirit of prophecy gives to fathers a very important counsel:

"Do not allow the vexations of your business to bring darkness into your home life. If, when little things occur that are not exactly as you think they should be, you fail to reveal patience, long forbearance, kindness, and love, you show that you have not chosen as a companion Him who so loved

you that He gave His life for you, that you might be one with Him.

In the daily life you will meet with sudden surprises, disappointments, and temptations. What saith the word? 'Resist the devil,' by firm reliance upon God, 'and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.' 'Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.' Look unto Jesus at all times and in all places, offering a silent prayer from a sincere heart that you may know how to do His will. Then when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard for you against the enemy. When you are almost ready to yield, to lose patience and self-control, to be hard and denunciary, to find fault and accuse—this is the time for you to send to heaven the prayer, 'Help me, O God, to resist temptation, to put all bitterness and wrath and evil-speaking out of my heart. Give me Thy meekness, Thy lowliness, Thy long-suffering, and Thy love. Leave me not to dishonor my Redeemer, to misinterpret the words and motives of my wife, my children, and my brethren and sisters in the faith. Help me that I may be kind, pitiful, tenderhearted, forgiving. Help me to be a real house-band in my home and to represent the character of Christ to others.' —The Adventist Home, pp. 214, 215.

The Commandment With Promise

"Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)" Eph. 6:2. This commandment of God determines the deportment of the child as long as he and his parents are alive. The Bible is filled with examples from the lives of men of God of old, which show us the position taken by their decedents. The family life was strong and governed all actions in life. Disobedience or even disregard to the commands and wishes of the parents was accounted a grievous sin. The examples in the Bible show the terrible results that followed. We should, therefore, always remember that the Lord upholds every one of His commandments. Every child should remember that father and mother are, next to God, the very closest tie in our lives. They were the ones who brought us into this life. They cared for us, and placed their own interests into the background to make our life as agreeable as possible. Should

we not respect, honor and love them, who from our birth have loved us?

Obedience toward parents is the first commandment that has a promise. Children, who regard this commandment, shall be endowed with the blessings of Heaven.

It should be regarded a self-evident matter that parents should place no stumbling blocks into the road of the children in this respect. The life of the parents should be such that the children find no just cause to turn away from them. Therefore the Bible cautions every parent in words addressed to the fathers, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 6:4.

Our Families to be an Example

It is just in a time of confusion like ours today, when in many respects it looks so dark in many Christian families, that the homes of Seventh-day Adventists should be a shining example.

"One well ordered, well disciplined family tells more in behalf of Christianity than all the sermons that can be preached. Such a family gives evidence that the parents have been successful in following God's directions, and that their children will serve Him in the church. Their influence grows; for as they impart, they receive to impart again. The father and mother find helpers in their children, who give to others the instruction received in the home. The neighborhood in which they live is helped, for in it they have become enriched for time and eternity. The whole family is engaged in the service of the Master; and by their godly example, others are inspired to be faithful and true to God in dealing with His flock, His beautiful flock. ...

"We need more sunshiny parents and more sunshiny Christians. We are too much shut up within ourselves. Too often the kindly, encouraging word, the cheery smile, are withheld from our children and from the oppressed and discouraged.

Parents, upon you rests the responsibility of being light-bearers and light-givers. Shine as lights in the home, brightening the path that your children must travel. As you do this, your light will shine to those without.

From every Christian home a holy light should shine forth. Love should be revealed

in action. It should flow out in all home intercourse, showing itself in thoughtful kindness, in gentle, unselfish courtesy. There are homes where this principle is carried out—homes where God is worshiped

and truest love reigns. From these homes morning and evening prayer ascends to God as sweet incense, and His mercies and blessings descend upon the suppliant like the morning dew." —The Adventist Home, pp.32,37.

Reading No. 4 - Sunday, December 6, 1959.

Home and Foreign Missions

by S. Gutknecht

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." .. "Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." Matt.28:18-20; Luke 10:3.

ABOUT 100 to 150 years ago the term "Mission" was a word with a bewitching sound to thousands and millions of human beings. The fervent desire was burning in the hearts of countless humans to go into the far-away regions of Africa, Asia, and the Americas, to proclaim the glad tidings of a crucified, risen, and coming Saviour. The journey into dark, foreign countries was not only a great honor, but a solemn obligation. In those early days such a decision was often a step that was paid for by life itself. Besides this, it demanded much sacrifice and self-denial. Yet these faithful servants of God went, and the Master was with them and blessed their weak efforts beyond measure.

This is, sorry to say, no longer the case. There are but very few humans who really have consecrated themselves to the cause of God. The masses are serving mammon, materialism, and self. Worries, wealth, and creature comfort have deadened the mind for sacrifice.

As such, we are living today in the most solemn and eventful epoch of the history of the human race. The return of Jesus Christ cannot be far off. Not very much longer will the Lord delay His coming. A testimony of the Spirit of prophecy says: "We are

standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Prophecies are fulfilling. Strange, eventful history is being recorded in the books of heaven. Everything in our world is in agitation. There are wars, and rumors of wars. The nations are angry, and the time of the dead has come, that they should be judged. Events are changing to bring about the day of God, which hasteth greatly." —Testimonies, Vol.6, p.14.

Humanity is very arrogant, and in blindness is boasting about its great accomplishments, progress, and enlightenment. The bold dream to visit other planets and to penetrate deeper into the universe seems to succeed with man. Yet, unveiled before the eye of the Omnipotent, appears the internal guilt and rottenness. The heavenly watchers see this world filled with cruelty and crime. Soon the Lord will call this world to an account; yet, before the wrath of God will be poured out upon this pitiful world, the people must be warned.

Christ, in speaking about the signs of the end, said, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt.24:14. This text does not speak only of Germany, Europe, or another Continent, but of the entire world—of the 200 countries, and the many, many islands of the sea. Also, it is not the will of God that small localities should continually hear the message, and vast territories which are thirsting for it have not the opportunity of seeing a servant of God with the message of salvation. The word "then", as used in the beforementioned text, emphasizes the fact that the end will come no sooner nor later until the gospel of the coming kingdom has been preached in all the world. This task is resting upon every one of us.

Jesus spoke this all-important prophecy, standing as it were upon the bridge of three Continents. Before His eye lay the vast, world-wide field of labor, and surrounding Him were a handful of quarrelsome, weak, uneducated, and frail disciples, which were commissioned to perform this task. Besides this, they were poor, had no means of conveyance, but bloody persecutions and bitter resistance were waiting for them everywhere. We would be ready to say today, How is this possible? It cannot be done! And yet, with God it was not impossible. By the power of the Holy Spirit it was made possible for these few men to carry the gospel of Jesus into all three Continents, and those in the depths of heathenism were won to Christ. This world-revolutionizing work could only be accomplished by a thorough conversion, in which all personal interests were buried. the spirit of love and harmony binding the hearts together, and their conviction was as solid as a rock that they were standing on the cause of God and had ventured out in obedience to the commission of the Lord, the power of the Holy Spirit co-operating with them.

Before us lies, in the same manner, a vast field of labor with 2 billion 500 million humans; and this population is increasing by over 500 every hour. In comparison with this vast multitude which populates the earth, are we not infinitely small, even if not quite as small as the group of the disciples was? Many may think in their hearts, even if they may not express it outwardly, how is it possible? Humanly speaking, I can understand every single member that has such thoughts, yet, in spite of it all—God has often done extraordinary things through a few, plain people. Through the power of God and His mighty arm, this is still possible today. What we are lacking today is a thorough conversion and regeneration. In this regeneration lies the power for action. We must be freed from indifference and indolence, freed from the love of the world, and freed from self. If we are dead ourselves; when Christ lives in us, and we are convinced of His mission, then the Lord can do a mighty work, and the world will soon be enlightened. How long are we to wait yet until the Lord can take full possession of our hearts? When will we say, "Here am I; send me!"? The Spirit of prophecy says: "While the angels hold the four winds we are to work with all our capabilities. We must bear our message without any

delay. We must give evidence to the heavenly universe, and to men in this degenerate age, that our religion is a faith and a power of which Christ is the Author, and His word the divine oracle. Human souls are hanging in the balance. They will either be subjects for the kingdom of God or slaves to the despotism of Satan. All are to have the privilege of laying hold of the hope set before them in the gospel; and how can they hear without a preacher?" —Testimonies, Vol.6, p.21.

If Christ left the 99 sheep to seek and save that which was lost, how can we be justified if we do less? Is it not a betrayal of a sacred trust and an insult against God if we neglect to work as Jesus worked, and bring sacrifices as He brought them?

We have no time to lose. The end is near. The way for the propagation of the gospel from place to place will soon be hedged in by dangers to the left and to the right. All kinds of obstacles will be placed into the path of God's messengers, so that they will not be able any longer to do what they can do today. We have to become conscious of our mission and accomplish it as quickly as possible by aggressive warfare. The way for the proclamation of the gospel becomes more and more hedged in. Year by year the work is becoming more difficult, and what we have neglected to do in days of comparative peace, we will have to accomplish under the greatest trials.

Africa used to be one of the countries with the greatest freedom to spread the gospel. As a result, many mission stations, churches, and denominations came into being. By this the work is hampered in many respects. In all the 11 countries in Europe which I could visit, I found in no country so many movements and drifting currents as I found here in South Africa.

The Catholic Church, in her missionary effort after the second world-war, has taken over the lead. The best pieces of land are bought in the cities with enormous sums of money; and even in the smaller towns and in the country large acreages are purchased to erect schools, educational institutions, hospitals, orphanages, and other facilities, in order to save the youth as well as the parents for Catholicism. In Africa this church has startling success and becomes a peril to Protestantism. If we as people of God have no healing facilities, then the

work among the natives becomes more difficult and nearly impossible. We are in need of means to build new mission stations, schools, and sanatoriums in Africa and Asia. We need workers to place them where they are most urgently needed. In view of these facts, should we not become conscious of our duty?

The Churches at Home must Co-operate

We read in "Gospel Workers", p.466: "The members of the churches in the home field should carry on their hearts the burden for the work in regions beyond. An American business man, who was an earnest Christian, in conversation with a fellow worker, remarked that he himself worked for Christ twenty-four hours of the day. 'In all my business relations,' he said, 'I try to represent my Master. As I have opportunity, I try to win others to Him. All day I am working for Christ. And at night, while I sleep, I have a man working for Him in China.'"

Why should not the members of a church, or several smaller groups team up together to sustain a missionary in a foreign field? They can do it, if they are willing to live a self-denying life. Brother and sister, will you not participate in this great work? I plead with you to do something for the Lord, and to do it now. By means of a teacher whom you support in a foreign field, souls can be saved to shine as stars in the crown of the Redeemer. No matter how small your offering may be, do not delay to bring it to the Lord. Even the smallest offering becomes valuable in the sight of God, and He blesses it if it is given with a heart full of the love of Jesus.

During my travels through Africa, I have seen pitiful sights. Oh, how deeply the people are imbedded in misery, in superstition, and error. How great is the want and how deep the suffering! They look up to the missionary, expecting of him spiritual and material aid. While visiting two native hospitals, with very primitive facilities and housing many patients, it was a great joy to me to see that, after our arrival, the news spread through the lines and the people gathered to hear the message from heaven. We could speak to many people about Jesus and our hope as Adventists. O, how thankful these souls were for this message! They loudly acclaimed the praises of the Lord in the meeting, and for His message,

and two young men desired to be baptized. My dear fellow believers, all these are Macedonian calls, "Come, and help us!" God's church should have annointed ears to hear these cries, and, with the help of God, through foreign missions endeavor to comply with these calls.

Home Missions

As important as the foreign missionary work is, calling for our undivided attention, we must not underestimate the deep significance of home missionary endeavor.

We read in Mark 5:18,19, "And when He was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and had compassion on thee." He, who was freed from the power of the devil, was intending to go abroad on the lake and remain with Jesus, but the Lord did not permit him to do so. The first commission was, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them..." Jesus points him to the way of order. In our home, among the relatives,—there we should prove ourselves that we have a burden for souls and are intent on saving them. Then, if we have done our duty among our relatives and acquaintances, the Lord can give us a broader calling.

There are many believers who are immediately ready to go to a foreign country, but they cannot muster enough courage to confess in their own home, among relatives, and in their home town, what the Saviour has done for them. Jesus places the greatest value in first line upon home missionary work.

Is it not sad indeed if in the families one hears almost nothing spoken between parents, children, and other relatives than worldly conversation of sports, making money, gain, and other unimportant and foolish talks, and nothing of Jesus and His saving truth? Is it a marvel, then, when the conversation turns to Christ and His truth, the children toward their parents, and the parents toward their children, show signs of uneasiness? Ought not the love of God and the hope in Christ Jesus be the most beloved subjects in the family? Can we not in this manner become great missionaries for our surroundings? My dear brethren and sisters, the welfare and salvation of our loved ones should become a heart matter with us. Under prayer and tears should we try to

win them for Jesus. On the final day, the Lord will ask us for our children which He gave us, and woe to us if we have not been true examples to them and did our all for their salvation.

The Greatest Missionaries of the World

"If married men go into the work, leaving their wives to care for the children at home, the wife and mother is doing fully as great and important a work as is the husband and father. While one is in the missionary field, the other is a home missionary, whose cares and anxieties and burdens frequently far exceed those of the husband and father. The mother's work is a solemn and important one,—to mold the minds and fashion the characters of her children, to train them for usefulness here, and to fit them for the future immortal life.

The husband, in the open missionary field, may receive the honor of men, while the home toiler may receive no earthly credit for her labor; but if she works for the best interests of her family, seeking to fashion their characters after the divine Model, the recording angel writes her name as one of the greatest missionaries in the world." —Gospel Workers, p.203.

Dear Sisters and Mothers: the Lord really knows your problems and burdens. He also knows your worries for your children. He will help you to save them for eternity if you will lay yourself on the altar of sacrifice and permit Jesus to live in you. His love, goodness, longsuffering, friendliness, and righteousness will attract the hearts of the children like a magnet, and by your example characters will be formed

for eternity. By unkindness, impatience, complaining, backbiting, and unfriendliness we are, as churchmembers, a hindrance for our children and other men to find the way to Jesus. Let us, therefore, retrace our steps and say while reading this article, "... no longer !"

The Time is Ripe for Action

The Reformation has now 40 years of wilderness travel behind it. Many unused opportunities can never be reclaimed. To carry on missionary endeavor becomes more difficult year after year; therefore it is time for action. Let every one of us give a helping hand in the great cause of God. Many brethren and sisters feel the need to help along, yet they are waiting for a strong hand to pull them along. What does the Spirit of prophecy say concerning this?

"I was shown God's people waiting for some change to take place,—a compelling power to take hold of them. But they will be disappointed, for they are wrong. They must act; they must take hold of the work themselves; and earnestly cry to God for a true knowledge of themselves." —Testimonies, Vol. 1, p.261.

This testimony speaks in no uncertain tones. It is the call of God to the General Conference, the Unions, Fields, churches, and every single soul. May God grant in mercy that the call of the Master to put our means, powers, talents, and our life to work in home and foreign missionary endeavor may fall upon fruitful ground, is my petition to God in this season of prayer.

Amen!

Reading No. 4 — Wednesday, December 9, 1959.

The Last Days and their Great Perils

by A. Mueller

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he

that doeth the will of God abideth forever."
1 John 2:15-17.

It is the great plan of God to restore in man the image of God which has been lost. By sin, this image has been almost completely lost, not only physically, but also in soul and morals. The serpent succeeded in

his art of deception, bringing disaster upon the world, which ended in death. If our Saviour had not stood in the breach, there would have been no escape from this calamity, for He took away the power of death.

John speaks of the love of the Father and the love of the world. Satan, by his cunningness and fraud, became the prince of this world. All his followers are of the world and love the world, and some day will perish with the world. In contrast with this, those who love God with all their hearts have eternal happiness promised to them as their reward.

By the mysterious insinuations of the prince of the world of spirits, Paradise was lost to our first parents. Sadly they had to accustom themselves to this judicial sentence of God, while standing outside the gates of their former home. In humility they must walk the path the Lord had prescribed for them, which, one day, would bring them back to the place they longed for. A way full of thorns and connected with hard physical labor was a part of the recovery of their lost home, for "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread". Today, in this respect, nothing has changed. Heartache and trouble was to be the appointed lot of men in their work, and weeds were to be their constant companions. It was a way of self-denial, and this way our Saviour was to walk to redeem the human race and to reveal the image of God.

Since the fall into sin, nearly six thousand years have elapsed. Satan's art of dissembling is still as mysterious as ever; yes, it has become very shrewd and often hardly noticeable, for he now works with the Bible, and the deceptive results are astonishing.

Signs of the Times in the Moral Sphere

As if he were living today, the apostle Paul fittingly describes our day, using the following words: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having the form of

godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

These words represent a mirror of the divine Word, into which we, also, must look to see whether one or the other mark fits us. In a few words, John calls it the "love of the world". This, of course, is a general term, but it includes matters which could prove very dangerous to our spiritual life.

Our Thoughts

Since the thoughts are always the forerunners of our actions we can better understand the words of the Wise Man, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. 4:23. When the aged Simeon in the temple at Jerusalem held our Saviour in his arms, he spoke the following ominous and prophetic words, "... that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Luke 2:35. These revelations came to light at the cross of Calvary; there, two enemy camps became visible, opposing each other,—on one side the worshipers of self and followers of the prince of darkness; on the other side the followers and worshipers of Christ.

"By the life and the death of Christ, the thoughts of men also are brought to view. From the manger to the cross, the life of Jesus was a call to self-surrender, and to fellowship in suffering. It unveiled the purposes of men. Jesus came with the truth of heaven, and all who were listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit were drawn to Him. The worshipers of self belonged to Satan's kingdom. In their attitude toward Christ, all would show on which side they stood. And thus every one passes judgment on himself. ...

"That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." In the light of the Saviour's life, the hearts of all, even from the Creator to the prince of darkness, are revealed. ... At the cross of Calvary, love and selfishness stood face to face." —Desire of Ages, p.57.

Human Appetites and Passions

The entry of sin into the world was by carnal longings. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to

be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Gen.3:6. After the thoughts had played their part, sin came into action, and the endresults brought sorrow, sadness, pain, tears, and finally death as a reward.

But Jesus, our Saviour, came into this world to limit the mysterious workings of Satan. By His example He again placed the image of God, which had been marred, into the focal point. The first step in His work consisted of a forty day's fast, that He might secure the victory over human appetites in view of the deceiver of our first parents.

"Of all the lessons to be learned from our Lord's first great temptation, none is more important than that bearing upon the control of the appetites and passions. In all ages, temptations appealing to the physical nature have been most effectual in corrupting and degrading mankind. Through intemperance, Satan works to destroy the mental and moral powers that God gave to man as a priceless endowment. Thus it becomes impossible for men to appreciate things of eternal worth. Through sensual indulgence, Satan seeks to blot from the soul every trace of likeness to God."—Desire of Ages, p.122.

Joys of the World

In the plan of God with man, He has not ordained that man should lead a joyless life. It is by sin that a great number of joyless days mark man's life. Never was it the will of God to see His children suffer, and He Himself be happy. We distinguish between two kinds of joy. There is the joy of the Lord, and the joy of the world; the first is perfect and pure, and carries eternal values with it; while the other is deceptive, and brings suffering and final destruction.

Today, the enemy of souls puts forth the most strenuous efforts to force those who profess to follow the Lord onto the descending road to perdition by all kinds of joys, which in reality are not found on the way to heaven. These joys are serving the purpose to satisfy the desires of the human heart, yet, are they serving to glorify Him who redeemed us on the cross of Calvary? And not only are the youth exposed to the danger of yielding to the current of our times (and these are multiple and fascin-

ating) but whoever does not love God supremely becomes a prey to the enticements of the evil one.

"The first four precepts of the decalogue allow no separation of the affections from God. Nor must anything share our supreme delight in Him. We cannot advance in Christian experience until we put away everything that separates us from God.

The great Head of the church, who has chosen His people out of the world, requires them to be separate from the world. He designs that the spirit of His commandments, by drawing His followers to Himself, shall separate them from worldly elements. To love God and keep His commandments is far away from loving the world's pleasures and its friendship. There is no concord between Christ and Belial."—Messages to Young People, pp.377,378.

How foolish it is to believe that the joys of the world can satisfy the souls' hunger and thirst after higher things. Only in Christ do we have the perfect joys that can be found in this world. Every child of God who has still joy in daily reading of the Bible, and is not satisfied to read just a verse or two in the morning and in the evening; who has joy in the Sabbath School and in the prayer meetings, and who does not fail to do missionary work, will experience an inner happiness which cannot be replaced by the joys of this world. Furthermore he who can enjoy nature will thereby honor his Creator, learning from our Saviour to speak of and admire the lilies of the field, and to remember the sparrow; and to consider the vast territory of the animal world which the Lord gave for us to study, for they were given to man to be his friends. Those things which bring to man true joy are not the many technical advantages that are given him today, for in many instances man becomes a slave to them, and more often receives physical and mental damage through them. He, who has the love of the Father abiding within, as John says, will know how to use these things or not to use them to the glory of the Lord.

Communion with God

Personal communion with the Lord has been lost among Christians. And how is it with us as Advent believers? Are we not in the same danger? Today the enemy of souls has succeeded in gathering human beings in mas-

ses and vast assemblies to further his work and influence his hearers more successfully. We, ourselves, can not speak of masses because we are only a little flock and will remain so till the close of time. The Bible injunction is, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is," and this rule is a common ground for all children of God who love and serve the Lord. Beside these divine services, ordained by the Lord and the church, we ought to examine ourselves very earnestly and ask ourselves how many audiences we have with the Lord who is to be our most beloved friend. It is most certainly a very serious question, and we ought to confess and regret that we have so little personal communion with Him who has loved us and still loves us above all things. How is it with your daily reading and study of the Bible in which pages the Lord Himself speaks to you? Since we find it marked 2500 times in the Scripture, "God said," or "Thus sayeth the Lord," does He not speak to you personally? Communion with the Lord in silent prayer in the closet,—has it not almost been lost?

What is the cause of our spiritual feebleness and our indifference in the Christian life; our lack of success in saving souls; and our defeats in the many temptations of our time? We have the best example in our Saviour, who, in prayer and quiet, personal communion with His Father attained strength for the day before Him. Without this, the plan of redemption would have been placed into jeopardy. All the men of faith and heroes of the Scripture gained their strength and power in personal communion and prayer with God.

The rush and the current of the present day, which originated with Satan, leaves us no time for the most important part of our spiritual life—the personal communion with God. The poet says, "Have you no time for Jesus standing at the portals?" We have hardly time for our morning and evening worships, and then plunge into every-day life, forgetting the Lord. Yes, we have time for all kinds of vanity, but not for Jesus.

Dear Brethren and Sisters in the Reform: Many things could be cited here which form great zones of danger. Is it not the last church that is depicted as being "lukewarm" in her spiritual condition, or "neither hot nor cold"? Thus the last deceiving art

of the devil is the most successful. Shall he succeed with us?

The first church lost her first love, and the Lord rebukes her for doing so. We ask, Is this rebuke in place for us also? This love has been pushed aside by a love for the world, and is expressed in the seeking after earthly matters and acquiring of money which often is no longer in line with honest practices. On the other side we find the lavish spending of money for things allowed and unallowed. Fashion-craze, which in addition is harmful to health, is not a rarity. And all this is intended to make ourselves appear beautiful in the eyes of the world. Personal respectfulness, which we owe to each other, and especially to those of advanced age, particularly to the elders of the church, is absent. In addition to this we find the disobedience of the children to their parents. All these matters belong to the dangers that confront God's people in the last days. These are things that must be observed within the sphere of the church, and must be overcome, if heaven should not be brought into jeopardy for us.

Our Reward

I would like to close this 1959 Reading with the thoughts expressed in a testimony of the Spirit of prophecy from the year 1904, in which all dear believers are called upon to remember that Heaven is worth the effort we put forth, if we would finally enter it. Do not tolerate, dear brethren and sisters, that unimportant matters take up your time and attention. Occupy yourself with the precious word of God. Its study will give you power for the trials and difficulties of the last days, and will enable you to walk with Christ in white, because you have been found worthy. In God's word we possess a spiritual guide and teacher, if we study and obey it, by whose help even the worse deterioration of evil in us may be brought under the discipline of the divine law. If we permit the teachings of the Word to influence our life, and subject our spirit and heart to its compelling force, then all the evil in churches and families can find no entrance. There would be none but blessings poured out upon converted homes, from which an influence would emanate to make God's children mighty in their efforts for the truth.

O, that we might ponder to know that the time of judgment has come upon us and that our destiny is decided upon. Now is the time to watch and pray and overcome all weakness, all pride, and all selfishness. The precious moments, so often wasted in frivolity, should be spent in meditation and prayer. Many of those, who profess to keep God's commandments, are following their own inclinations instead of duty. As they are now, they are unworthy of life eternal. I would say to these careless, indifferent ones, "All your vain thoughts, your unkind words, your selfish actions, are written in the heavenly records. The angels, who were witnessing the blasphemous revelry of Belshazzar, are standing next to you when you dishonor your Redeemer. They are sadly turning away; made sad because you crucify Him anew in this manner and bring Him to open shame."

At the coronation day of Christ, He will not acknowledge one soul who still has one

spot or wrinkle. But to His faithful ones He will give crowns of eternal glory. Those who did not want that He should rule over them, shall see Him surrounded with the throngs of the redeemed, those who carry this inscription, "The Lord Our Righteousness." They shall see the head that once bled under the crown of thorns adorned with a crown all splendid and glorious.

On that day the redeemed will shine forth in the brightness of the Father and His Son. Angels from heaven, with the sweet voices of the harp, shall welcome the King; together with the trophies of victory, those who have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. A shout of triumph will ring in heaven, Christ has gained the victory! He enters into the heavenly courts, accompanied by the redeemed ones, who are witnesses that His suffering and sacrifice has not been in vain.

May we all partake of this eternal glory!

Amen !

Reading No. 5 - Friday, December 11, 1959.

Our Preparation for the Great Day of God

by Carlos Kozel

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations." ... "And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. ... The earth is utterly

broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly." Joel 2:1,2; Isaiah 24:2,3,19.

Two Days that Decide the Destiny of all Mankind

IN the course of much activated events of our time there are two outstanding days which decide the destiny of all mankind. The one has been, still is, and will soon be for all eternity. It is the day of the Lord, much beloved by us, the holy Sabbath-day. (Rev.1:10; Ex.31:17.) The other is the "great day of God", sharply at the door, which with its sudden appearance will decide the destiny of all mankind forever. (Isa. 13:6; Joel, Chap.2.)

While looking upon present world-conditions, the following testimony of the Spirit of prophecy must fulfill itself with you and me, or else without it, concerning the first mentioned day (Sabbath):

"I saw that God had children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They have not rejected the light upon it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. This enraged the churches and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. And at this time God's chosen people all saw clearly that we had the truth, and they came out and endured the persecution with us. I saw the sword, famine, pestilence, and great confusion in the land. The wicked thought that we had brought the judgments upon them, and they rose up and took counsel to rid the earth of us, thinking that then the evil would be stayed." -Early Writings, pp.33,34.

From this wonderful testimony we can see clearly that the proclamation of the Sabbath in a fuller measure in the severe battle against the mark of the beast, Sunday, will bring about, as a dire result, the great day of God, or the perishing of the people who hold on to the keeping of the Sunday.

Two Doors,--One Opened for all Eternity;
the Other Closed Forever!

Into our time, often lived in great indifference by many children of God, falls the momentous decision of a door, opened in the end, or closed forever. It is necessary that our preparation be an established fact at the time when the proclamation of the Sabbath in a fuller measure has arrived. It also speaks in this testimony clearly of those who, at this time, have received the latter rain. Who could afford under these highly dangerous conditions to sleep and pass the time indifferently? "... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:12,13.

Two Needed Traits of Character
to Receive the Latter Rain

We, therefore, stand or fall with the latter rain! What, then, is of more importance, to be counted among those who will

carry the latter rain? What important characteristic must permeate our entire being, our thinking and actions, comparing it to the body and its nervous system that controls it? Shall we in the following lines make them an object for our study:

A. "POSITIVENESS", in contrast with the lukewarmness which is so inherent with Laodicea and leading them into destruction, is demanded as a condition for the reception of the latter rain; it must be a full, decisive, and complete matter in thoughts, words, and Christian behavior in the face of the world and every sin. Rev.3:16.

"I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of 'refreshing' and the 'latter rain' to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father." -Early Writings, p.71.

In order to place the straight or decisive truth again upon the candlestick and bring it among God's people, a shaking (sifting) and a reformation, that followed in its wake, was necessary. (Early Writings, pp. 269-273.) We are at the present living in the most dangerous, yet in the most solemn time of all the 6,000 years. We either attain to a complete victory, or we will stand fixed once and forever.

"This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it and be purified." -Early Writings, p.270.

Let us, my dear fellow believers, no longer be found asleep. We must now venture all, yes all, as in a terrible battle. Only in this manner a great change can be affected.

"I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, 'It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the

Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.'"
-Early Writings, p.271.

Place yourselves into this position! One of the same family will be accepted, while the other because of a lack of needed preparation concerning the straight truth, is rejected. What a heart-rending scene! Soon, when this hour of terrible decision will have struck, there will be changing no longer. What we are then, we will be forever. (Rev.22:11.)

While dwelling upon this solemn thought, we can well understand the bitter, fearful cry of the Spirit of prophecy:

"What shall I say to arouse the remnant people of God? I was shown that dreadful scenes are before us; Satan and his angels are bringing all their powers to bear upon God's people. He knows that if they sleep a little longer he is sure of them, for their destruction is certain. I warn all who profess the name of Christ to closely examine themselves, and make full and thorough confession of all their wrongs, that they may go beforehand to judgment, and that the recording angel may write pardon opposite their names. My brother, my sister, if these precious moments of mercy are not improved, you will be left without excuse. If you make no special effort to arouse, if you will not manifest zeal in repenting, these golden moments will soon pass, and you will be weighed in the balance and found wanting. Then your agonizing cries will be of no avail." -Testimonies, Vol.1, p.263.

To further support us in this thorough examination, we would like to draw the attention to the following thoughts of the testimonies:

1. "Let every one examine himself, to see whether he be in the faith. Let the people of God repent and be converted, that their sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." -Testimonies, Vol.8, p.103.

2. "I saw that none could share the 'refreshing' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action." -Early Writings, p.71.

3. "If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge, 'They are joined to their idols, let them alone,' and

they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation." -Testimonies, Vol.1, pp.187,188.

4. "Those who are uniting with the world, are receiving the worldly mold, and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth,--- these are receiving the heavenly mold, and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth, and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity.

Now is the time to prepare." -Testimonies, Vol.5, p.216.

He, therefore, who in thoughts, words, and actions, in dress (fashion), speech (jesting, joking, and general worldly behavior, etc.) and all that is forbidden in the Bible; he who acts like the world and is inclined in this direction, shall, during the time when the Sabbath shall be proclaimed more fully, fall a prey to the mark of the beast, although he might keep the Sabbath today. This does not concern only the individual one, but in particular the great world-loving Adventists.

5. After all, how many souls are actually ready to break with the worldly power of the evil one in order to be saved?

"The way marked out by our divine Lord is too narrow and the gate too strait to admit them while grasping the world, or while cherishing selfishness, or sin of any kind. There is no room for these things; and yet there are but few who will consent to part with them, that they may pass the narrow way and enter the strait gate." -Testimonies, Vol.2, pp.445,446.

"I have tried in the fear of God to set before His people their danger and their sins, and have endeavored, to the best of my feeble powers, to arouse them. I have stated startling things, which, if they had believed, would have caused them distress and terror, and led them to zeal in repenting of their sins and iniquities. I have stated before them that, from what was shown me, but a small number of those now

professing to believe the truth would eventually be saved,—not because they could not be saved, but because they would not be saved in God's appointed way." —Ibid.

B. "UPRIGHTNESS". "... he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly." Prov. 2:7. "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Rev. 14:3. Only upright motives, pointing to self-denial, can serve as building stones through all the trials, and be accepted by God for the upbuilding of our character. God is the Master-builder. Yet we are to furnish every day the bricks in form of Christian thoughts, words, and actions, till we become "a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 4:13.

1. All the building stones, not suitable, will be rejected by Heaven; they will prove themselves very destructive, falling back and finally crushing us.

"Many hear the invitation of mercy, are tested and proved; but few are sealed with the seal of the living God. Few will humble themselves as a little child, that they may enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

Few receive the grace of Christ with self-abasement, with a deep and permanent sense of their unworthiness. They cannot hear the manifestations of the power of God, for this would encourage in them self-esteem, pride, and envy." —Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 50, 51.

2. "Anciently, when Elijah was sent with a message from God to the people, they did not heed the warning. They thought him unnecessarily severe. They even thought that he must have lost his senses, because he denounced them, the favored people of God, as sinners, and their crimes as so aggravated that the judgments of God would awaken against them. Satan and his host have ever been arrayed against those who bear the message of warning, and who reprove sins. The unconsecrated will also be united with the adversary of souls to make the work of God's faithful servants as hard as possible.

If my husband has been pressed beyond measure, and has become discouraged and desponding, if we have at times seen nothing desirable in life that we should choose it, this is nothing strange or new." —Testimonies, Vol. 3, p. 261.

3. The establishment of a wider road is a sign of a lack of uprightness toward Heaven and before men. It will not be covered with light, but be punished from Heaven by darkness. The fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22) will inevitably make room for the fruits of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), and close up Heaven. How will this take place with the individual, as well as with all of the people, as it was with the Advent people? The Spirit of prophecy touches this point as follows:

"Today sin is cherished and excused. The sharp sword of the Spirit, the word of God, does not cut to the soul. Has religion changed? Has Satan's enmity to God abated? A religious life once presented difficulties and demanded self-denial. All is made very easy now. And why is this? The professed people of God have compromised with the powers of darkness." —Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 222.

"As the people of God approach the perils of the last days, Satan holds earnest consultation with his angels as to the most successful plan of overthrowing their faith. ... Says the great deceiver: ... 'Through those that have a form of godliness but know not the power, we can gain many who would otherwise do us great harm. Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God will be our most effective helpers. Those of this class who are apt and intelligent will serve as decoys to draw others into our snares. Many will not fear their influence, because they profess the same faith. We will thus lead them to conclude that the requirements of Christ are less strict than they once believed, and that by conformity to the world they would exert a greater influence with worldlings. Thus they will separate from Christ; then they will have no strength to resist our power, and ere long they will be ready to ridicule their former zeal and devotion.' —Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 472-474.

In closing, a certain mystery concerning the object of "uprightness" might be mentioned. Only he who seeks for Christian uprightness and nourishes it, avoiding the broad road, will finally be able, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to crucify self.

"They are not reconciled to God, neither can be, until self is crucified, and Christ lives in the heart of faith." —Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 46.

Twice Through the Water

Twice the people of Israel, in whose history the Advent people are often reflected, had to pass through the water. For the first time it was with Moses as leader through the Red Sea. The second time it was with Joshua through the Jordan. In both events we find great lessons for us which we, because of lack of space, cannot study in their details. One thing might be mentioned shortly, namely, that the plan of redemption is founded upon "blood" and "water". "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." John 19:34.

Two Different Periods of Struggle in our Christian Life

Our first period of conflict is our separation from the world and the devil. They are heavy conflicts, threatened by so many enemies, which compare with the exodus from Egypt. It is crowned, acknowledged by Heaven, and by the blood of Jesus Christ in baptism established as a divine covenant. It is foreshadowed by the journey of the children of Israel through the Red Sea. (1 Cor. 10:1-4.)

Two Games are Won

By baptism we have won the first game against the powers of darkness. Now we belong to our Lord and Saviour through the blood which He shed for us, and may call ourselves the children of God. What a precious, inestimable privilege! "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." 1 John 3:1. Yet, our separation from the world must be complete. We can not flirt with her, return to Egypt, or desire to do so, else this gain or game that was won in the beginning with the powers of darkness, will be lost. More than ever these powers are zealously engaged to connect the children of God again with the world by means of miraculous inventions—movies and theater in the home—instruments by which one day the mark of the beast will be instituted, and by many more finely-woven deceptions. The bewitching power exerted upon the human heart, which is proven to be easily blinded and deceived, is so strong that only a solid and upright character by the help of God is able to see clear in the matter. We dare not go back at this point, but must advance

continually in sanctification, prescribed by Heaven, in order that we may finally pass through the Jordan. This would mean to:

Win also the Second Game.

The first gain (game) has no value unless we gain also the second one, because the plan of redemption consists of two things sanctified, "blood" and "water", which, again, is equivalent with the Righteousness of Christ, built on a two-fold foundation, namely,

1st.—the Righteousness of Christ "imputed", which means our acceptance by God because of the shed blood of His dear Son. It is righteousness imputed, by which man is freed from his sin; it brings us our title to heaven.

2nd.—the Righteousness of Christ "imparted", "which sanctifies the life conduct, and provides 'our fitness for heaven'". (C.O.R., p.93.) "The first is our title to heaven; the second is our fitness for heaven." —R. & H., June 4, 1895.

The first we may consider as the successful passing through the Red Sea, with our baptismal covenant, or with the first game that was won against the powers of darkness. Yet in order to win also the second game, that is to partake of the Righteousness of Christ imparted, or going through the Jordan; yes, to be fully freed from sin by the divine process of cleansing, symbolized by the water, it is needful that now we must earnestly prepare ourselves, as this Week of Prayer Reading visualizes so impressively.

"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." 1 John 3:2.

He who by the dual Righteousness of Christ permits himself not only to be reconciled but also purified and sanctified, will win also the second game against self and the powers of darkness. He will thus pass through the Jordan and will after this receive the latter rain. The high, solid walls of Jericho will then fall by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, poured out in its fulness, for which we have been waiting so long. Soon after this we will travel home with all the redeemed,—home forever.

May God grant that soon we may be with Him for time and eternity. Amen!

Reading No. 6 - Sabbath, December 12, 1959.

The Final Scenes of the Heavenly Judgment

by K. Hansske

N O T E :

This is a Sabbath of fasting.

At the conclusion of this reading the offering will be taken.

"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." Dan. 7:9,10.

IN this manner the great and solemn day was shown to the prophet in vision when the character and life of every man will pass in review before the great Judge of the world. The Ancient one is God, the eternal Father. The Psalmist says, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." He, who is the Originator of all created things and the Source of all laws, shall preside in the judgment. As assistants and witnesses, His holy angels, "thousand times thousands and ten thousand times ten thousands," will be present at this great and solemn judgment.

"I saw in the night vision, 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." Dan. 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 2,300 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:..." —Great Controversy, pp.478,480.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the tenth day of the seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be a holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, ... For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people." Lev. 23:26-29.

The word here mentioned "afflict" comes from Latin, meaning to "mortify—yield up", It certainly is not hard to find out what must be mortified in us and what we must yield up. The Apostle says, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life. ... For he that is dead is freed from sin." Rom. 6:4,7. To what extent our dying to sin and the yielding-up of the world has taken place, is just what the heavenly judgment is to decide.

In this judgment all heaven is participating. Hundreds of thousands of witnesses are there—the angels that have been invited, and have, with a scrutiny that is beyond our conception, entered into the books all good and evil deeds, and which are now being opened. A “Book of Remembrance” is written before the Lord, in which all good deeds of those who “feared the Lord and that thought upon His name”, are entered.

“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. . . 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.’ Said the Saviour, ‘By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.’ The secret purposes and motives appear in the unerring register; . . . 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.” —Great Controversy, pp.481,482.

Dear brethren and sisters, Is not the solemn question justified, “But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?” Mal.3:2.

Is hiding, belittling, distortion, or keeping it secret of just one sin possible? for “all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” Heb.4:13. Those things often done before the eyes of men, receiving commendation and praise from them, and which is styled as worthy of imitation, will be branded by the heavenly court as sinful! The angel noticed the underlying motive that prompted the one or other action. He marked it into the book as self-aggrandizement, or as having been done to receive honor of men. Thus everything will come to light. Many will

experience what Balaam did with his beast. In his anger he continued, in spite of the strange answer of the beast, until his eyes were opened and he saw the angel of God with the sword drawn at him. Numbers 22:31. What report is going to be revealed on that day about you and I? If we follow faithfully the events of the heavenly judgment, which is convening since the day that Jesus entered the Most Holy, could it not bring doubts into the hearts of everyone who has made a covenant with God, even because not all sins might have been repented of and forsaken?

Oh, my Lord Jesus,
What would I do without Thee?

Martin Luther, the great reformer, once dreamed that Satan appeared to him. In his hand he had a list containing all the grievous sins of Luther. Luther asked Satan, “Are these all my sins?” “Oh, no!” answered the devil. Then said Luther, “Please, show me all my sins!” Satan disappeared, and after a while he returned with an enormously long list on which were chronicled all the sins of Luther. Luther could not justify himself, but he said to Satan, “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.” He placed himself behind the Lamb of God. Without a further comment, Satan disappeared.

In this discussion between sin and purity, guilt and cleansing, there is but one way of escape and this is Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who can cleanse and forgive us our sins, no matter how many they may be. All doubts vanish from us, all fear subsides when we remember that Jesus is participating as Highpriest, Mediator, Defense, and Intercessor in the heavenly judgment. If His blood did not speak for the sinner, where should I, the poorest of them all, look for help? On the other hand, shall we remember that our Saviour can only represent him, who has shown the deepest repentance; him to whom the loss of earthly goods, honor, or comfort was more important than unrighteous gain and seeking after worldly honor. What efforts should we put forth in this solemn time of judgment, as long as the door of mercy is open, to part with all our wrong habits, and to overcome our inherited weaknesses of character which are known to take the deepest roots in the hearts of men. We are not capable to lift ourselves out of this sinful nature. Here the greatest

miracle of redemption, the precious blood of Jesus Christ, must be appropriated. We cannot justify ourselves from all our wrongs, as little as Martin Luther could not do it. Another thing that will not help us is when father, mother, husband, or wife are leading a pious life and we ourselves do not experience a deep heart-conversion. If we ourselves expect only from others a confession, and hold back with our own confession of sin, Christ cannot represent us. "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God." Ezek. 14:14.

The Life of Israel
as a Warning for God's People

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood touched blood." Hos. 4:1,2.

The people of Israel had all privileges that other people did not have. Into the minutest detail the Lord had made provision for the forgiveness and cleansing of their sins, yet they transgressed more than the Heathen. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee..." Hos. 4:6. Time has really become serious. We have points of interest concerning the final events which proclaim with all certainty that the history of mankind is being rapidly spent, bringing with it the last possibility for a reconciliation with God. Like it was with Israel, is there also among us a lack of love and faithfulness?

"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. Every one 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 knows how soon--it will pass to the case 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." "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."

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. ...

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, irrevokable 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." 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." 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 balance, and art found wanting." -- Great Controversy, pp. 490, 491.

In view of these facts that we are living at the time of the last atonement, who would want to continue to live an indifferent life? Can you still have a divided heart that wishes to serve the world and God; or do you believe that you can continue

to use the gifts that only belong to God for yourself and live under the impression that, nevertheless, in that hour when on the great day of judgment, or made clearer, in the hour when your name will be called upon before the heavenly host, you will be able to stand? Oh, that we might examine ourselves. It is still time to break with the

old man which does not seek reconciliation, and which has no desire to show reconciliation to his brother and sister.

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:20. Amen!

Reading No. 7 - Sunday, December 13, 1959.

Our Duty as Reformation at the Time of the End

by A. W. Doerschler

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Isaiah 52:7, 8, 10.

"The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message, is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. ... By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers." -Great Controversy, pp. 611, 612.

The Need of the World

THE end of all things is at the door. This is no longer looked upon as a phantom of fear by the present world and its farsighted political leaders, but as a sober, shocking fact. With the increase of scientific search in the realm of destroying atom and other powers, the uneasiness and sinister fear of the nations against each other is intensified. "Men's heart failing them for fear, and for looking after those

things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:26. These words of the Scripture have been literally fulfilled before our eyes.

The need of the world has gigantic proportions. In spite of seeming prosperity, thousands and millions on this earth are suffering for want of the daily necessities. And this distress is essentially made worse through lingering diseases which prey upon mankind and daily demand their victims.

Aside of this, the vast populace of men of our day is rolling with steadily increasing tempo toward the chasm. The fast pace of life today is catapulting thousands upon thousands every year into unforeseen accidents on water, land, and in the air. Thinking men look with terror into the future. The Spirit of prophecy writes about the time in which we live as follows:

"The world is a theater; the actors, its inhabitants, are preparing to act their part in the last great drama. With the great masses of mankind, there is no unity, except as men confederate to accomplish their selfish purposes. God is looking on. His purposes in regard to His rebellious subjects will be fulfilled. The world has not been given into the hands of men, though God is permitting the elements of confusion and disorder to bear sway for a season. A power from beneath is working to bring about the last great scenes in the drama,--

Satan coming as Christ, and working with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness in those who are binding themselves together in secret societies. Those who are yielding to the passion for confederation are working out the plans of the enemy. The cause will be followed by the effect.

Transgression has almost reached its limit. Confusion fills the world, and a great terror is soon to come upon human beings. The end is very near. We who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise." —Testimonies, Vol. 8, pp. 27, 28.

In spite of increased intelligence of the human mind and a professedly better education of our day, crime of all kinds is increasing at a rapid pace. That which years ago would have left a shocking impression upon the mind of the individual, has become commonplace today. Man, astoundingly, gets used to anything.

And yet, the threatening calamity comes closer and closer! Already the clouds of divine vengeance are forming over a world ripe for the judgment and destined for destruction.

God's Remnant People

"And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant ... I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. ... Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; .." Isa. 49:6, 16.

Where do we find the people of God in this solemn, eventful time? Hidden in the lands of the earth, here and there, live the individual, the faithful, whose eyes are enlightened by the Spirit to know the solemnity of the hour. Thousands of faithful ones are still ensnared in the error of other churches and denominations. Indeed, they live up to the light they have, yet wait longingly for a higher, heavenly enlightenment.

Since the days of the reformation among the Advent people, God has turned His eye upon the remnants which keep God's commandments and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. To them He has entrusted the message of salvation; of them He requires that they shall bring their lives into harmony with the message they carry. They

shall be His instruments today, as was Noah of old, to warn a perishing world. Yet they shall not only warn them but actually engage in alleviating the suffering of the world, seek for the lost, and heal what can be healed, to lead them to Jesus.

The need of the world is great, not only physically, but in a far greater measure in the spiritual sense. Shall we therefore focus our eyes once upon the one, and then again upon the other side:

Poverty

"Withold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it." Proverbs 3:27.

The Spirit of prophecy is casting light upon this as follows:

"In the providence of God events have been so ordered that the poor are always with us, in order that there may be a constant exercise in the human heart of the attributes of mercy and love. Man is to cultivate the tenderness and compassion of Christ; he is not to separate himself from the sorrowing, the afflicted, the needy, and the distressed."

"The poor man as well as the rich man is the object of God's special care and attention. Take away poverty, and we should have no way of understanding the mercy and love of God, no way of knowing the compassionate and sympathetic heavenly Father,"

"Those who are indifferent to the wants of the needy will be counted unfaithful stewards, and will be registered as enemies of God and man. Those who misappropriate the means that God has entrusted to them to help the very ones who need their help, prove that they have no connection with Christ, because they fail to manifest the tenderness of Christ toward those who are less fortunate than themselves." —Welfare Ministry, pp. 17-19.

Yes, the distress of the world is great. Let us ponder the words of the Apostle who says, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. 6:10.

Sickness

The world is one great hospital in which multi-millions of men suffer a lingering death with nerve-wrecking pains. In spite

of all medical science, sicknesses and epidemics increase at an alarming rate. Hardly has a medical achievement conquered an incurable disease, according to outward appearances, and already another more death-dealing plague is rising somewhere else.

Nearly two-thousand years ago Jesus walked on earth and spent more time in healing than in preaching. Wherever He came He brought health and new joy of living with Him. His followers are called to the same solemn task; they are to acquire knowledge to help the sick to get well by the means of natural remedies.

There is no need on this place to point to the dangers of the medicines in common use, yet we shall regard the words found in "Ministry of Healing," pp.126,127:

"People need to be taught that drugs do not cure disease. It is true that they sometimes afford present relief, and the patient appears to recover as the result of their use; this is because nature has sufficient vital force to expel the poison and to correct the conditions that caused disease. Often the effect of the poison seems to be overcome for a time, but the results remain in the system, and work great harm at a later period."

"Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power,—these are the true remedies. Every person should have a knowledge of nature's remedial agencies and how to apply them."

Here a great number of important healing factors are at our disposal. Oh, how sad, how deplorable it is that God's children are generally not deeply schooled in these natural treatments. What untold sufferings could be stilled, what pains alleviated. And souls thus benefitted are winning confidence in the great soul-Physician Jesus who is able to still the pains of the soul as well. Thus by the missionary endeavor of physical healing, a door can be opened for souls to come to the knowledge of the eternal truths.

In the great work of saving souls before the end of all things, this branch of the message will yet play a great part in this Reformatory Movement, not to be underestimated. Let us in these days of prayer call earnestly to God that He might give us divine wisdom in these matters, so that we

may faithfully perform our duty in this respect.

The Spiritual Need

Never before has more light about divine truths been shining upon the people of God and the world in general; never has the knowledge in sciences of the world so increased as in our day. Dan.12:4. Indeed, knowledge has so increased that the nations of today in their false intelligence and estrangement to God are holding in their hands the most destructive weapons to restlessly destroy whole nations with their populous cities in a few hours,—or else be destroyed themselves. All it takes is a touch-off to unloosen this child of hell. Are we as thinking children of God really conscious of this threatening situation? The inventions of the human mind have become the harbinger of threatening disaster.

The daily straining of all nerves not to succumb in the battle of life leads to a mad rush which is nearly too much for the common man. The resulting effect is a callousing of the inner man, a hardening of the mind, a spiritual lethargy, ending in total materialism.

Surrounded by this spirit of the times live the few remnants in all lands. Will they be able to cope with this prevailing spirit? Listen to the words of admonition by the Spirit of prophecy:

"Jesus is coming; and will He find a people conformed to the world? and will He acknowledge these as His people that He has purified unto Himself? Oh, no. None but the pure and holy will He acknowledge as His. Those who have been purified and made white through suffering, and have kept themselves separate, unspotted from the world, He will own as His.

As I saw the dreadful fact that God's people were conformed to the world, with no distinction, except in name, between many of the professed disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus and unbelievers, my soul felt deep anguish. I saw that Jesus was wounded and put to an open shame. Said the angel, as with sorrow he saw the professed people of God loving the world, partaking of its spirit, and following its fashions, 'Cut loose! Cut loose! lest He appoint you your portion with the hypocrites and unbelievers outside the city. Your profession will only cause you greater anguish, and your punish-

ment will be greater because ye knew His will, but did it not.' ...

I asked the angel why so few were interested in their eternal welfare, so few preparing for their last change. Said he, 'Earth attracts them, its treasures seem of worth to them.' They find enough to engross the mind, and have no time to prepare for Heaven. Satan is ever ready to plunge them deeper and deeper into difficulty; as soon as one perplexity and trouble is off their mind, he begets within them an unholy desire for more of the things of the earth; and thus their time passes, and when it is too late, they see that they have gained nothing substantial. They have grasped at shadows, and lost eternal life. Such will have no excuse." -Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 133, 132.

O, what solemn, timely words are these, which even today find their greatest application as never before. Shall we heed them? Indeed, the spiritual need is great, even among God's people.

The Living Testimony

"I was pointed down to the time when the third angel's message was closing. The power of God had rested upon His people; ... and the living testimony had been revived." -Early Writings, p. 279.

We cannot come to the aid of the great need in the world unless we, as carriers of this aid, are beginning to live the message which we profess to believe in our own lives. O, for the power of a Christian example! What sweet influence it spreads in all the world. A Christian life of devotion and deep piety is a resounding sermon that has no equal. This is the "living testimony" carried by men of whom it is said, "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend..." Eph. 3:16, 17. Let us also listen to these inspired words:

"With the calling of John and Andrew and Simon, of Philip and Nathanael, began the foundation of the Christian church. John directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these, Andrew, found his brother, and called him to the Saviour. Philip was then called, and he went in

search of Nathanael. These examples should teach us the importance of personal effort, of making direct appeals to our kindred, friends and neighbors. There are those who for a lifetime have professed to be acquainted with Christ, yet who have never made a personal effort to bring even one soul to the Saviour. They leave all the work for the minister. He may be well qualified for his calling, but he cannot do that which God has left for the members of the church.

There are many who need the ministration of loving Christian hearts. Many have gone down to ruin who might have been saved, if their neighbors, common men and women, had put forth personal effort for them. Many are waiting to be personally addressed. In the very family, the neighborhood, the town where we live, there is work for us to do as missionaries for Christ. If we are Christians, this work will be our delight. No sooner is one converted than there is born within him a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus. The saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart.

All who are consecrated to God will be channels of light. God makes them His agents to communicate to others the riches of His grace. His promise is, "I will make them and the place round about My hill a blessing; and I will cause the showers to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing." -Desire of Ages, p. 141.

The apostle Peter reminds us of our holy calling in this manner,

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Peter 2:9.

Through this, our Week of Prayer reading receives a very special, personal touch. It speaks to you and to myself. "Ye should show forth..." It is therefore a heavenly command from which we cannot escape. The Spirit of prophecy has given the following earnest instruction:

"Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be taught how to labor successfully. ... The greatest help that can be given our people is to teach them to work for God, and to depend on Him,

not on the ministers. ... If in one place there are only two or three who know the truth, let them form themselves into a band of workers. Let them keep their bond of union unbroken, pressing together in love and unity, encouraging one another to advance, each gaining courage and strength from the assistance of the others. ... God will move upon men in humble positions to declare the message of present truth. Many such will be seen hastening hither and thither, constrained by the Spirit of God to give the light to those in darkness. The truth is as a fire in their bones, filling them with a burning desire to enlighten those who sit in darkness. Many even among the uneducated, will proclaim the word of the Lord. Children will be impelled by the Holy Spirit to go forth to declare the message of heaven. The Spirit will be poured out upon those who yield to His promptings." —Testimonies, Vol.7, pp.16-27.

A World-embracing Work

"God's people have a mighty work before them, a work that must continually rise to greater prominence. Our efforts in missionary lines must become far more extensive. A more decided work than that has been done must be done prior to the second appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. God's people are not to cease their labors until they shall encircle the world.

The vineyard includes the whole world, and every part of it is to be worked. ... The whole earth is to be illuminated with the glory of God's truth. The light is to shine to all lands and to all peoples. And it is from those who have received the light that it is to shine forth. The day-star has risen upon us, and we are to flash its light upon the pathway of those in darkness.

A crisis is right upon us. We must now by the Holy Spirit's power proclaim the great truths for these last days. It will not be long before every one will have heard the warning and make his decision. Then shall the end come." —Testimonies, Vol.6, pp.23,24.

A Closing Word

Yes, the need of the world is great! Who will learn in these days of prayer to do something about it? Who will consecrate himself to God, body and soul, for this work, and say:

"Here is my heart! My God I give it Thee;
To Thee, Creator, Lord.
'Not to the world, My child, but give it Me,'
This is to me Thy word.

Thy suff'ring paid for it so dearly;
With joy I consecrate it early,
Here is my heart! Here is my heart!

"Here is my heart! God's Spirit make it
And make it fully new. (clean,
Thy holy temple, Lord, abide within,
Yes, make it good and true.
O, that it long for God forever,
And love Him and forsake Him never,
My heart so new; My heart so new.

Then with such yielding of the heart in your's and my own life it should not be difficult to give the right answer to the voice of the Spirit when He calls, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" With a purified and joyful heart we will answer, "Here am I; send me!"

"Let the repenting sinner fix his eyes upon 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;' and by beholding, he becomes changed. His fear is turned to joy, his doubts to hope. Gratitude springs up. The stony heart is broken. A tide of love sweeps into the soul. Christ is in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. When we see Jesus, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, working to save the lost, slighted, scorned, derided, driven from city to city till His mission was accomplished; when we behold Him in Gethsemane, sweating great drops of blood, and on the cross dying in agony,—when we see this, self will no longer clamor to be recognized. Looking unto Jesus, we shall be ashamed of our coldness, our lethargy, our self-seeking. We shall be willing to be anything or nothing, so that we may do heart-service for the Master. We shall rejoice to bear the cross after Jesus, to endure trial, shame, or persecution for His dear sake." —Desire of Ages, pp.439,440.

When finally the redeemed will enter the golden gates of the heavenly Jerusalem on the coronation day, they will receive a diadem of glory, and many a faithful soul will greet us with tears of joy to thank us that we have showed them the way of redemption.

May we in this Week of Prayer become fully conscious of the need—the dire distress—of this world, and cry to God with all our

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hearts to let us find ways and means to
finish the work on earth, so that the coming
of Jesus might be hastened. This God may
grant in mercy. Amen!

E N D

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ALONE WITH MY CONSCIENCE

I sat alone with my conscience,
In a place where time has ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In the land where the years increased;
And I felt I should have to answer
The question it put to me;
And to face the answer and question
For all eternity.
The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,
And things that I thought were dead things,
Were alive with a terrible might.
And the vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to face—
Alone with my conscience sitting
In this solemnly silent place.
And I thought of a far-away warning
Of sorrow that was to be mine,
In a land that was then the future.
But now it is present time.
And I thought of my former warning
Of the judgment day to be,
But sitting alone with my conscience
Seemed judgment enough for me.
And I wondered if there was a future
To this land beyond the grave,
But no one gave me an answer,
And no one came to save.
Then I felt that the future was present,
And the present would never go by,
For it was but the thought of my past life
Grown into eternity.
Then I woke from my timely dreaming,
And the vision passed away,
And I knew the far-away warning
Was a warning of yesterday.
And I pray that I may not forget it,
In this land before the grave,
That I may not cry in the future,
And no one come to save.
And so I have learned a lesson
Which I ought to have known before,
And which, though I learned it dreaming,
I hope to forget no more.
I sit alone with my conscience,
In the place where the years increase,
And I try to remember the future
In the land where time will cease;
And I know of the future judgment,
How dreadful soe'er it be,
That to sit alone with my conscience
Seems judgment enough for me.

--Sel.